

**Spring 2011**  
**Unique # 38815 GOV 312P**  
**Constitutional Principles: Core Texts**  
**America's Founding Principles**

**Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:00-3:15 P.M.**  
**Location: Mezes B0.306**

**Instructors:** Dana Stauffer  
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Office Hours:  
Tuesdays 10:15-1:15

Office Hours:  
T Th 3:20-4:50

Office Hours:  
Wednesdays 9:30-12:30  
Batts Hall 1.118

This course examines the principles that lie at the core of the American political system. Why do we, as Americans, stand for liberty, equality, and democracy? How did these come to be our principles? How has our commitment to these principles manifested itself in our political history? How has our understanding of these principles changed over time, and what do these principles demand of us today?

We will begin by considering the theoretical foundations of our liberal democracy in the thought of John Locke. Then we will consider how the political theory of modern liberalism found expression in the American Founding. We will examine the considerations that led the Founders to design the Constitution as they did, as well the arguments of those who opposed the Constitution, the Anti-Federalists. We will turn from the Founding period to Alexis de Tocqueville's great work *Democracy in America*, and consider his analysis of American political life and of the American character more generally. After that, we will consider how liberty and equality became thematic issues in the debate over slavery. We will examine how the ways in which Americans conceived of liberty and equality changed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. We will examine how those principles were defended in the context of the Cold War. And we will conclude by considering some of the most compelling and provocative assessments of American life today.

The course aims first to give students a better understanding of the origins and evolution of American principles and beliefs about politics. Second, it aims to provide students with a theoretical framework that will allow them to think critically about those principles and beliefs, and finally, it seeks to enable them to make informed judgments about how well America has achieved its ideals.

**Required Texts (5):**

1. COURSE READER, available at Jenn's Copying and Binding, 2518 Guadalupe St., at the corner of Guadalupe and Dean Keeton, tel. 482-0779.
2. *Second Treatise of Government* by John Locke. Hackett edition, edited by C.B. Macpherson.
3. *The Federalist Papers* by John Jay, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton. Signet Classics edition, edited by Clinton Rossiter.
4. *Democracy in America*, Volume Two, by Alexis de Tocqueville. Vintage Classics edition.
5. *Capitalism and Freedom* by Milton Friedman. 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition, University of Chicago Press.

### **Grading and Requirements:**

<u>Option 1 (No paper):</u>	<u>Option 2 (With paper):</u>
Midterm Exam: 40%	Midterm Exam: 20%
Pop Quizzes: 10%	Pop Quizzes: 10%
Final Exam: 50%	Final Exam: 30%
	Paper: 40%

**Exams:** The mid-term will be an in-class examination comprised of an essay and short answer questions. The final exam will be cumulative. It will consist of an essay section, a short answer section, and some quote identifications. For both exams, I will announce in advance a list of themes from which the essay questions will be drawn.

The **optional paper** will be assigned in the second half of the term. I will distribute a list of possible questions. The task of the paper will be to analyze and/or evaluate the readings in the course. Papers must be between 4-6 double-spaced, typed pages, in 12- point font. Papers that do not meet these specifications will not be accepted. You must *not* use secondary sources for this paper. Plagiarism will result in an automatic F. Since this paper is optional, late papers will not be accepted. Papers may not be submitted by email. They must be submitted in hard copy form. If you choose to submit a paper, your grade will be calculated according to "Option 2" described above; the grade you receive on the paper will be counted toward your final grade.

**Unannounced pop quizzes:** These quizzes will be multiple choice. They will be designed to reward you for doing the reading; they will not be difficult for those who have read carefully. You will be expected to bring a #2 pencil to each class. Makeup quizzes will not be given. However, I will drop your lowest quiz grade.

**Attendance and Classroom Etiquette:** I will take attendance frequently, either by passing around an attendance sheet or by taking roll, either at the beginning or at the end of class. On the days on which there is a quiz, attendance will be registered by handing in the quiz. Absences will be excused with a doctor's note only. **Students with 4 or more unexcused absences will be docked a letter grade for the course.** *Example: the grade of a student with a B+ average who has four or more unexcused absences will be a C+.*

Much of the lecture will proceed by way of textual analysis. Frequently, I will quote from the readings and refer to page numbers, so you should bring the assigned reading to every class.

**Laptops, cell phones, blackberries, and gadgets of any sort must be turned off during class.**  
If you have a special need for a laptop, please explain that need to me.

**Supplemental Instruction:** The TA for the course, Samuel West, will offer Supplemental Instruction in the form of **optional weekly discussion sections** on a day and time to be announced shortly after the start of the course. These discussion sections are a great way to get additional help with challenging material, discuss the ideas and themes of the course, and to get to know your TA.

**Disabilities:** Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

**Academic Honesty:** In all of your work for this course, you are expected to know and to adhere to University of Texas policies regarding academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of F for the course.

**Course Schedule:** “CR” means “Course Reader”

*Note: This course schedule is approximate. I will announce the official reading assignment for the next class at the beginning of each class. So be sure to listen carefully at the beginning of each lecture! If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out the precise reading assignment for the next class.*

January 18                      Introduction

### **Theoretical Foundations of American Liberalism**

January 20                      John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters 1-4

January 25                      John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapter 5

January 27                      John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters 6-8

February 1                      John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters 9-14

February 3                      John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Selections

February 8                      John Locke, *Letter Concerning Toleration* (In CR)

## **The Founding**

- February 10            John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity”  
And “On Liberty” (In CR)
- February 15            *Declaration of Independence* (In *The Federalist Papers* Reader)  
Articles of Confederation (In *Federalist Papers* Reader)  
Federalist Paper 1, 2, 9
- February 17            Federalist Papers 10, 49, 51
- February 22            Anti-Federalists *Centinel* I and *Brutus* I (In CR)

## **Tocqueville’s Observations on America**

- February 24            Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Selections
- March 1                Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Selections
- March 3                Midterm Review
- March 8                Midterm Exam**
- March 10              Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Selections
- March 22              Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Selections
- March 24              Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Selections

## **The Question of Slavery and Its Legacy**

- March 29              Abraham Lincoln, “A House Divided” Speech (In CR)
- March 31              Selections from the Lincoln – Douglas Debates (In CR)
- April 5                Abraham Lincoln, Address at Cooper Institute (In CR)  
**Optional Paper Assigned**
- April 7                Frederick Douglass, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?”, “The  
Constitution of the United States: Is it Pro-Slavery or Anti-Slavery?” (CR)
- April 12              Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham City Jail” (CR)

## **The Meaning and Significance of American Freedom**

- April 14 Theodore Roosevelt, "The Man in the Arena: Citizenship in a Republic,"  
Woodrow Wilson, *The New Freedom*, Selections (In CR)
- April 19 Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, pages 1-25  
**Optional Paper Due**
- April 21 Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, Selections
- April 26 Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, "A World Split Apart" (In CR)
- April 28 Robert Goldwin, "Of Men and Angels: A Search for Morality in the  
Constitution" (In CR)
- May 3 Conclusion
- May 5 Review

**Final Exam: Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2:00-5:00, location TBA.**