This course will survey the history of political, religious, and social thought in the United States from the arrival of English speaking peoples until the present day through an exploration of writings, speeches, and letters. I have divided the syllabus into two major sections. The first is a chronological exploration of much of the American political tradition in which we will explore the role of the national and state governments, the responsibility of the community for individuals’ well-being, and the nature of liberty. The second section is more thematically oriented and explores four different conceptions of the self and citizenship in American political thought. This course is also notable for what it leaves out or treats too minimally: slavery, the Civil War and Reconstruction, Imperialism and the Gilded Age, race, and gender. These are conscious choices made because of the lack of time to achieve all goals and to shape a coherent narrative that reached from the Revolution to the present.

**Required books for this course:**

**Course Requirements:**
The format of this course will require a great deal of reading and participation in classroom discussion. There will also be four short (approx. 5 page) required papers. The central assignment for this writing intensive course is a research paper of approx. 20 pages. By Feb 13, you must submit an executive summary, which will contain no more than two paragraphs describing your intended subject and including your thesis along with a preliminary bibliography. I must approve your proposal before you proceed. Instructions for the research paper are on Canvas.

Student participation in class discussion will be a large portion of your final grade, and attendance is necessary. I expect that you will complete ALL of the assigned reading BEFORE the class for which it was assigned and reserve the right to call on anyone at anytime.

The use of laptop computers and cellphones during class is strictly prohibited. For an explanation of this policy, please see [here](#).

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<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>Date Assigned</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Essay</strong></td>
<td>January 30</td>
<td>February 6</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td><strong>Second Essay</strong></td>
<td>March</td>
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<td><strong>Third Essay</strong></td>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>April 9</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Final Essay</strong></td>
<td>April 24</td>
<td>May 3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Paper</strong></td>
<td>Jan. 9</td>
<td>April 17 (exec summary by 2/13)</td>
<td>40%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Academic Misconduct:** All quotes must be cited as such and include a clear reference to the work from which they were drawn; they will otherwise be treated as plagiarism. All use of materials other than course materials must be accompanied by full citations. All work in this course is assigned as individual work; working as groups or teams is
strongly discouraged (and may be treated as cheating), as is all but the most casual assistance from others; this includes spouses and other family members. If you intend to submit a paper which significantly draws upon work for another class, you must first receive explicit permission to do so from both myself and the other instructor. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the course and other disciplinary action, up to expulsion from the University. Please note that you should keep a copy of your work. When working on a computer, always make a back-up; computer malfunction is not an excuse.

Accommodation of Sincerely Held Beliefs: I will work with students who require schedule changes due to religious or other significant obligations. I will not consider requests based on course content. Because the history of American politics has included many debates over race, sexuality, religious practice and belief, and political ideology, any class that did not address such issues would be substantially limited. Students are required to attend all classes and to read all assignments. All assignments and lectures are related to our subject matter, and I do not include gratuitously salacious material. If you have any objection to the frank and open discussion of any of the topics above, including the use of adult language when appropriate to subject matter, please drop the class.

Policy on Late Papers, Unsubmitted Work and Incompletes: Papers will be accepted until 5 pm on the date due. Late papers will lose one stepped grade (i.e. B+ → B) if submitted within a week of date due; papers will not be accepted after a week. Failure to complete any assignment will result in failure of the course. A grade of Incomplete is only available in cases of documented emergency or medical condition. Papers must be submitted both in hard copy and through Canvas. To encourage multiple drafts and proper proofreading, all submissions must have a marked, edited print version of an earlier draft stapled to the final draft.

Americans with Disabilities Act Notice: Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations to meet the expectations of this course should provide reasonable prior notice to the instructor and to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD) to make arrangements. Written material in this course can be made available in alternative format with prior notification.

The Course of Reading and Instruction will be as follows:

The State

Jan. 9, 16 – Revolutionaries
Jonathan Mayhew, *A Discourse Concerning Unlimited Submission*, 43
James Otis, “The Rights of the British Colonists,” 100
Jonathan Boucher, *On Civil Liberty, Passive Obedience, and Non-Resistance*, 113
John Adams, *Novanglus*, 119
Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, 131; *The American Crisis*, 149
Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Independence, 151; To Colonel Edward Carrington, 359; To William S. Smith, 360
Louis Hartz, “The Concept of a Liberal Society,” 1247

Canvas: John Locke, Selections from *Second Treatise of Government*
Bernard Bailyn, “Political Experience and Enlightenment Ideas in Eighteenth-Century America”
Edmund Morgan, “The Revolution Considered as an Intellectual Movement”
James Kloppenberg, “The Virtues of Liberalism”

Jan. 23, 30 - Federalists and Anti-Federalists
Alexander Hamilton, Letter to James Duane, 163
The Constitution of the United States, 170
(esp. *Federalists* 9, 10, 39, 48, and 51)
Robert Yates, *Essays of Brutus*, 256
George Washington, *Farewell Address*, 319
Thomas Jefferson, To Elbridge Gerry, 3 64; To Samuel Kercheval, 372
James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, *Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions*, 375
James Madison, *Report to the Virginia General Assembly*, 381
Charles Beard, *The Economic Basis of Politics*, 1017

Canvas: Christopher Duncan, “Men of a Different Faith”
Richard Matthews, from *If Men were Angels*
Daniel Levin, “Federalists in the Attic”

Feb. 6 - The Argument over Improvements and the Size of the National State
Alexander Hamilton, First Report on the Public Credit, 297; Opinion on the
Constitutionality of the Bank, 304; Report on Manufactures, 309
Thomas Jefferson, Notes on the State of Virginia, 342-344; Opinion on the
Constitutionality of the Bank, 348; To Reverend James Madison, 358
Henry Clay, Speech on the Tariff, 389
John Quincy Adams, First Annual Message to Congress, 392
Andrew Jackson, First Annual Message to Congress, 419; Veto of Maysville Road Bill,
424; Bank Veto Message, 427
Daniel Webster, Speech on Jackson’s Veto of the United States Bank Bill, 443
Canvas: Drew McCoy, from *The Elusive Republic*
John Larson, from *Internal Improvement*

Feb. 13 – Democracy and Self-Government
Canvas: Sheldon Wolin, from *Tocqueville Between Two Worlds*

Feb. 20 - The Progressive Era
Walter Lippman, from *Public Opinion*, 1058
Herbert Croly, *The Promise of American Life*, 1065
Theodore Roosevelt, “The New Nationalism,” 1086
Louis Brandeis, “The Living Law,” 1095; “Industrial Absolutism and Democracy,” 1099
Woodrow Wilson, "The New Freedom," 1102
Eldon J. Eisenach, “Some Second Thoughts on Progressivism and Rights”
Feb 27 - The New Deal
Franklin Delano Roosevelt, “Commonwealth Club Speech,” “First Inaugural Address,”
Walter Lippman, “Planning in an Economy of Abundance,” 1206
Canvas: Philip Abbott, from *The Exemplary Presidency*
Russell Hanson, from *The Democratic Imagination in America*

March 6 - The Great Society and Reaction
Barry Goldwater, from *The Conscience of a Conservative*, 1256
Robert Dahl, Who Governs?, 1282
John Rawls, from *A Theory of Justice*, 1370
Michael Walzer's *What Does It Mean to be an American*, 1449
Pat Robertson, “A Portrait of America,” 1464
Michael J. Sandel, “The Public Philosophy of Contemporary Liberalism,” 1477
Web: Lyndon Baines Johnson, *The Great Society*
Web: Ronald Reagan, *First Inaugural Address*
Canvas: Daniel Rodgers, from *The Age of Fracture*

The Self

March 20 - The Self-Made Self
Cotton Mather, A Christian at His Calling, 52
Benjamin Franklin, The Way to Wealth, 53; The Art of Virtue, 60; Information to Those Who Would Remove to America, 66
Frederick Douglass, What are the Colored People Doing for Themselves?, 588
Russell H. Conwell, “Acres of Diamonds,” 737
Booker T. Washington, Atlanta Exposition Address, 946
W.E.B. DuBois, Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others, 957
Herbert Hoover, American Individualism, Rugged Individualism, 1133-1141
Charles A. Beard, “The Myth of Rugged American Individualism,” 1147
Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, 1391
Canvas: from Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*
from Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*

March 27 - The Democratic Self
James Fenimore Cooper, *The American Democrat*, 465
Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*, 1211
*Tocqueville, Democracy in America*, pp. 403-410, 479-509, 521-532, 661-676
Canvas: Robert Putnam, from *Bowling Alone*
April 3, 10- The Transcending Self
   Ralph Waldo Emerson, Self-Reliance, 471; Politics, 476
   Henry David Thoreau, Resistance to Civil Government, 484; Life without Principle, 491
   Frederick Douglass, What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?, 594
   Eugene V. Debs, Speech to the Jury, 840
   Mario Savio, An End to History, 1301
   Martin Luther King, Jr., The Power of Nonviolence, 1305; I Have a Dream, 1317
   Canvas: John Diggins, “Locke, Calvinism, and the Transcendentalist Negation”

April 10, 17 - The Pragmatic Self
   William James, “Pragmatism: A New Name for Old Ways of Thinking,” 1024
   Richard Rorty, “A Cultural Left,” 1494
   Canvas: William James, “The Moral Equivalent of War”
      Alfonso Damico, from Individuality and Community
      Daniel Malachuk, "Loyal to a Dream Country"

April 17, 24 - The Empty Self
   Betty Friedan, The Feminine Mystique, 1344
   Jerry Rubin, A Yippie Manifesto, 1353
   Irving Kristol, Capitalism, Socialism, and Nihilism, 1381
   Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman
   Canvas: Daniel Reisman, Nathan Glazer, from The Lonely Crowd
          Daniel Bell, from Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism