

**American Political Thought: Political Science 356
Spring 2006**

Tuesday and Thursday, 3:30 to 4:45
Kinard 211

Instructor: Dr. Michael Lipscomb
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Office Hours: Tuesday, 2 to 3:10;
Wednesday, 3:30 to 4:45; and by
appointment.

I. Goals of the Course

This course explores fundamental themes and concerns of American political experience through a careful engagement with selected texts from a variety of authors and perspectives. By reading, discussing and writing about the texts selected for this class, we will encounter many of the terms and concepts that provide the foundation for the way that we talk about American politics. Critically examining how these terms and concepts have been used over time, in various historical contexts, will permit us a more sophisticated understanding of how they function in current political discussions. By cultivating such an understanding, we can improve our ability to participate, as both speakers and listeners, in a broad range of political conversations

II. Required Texts

David Wooton, *The Essential Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers* (Hackett: Indianapolis, 2003)

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*

W. E. B. Dubois, *The Souls of Black Folk*

Mark Twain, *Huckleberry Finn*

John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*

Mike Davis, *City of Quartz*

Susan Faludi, *Stiffed*

Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*

III. Assignments

1) **Attendance is not optional** and will be taken daily. I will excuse absences because of religious holidays, but it is your responsibility to inform me that this is the reason for your

absence. I will also excuse absences caused by sickness or family emergency if you provide me with proper written documentation.

- 2) It is your responsibility to see that your **Winthrop email account is set-up** and that you have access to the class list serve. I will use the list serve to make class related announcements throughout the semester.
- 3) You are expected to have completed all **reading** assignments before you come to class.
- 4) To make sure that you keep up with and understand the readings, you will be given **pop quizzes** throughout the semester.
- 5) You will be graded on both the frequency and quality of your **participation in class discussions and, when appropriate, class exercises.**
- 6) You will take a **take-home midterm.**
- 7) You will take a **final** at the end of the semester.

All written work will be penalized half a letter grade (four points) for each day that it is late. This policy will be strictly enforced.

NOTE ON PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY: Any act of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in an “F” for the course and will lead to appropriate administrative action. Ignorance as to what constitutes plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty is not a valid excuse for such transgressions. For clarification about matters of academic dishonesty, students should consult Section V of the **Student Conduct Code** in the **Student Handbook**. For specific questions about plagiarism, the Writing Center, located on the second floor of Bancroft, is an excellent resource. The Center’s web page (www.Winthrop.edu/wcenter) has specific links that can help you with questions about how to cite source material and how to avoid plagiarism. Your instructor is more than glad to talk to you about these matters.

Because of an escalating problem with cheating, I have decided that all papers in this class must be turned in through the electronic detection service provided by the library, **Turnitin.com**. The ID and the password will be provided for you. We will discuss the protocol for using this system when we go over the first assignment in class.

IV. Final Grade Distribution

Participation	25%
Pop Quizzes	25%
Midterm	25%
Final	25%

V. Grading Criteria For Written Work

I will grade your written work using the General Education Writing Competency Rubric developed by the English Department. I will hand out and discuss this rubric in class. Across the University, and specifically in this class, writing competency is expected and taken very seriously. A student and a citizen who cannot write can neither think clearly nor communicate effectively.

VI. Schedule

Note on schedule: the instructor reserves the right to make changes to this schedule as he sees fit, depending on the unfolding needs of the class. Any such changes will be announced in class, and it is the sole responsibility of the student to be aware of such changes.

1. 1/10 **Introduction.**
2. 1/12 Jefferson, et al, *The Declaration of Independence.*
3. 1/17 *The Articles of Confederation; The Constitution of the United States of America*
4. 1/19 Lindblom, "The Market as Prison"; Hightower, "This Land is Your Land"
5. 1/24 Wooton, "Introduction"
6. 1/26 Wooton, *The Anti-Federalists.*
7. 1/31 Wooton, *The Federalists*
8. 2/2 Wooton, *The Federalists*
9. 2/4 De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*
10. 2/7 De Tocqueville *Democracy in America*
11. 2/9 De Tocqueville *Democracy in America*
12. 2/14 Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance"
13. 2/16 Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience"
14. 2/21 Thoreau, *Walden*
15. 2/23 Thoreau, *Walden* **Take Home Midterm Handed Out In Class**
16. 2/28 Zinn, "Drawing the Color Line"; "Slavery Without Submission, Emancipation Without Freedom"
17. 3/2 W.E.B. DuBois, from *The Souls of Black Folk.*
18. 3/7 W.E.B. DuBois, from *The Souls of Black Folk.*
19. 3/9 Twain, *Huckleberry Finn*
20. 3/14 **Spring Break**
21. 3/16 **Spring Break**
22. 3/21 Twain, *Huckleberry Finn* **Take Home Midterm Due in Class**
23. 3/23 Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*
24. 3/28 Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*
25. 3/30 Faludi, *Stiffed*
26. 4/4 Faludi, *Stiffed*
27. 4/6 Davis, *City of Quartz*
28. 4/11 Davis, *City of Quartz*
29. 4/13 Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*
30. 4/18 Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*
31. 4/20 Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*

The **final exam** for this class is scheduled for Thursday, April 27th at 3 p.m. The exam must be taken at this time unless there is a conflict with other exams which has been certified by the registrar. **Travel plans are not a valid excuse for requesting an alternative exam period.**

