

American Political Thought
PSCI 3054-001
12:30-3:30 Monday-Friday
GUGG 206
Maymester 2018

Instructor: Dr. Janet Donovan
Office hours: 11-12 Monday & Thursday
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Course description: This course traces major themes in American Political Thought from the Colonial Period through the present, by reading and evaluating the works of key American political thinkers, and putting their ideas into historical and political perspective. In the course, we will use various means of understanding and evaluating these works, including lecture, discussions, a semester paper, reading quizzes and midterm and final exams.

Using the readings, class discussions, and activities, we will trace the development and changes in core principles of American democracy over time, including liberty, equality of opportunity, property and religious ideals. We will also trace the importance of liberalism and conservatism as political philosophies for articulating these principles (please keep in mind that “liberalism” and “conservatism” are used in this course in their philosophical meanings, not their common meanings in politics today).

The readings and concepts explored in this course are difficult, and students will need to carefully complete the reading assignments before class, come to class on a regular basis and take good notes, and participate fully in discussions in order to be successful in the course. Students should expect to spend an average of 3-5 hours per day outside of class working on the course. There is an average of 120 pages of reading per class period, though this varies. It is recommended that students have taken the prerequisite PSCI 2004: Survey of Western Political Thought prior to this course. Students having trouble should make an effort early on to come to office hours and ask questions, and address ways of improving course performance. All students are welcome and encouraged to come to office hours.

The course text was chosen for its comprehensive selection of writings, speeches and documents that have influenced the development of American political thought, and indeed, the way Americans think. The text offers some context to these writings, but additional context will be provided in lecture.

This is a political theory course, which may be counted toward American field credit as well. This course is approved for arts and sciences core curriculum: United States context or ideals and values.

Course objectives:

- 1) Learn about key ideas and concepts in American Political Thought by reading primary texts from influential thinkers
- 2) Trace core principles of American democracy over time—liberty, equality of opportunity, property, religious ideals
- 3) Examine the importance of the dominant political philosophy of liberalism, and the interplay of liberalism and conservatism, in defining and articulating these core principles
- 4) Critically examine the ways in which these core principles and political philosophies have shaped the development of our political system, and how Americans think.

Grading and scale:

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|---------------------------------------|-----------|--------|----|
| Midterm exam | 25 | 93-100 | A |
| Activities & quizzes | 15 | 90-92 | A- |
| Paper | 20 | 88-89 | B+ |
| Final Exam | 25 | 83-87 | B |
| <u>Attendance & Participation</u> | <u>15</u> | 80-82 | B- |
| Total | 100 | 78-79 | C+ |
| | | 73-77 | C |
| | | 70-72 | C- |
| | | 60-69 | D |
| | | ≤ 59 | F |

Required Text:

Isaac Kramnick and Theodore Lowi, eds. *American Political Thought: A Norton Anthology*. Norton: New York. ISBN-13: 978-0-393-92886-0

Course Requirements:

Midterm exam: All students must take the midterm exam in class on Tuesday, May 22. The exam will consist of a combination of term identifications and essay questions. A study guide will be provided on Friday, May 18. The exam is worth 25 points of the final grade and is required to receive a passing grade in the course. Make-up exams will be given only in cases of documented medical or family emergency, religious observances or university absences related to participation in university-sanctioned activities. If it is physically possible, the instructor must be notified in advance an emergency. All make-ups are at the instructor's discretion and would be in a different format than the original.

Activities & quizzes: We will have 20 activities and quizzes over the course of the class, worth 1 points each. The quizzes are unannounced pop quizzes, with the purpose of holding students accountable for completing the readings before class begins. There are no make-ups for reading quizzes. The activities are designed to provide student input into what we are learning, and to help students understand and apply the material. The five lowest activity and quiz grades will be dropped. Activities and quizzes will be graded all together at the end of the semester, so students should be responsible for keeping track of how many activities and quizzes have been completed.

Paper: Each student will choose from a list of topics and complete a 4-5 page paper, double-spaced, in a standard font with 1" margins. The paper must include a bibliography, which does not count toward the page requirement. More information on the paper is provided at the end of the syllabus. The paper is worth 20 points of the final grade, and is required to receive a passing grade in the class. The paper must be submitted both in class and electronically via D2L on Tuesday, May 29. Students are responsible for the electronic document being readable. Late papers will receive a 1 point deduction per day. Papers will not be accepted after Thursday, May 31.

Final exam: All students must take the final exam on Friday, June 1 during our scheduled class time. The final will consist of term identifications and essay questions. One essay question will be comprehensive; the rest of the exam will cover material since the midterm. The exam is worth 25 points of the final grade and is required to receive a passing grade in the course. Make-up finals will be given only in cases of documented medical or family emergency, religious observances or university absences related to participation in university-sanctioned activities. Again, if it is physically possible,

the instructor must be notified in advance of such an emergency. All make-ups are at the instructor's discretion and would be in a different format than the original.

Attendance: Students are required to attend class regularly for the entire class period. Only documented medical or family emergencies, religious observances or university absences related to participation in university-sanctioned activities will be excused. Because this is an intensive course, with each day being the equivalent of a week in a regular semester, there are no "free" absences. Students are required to be in class every day for the entire time and are expected to participate in class discussions. Attendance is valued at total of 15 points, and one point will be deducted per absence. Students may also lose points for being late, leaving early, or missing part of the class.

Course policies:

Course communications: Email is the official mode of communication for the University of Colorado at Boulder. Students are required to regularly check their university-registered email (at least every 48 hours) for updates regarding the course. Students are responsible for receiving any messages sent by the instructor to the class email list, or individually to the student. Students are responsible for ensuring that any email sent by the student to the instructor is received. In addition, students are responsible for checking the D2L site for the course regularly.

Contacting the Instructor: Please feel free to contact me with questions about the course. The best ways to reach me are to come by office hours, or to email. I always answer email within 48 hours, so if you do not receive a reply, that means I did not get your email and you should try to contact me again. When addressing me, please address me in person or in email as Janet, Dr. Donovan or Professor Donovan.

Course Etiquette: Students are expected to come to class on time and stay the entire time. If it is necessary to come late or leave early, please let me know in advance. If your schedule does not permit you to be on time and in class on a regular basis, please take another course. Students are expected to be respectful of each other and of the instructor; lively debate is encouraged, but personal attacks are prohibited. These guidelines should be obvious, and they will help to make the course a more enjoyable experience for all. For more information on University requirements regarding classroom behavior please see <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code.

Electronic Devices: Electronic devices, including computers, tablets and mobile phones, may be used only for class purposes while in class. Any student using devices for other purposes may be asked to put away the device, or may lose attendance and participation points for not being truly present in class.

Honor code: All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. In this course, students will receive a 0 on any assignment in which the honor code is violated. In addition, all incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode>

Students with disabilities: If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit a letter from Disability Services so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations. Contact: 303-492-8671 and <http://www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices>.

Religious observances: Students with religious observances that conflict with course requirements will be accommodated whenever possible. To ensure such accommodation, students must notify the instructor within the first 2 weeks of the course to allow time to make such arrangements. For more information on the University policy, please see http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

Discrimination and harassment: The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>

Reading Schedule:

Readings are to be completed BEFORE class on the assigned day.

Week 1

Monday, May 14: Introduction to course, pass out syllabus, Colonial roots of APT

Tuesday, May 15: Colonial roots of APT, Political theory of the Revolution

Readings: p. 1-23 (through Winthrop), p. 53-89 (begin with Franklin), p. 91-154

Wednesday, May 16: The Constitution and its critics

Readings: p. 155-283

Thursday, May 17: The Federalist and Jeffersonian visions, Jacksonian democracy

Readings: p. 285-366 (through Danbury Baptist), p. 375-381 (through VA and KY Res), p. 389-464

Friday, May 18: Individualism and democracy, Women in the early republic, Slavery and free labor

Readings: p. 465-577 (through Grimke)

Week 2

Monday, May 21: Slavery and free labor

Readings: p. 577 (from Weld)-685

Tuesday, May 22: Midterm exam in class

Wednesday, May 23: Social Darwinism, Intellectuals and populism, Voices of dissent

Readings: p. 687-729 (through Sumner), 740-764 (through Bellamy), 773-779 (through Sociocracy), 809-877 (through Gilman)

Thursday, May 24: Empire and Race

Readings: p. 893-987

Friday, May 25: The Progressive Era

Readings: p. 988-1113

Week 3

Monday, May 28: Memorial Day, No Class

Tuesday, May 29: The New Deal and its Critics

Readings: p. 1115-1211, Papers due in class and on D2L

Papers due in class and on D2L

Wednesday, May 30: The Cold War, the 1960s

Readings: p. 1211-1369

Thursday, May 31: Contemporary discourse

Readings: p. 1370-1438 (through Marshall), p. 1471-1522

Friday, June 1: Final Exam in Class

Paper Assignment

Each student is required to write a 4-5 page paper, double-spaced, with standard 1" margins, answering one of the following questions. To answer the question, students should refer to the ideas of at least 2 authors from the course text, and utilize at least 2 outside peer-reviewed sources. The paper must include a bibliography, which does not count toward the page requirement. The paper is due in class and via D2L on Tuesday, May 29. The paper is valued at 20 points.

- 1) The dominant understanding of property has changed over time in American Political Thought, and many competing ideas of property, and the government's role in protecting and regulating property, have been explored. Choose one view on the definition of property, as represented by an author in the course, and either defend or refute that view of property.
- 2) Equality of opportunity is a key idea in classical liberalism. Why is equality of opportunity so important to classical liberalism?
- 3) Philosophical pragmatism offers an alternative to liberalism as a foundation for American democracy. How would a democracy based on pragmatism differ from a democracy based on liberalism?
- 4) What is the New Deal? Support the idea that positive liberty, as embodied in the New Deal, is the best way forward for the American political system.
- 5) From Hoover to the present, some have argued passionately against the New Deal and in favor of retaining a limited government based on negative liberty. Support the idea that negative liberty is the best way forward for the American political system