

American Political Thought

Overview

American political institutions and culture are uniquely the product of ideas and self-conscious choice, and those ideas, in turn, are uniquely the product of experience. Even to the extent events and evolving values have changed our institutions and the ideas on which they are based, they remain deeply embedded in what might be called our political DNA. To understand who we are today, and what we may or may not aspire to be, it is necessary to understand the foundations of the American republic as well as the ideas that continue to animate our political institutions. Consequently, we will spend the bulk of our time in this course examining the theoretical foundations of the Constitution, beginning with its roots in the early colonial settlements and continuing through the challenges to it that culminated in the Civil War. Finally, we will look briefly at how ideas of freedom and the role of government evolved in the late 19th and the 20th centuries.

Books

Bruce Frohnen, *The American Republic: Primary Sources* (optional; available online)
George W. Carey, *The Federalist: Design for a Constitutional Republic* (required)
Carey and McClellan, *The Federalist: The Gideon Edition* (optional; available online)
John C. Calhoun, *Union and Liberty* (optional; available online)
David A. Hollinger, *The American Intellectual Tradition: Volume II* (optional)
Jean Bethke Elshtain, *The Jane Addams Reader* (required)

Course Schedule

Unit I: Early America: Foundations and Founding

1. Foundations

Readings: Carey and Kendall, *Basic Symbols of the American Political Tradition* (selections to be distributed); Frohnen: Mayflower Compact, Massachusetts Body of Liberties, Charter of Liberties and Frame of Government of the Province of Pennsylvania in America, Little Speech on Liberty, The Bloody Tenent of Persecution for Cause of Conscience

2: Independence and Founding

Readings: Frohnen: Magna Charta, English Bill of Rights, Virginia Bill of Rights, Declaration of Independence, Thoughts on Government, Articles of Confederation

3: The Constitution: Republicanism and Representation, Separation of Powers

Readings: Carey (*Design*): Chapters 1 and 2; Frohnen: The Virginia and New Jersey Plans, Constitution of the United States, Centinel 1, Brutus 1; *The Federalist*: Federalist 1, 10, 14, 39, 47-51

4: Federalism

Readings: Carey (*Design*): Chapters 3 and 4; *The Federalist*: Federalist 41, 44-46; Frohnen: The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions; Storing, *What the Anti-Federalists Were For*: Chapter 3 (to be distributed); Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (selections)

5: The Judiciary and the Bill of Rights

Readings: *The Federalist*: Federalist 78, 84; Frohnen: Memorial and Remonstrance, Speech Introducing Proposed Constitutional Amendments; Brutus 14 (available at http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/a3_2_2s2.html)

6: The Meaning of Union

Readings: Calhoun, *Disquisition*; Lincoln, First Inaugural

Unit II: Ideas of Freedom

1: Slavery, Lincoln and War

Readings: Frederick Douglass (“What to the Slaves is the Fourth of July?” and “Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln,” both to be distributed); Frohnen: Lincoln’s Lyceum Address; Lincoln: Cooper Union Address, Gettysburg Address, Emancipation Proclamation, Second Inaugural

2: Freedom and the Frontier

Readings: Ralph Waldo Emerson (“Self Reliance,” selections -- to be distributed); Henry David Thoreau (“Resistance to Civil Government,” to be distributed); *AIT*: Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History”

3: The Women’s Suffrage Movement

Readings: *AIT*: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “The Solitude of Self” and “Selection from *The Woman’s Bible*,” Charlotte Perkins Gilman, “Selection from *Women and Economics*”; Susan B. Anthony: “Is it a Crime for a Citizen of the United States to Vote?” (<http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/anthony/anthonyaddress.html>); *Addams Reader*: “Aspects of the Women’s Movement”

Unit III: Progressivism and its Discontents

1: Jane Addams

Addams Reader: Editor's Introduction: A Return to Hull House; The Subjective Necessity for Social Settlements; The Subtle Problems of Charity; A Modern Lear; Americanization; Women's Conscience and Social Amelioration; Our National Self-Righteousness

2: Government and the Economy: Changing Roles

To be distributed: Alexander Hamilton, "Report on Manufactures" (selections); Franklin Roosevelt, "Commonwealth Club Address"; Theodore Lowi, *The End of Liberalism* (selections).

3: Selections from the Civil Rights Movement

AIT: Martin Luther King, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"; Malcolm X, "The Ballot or the Bullet"