Note: this is a draft syllabus. Assignments and readings are subject to change.

PS 308: United States Political Thought
Winter 2016, TR 08:30 – 9:50, ESL 105

Instructor: Robin Barklis
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Office Hours: TR 10:00 – 11:00

Course Description
Since before the founding of the United States, U.S. political thought has been typified by disagreements about what it means to be an American, what we owe to each other as fellow residents or citizens, and the ultimate purpose of American government. This course surveys several prominent areas of debate.

The first half focusses on American politics up to the Civil War, including questions of colonization and colonial authority, revolution, the proper foundations of government, and racial equality. After the midterm, we move to more contemporary concerns, with shorter units on the legacies of slavery, American feminisms, capitalism and its critics, and the nature, if any, of American identity.

Requirements and Grading

Required Texts
There is just one required text, which should be available from the UO Bookstore. Occasionally, other readings will be made available as PDFs on Canvas.


Evaluation

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>EVERYDAY</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay</td>
<td>March 3</td>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>February 11</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>March 14, 8:00</td>
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Participation
This course incorporates a lot of reading. Your biggest responsibility is to keep up with daily reading, and come to class ready to discuss. I know that not everyone likes to talk in class. If this is you, please come to see me in office hours to show that you’re here and engaged in other ways. In addition to this, participation grades will reflect your performance on *three unannounced reading quizzes* that will be given throughout the term.
Essay
There will be one essay, of around 2000 words (~7 pages), due Thursday of Week 9 (March 3). A few example topics will be provided by the end of Week 5. If you would like to write on an alternative topic, you are welcome to do so, but will need to email me an overview of the topic by the end of Week 6.

*Essays will be graded down 5% for each day late.*

Exams
There are two exams, containing short answer and essay questions. Study guides will be provided beforehand. *No make-up examinations will be given without an excuse, which must be approved in advance (except in extreme circumstances). Excuses will only be approved for medical or family emergencies.*

Academic Misconduct
This goes without saying: don’t cheat. The work that you represent as being your own should be your own. If you have any questions about what that means, please consult UO’s plagiarism information page at [http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html](http://library.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/index.html).

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**COURSE SCHEDULE**

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**Colonization and the Founding**

**Week 1**
- **T, Jan. 5:** Introduction
- **R, Jan. 7:** Native American Dispossession
  - Readings TBA

**Week 2**
- **T, Jan. 12:** The Paradox of Colonial Authority
  - James Otis, “The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved” (K&L, 100-107)
  - John Adams, “Novanglus” (K&L, 119-124)
- **R, Jan. 14:** Justifying Revolution
  - Thomas Paine, “Common Sense” and “The American Crisis” (K&L, 131-150)
  - Thomas Jefferson, “Declaration of Independence” (K&L, 151-154)

**Week 3**
- **T, Jan. 19:** From Revolution to Constitution
  - The Articles of Confederation (K&L, 155-162)
From the Constitution to the Civil War

Week 4
T, Jan. 26: Westward Expansion and Manifest Destiny
- Thomas Jefferson, “First Inaugural Address” and “Second Inaugural Address” (K&L 353-358)
- Chief Joseph, “An Indian’s View of Indian Affairs” (K&L 928-941)
- Chief Joseph, Crazy Horse, and Smohalla “On Work and Property” (K&L 942-943)

R, Jan. 28: Individualism and Democracy
- Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Self-Reliance” and “Politics” (K&L 473-485)
- Henry David Thoreau, “Resistance to Civil Government” (K&L 486-492)
- Walt Whitman, “Democratic Vistas” (K&L 499-508)

Week 5
T, Feb. 2: Freedom and Slavery 1: A Century of Debate
- Thomas Jefferson, “Notes on the State of Virginia” (K&L 340-348)
- John Calhoun, “Speeches on Slavery” (K&L 603-608)
- Thomas Paine, “African Slavery in America” (K&L 543-546)
- Frederick Douglass, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” (K&L 595-598)
- Roger Taney “Dred Scott v. Sanford” (K&L 646-648)

- Frederick Douglas, “Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln” (PDF on Canvas)

Week 6
T, Feb. 9: Midterm Study Session: No Reading Assignments

MIDTERM: THURSDAY, FEB. 11
Race in the Twentieth Century

Week 7

T, Feb. 16: The Legacies of Slavery 1: Reconstruction and Re-Entrenchment
- In class video: The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow, Episode 1

R, Feb. 18: The Legacies of Slavery 2: The Civil Rights Movement and Beyond
- Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” (K&L 1308-1316)
- Bayard Rusin, “From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement” (1345-1354)
- Cornel West, “Race Matters” (K&L 1491-1495)

American Feminisms

Week 8

T, Feb. 23: Early Statements
- Abigail Adams, “Letter to John Adams” (K&L 508-509)
- Judith Sargent Stevens Murray, “On the Equality of the Sexes” (K&L 509-511)
- Catherine Beecher, “A Treatise on Domestic Economy” (K&L 524-530)
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “The Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions” (K&L 531-534)
- Victoria Woodhull, “On Constitutional Equality” (K&L 862-867)
- Jane Addams, “If Men Were Seeking the Franchise” (K&L 879-883)

R, Feb. 25: Contemporary Statements
- Betty Friedan, “The Feminine Mystique” (K&L 1360-1365)
- Kate Millett, “Sexual Politics” (K&L 1378-1387)
- Bell Hooks, “Feminist Theory from Margin to Center” (K&L 1444-1455)
- Judith Butler, “Performatives Acts of Gender Constitution” (PDF on Canvas)

Capitalism and its Critics

Week 9

T, Mar. 1: Individualism Revisited
- William Sumner, “What Social Classes Owe to Each Other” (K&L 705-720)
- Edward Bellamy, “Looking Backward” (K&L 749-765)
- Henry Lloyd, “Wealth Against Commonwealth” (K&L 766-774)

R, Mar. 3: Contemporary Liberalisms
- John Rawls, “A Theory of Justice” (K&L 1388-1398)
- Robert Nozick, “Anarchy, State, and Utopia” (K&L 1409-1423)
- Michael Sandel, “The Public Philosophy of Contemporary Liberalism” (1496-1513)
Who Are “We”? 

Week 10

T, Mar. 8: American Identities
- Allan Bloom, “The Closing of the American Mind” (K&L 1456-1466)
- Michael Walzer, “What Does it Mean to be an ‘American’?” (K&L 1467-1483)
- Richard Rorty, “A Cultural Left” (K&L 1514-1522)

R, Mar. 10: Review Session: No Reading

FINAL EXAM: MARCH 14, 8 A.M.