

American Political Development

Political Science 394

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Office Hours: Monday 10:40-12:00 or by appointment.

Class Time: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9:40-10:30.

Course Synopsis:

This course looks at the development of American politics, from the founding of the republic to the emergence of a recognizably modern American state in the early part of the 20th century. This is a course that asks the question “How did we get here?” and turns to the past for answers. Its goal will be to examine the ways that American political history has influenced contemporary American political norms, practices, institutions, ideologies, and values.

Important themes covered in the course include the following:

- In what ways is American politics different from the patterns found in other Western democracies?
- What ideologies and political prejudices did the early British colonists bring from across the Atlantic? How did these contribute to political life in the colonies, and to the eventual American rebellion against Britain?
- What is “political culture”?
- How is it that the U.S. constitution came so quickly to be revered, even by those who had originally opposed it?
- How did so many of the “founding fathers,” who as a group had detested the notion of permanent political parties, quickly become party leaders?
- How did economic growth change American politics?
- How did the minimal federal state of the early 1800s transform into a central government in many ways more powerful than traditional European states?

Required Texts:

Wood, Gordon S. 1991. *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*. New York: A. A. Knopf. ISBN: 0679736883

Wooton, David, editor. 2003. *The Essential Federalist and Antifederalist Papers*. New York: Hackett. ISBN: 0872206556

Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. ISBN: 0226012727

McPherson, James. 1995. *What They Fought For*. New York: Anchor. ISBN: 0385476345

Bensel, Richard Franklin. 1991. *Yankee Leviathan*. New York: Cambridge University Press. ISBN: 0521398177

Wiebe, Robert H. 1966. *The Search for Order*. New York: Hill and Wang. ISBN: 0809001047

Course Expectations:

Let me be clear: **this course will be a lot of work**. POS 394 is designed for junior and senior political science majors, and for students in related disciplines with a strong interest in the subject matter. A 300-level course must challenge those who have already demonstrated their ability to do well in basic political science coursework. In several regards, this course is even more challenging than most.

This course requires a lot of reading. The syllabus averages between 50 and 60 pages of reading per class session—almost a book a week. This is, for better or worse, and inevitable feature of any course focusing on American political development. All APD courses assign a significant number of books: of the two dozen undergraduate APD course syllabi surveyed in the process of preparing this course, the number of texts assigned ranged from 6 to 12. APD scholarship fuses the concerns of political science and history, and it requires meticulous analysis of the historical record. Most APD books, therefore, are quite long. They do not read like the latest John Grisham novel. Students should not take this course if they believe that this level of reading is more than they can commit to.

Doing the reading—doing it carefully, and taking notes—is the most important task of every student in this course. It is a basic psychological truth that if students are not regularly held accountable for the reading, they will not do it. In this course, accountability for the reading will happen in two ways.

First, between once and twice per week, students will be asked at the start of class to write a one- or two-paragraph response to a question on the assigned section of the text. Students will have five minutes to answer these questions—**thus making it especially important that students not be late for class**. Opportunities to make up a missed response question will be given only in exception circumstances. These responses will account for 20 percent of the grade.

Additionally, students will be held accountable for the readings through class discussions, and will be graded on their contributions to class debate. Given the size of the course, a

significant portion of class discussion will consist of students being called on randomly to offer their thoughts and insights. **If you attend class, expect to be called on.**

Please take the participation portion of your grade seriously: I certainly will. Note, too, that you can't contribute to class discussion if you aren't here. More than a couple of absences over the course of the semester will have a strong negative impact on this portion of your grade. Those who will miss class for debate tournaments, track meets or other ASU-approved activities need to discuss arrangements for these absences with the instructor during the first two weeks of the course.

Other issues:

A Scholarly Attitude: Students in this course will be treated as scholars—and they will be expected to take that role seriously. While vigorous discussion is essential, views and insights must be expressed in a manner that is respectful of one's peers. Attentiveness during class discussions is critical. Entering class late or leaving it early is disruptive, and will have a strong negative impact on your participation grade. Likewise, it is your responsibility to turn off cell phones before entering the classroom.

Make-up Exams and Late Policy: Most of the grading for this course will be based on midterm and final exams. Students will be given the opportunity to make up these exams only in exceptional circumstances, such as the serious illness of the enrolled student or the death of one of the student's family members. In any other case, missing the midterm or the final exam means that the student will fail the course. **Do not miss the midterm of the final.**

Other assignments must be turned in at the start of the class period in which they are due. For every day that an assignment is late, the grade on that assignment drops by 1/3 of a full letter grade: for example, a B paper that was three days late would be graded a C. Late assignments **may not** be turned in by email attachment; instead they must be signed and dated by one of the Political Science department secretaries, and placed in the instructor's box.

Plagiarism: Finally, and hopefully unnecessarily, plagiarism, cheating on a test, or other academic fraud in this course will be treated for what it is: a gross violation of academic ethics and the University's code of conduct. Chapter 1, section 302 of Arizona State University's policy manual defines plagiarism as the following:

“Plagiarism” means intentionally or knowingly representing the words and ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise.

Any student who plagiarizes or cheats on an exam will fail the course, and a disciplinary note will be placed in his or her permanent academic transcript. Note that even if you cite the work you reference, you are committing plagiarism if you “paraphrase” by changing only one or two words in the sentence.

Let me add that plagiarizing online sources is particularly lazy and stupid. The instructor reserves the right to use plagiarism detection software or other automated methods, so long as this is consistent with other university policies. Any questions about citing other scholarship should be referred to the instructor.

Grading

Grading will be determined as follows:

Reading response questions:	20%
Discussion Participation:	20%
Midterm Exam:	25%
Final Exam:	35%

Grading will be on a 4.0-0.0 scale:

A	4.0	C	2.0
A-	3.7	D	1.0
B+	3.3	F	0.0
B	3.0		
B-	2.7		
C+	2.3		

The contribution of the reading response questions to the overall grade will be graded on a curve, with the median student assigned a B-. The rest of the course, however, will not be graded on a curve. The grading criteria for the midterm and final exams will be explained on the exams themselves.

There are no set number of A's or F's which will be handed out in the course. In theory, it is possible for everyone to get a high B or an A. As a **very rough guideline**, however, students should expect the average grade in the course to be a B-. Students should not interpret a B or a B+ as punishment, but rather as a reward for strong work that exceeds the average.

Course Schedule

Part I: Colonials, Rebellion, Liberalism, and the Republican Consensus

January 19

- Introductory lecture

January 21

- Hartz, Louis. 1952. "American Political Thought and the American Revolution." *American Political Science Review*, 53:474-483. Available online through JSTOR.

January 24

- Wood, pp. ix – 42

January 26

- Wood, pp. 43-94

January 28

- Morgan, Edmund S. 1972. “Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox.” *Journal of American History*, 59:5-29.

January 31

- Wood, pp. 95-144

February 2

- Wood, pp. 145-189

February 4

- Wood, pp. 189-229

Part II: The Constitution and its Apotheosis

February 7

- Federalist and Antifederalist Papers, pp. 317-338, pp. 1-41

February 9

- Federalist and Antifederalist Papers, pp. 58-96

February 11

- Federalist and Antifederalist Papers, pp. 140-183

February 14

- Federalist and Antifederalist Papers, pp. 183-231

February 16

- Federalist and Antifederalist Papers, pp. 231-275

February 18

- Federalist and Antifederalist Papers, pp. 275-316

February 21

- R. R. Palmer, “The People as Constituent Power.” In *The Age of Democratic Revolution*, Volume 1, chapter 7.

February 23

- Lance Banning, "Republican Ideology and the Triumph of the Constitution, 1789-1793," *William and Mary Quarterly* 31 (April 1974). Available through JSTOR.
- John M. Murrin, "A Roof without Walls: The Dilemma of American National Identity," in *Beyond Confederation: Origins of the Constitution and American National Identity*, ed. Richard Beeman, Edward C. Carter, and Stephen Botein (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 333-348. On reserve.

Part III: Parties, Markets, and the Early Republic

February 25

- Aldrich, pp. 1-50

February 28

- Aldrich, pp. 50-97

March 2

- Aldrich, pp. 97-125

March 4

- Aldrich, pp. 126-158

March 7

- Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution*, pp. 70-102, 137-152. Readings on reserve.

March 9

- Richard Ellis, "The Market Revolution and the Transformation of American Politics, 1801-1837," in Melvyn Stokes and Stephen Conway, eds., *The Market Revolution in America: Social, Political, and Religious Expressions, 1800-1880* (UVA 1996), 149-76. Reading on Reserve.

March 11

- **MIDTERM EXAM**

March 14-18

- **SPRING BREAK**

Part IV: Civil War and the New American State

March 21

- Lincoln, "First Inaugural Address"
- McPherson, *What they Fought For*, pp. TBA

March 23

- Lincoln, "Emancipation Proclamation"

- McPherson, *What They Fought For*, pp. TBA

March 25

- McPherson, *What They Fought For*, pp. TBA
- Lincoln, "Gettysburg Address"
- Lincoln, "Second Inaugural Address"

March 28

- Bensel, pp. 1-60

March 30

- Bensel, pp. 60- 135

April 1

- Bensel, pp. 135-181

April 4

- Bensel, pp. 181-237

April 6

- Bensel, pp. 238-302

April 8

- Bensel, pp. 303-365

April 11

- Bensel, pp. 366-435

Part V: Populism, Progressivism, and the Welfare State

April 13

- Skocpol, Theda. 1993. "America's First Social Security System: The Expansion of Benefits for Civil War Veterans." *Political Science Quarterly*. 108 (1): 85-116.
- Skocpol, Abend-Wein, Howard, and Lehman. "Women's Associations and the Enactment of Mother's Pension in the United States." *American Political Science Review*, 87 (3): 686-701.

April 15

- Weibe, pp. 1-44

April 18

- Wiebe, pp. 44-75

April 20

- Wiebe, pp. 76-133

April 22

- Wiebe, pp. 133-196

April 25

- Wiebe, pp. 196-255

April 27

- Wiebe, pp. 256-302

April 29

- Skocpol, Theda. 1980. "Political Response to Capitalist Crises: The Case of the New Deal" *Politics and Society*, 10 (2): 155-201. On reserve.
- Skocpol, Theda. 1982. "State Capacity and Economic Intervention in the Early New Deal." *Political Science Quarterly*, 97 (2): 255-278. Available through JSTOR.

May 2

- **FINAL EXAM**