

**Princeton University
Department of Politics**

**POL 423 – American Political Thought, Reconstruction to the Present
Fall 2015**

Keith E. Whittington
240 Corwin Hall, 258-3453
kewhitt@princeton.edu

TH 1:30-4:20
Robertson 008
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 end of Reconstruction to the present.

Schedule:

1. Sept 17: Thinking about American Political Thought
2. Sept 24: The Gilded Age
3. Oct 1: Race and Gender in the Time of Jim Crow
4. Oct 8: Democracy and Freedom at the Turn of the Century
5. Oct 15: American Imperialism and its Discontents
6. Oct 22: A New Deal for Democracy – Will need to reschedule this session
7. Oct 29: A New Deal for the Economy
- Fall Break
8. Nov 12: The Cold War
9. Nov 19: Postwar Democracy and Freedom
- Thanksgiving Break
10. Dec 3: Civil Rights
11. Dec 10: A New Gilded Age?
12. Dec 17: American Empire or the Clash of Civilizations?

Readings:

1. Thinking about American Political Thought
 - Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America*, ch. 1
 - Keith Whittington, “Introduction to American Political Thought”
2. The Gilded Age
 - Elisha Mulford, *The Nation*
 - Russell Conwell, “Acres of Diamonds”
 - Abraham Lincoln, Reply to a Committee from the Workingmen’s Association
 - C. Osborne Ward, *A Labor Catechism of Political Economy*
 - B.O. Flower, “Pure Democracy versus Vicious Governmental Favoritism”

- William Graham Sumner, *What Social Classes Owe to Each Other*
Andrew Carnegie, "The Gospel of Wealth"
Henry D. Lloyd, *Wealth against Commonwealth*
Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*
3. Race and Gender in the Time of Jim Crow
Henry W. Grady, "The New South"
Thomas E. Watson, "The Negro Question in the South"
Booker T. Washington, Atlanta Exposition Address
Theodore Roosevelt "What 'Americanism' Means"
Henry Cabot Lodge, Speech to the Senate on Literacy Tests
Grover Cleveland, Literacy Test Veto
Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Women and Economics*
Randolph Bourne, "Trans-National America"
W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folks*
Jane Addams, "If Men Were Seeking the Franchise"
4. Democracy and Freedom at the Turn of the Century
Francis Parkman, "The Failure of Universal Suffrage"
Thomas M. Cooley, "Labor and Capital before the Law"
James B. Weaver, *A Call to Action*
Theodore Roosevelt, *The New Nationalism*
Woodrow Wilson, *The New Freedom*
Oliver Wendell Holmes, "Natural Law"
John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*
Arthur Twining Hadley, *The Conflict Between Liberty and Equality*
5. American Imperialism and its Discontents
Josiah Strong, "Our Country"
William Graham Sumner, "The Conquest of the United States by Spain"
Elihu Root, Speech at Canton, Ohio
Theodore Roosevelt, "Social Values and National Existence"
Woodrow Wilson, "Conditions of Peace"
Randolph Bourne, *The State*
William Borah, "On the Need for Naval Disarmament"
6. A New Deal for Democracy
Herbert Hoover, Rugged Individualism Speech
Franklin D. Roosevelt, Commonwealth Club Address
Albert Jay Nock, "Life, Liberty, and . . ."
Franklin D. Roosevelt, Fireside Chat on the Reorganization of the Federal Judiciary
James Weldon Johnson, *Negro Americans, What Now?*
Ralph J. Bunche, "A Critical Analysis of the Tactics and Programs of Minority Groups"
John Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action*
Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*
7. A New Deal for the Economy
Eugene Debs, "Unionism and Socialism"
Emma Goldman, *Anarchism*
Herbert Croly, *The Promise of American Life*
Herbert Hoover, *American Individualism*

- Rexford G. Tugwell, "The Principle of Planning and the Institution of Laissez Faire"
 Adolf A. Berle, Jr., "A High Road for Business"
 Huey P. Long, "Every Man a King"
 Earl Browder, *What is Communism?*
 Franklin D. Roosevelt, The Forgotten Man Speech
8. The Cold War
 George F. Kennan, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct"
 Harry S. Truman, Address before a Joint Session of Congress
 Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*
 Robert A. Taft, *A Foreign Policy for Americans*
 Hearings on the Structure of the United Nations
 J. Edgar Hoover, Testimony before the House Un-American Activities Committee
 Hans J. Morgenthau, *In Defense of the National Interest*
 James Burnham, *Containment or Liberation?*
 J. William Fulbright, *The Arrogance of Power*
 American Friends Service Committee, *Speak Truth to Power*
9. Postwar Democracy and Freedom
 Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*
 Barry Goldwater, Acceptance Speech for the Republican Nomination for President
 Herbert Marcuse, *An Essay on Liberation*
 John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*
 Friedrich Hayek, "Why I am Not a Conservative"
 Students for a Democratic Society, The Port Huron Statement
 Lyndon B. Johnson, Remarks at the University of Michigan
 Ralph Nader, "We Need a New Kind of Patriotism"
10. Civil Rights
 Martin Luther King, Jr., Letter from a Birmingham City Jail
 Martin Luther King, Jr., I Have a Dream Speech
 Malcolm X, The Ballot or the Bullet
 Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*
 Kate Millet, *Sexual Politics*
 Thomas Sowell, *Civil Rights: Rhetoric or Reality?*
 Thurgood Marshall, Bicentennial Speech
 Carl Wittman, The Gay Manifesto
11. A New Gilded Age?
 Ronald Reagan, First Inaugural Address
 Richard Rorty, "The Priority of Democracy to Philosophy"
 Richard A. Epstein, *Skepticism and Freedom*
 David Graeber, "Direct Action, Anarchism, Direct Democracy"
 Michael Walzer, "What Does It Mean to be an 'American'?"
 Irving Kristol, "The Neoconservative Persuasion"
 Wendell Berry, *Citizenship Papers*
 Richard A. Posner, *The Economics of Justice*
 National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All*
 Bill Clinton, Remarks to the International Business Community
 Michael Albert, "Beyond Class Rule is Parecon"
12. American Empire or the Clash of Civilizations?

Jean J. Kirkpatrick, "Dictatorships and Double Standards"
Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?"
Noam Chomsky, *Understanding Power*
Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?"
Robert M. Gates, Speech at World Forum on the Future of Democracy
Ronald Reagan, Address to the British Parliament
George Bush, Address to the General Assembly of the United Nations
George W. Bush, Second State of the Union Address

Materials:

All primary readings will draw from Keith E. Whittington, *American Political Thought: Readings and Materials*. The book will not be in print in time for the start of class, so all materials for the semester will be made available on the Blackboard course website.

Students will be expected to have access to the readings during seminar discussions.

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 short paper is due by 5:00 pm on the day we cover the material that you will discuss (e.g., a paper on Week 2 materials would be due on 9/24/2015). 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. An electronic copy of the paper will be due to my email by 4:00 pm, January 12 ("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%