SYLLABUS

This course has two main objectives. First, we will examine the historical development of American political theory with an eye to see it, not as a unified trajectory of developing ideas about state, economy, and citizenship, but as a body of work influenced by multiple, sometimes conflicting, historical and theoretical traditions. Second, we will concentrate on some of the central themes in this history: the founding debate over the size, character, and institutional structure of the republic, individualism, equality, race, gender, the problems and prospects for democracy in industrial and post-industrial America, and more.

REQUIRED TEXT: Available at the Barnes and Noble Campus Bookstore


Other assigned readings will be posted to Blackboard

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Two 6-page papers – 50% (25% each, with an opportunity to rewrite the first)
Class participation – 25%

This is important. Your engagement with the text is vital for both writing good papers and engaging each other in class. To encourage diligent reading, you must submit two short reaction papers per week (two paragraphs or so, unless you’re feeling inspired). Since class meets three times weekly, you may pick the day you submit: either two for one group of readings, or one for two separate days. Submit your responses to Blackboard by 10:00 pm the day before class. Be prepared to discuss your responses in class.

Final exam – 25%

COURSE OUTLINE: (This is a tentative schedule.)

August 30: Course Introduction: What makes American political theory unique?

I. The American Colonies: politics and the Protestant ethic

September 1: The Mayflower Compact, John Winthrop, John Cotton, Roger Williams, John Wise, and Cotton Mather
September 3: Ben Franklin

September 6, 8, 10: Class suspended

II. The American Revolution and Founding: size, character, structure, and spirit


September 15: James Madison

September 17: James Madison cont.

September 20: Alexander Hamilton


III. American Democracy?

September 27, 29: Thomas Jefferson and John Marshall

October 1: John R. Cooke and Abel P. Upshur – Debate over inclusion

October 4: Andrew Jackson and Daniel Webster – Debate over Natl. bank

IV. The American Individual

October 6: James Fenimore Cooper, Ralph Waldo Emerson

October 8: Henry David Thoreau, Walt Whitman

October 11: **First Paper Due**

V. Who Counts as an American? Inclusion of women and African slaves

October 13: Abigail Adams, Catherine Beecher

October 15: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony

October 18: Jane Addams, Orestes Brownson

October 20: Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, William Lloyd Garrison

October 22: Frederick Douglas, David Walker, Harriet Beecher Stowe
October 25: John Calhoun, James Hammond

October 27, 29: Abraham Lincoln

VI. American Capitalism and Socialism: economy and freedom

November 1: William Graham Sumner, Andrew Carnegie

November 3: Edward Bellamy, Ignatius Donnelly

November 5: Continued

November 8: Emma Goldman

November 10: Eugene Debs, Samuel Gompers, Upton Sinclair

VII. The American Empire: Does the question of inclusion have an answer?

November 12: Theodore Roosevelt, Henry Cabot Lodge

November 15: Anti-Imperialism and William Graham Sumner, Chief Joseph

November 17: Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. DuBois,

November 19: Marcus Garvey, Langston Hughes, Hiram Evans

VIII. American Progressivism and the Resurgence of the State

November 22: Lincoln Steffens, Jane Addams, Charles Beard

**Second Paper Due**

November 29: Theodore Roosevelt, Herbert Croly, Woodrow Wilson,

XI. In Search of An American Public

December 1: Louis Hartz, Barry Goldwater

December 3: C. Wright Mills, Robert Nozick

December 6: SDS, Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Betty Friedan, Bell Hooks

December 8: Wrap-up
REMAINDERS:

Office Hours in Humanities B16 MW: 9:00am -10:15 and by appointment

Students who work with the Disabilities office, please see me.

There will be a daily attendance sign-in; however, it is up to you to keep up with the reading and discussion question submission. Significant absence will affect your participation grade, and by extension, the quality of your papers and finals.

Plagiarism is a consistent problem I see every year. None of the assignments require that you make use of sources other than the assigned texts; however, if you choose to use external sources, you MUST cite those references. This includes wikipedia, sparknotes, or any other miscellaneous internet source – anything that's not yours. I would prefer that you didn't use these at all, but if you do, please use a proper citation. Additionally, please cite page numbers from the assigned textbook when you quote or paraphrase. We may both know where the information comes from, but a page number makes it official and also forces you to back up your statements with tangible evidence of your interaction with the text.