

Political Science 361: Contemporary American Political Thought
University of Wisconsin, Madison
Spring 2020
MWF 8:50-9:40
Ingraham 19 (Face-to-Face Only)

Teaching Team:

Professor John Zumbrennen

110 North Hall

zumbrennen@wisc.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Matthew Hansen

E-mail: mghansen2@wisc.edu

Hours: Wednesday 10:00-12:00

Location: Peet's Coffee

Xinzhi Zhao

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Hours: Tuesdays 9:50-11:50 am

Location: 1250 College Library (the large room on the 1st floor that hosts the Open Book Café)

Course Description This course considers central themes and controversies in American political thinking during the 20th and early 21st centuries. Topics include the development of liberalism from the Progressive Era to the New Deal to the Great Society and beyond; the emergence of new strands of conservatism after World War II and the tensions between those strands; challenges by excluded and marginalized groups to the traditional social and political order; and the revival of concerns about "community" in America. As a topic of study, "American Political Thought" combines philosophy, political theory, history, and practical politics. We will thus read a wide variety of texts, ranging from philosophical treatises to newspaper articles, from presidential addresses to works of social science. This semester, we will approach the material through the lens of leadership, asking how various strands of contemporary American political thought have understand the role of leaders in the American political experience, Our ultimate goal is to become more knowledgeable and more critical students of the American political experience.

Course Learning Outcomes. Students who complete Political Science 361 will be able to

1. Explain in their own words main themes and arguments in American political thought from the Progressive Era to the present.
2. Analyze contemporary American political thought in the context of the political thought of the founding and early republic eras.
3. Analyze understandings of the role of leaders and citizens in different strands of contemporary American political thought
4. Articulate their own understanding of citizenship and leadership in the context of contemporary American political thought.

Course Materials All materials for the course will be available through the course Canvas site. Most are collected in a digital course anthology, accessible through the site and available as a pdf for download and/or printing. There are no books to buy for the course.

Course Requirements, Assignments and Grading The most important requirement for our course is that everyone comes to class having completed the assigned readings and with an open mind, ready to discuss and learn. In general, our Monday and Wednesday sessions will be a mix of lecture and discussion, focused on learning new content. Our Friday sessions will be devoted to active learning exercises, at times in small groups and at times working in discussion teams. Discussion section sessions will be devoted to review and discussion of assigned material and preparation for Friday's active learning sessions.

You will write **three 1000 word essays** over the course of the semester, asking you to make compelling arguments about major questions in contemporary American political thought. I will distribute prompts for these essays two weeks before the due dates listed on the course schedule below. You will also take a **comprehensive final examination** consisting of short answer and/or essay questions. Part of your grade will also be based on your **participation in discussion section** activities.

Finally, each day in lecture you will submit an "exit ticket" as you leave class, most often a brief reflection on a prompt based on the day's activities. These **exit tickets** serve a variety of purposes: to promote reflection on the day's activities, to help the instructor gauge students' understanding of the material, and to encourage and reward attendance. Note that exit tickets account for 10 points in the final grade calculation but that turning in all available exit tickets will yield more than 10 points, thereby allowing the student to earn extra credit for the course by attending all lecture sessions. Please note that missed exit tickets may not be made up and can only be excused if written documentation of the reason is provided. For very late arrivals to class, the instructor may refuse to accept exit tickets.

Course grades will be calculated approximately as follows (though the instructor reserves the right to change course assignments as necessary, and with adequate notice and explanation):

1000 word essays (3 @ 20 points each)	60 points
Final Examination	20 points
Discussion Section Participation	10 points
Exit Tickets (.3 points each)	10 points
Total Available Points	100 points

Final letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

93-100 points	A
88-92 points	AB
83-87 points	B
78-82 points	BC
70-77 points	C
60-69 points	D
0-59 points	F

Honors Option. This course is "HIA" and so students may choose to pursue an honors option. Note that students can add or remove the Honors Option through the Course Search & Enroll app without instructor or Dean's permission through the twelfth week of a fall or spring semester. If you have enrolled for the honors option as of the first day of class, the instructor will contact you with details. If you add an honors option after the first day of class or are interested in doing so, please e-mail the instructor.

Academic Policies

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison's community of scholars in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards for additional review. For more information, refer to <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-integrity/>

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

McBurney Disability Resource Center syllabus statement: “The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.”

<http://mcburney.wisc.edu/facstaffother/faculty/syllabus.php>

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Institutional statement on diversity: “Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.” <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>

Course Reading and Assignment Schedule

Week 1 (January 22, 24): Introduction to Course

- [UW Leadership Framework](#)

Week 2 (January 27, 29, 31):: Historical and Theoretical Background

- Federalist Paper 70
- Philadelphiensis, Letter IX
- Jackson, 1829 State of the Union
- Lincoln, First Inaugural

Week 3 (February 3, 5, 7): Populism and Race in the Late 19th Century

- Booker T. Washington, Atlanta Compromise Address
- W.E.B. DuBois, The Talented Tenth
- National People's Party, Omaha Platform
- Thomas E. Watson, The Negro Question in the South

Week 4 (February 10, 12, 14): Progressive Politics

- Theodore Roosevelt, Citizenship in a Republic
- Progressive Party Platform, 1912
- Woodrow Wilson, Leaders of Men
- Democratic Party Platform, 1912

Week 5 (February 17, 19, 21): Progressive Social Action, Socialis

- Jane Addams, Subjective Necessity of Social Settlements, The Subtle Problems of Charity
- Eugene Debs, The Issue

Week 6 (February 24, 26, 28): The 1920s

- Walter Lippmann, Public Opinion
- Herbert Hoover, Rugged Individualism
- **Friday, March 6: 1000 Word Essay #1 Due**

Week 7 (March 2, 4, 6): FDR & New Deal Liberalism

- FDR, Commonwealth Club Address, 1941 State of the Union, 1944 State of the Union
- Walter Lippmann, Planning in an Economy of Abundance

Week 8 (March 9, 11, 13): Post WWII Conservatism

- Richard Weaver, Ideas Have Consequences
- Friedrich Hayek, Why I am Not a Conservative
- Young Americans for Freedom, The Sharon Statement
- Frank Meyer, The Twisted Tree of Liberty

Spring Break!
March 14-22

Week 9 (March 23, 25, 27): The 1960s, Part 1

- C. Wright Mills, The Power Elite
- Barry Goldwater, 1964 RNC Acceptance Speech
- Students for a Democratic Society, The Port Huron Statement
- **Friday, April 3: 1000 Word Essay #2 Due**

Week 10 (March 30 and April 1, 3): The 1960s, Part 2

- Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique
- NOW, 1967 Bill of Rights
- Martin Luther King, Jr., Letter from Birmingham Jail
- Malcolm X, The Ballot or the Bullet
- Stokely Carmichael, Black Power Address

Week 11 (April 6, 8, 10): Liberalism Reimagined

- John Rawls, A Theory of Justice
- Amatai Etzioni, Communitarianism
- Combahee River Collective Statement

Week 12 (April 13, 15, 17): The Rise of the Right

- Russell Kirk, 10 Conservative Principles
- Pat Robertson, National Religious Broadcasters
- Milton Friedman, Capitalism and Freedom
- Ronald Reagan, First Inaugural Address

Week 13 (April 20, 22, 24): Contemporary Questions, Part 1

- Bill Clinton, Second Inaugural Address
- George W. Bush, Second Inaugural Address
- **Friday, April 24: 1000 Word Essay #3 Due**

Week 14 (April 27, 29 and May 1: Contemporary Questions, Part 2

- Barack Obama, Toward a More Perfect Union
- Donald Trump, Inaugural Address

**Sunday, May 3, 10:05 a.m. - 12:05 p.m.
FINAL EXAMINATION**

Official Course Information From UW Guide.

POLI SCI 361 — CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

3-4 credits.

This course considers central themes and controversies in American political thinking during the 20th and early 21st centuries. Topics include the development of liberalism from the Progressive Era to the New Deal to the Great Society and beyond; the emergence of new strands of conservatism after World War II and the tensions between those strands; challenges by excluded and marginalized groups to the traditional social and political order; and the revival of concerns about "community" in America. As a topic of study, "American Political Thought" combines philosophy, political theory, history, and practical politics. The course covers a wide variety of texts, ranging from philosophical treatises to newspaper articles, from presidential addresses to works of social science with ultimate goal to become more knowledgeable and more critical students of the American political experience. Enroll Info: Not open to students with credit for POLI SCI 566 prior to fall 2017

Requisites: Sophomore standing and ([POLI SCI 160](#) or [ILS 205](#)) or (POLI SCI 209 taken prior to Fall 2017)

Course Designation: Breadth - Humanities

Level - Intermediate

L&S Credit - Counts as Liberal Arts and Science credit in L&S

Repeatable for Credit: No