

Political Science 1001.01
Fundamental Issues of Politics
Louisiana State University
Fall 2021

Course Description:

Behind political conflict and the game of politics—campaigns and elections, pundits and commentators, policy analysts and advocates, protesters and authorities, 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:

James R. Stoner, Jr.
poston@lsu.edu
225-578-2538

Teaching Assistant:

Peidong Wu
pwu6@lsu.edu

Office Hours:

M, 1:00–2:30 p.m.,
F, 9:00–10:00 a.m., and by appointment
Stubbs 214

Class Time, and Location:

MWF 10:30–11:20 a.m. 143 Coates

Attendance: Attendance in class is expected, unless you are ill, have been required to isolate or quarantine due to covid-19, or find attendance impossible during a covid-outbreak on campus. For those who cannot attend in person, the lecture will be webcast synchronously via a link on Moodle and quizzes will be available that way, too.

Class Discussion: The instructor will pause for questions during lecture and encourages you to speak up. For students, the Chatham House Rule applies: no student question or comment made in class should be attributed to the speaker outside of class. Please show courtesy to one another, of course.

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: 978-0872206557]
- 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 (open book; make-ups only if arranged beforehand)	25%
In-class test (Fri., Oct. 1)	20%
In-class test (Wed., Nov. 10)	20%
Final Exam (Sat., Dec. 11, 7:30-9:30 a.m.)	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%)

General Education Credit and the Integrative Learning Core:

General education credit for the social sciences will be earned by students in this course, since our study shares the goals of the general education program at LSU. According to an earlier 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.” We are now mandated to add the following: “Integrated learning allows students to make simple connections among ideas and experiences and across disciplines and perspectives. The LSU Integrative Learning Core (ILC) curriculum is designed to develop student abilities to transfer their learning to new situations, and demonstrate a sense of self as a learner. A fundamental goal of the ILC is to foster students’ practical and intellectual capacities associated with integrative learning in preparation for high competence and functionality in their post-baccalaureate careers. This course fulfills the BOR Area of *Social/Behavioral Sciences* and provides students experience with the ILC proficiency of *Inquiry and Analysis*.”

SYLLABUS:

Mon., Aug. 23: Introduction

I. War and Peace

Wed., Aug. 25: Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, preface, chapter 1
 Fri., Aug. 27: Walzer, chapters 2, 3
 Mon., Aug. 30: Walzer, chapters 4, 6
 Wed., Sept. 1: Walzer, chapters 8, 9
 Fri., Sept. 3: Walzer, chapters 11, 12

[Labor Day Break]

Wed., Sept. 8: Walzer, chapters 14, 16
 Fri., Sept. 10: Walzer, chapters 18, 19

II. Wealth and Poverty

Mon., Sept. 13: John Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action*, chapter 1
 Wed., Sept. 15: Dewey, chapter 2
 Fri., Sept. 17: Dewey, chapter 3

Mon, Sept. 20: F.A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, Introduction, chapters 1-2
 Wed, Sept. 22: Hayek, chapters 3-5
 Fri, Sept. 24: Hayek, chapters 6-8
 Mon, Sept. 27: Hayek, chapters 9, 14

Wed, Sept. 29: Mathieu Desan & Michael A. McCarthy, “A Time to be Bold,”
Jacobin, July 31, 2018
Conor Friedersdorf, “The Hunger for a Bold Socialism,”
Atlantic, August 2, 2018

Fri, Oct. 1: Test

III. First Principles

- Mon., Oct. 4: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book 1
 Wed., Oct. 6: Aristotle, Book 3
 Fri., Oct. 8: Aristotle, Book 7
- Mon., Oct. 11: Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, q. 91, aa. 1-4; q. 94, aa. 1-6; q. 95, aa. 1-2; q. 97, aa. 1-4
- Wed., Oct. 13: Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), chapters 13, 14 (para. 1-9), 15, 17-18
- Fri., Oct. 15: John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (1690), chs. 5, 19
- Mon., Oct. 18: The Declaration of Independence
James R. Stoner, Jr., “Is There a Political Philosophy in the Declaration of Independence?” *Intercollegiate Review* (2005)

IV. Forming and Re-Forming Government

- Wed., Oct. 20: Constitution of the United States;
 “Address of the Minority of the Pennsylvania Convention,” in Wootton, ed., *Essential Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers*, pp. 326-337, 3-24

[Fall Break]

- Mon., Oct. 25: *The Federalist* ##1, 10, 14-15, 39 in Wootton, pp. 140-143, 167-174, 179-190, 225-231
- Wed., Oct. 27: *The Federalist* ##47-52 in Wootton, pp. 231-254
- Fri., Oct. 29: Brutus #15, *The Federalist* ##55, 57, 62, 70, 78 in Wootton, pp. 92-96, 254-268, 275-289
- Mon., Nov. 1: William Brennan, “Constitutional Interpretation” (1985)
Keith E. Whittington, “How to Read the Constitution” (2006)
- Wed., Nov. 3: 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)

Fri., Nov. 5: Steven Levitsky & Lucan Way, “The New Competitive Authoritarianism,” *Journal of Democracy* (January 2020)

Mon., Nov. 8: 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., Nov. 10: Test

V. Character and Culture

Fri., Nov. 12: Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, pp. 25-61

Mon., Nov. 15: Bloom, pp. 62-81, 313-335

Wed., Nov. 17: Bloom, pp. 336-382

Fri., Nov. 19: Shelby Steele, *White Guilt*, pp. 3-56

Mon., Nov. 22: Steele, pp. 57-110

Wed., Nov. 24: Steele, pp. 113-181

[Thanksgiving Break]

Mon., Nov. 29: Christina Hoff Sommers, *Freedom Feminism*, intro., ch. 1-2

Wed., Dec. 1: Sommers, ch. 3, concl.

Fri., Dec. 3: George Washington, “Farewell Address,” September 19, 1796

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: Saturday, December 11 (7:30-9:30 a.m.)