

Political Science 1001.01
Fundamental Issues of Politics
Louisiana State University
Spring 2018

Course Description:

Behind the game of politics – campaigns and elections, pundits and commentators, policy analysts and advocates, behind even those who fight and die – lie certain fundamental issues that persist from generation to generation and that give political life its energy and form. In this course, we will begin to explore several such issues: the question of justice at war, the question of the role of government in relation to the economy, the question of constitutional design, and the question of the cultural foundations of political freedom.

We will read several books in this course, most of them written relatively recently, but we will also sample several great works of political philosophy. Lectures, quizzes, and tests will be designed around the reading assignments, which are given in the syllabus class by class. To succeed in the course, you should come to class having read the assignment for that day—a daily quiz will give you an incentive to keep up—and having thought about its significance for our study.

Professor:

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Teaching Assistant:

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Office Hours:

M, 1:30–2:30,
W, 1:30–3:30, and by appointment
Stubbs 214

Th, 10:30–11:30
F, 1:00–2:00
Stubbs 232

Class Time, and Location:

MWF 10:30–11:20 am 143 Coates Hall

General Education Credit:

General education credit for the social sciences will be earned by students in this course, since our study aims at a number of the goals of the general education program at LSU. According to a LSU catalogue, “General education courses are not hurdles to be overcome; rather, they are means by which students learn to think, describe, interpret, and analyze the world. Their primary aim is to educate rather than train, and to instill a desire for life-long learning.” In the social sciences, the learning outcome sought is “an understanding of factors associated with global interdependence, including economic, political, psychological, cultural and linguistic forces.” From our initial study of just war theory, through our consideration of economic policy, constitutional design, and civic

culture, we keep an eye on the global dimension of the political issues we consider. While our focus for much of the course is the American regime, we look as well at other cultures—for example, Greek antiquity and Renaissance England—and at forms of thought that do not take for granted the value of democracy or freedom.

Course Materials:

The following books are required, and are (or will soon be) available in the bookstore. Please obtain these specific editions so that we can all work from the same translations and/or page numbers. The books are listed in the order in which we will study them. Additional articles are available through the Moodle website, either in pdf or as an internet link; some materials are hyperlinked in the online version of the syllabus.

- Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, 5th ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2015) [ISBN: 978-0465052714]
 John Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action* (1935; reprint, Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1999) [ISBN: 978-1573927536]
 F.A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, Bruce Caldwell, ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007 [1944]) [ISBN: 978-0226320557]
 Aristotle, *The Politics*, 2nd ed., Carnes Lord, trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013) [ISBN: 978-0226921846]
 David Wootton, ed., *Essential Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers* (Hackett, 2003) [ISBN: 978-0-87220-655-7]
 Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987; 2d ed., 2012) [ISBN: 978-1451683202]
 Shelby Steele, *White Guilt: How Blacks and Whites Together Destroyed the Promise of the Civil Rights Era* (New York: Harper, 2006) [ISBN 978-0060578633]
 Christina Hoff Sommers, *Freedom Feminism: Its Surprising History and Why It Matters Today* (Washington: AEI Books, 2013) [ISBN 978-0844772622]

NOTE: You will need to bring to class every day an electronic device that can access the internet (specifically, the Moodle site for the course): a smartphone, a tablet, or a laptop.

Grading:

Daily quizzes (make-ups only if arranged beforehand)	25%
In-class test (Fri., Feb. 23)	20%
In-class test (Fri., Apr. 6)	20%
Final Exam (Fri, May 4, 10:00 a.m. – noon)	35%

Grading scale:

- A+ (98%-100%), A (93%-97%), A- (90%-92%)
 B+ (88%-90%), B (83%-87%), B- (80%-82%)
 C+ (78%-80%), C (73%-77%), C- (70%-72%)
 D+ (68%-70%), D (63%-67%), D- (60%-62%)
 F (below 60%)

SYLLABUS:

Wed, Jan 10: Introduction

I. War and Peace

Fri, Jan 12:

[George Washington's Farewell Address \(1796\)](#)

[Woodrow Wilson, "Fourteen Points" \(8 January 1918\)](#)

[Ronald Reagan's 1982 Speech to the British Parliament](#)

[Barack Obama's Cairo Speech \(2009\)](#)

[Martin Luther King Day Break]

Wed, Jan 17: Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, chapter 1, 2

Fri, Jan 19: Walzer, chapters 3, 4

Mon, Jan 22: Walzer, chapter 5, 6

Wed, Jan 24: Walzer, chapters 8, 9

Fri, Jan 26: Walzer, chapters 12, 16

II. Wealth and Poverty

Mon, Jan 29: John Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action*, chapter 1

Wed, Jan 31: Dewey, chapter 2

Fri, Feb 2: Dewey, chapter 3

Mon, Feb 5: F.A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, Introduction, chapters 1-2

Wed, Feb 7: Hayek, chapters 3-5

Fri, Feb 9: Hayek, chapters 6-8

[Mardi Gras Break]

Fri, Feb 16: Hayek, chapters 9, 14

Mon, Feb 19:

[John Cassidy, "Forces of Divergence: Is Surging Inequality Endemic to Capitalism?" *The New Yorker* \(March 31, 2014\)](#)

[Tyler Cowen, "Capital Punishment: Why a Global Tax on Wealth Won't End Inequality," *Foreign Affairs* \(May/June 2014\)](#)

Wed, Feb 21:

[Charles Murray, "A Guaranteed Income for Every American," *Wall Street Journal*, June 3, 2016](#)

[Alyssa Battistoni, "The False Promise of Universal Basic Income," *Dissent*, Spring 2017](#)

Fri, Feb 23: Test

III. First Principles

Mon, Feb 26: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book 1

Wed, Feb 28: Aristotle, Book 3

Fri, Mar 2: Aristotle, Book 7

Mon, Mar 5: Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 91, aa. 1-4; q. 94, aa. 1-6; q. 95, aa. 1-2; q. 97, aa. 1-4

Wed, Mar 7: Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), chapters 13-14, 17-18

Fri, Mar 9: John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (1690), chs. 5, 19
The Declaration of Independence

IV. Forming and Re-Forming Government

Mon, Mar 12: Constitution of the United States;
“Address of the Minority of the Penn. Convention,” in Wootton, ed., *Essential Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers*, pp. 326-337, 3-24

Wed, Mar 14: *The Federalist* ##1, 10, 14-15, 39 in Wootton, pp. 140-143, 167-174, 179-190, 225-231

Fri, Mar 16: *The Federalist* ##47-52 in Wootton, pp. 231-254

Mon, Mar 19: Brutus #15, *The Federalist* ##55, 57, 62, 70, 78 in Wootton, pp. 92-96, 254-268, 275-289

Wed, Mar 21:

Keith E. Whittington, “How to Read the Constitution” (2006)

William Brennan, “Constitutional Interpretation” (1985)

Fri, Mar 23:

Christina Villegas, “Electing the People’s President: The Popular Origins of the Electoral College,” *Perspectives on Political Science* (2017)

Burdett Loomis (pro) and Byron E. Shafer (con), “Resolved, The president should be elected directly by the people,” in Richard Ellis and Michael Nelson, eds., *Debating the Presidency*, 4th ed. (CQ Press, 2018)

[Spring Break]

Mon, Apr 2:

Henry Kissinger, “The Pitfalls of Universal Jurisdiction,” *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2001)

Kenneth Roth, “The Case for Universal Jurisdiction,” *Foreign Affairs* (Sept/Oct 2001)

Wed, Apr 4:

Yoram Hazony, "Nationalism and the Future of Western Freedom," *Mosaic*
(September 2016)

Fri, April 6: Test

V. Character and Culture

Mon, Apr 9: Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, pp. 25-61

Wed, Apr 11: Bloom, pp. 62-138

Fri, Apr 13: Bloom, pp. 336-382

Mon, Apr 16: Shelby Steele, *White Guilt*, pp. 3-56

Wed, Apr 18: Steele, pp. 57-110

Fri, Apr 20: Steele, pp. 113-181

Mon, Apr 23: Christina Hoff Sommers, *Freedom Feminism*, intro., ch. 1-2

Wed, Apr 25: Sommers, ch. 3, concl.

Fri, Apr 27: Barack Obama, "Farewell Address," January 10, 2017

James R. Stoner, Jr., "Why We Respect the Dignity of Politics," in
James R. Stoner, Jr., and Harold James, eds., *The Thriving Society:
On the Social Conditions of Human Flourishing*, pp. 81-96

FINAL EXAMINATION: Friday, May 4 (10:00 a.m. -- noon)