

**Princeton University
Department of Politics**

**POL 423 – American Political Thought, Colonial Era to Civil War
Fall 2014**

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TH 1:30-4:20

office hours: by appointment

This seminar will explore recurring themes and problems in American political thought. The course will draw on primary and secondary sources relating to the ideas and actions that have shaped the American conception of freedom, democracy, community, and nationhood. It will consider these works as contributions to political theory, but it will also focus on the relationship between political ideas and political and social events. The course will focus on the period from the colonial era through the Civil War.

Schedule:

1. Sept 11: Thinking about American Political Thought
2. Sept 18: Colonial Thought
3. Sept 25: Revolution
4. Oct 2: Founding
5. Oct 9: The “Other Founding”
6. Oct 16: Launching American Politics
7. Oct 23: Democratizing Politics
8. Nov 6: Individualism
9. Nov 13: America in the World
10. Nov 20: Slavery and Equality
11. Dec 4: Union
12. Dec 11: New Foundings

Readings:

1. Thinking about American Political Thought
 - Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America*, ch. 1
 - Daniel Rodgers, “Republicanism: The Career of a Concept”
 - James Kloppenberg, “The Virtues of Liberalism”
 - Rogers Smith, “Beyond Tocqueville, Myrdal and Hartz,” *APSR* (1993)
 - Keith Whittington, “Introduction to American Political Thought”
2. Colonial Thought
 - John Winthrop, “Little Speech on Liberty”
 - Roger Williams, *The Bloody Tenent*
 - John Cotton, “Limitation of Government”
 - John Wise, *A Vindication of the Government of New England Churches*

- John Winthrop, *A Modell of Christian Charity*
Benjamin Franklin, "The Way to Wealth"
3. Revolution
Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*
John Dickinson, Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania
Daniel Leonard, Massachusettensis
Jonathan Boucher, "On Civil Liberty, Passive Obedience, and Nonresistance"
Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Independence
4. Founding
John Adams, "Thoughts on Government"
Carter Braxton, An Address to the Convention of the Colony
Alexander Hamilton, Letter to James Duane
James Madison, "Vices of the Political System of the United States"
The Federalist Papers
5. The "Other" Founding
Samuel Adams, Creed of Good Americans
Dissent of Pennsylvania Minority
Richard Henry Lee, Letters from a Federal Farmer
Robert Yates, "Brutus"
Correspondence of Thomas Jefferson and James Madison
Correspondence of Abigail Adams and John Adams
6. Launching American Politics
Alexander Hamilton, First Report on Public Credit
Alexander Hamilton, Report on Manufacturers
Alexander Hamilton, "Tully"
George Washington, Farewell Address
Thomas Jefferson, First Inaugural Address
Thomas Jefferson, To the Danbury Baptists
Thomas Jefferson, To Samuel Kercheval
Thomas Jefferson, To John Adams
Fisher Ames, "The Mire of Democracy"
7. Democratizing Politics
Selections from New York Constitutional Convention of 1821
Selections from Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1829
George Bancroft, "Office of the People in Art, Government and Religion"
Horace Greeley, "Why I am a Whig"
George Colton, "Responsibility of the Ballot Box"
Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments"
Andrew Jackson, Veto of the Bank Bill
William Leggett, "True Functions of Government"
Henry Clay, Speech on the American System
8. Individualism
Henry David Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience"
Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance"
Ralph Waldo Emerson, "On Politics"
John C. Calhoun, *A Disquisition on Government*

- Theodore Parker, "Law of God and the Statutes of Men"
9. America in the World
- George Washington, Farewell Address
 - John Quincy Adams, Speech on Independence Day
 - James Monroe, Seventh Annual Message
 - Samuel F.B. Morse, Imminent Dangers to the Free Institutions of the United States
 - John L. O'Sullivan, "Manifest Destiny"
 - Robert Winthrop and John Chipman, The Oregon Question and Manifest Destiny
 - Charles Sumner, The True Grandeur of Nations
 - Adin Ballou, Christian Non-Resistance
10. Slavery and Equality
- Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*
 - Correspondence of Benjamin Banneker and Thomas Jefferson
 - William Lloyd Garrison, Declaration of Principles of the *Liberator*
 - Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?"
 - William West, "Wages Slavery and Chattel Slavery"
 - George Fitzhugh, *Cannibals All!*
 - James Hammond, Speech to the Senate on Slavery
 - Abraham Lincoln, Speech at New Haven
11. Union
- John Marshall, Opinion in *McCulloch v. Maryland*
 - John Taylor, *Constructions Construed and Constitutions Vindicated*
 - Daniel Webster, Second Speech on Foot's Resolution
 - John Calhoun, Fort Hill Address
 - Abraham Lincoln, House Divided Speech at Springfield
 - Abraham Lincoln, First Inaugural
 - Alexander H. Stephens, *A Constitutional view of the Late War Between the States Texas v. White*
12. New Foundings
- Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address
 - Abraham Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address
 - Thaddeus Stevens, Speech on the Reconstruction Acts
 - Charles Sumner, Equal Rights
 - Albert T. Bledsoe, "What is Liberty?"
 - Susan B. Anthony, "Is it a Crime for a Citizen of the United State to Vote?"
 - Elisha Mulford, *The Nation*

Materials:

A course packet will be available for purchase (for those who would prefer a hard copy).

All primary readings will draw from a forthcoming text in American Political Thought and will be made available on Blackboard.

Students will be expected to have access to the readings during seminar discussions, in either electronic or hard copy form.

Requirements:

The requirements for the course include both written and oral components. All students are expected to come to class fully prepared to be active participants. A seminar cannot work unless all of its participants are prepared to make useful contributions, and you will not be able to take full advantage of the seminar if you are not prepared. Participation will be a significant component of your final grade. You will also be expected to give two scheduled oral presentations, which will contribute to part of your participation grade.

One oral presentation may accompany your short paper (5-10 pages) which will examine the issues in a given week's readings. The bulk of your grade will be determined by a term paper. This research paper (20-25 pages) will focus on a topic of your own choosing, approved by me before October 1. Topics for the research paper should be emailed to me. A hard copy of the paper will be due in a marked box outside the Politics office by 4:00 pm, January 13 ("Dean's Date"). For the research paper, you will be expected to draw not only on the class materials but also on additional materials that you find outside of class.

Term Paper	50%
Short Paper	30%
Class Participation	20%