

PSC 371: American Political Thought (SI)
Spring 2010
Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:30 – 10:45
Graham 203

Professor: Carisa R. Showden

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30-5:00 p.m., and by appointment

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Catalog Description: This course examines major themes in American political thought from the colonial era to the contemporary period. We will examine the tensions between the ideals of freedom and equality, the role of religion in political life, radical and identity-based challenges to problems of exclusion and difference, and the question of what it means to be an “American.”

Student Learning Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. orally explain summaries of and reflections on one’s reading and research;
2. differentiate main ideas from secondary ideas in theoretical arguments;
3. analyze theoretical writings for author biases and proposed political actions;
4. describe the main features and themes in American political thought as it has developed from the colonial period to the present;
5. explain how the tension between freedom and equality has evolved from the founding period to the present.

Speaking Intensive Course: This course is designated to meet one of your university-required “speaking intensive” learning opportunities. As such, you will be required to participate frequently in class discussion and many of your graded assignments incorporate oral presentation as central elements of the tasks. Oral communication is a fundamental component of—and not just a method of delivering—what you are trying to learn this semester. To facilitate the development of your oral communication skills in a variety of contexts, we will dedicate some class time to the fundamentals of oral communication in addition to the substance of American political thought as a body of knowledge. Your final course grade will rest on how well you develop your speaking skills in addition to your mastery of political theory.

Required Texts:

1. *American Political Thought, 6th Edition*, Kenneth M. Dolbeare and Michael S. Cummings, ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press. 2010. (“Dolbeare” in the schedule of readings). NOTE: the textbook contains excerpts of all of the titles listed.

2. e-reserve readings: marked with a double asterisk (**) in the schedule of readings. You can access the reserve readings through the course Blackboard page.

3. “Blackboard Readings”—marked “BB” on the syllabus. These are handouts from the Speaking Center that we will read before a few of your major speaking assignments and are also available on the course Blackboard page. A few readings from the internet will also be marked “BB”—the web address will be posted under that button.

Evaluation and Grading:

In-Class Debate: **15%**

Annotated bibliography of source materials used in preparing for the in-class debate: **8%**

Class Leader Assignment: **20%**

Annotated bibliography of source materials used in preparing to lead class: **12%**

Student Interview Paper: **10%**

Final Exam: **20%**

Participation: **15%**

In Class Debate:

There will be three (3) in-class debates this semester. Each student will formally debate in ONE of the debates. For the other two debates, you will be expected to read the assigned material and pose questions to the debaters after the formal statement and response period has been completed. The debates will require you to do outside research to prepare your statements and your rebuttals. The formal debates will take approximately 45 minutes of class time. The remainder of class time will be used for the non-debating students to ask questions of the debaters, for the entire class to assess how they responded to the information each side presented, and to have a debriefing about which side they think “won” the debate.

When you are preparing for your debate, your team should also prepare one collated annotated bibliography of your primary source materials. This bibliography is to be submitted to me at the beginning of the class period in which you are debating.

Class Leader Assignment:

Each of you will be assigned one class period in which you will be expected to lead class discussion with a small group of your peers (usually three people per group). Leading discussion includes formulating questions about the assigned texts, being prepared to present a summary of the arguments contained therein, and connecting those ideas with, or comparing them to, others that have been discussed in previous classes. Class leaders will be expected to make use of technology in their presentation (the internet, movie clips, music, powerpoint, etc.) and to provide me an annotated bibliography of resources used in preparing the class meeting. Your group should also prepare and submit to me two-to-four exam questions you think fairly reflect the ideas you have tried to convey in your presentation. Those students not leading discussion are also expected to read the assigned text, to be prepared with questions they have about it, and to be prepared to answer questions posed by the students leading the discussion.

You will receive a group grade on this assignment. In the unfortunate event that a member of your group fails to put forth any effort, or attempts to “go it alone,” you must let me know this *in advance* of your presentation. I will not allow anyone who hasn’t met or worked with her or his group to participate in leading the class (which will result in an automatic “F” for that person). But if you wait to tell me after your presentation that someone didn’t do his or her part, his or her weak performance will factor in to your group grade.

There will be a sign-up sheet for the class discussion leader assignment passed around in class after the first week of classes. Student-led discussion dates are on the syllabus and will not be changed. It is your responsibility to check your schedule *before* you sign up for a presentation slot. **DO NOT SIGN UP TO LEAD A CLASS PERIOD FOR WHICH YOU HAVE A CONFLICT!**

Note well: students leading class discussions are **REQUIRED** to meet with me at least one week prior to your discussion day. Groups who fail to meet with me prior to leading class will have their presentation grade *halved* (dropped by 50%).

Finally, **all** class leaders must schedule and attend a consultation to work on presentation skills at the Speaking Center **at least two days prior to their class presentation**. The Speaking Center's appointments book up quickly, so please schedule your appointment far enough in advance that you are able to meet this requirement. The Center is located in 3211 MHRA

Annotated Bibliographies:

For both the debate and class leader assignment, you will need to prepare (with your group members) an annotated bibliography. To help you learn what an annotated bibliography is, and how to conduct research in political theory, we will spend one class meeting (**Jan. 28th**) at Jackson Library with Ms. Lynda Kellam, the political science data services and government information reference librarian at Jackson Library.

NOTE VERY WELL: Attendance at this class meeting is mandatory. Failure to attend will result in a 25% reduction in your class participation grade. PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW AND LET ME KNOW IMMEDIATELY IF YOU HAVE A CONFLICT.

Student Interview:

During the last week of the semester, students will be paired up to interview each other on what they have learned about American political thought through this course. Specifically, students will interview each other on the questions (1) What does it mean to be an American? and (2) What is American political thought? Each student will write a two-page paper summarizing his or her interviewees' responses to these questions.

Final Exam:

The final exam will be a short answer and short essay format composed of questions on the material from throughout the course. In addition to writing questions myself, I will draw on the questions you submitted as class leaders as I prepare the final exam. Please note, I reserve the right to combine, rework, or jettison questions as necessary to compile a fair and balanced exam. The exam will be held during our University-scheduled final exam period in our classroom. Early exams will not be given. Please plan your post-semester travel to begin sometime after May 11th.

Participation:

All students are expected to read the assigned material before coming to class and to have questions about and reflections on the material that they are prepared to share with the class. Participation also includes responding to questions that I and the other students pose, active listening, connecting ideas that different people have raised or from a variety of materials that we've read, and taking responsibility for helping us keep a conversation going throughout our class meeting. **As this is a speaking-intensive course, participation is an essential element of your course grade** as it provides you with a consistent, and fairly informal, means through which to work on your small-group communication skills. Engaged class discussion is an essential, and not an incidental, aspect of your grade. Bring your ideas and enthusiasm to class!

Academic Integrity Policy: I expect all students in this course to abide by both the letter and spirit of the university's academic integrity policy. Violations of the university honor code will be prosecuted. The full text of the Academic Integrity Policy can be viewed at:

<http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>. Please sign/pledge all of your written work in this course.

Schedule of Readings:

Tues. Jan. 19th: Course Introduction

The Religious and Secular Roots of American Political Thought

Thurs., Jan. 21st

1. John Winthrop: "The Little Speech" (Dolbeare, pp. 15-18)
2. John Winthrop: "A Model of Christian Charity"***
3. Roger Williams: "The Bloody Tenet of Persecution" (Dolbeare, pp. 19-22)
4. John Wise: "Democracy Is Founded in Scripture" (Dolbeare, pp. 23-28)
5. John Cotton: "Limitation on Government"***

Recommended Reading:

William Bradford: "Of Plymouth Plantation"***

Tues. Jan. 26th

1. Benjamin Franklin: 4 excerpts in (Dolbeare, pp. 28-39).
2. William Penn: Preface to the First Frame of Government for Pennsylvania (BB)

Thurs., Jan. 28th: Meet at Jackson Library for research tutorial with Lynda Kellam

Revolutionary America: The Constitutional Era

Tues. Feb. 2nd

1. Samuel Adams: "The Rights of the Colonists" (Dolbeare, pp. 39-43)
2. Benjamin Rush: "An Address to the Inhabitants of the British Settlements in America, Upon Slave-Keeping" (Dolbeare, pp. 43-48)
3. Thomas Paine: "Common Sense" (Dolbeare, pp. 49-55)
4. Thomas Paine: "Rights of Man—Part One" (Dolbeare, pp. 57-58)
5. John Adams: "Thoughts on Government" (Dolbeare, pp. 67-72)
6. John Adams: "Correspondence with Abigail Adams" (Dolbeare, p. 77)

Thurs. Feb. 4th

1. "The Declaration of Independence" (Dolbeare, pp. 58-61)
2. The Articles of Confederation (Dolbeare, pp. 61-67)
3. The Constitution (Dolbeare, pp. 78-88)
4. Madison, "*Federalist Essays*" #10 and #39 (Dolbeare, pp. 88-100)
 5. "What to do in a Rebuttal" (BB)
 6. "Presenting an Argument" (BB)
 7. "Refutational Pattern" (BB)

Tues. Feb. 9th:

1. Madison: "*Federalist Essays*" #s 48, 51, and 54 (Dolbeare, pp. 100-108)
2. Hamilton: "*Federalist Essays*" (Dolbeare, pp. 109-123)
3. "Against Adoption of the Constitution" (Dolbeare, pp. 124-137)

Thurs. Feb. 11th **Debate #1: The U. S. Constitution**

Democracy, Individualism, and Development

Tues. Feb. 16th:

1. Alexis de Tocqueville: "Democracy in America"***

Thurs. Feb. 18th **Student-Led Class (Questions of Equality in Early America)**

1. William Lloyd Garrison: "Declaration of Sentiments of the American Anti-Slavery Society" (Dolbeare, pp. 203-207)
2. Orestes Brownson: "The Laboring Classes" (Dolbeare, pp. 207-214)
3. Elizabeth Cady Stanton: 2 excerpts (Dolbeare, pp. 231-236)
4. Frederick Douglass: 2 excerpts (Dolbeare, pp. 236-242)

Tues., Feb. 23rd:

1. Henry David Thoreau: "Civil Disobedience" (Dolbeare, pp. 221-231)
2. John C. Calhoun: "A Disquisition on Government" (Dolbeare, pp. 242-254)
3. George Fitzhugh: "Cannibals All!" (Dolbeare, pp. 255-262)

Thurs., Feb. 25th: **Student-Led Class (Civil War & Reconstruction)**

1. Abraham Lincoln: 5 excerpts (Dolbeare, pp. 263-277)
2. "The Civil War Constitutional Amendments and the Failure of the 16th Amendment" (Dolbeare, pp. 291-301)

Industrialization and Reaction

Tues.. March 2nd

1. W. G. Sumner: "What the Social Classes Owe Each Other" (Dolbeare, pp. 301-315)
2. Andrew Carnegie: "Wealth" (Dolbeare, pp. 327-334)
3. Lochner v. New York**

Thurs., March 4th **Student-Led Class (Populism)**

1. "Populism" (Dolbeare, pp. 334-339)
2. Robert Ingersoll excerpts (Dolbeare, pp. 339-345)
3. Henry D. Lloyd: "Revolution: the Evolution of Socialism" (Dolbeare, pp. 346-351)

Tues., March 9th: **SPRING BREAK**

Thurs, March 11th: **SPRING BREAK**

Tues., March 16th

1. Edward Bellamy: "Looking Backward" (Dolbeare, pp. 318-326)
2. W.E.B. DuBois: "The Souls of Black Folk" (Dolbeare, pp. 374-386)
3. Emma Goldman: 2 excerpts (Dolbeare, pp. 387-399)
4. Eugene V. Debs: 2 excerpts (Dolbeare, pp. 400-415)

Thurs., March 18th **Student-Led Class (Progressivism & Pragmatism)**

1. Herbert Croly: "The Promise of American Life" (Dolbeare, pp. 416-425)
2. The Progressive Party Platform & Amendments (Dolbeare, pp. 426-431)
3. Woodrow Wilson: "The Meaning of Democracy" (Dolbeare, pp. 439-443)
4. John Dewey: "The Public and Its Problems" (Dolbeare, pp. 444-451)

Tues., March 23rd **Debate #2: The New Deal**

1. Franklin D. Roosevelt, 3 excerpts (Dolbeare, pp. 452-466)
2. Charles A. Beard: “The Myth of Rugged American Individualism”**

The Cold War, The New Left, and The Rise of the Right

Thurs., March 25th

1. William F. Buckley, Jr.: “God and Man at Yale”**
2. Whittaker Chambers: “Witness”**
3. Louis Hartz: “The Concept of a Liberal Society”**

Tues, March 30th: **Student-Led Class (The New Left & Black Liberation)**

1. John F. Kennedy: Inaugural Address (Dolbeare, pp. 479-480)
2. Martin Luther King, Jr.: “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” (Dolbeare, pp. 481-487)
3. SDS: “The Port Huron Statement” (Dolbeare, pp. 488-497)
4. Malcolm X: “The Ballot or the Bullet”**
5. Stokely Carmichael: “Toward a Black Liberation”**

Thurs. April 1st: class cancelled (WPSA)

Tues., April 6th

1. Betty Friedan: “Our Revolution Is Unique” (Dolbeare, pp. 510-515)
 2. National Organization of Women: “Statement of Purpose”**
 3. Pauli Murray “The Liberation of Black Women”**
 4. Audre Lorde: “Age, Race, Class, And Sex: Women Redefining Difference”**
- Recommended:*
Sherry B. Ortner “Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?”**

Thurs, April 8th **Student-Led Class (The Conservative Response to the New Left & the Civil Rights Movement)**

1. Christopher Lasch, 2 excerpts (Dolbeare, pp. 528-533)
2. Barry Goldwater: Statement to Congress Opposing the Civil Rights Act**
3. Young Americans for Freedom: “The Sharon Statement”**
4. Young Americans for Freedom: “King Was a Collectivist”**
5. Phyllis Schlafly: “What’s Wrong with ‘Equal Rights’ for Women?”**

Tues., April 13th **Debate #3: The Equal Rights Amendment**

1. “Summary of an Era” (Dolbeare, pp. 535-536)

Neoconservatism and Beyond

Thurs, April 15th

1. Irving Kristol: “Capitalism, Socialism, and Nihilism”**
 2. Ronald Reagan, 2 excerpts (Dolbeare, pp. 541-550)
 3. National Conference of Catholic Bishops (Dolbeare, pp. 551-558)
 4. Glenn C. Loury: “Achieving the Dream” (Dolbeare, pp. 559-569)
 5. Patrick J. Buchanan: “Where the Right Went Wrong” (Dolbeare, pp. 575-579)
- Recommended:*
Allan Bloom: “The Closing of the American Mind”**

Tues., April 20th

1. Michael Walzer: “What Does It Mean to Be An American?”**
2. Michael J. Sandel: “The Public Philosophy of Contemporary Liberalism”**
3. “Questions for Conducting Interviews” (BB)
4. “Tips for Listening to Others” (BB)

Thurs., April 22nd

Student Interviews

Tues., April 27th **Student-Led Class (American Political Thought in the 21st Century)**

1. “The Third Way” (Dolbeare, pp. 604-609)
2. Hillary Rodham Clinton: Address to the DNC (Dolbeare, pp. 611-615)
3. Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Bill Moyers Interview (Dolbeare, pp. 616-622)
4. Andrew J. Bacevich, 2 excerpts (Dolbeare, pp. 626-636)
5. Barack Obama, 5 excerpts (Dolbeare, pp. 643-663)

Thurs., April 29th:

Course Wrap Up. Report on Student Interviews.

Student Interview Papers Due.

Tues., May 11th: Noon-3:00 p.m.: FINAL EXAM