

**American Political Thought: Liberty and Equality**  
**GVPT 444**  
**Department of Government and Politics**  
**University of Maryland**  
**Summer 2008**  
**M, W: 4:00pm- 7:00pm, Tydings 1111**

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Office Hours: M and W 2-3 and by  
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In this course, we will survey American Political Thought from its birth or founding in the Revolutionary period until its rebirth or re-founding with the American Civil War (or perhaps simply the completion of the founding). We will follow the thought that underlies the founding, that first experimented with the notion of creating the union, and the thought that went into sustaining the union. The greatest writings of American Political Thought are not the work of political theorists detached from politics, but are of the men and women who were immersed in the political struggle for freedom and equality. We rely mostly, therefore, on speeches and writings of great American statesmen, including Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, John C. Calhoun, Frederick Douglass, and Abraham Lincoln. The sole departure from this approach is our study of Alexis de Tocqueville, to whom intelligent students of American politics frequently turn. We will strive, above all, to understand the moral and political principles of these thinkers. It is always an important task to understand the thought of the founders, even while the thought of the founders is certainly open to criticisms. Above all it is argued that the founders were not sufficiently democratic and did not provide for proper safeguards for liberty and, more often, equality. The problems with which these political thinkers of the highest order struggled still confront us today, and are therefore worthy of investigation.

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**I. Required and Recommended Texts**

*Please Note: I apologize, but I must insist that you purchase the editions listed below. We will read together in class often, and it is imperative to remain on the same page.*

**Required Texts:**

Calhoun, John C. *A Disquisition On Government And Selections From The Discourse*. Edited, with Introduction, by C. Gordon Post with a New Foreword by Shannon C. Stimson. Hackett Publishing, Indianapolis: 1995. ISBN 0-87220-293-3

Douglass, Frederick. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written by Himself*. W.W. Norton Press, New York:1996. ISBN 0393969665

Jefferson, Thomas. *The Portable Thomas Jefferson*. Ed. Merrill D. Peterson. Penguin Books, New York: 1977. ISBN 0140150803

Lincoln, Abraham. *The Portable Abraham Lincoln*. Ed. Andrew Delbanco. Penguin Books, New York: 1992. ISBN 0140170316

Publius. *The Federalist*. Ed. George W. Carey and James McClellan. Liberty Fund Press, Indianapolis: 2001. ISBN 0-86597-289-3

Tocqueville, Alexis de. *Democracy in America*, Trans. Harvey C. Mansfield and Delba Winthrop. University of Chicago Press, Chicago: 2000. ISBN 0-226-80532-8

### **Recommended Texts**

*Please note: These texts are highly recommended but not required. They will greatly improve your understanding of the political thought that informed the American Founding.*

1. Charles Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu. *On the Spirit of the Laws*, trans. Anne M. Cohler. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge: 1989. ISBN: 0-52136-974-6 (Books I-V, XI, XII, XIV, XV, XVIII-XXIV, XVI)
2. Locke, John. *Second Treatise of Government*. Ed. C.B. Macpherson. Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis: 1980. ISBN: 0915144867
3. Machiavelli, Niccolò. *Prince*. Trans. Harvey C. Mansfield. Chicago University Press, Chicago: 1998. ISBN: 0226500446
4. Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. Ed. Edwin Curley. Hackett Publishing, Indianapolis: 1994. ISBN: 0872201775 (Chapters xiii-xviii, xxi, xxiv, xxvi-xxx, xlvi)
5. Strunk & White. *Elements of Style*. Any edition.

## **II. Course Requirements**

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|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Preparation & Participation      | (10%)             |
| 2. Quizzes                          | (20%)             |
| 3. Presentation                     | (10%)             |
| 4. First Essay (After Presentation) | (20%) 2000 words. |
| 5. Final Essay                      | (40%) 2500 words. |

Due date: July 14

**Class Preparation, Participation, and Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory: missing two classes will result in a failing grade. Your primary task is to come to class each day having read very carefully and to be prepared to talk intelligently about the material. This is a senior-level course, and, as such, you are expected to keep up with the substantial reading load. Do not come to class having read the text superficially. Reread it if necessary. Take notes as you read, and outline arguments. Think about what you are

reading, and reflect on the moral and political importance of it. Analyze the arguments. Are they persuasive? Do they convince you? Class discussion is imperative, and I will do my best to involve everyone in class discussion. From time to time, I will offer interpretation. My interpretation is, of course, not final. Stand your ground: if you think my interpretation is wrong, say so. The same goes for each other. Do not hesitate to challenge your fellow students, and be prepared to be challenged. You will find that once you get over any initial discomfort you may have, it is quite pleasant to engage in rational argument.

**Quizzes.** There will be, from time to time, Pop Quizzes. These are simple and meant only to reveal to me whether you have in fact read the text.

**Presentation.**

Each one of you will make a brief presentation (15 minutes) at the beginning of a selected class. You are to provide a critical analysis of the material to be covered during that class period. A short paper, based on the presentation, is to be turned in the following class period.

**Essays:** These essays are meant to encourage you to wrestle with the text. I expect papers that are well-argued, original, succinct, and beautiful. I want to enjoy reading them. I am not looking for summary; we have all read the text. Make an argument! Agree or disagree with interpretations offered in class. I encourage you to write and rewrite, read and proofread. I will count off for bad arguments, and also hold you accountable to the highest standards of style. This includes grammar, as grammatical mistakes often indicate a lack of time and effort spent on a paper. One of the great benefits of this course is that you will hopefully learn—in addition to something about American Political Thought—how to read and write carefully. These are great tools that will aid you in whatever you pursue.

Under no circumstances whatsoever will papers be accepted after the dates listed above.

**III. Miscellanea:**

1. Academic Dishonesty: All work must be done in strictest accordance with the letter and spirit of the honor code of the University of Maryland. All violations will be prosecuted *to the fullest extent possible*. If you have any doubts or questions whatsoever as to what constitutes a violation, feel free to speak to me ahead of time. When writing papers, you are not permitted to use *any* outside sources. You are to remain *solely* within the confines of the text at hand. Part of this course is learning how to think for oneself about the issues raised in the texts.
2. Students with documented disabilities should see the instructor immediately. Their needs will be accommodated provided the instructor is sufficiently notified.
3. The UMD policy of respecting the religious observances of students or their participation in university activities will be followed. Again, you must inform the instructor ahead of time.

#### IV. Schedule of Readings for American Political Thought

##### JUNE 2: THOMAS JEFFERSON

Declaration of Independence	<i>PTJ</i> : 235-241
To Roger C. Weightman	<i>PTJ</i> : 584-585
Response to Citizens of Albemarle	<i>PTJ</i> : 259-260
To David Rittenhouse	<i>PTJ</i> : 395-398
To William Short	<i>PTJ</i> : 464-466
<i>Notes on Virginia</i>	On Buffon ( <i>PTJ</i> : 78-79)
	On Indians and European Settlers ( <i>PTJ</i> : 93-103)
	On Immigration ( <i>PTJ</i> : 123-128)

##### JUNE 4: THOMAS JEFFERSON

To John Adams	<i>PTJ</i> : 533-539
Patrick Henry to Robert Pleasants	Packet
Notes on Virginia	On the Negro ( <i>PTJ</i> : 184-bottom 193)
	On manners and slavery ( <i>PTJ</i> : 214-215)
Benjamin Banneker to TJ	Packet I
To Benjamin Banneker	<i>PTJ</i> : 454-455
To Henri Grégoire	<i>PTJ</i> : 517
To Edward Coles	<i>PTJ</i> : 544-547
To John Holmes	<i>PTJ</i> : 567-569
To James Madison	<i>PTJ</i> : 415-418
Draft Constitution for VA	<i>PTJ</i> : 242-250
To Edmund Pendleton	<i>PTJ</i> : 355-357
<i>Notes on Virginia</i>	Manufacturing and Agriculture <i>PTJ</i> : 216-217, 224-229
To John Jay	<i>PTJ</i> : 383-386
To Benjamin Austin	<i>PTJ</i> : 547-550
To James Madison	<i>PTJ</i> : 444-451
Madison to Jefferson, Feb. 4, 1790	Packet I
To James Madison	<i>PTJ</i> : 428-433
To Francis Hopkinson	<i>PTJ</i> : 435-437

##### JUNE 9: THOMAS JEFFERSON

<i>A Bill for Establishing Human Freedom</i>	<i>PTJ</i> : 251-253
<i>Notes on Virginia</i>	<i>PTJ</i> : 208-213
To Benjamin Rush	<i>PTJ</i> : 490-494
To John Trumbull	<i>PTJ</i> : 434-435
To William Short	<i>PTJ</i> : 564-567
<i>Notes on Virginia</i>	<i>PTJ</i> : 193-199

To Martha Jefferson	<i>PTJ</i> : 366-367
To Peter Carr	<i>PTJ</i> : 380-383
To John Banister, Jr.	<i>PTJ</i> : 392-395
To George Wythe	<i>PTJ</i> : 398-400
To Edward Carrington	<i>PTJ</i> : 414-415
To Thomas Law	<i>PTJ</i> : 540-544
To Peter Carr	<i>PTJ</i> : 423-428

**JUNE 11: JAMES MADISON**

The Articles of Confederation	Packet I
“Vices of Political System of U.S.”	Packet I
Madison to Edmund Randolph	Packet I
From <i>Notes of Debate in the Federal Convention</i>	Packet II
U.S. Constitution	Appendix in <i>Federalist</i>

**JUNE 16: RATIFICATION**

<i>Brutus</i> 1	Packet I
<i>Centinel</i> 1	Packet I
<i>Federalist</i> 1, 9, 10, 47, 49, 51, 57, 62, 70, 78	

**JUNE 18-25: ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE, *DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA***

**JUNE 18:**

Vol. I, Part One:	AT's Introduction
Vol. I, Part Two:	Ch. 1, 6 (1,3,4), 7 (1,2,4,6), 9 (1-6, 8), 10 (5,6)

**JUNE 23:**

Vol. II, Part One	Notice: Ch. 1, 2, 5, 8, 10, 13, 15, 18.
Vol. II, Part Two	Ch. 1, 4, 8, 9, 10, 15, 19, 20

**JUNE 25:**

Vol. II, Part Three	Ch. 8, 9, 11, 12, 19, 21, 22, 24
Vol. II, Part Four:	Ch. 1, 4, 6, 7, 8

**JUNE 30: FREDERICK DOUGLASS**

Read all of *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself*, including the “Preface” by William Lloyd Garrison

**JULY 2: JOHN C. CALHOUN**

Read all of *Disquisition on Government*  
 Also read Jefferson, “The Kentucky Resolutions” *PTJ*: 281-289.

**JULY 7: ABRAHAM LINCOLN**

“Address to Young Men’s Lyceum”	<i>PAL: 17-26</i>
Roger B. Taney	From <i>Dred Scott v. Sandford</i> Packet I
Alexander H. Stephens	From “The Corner Stone Speech” Packet I
AL on Kansas-Nebraska Act	<i>PAL: 41-83</i>
First Lincoln-Douglas Debate	<i>PAL: 97-140</i>
To Alexander H. Stephens	<i>PAL: 193-194</i>
Farewell address at Springfield, Illinois	<i>PAL: 194</i>
First Inaugural	<i>PAL: 195-204</i>
To Horace Greeley	<i>PAL: 239-240</i>

**JULY 9: ABRAHAM LINCOLN**

Address on Colonialization to a Committee of Colored Men	<i>PAL: 234-239</i>
Selection from Annual Message to Congress	<i>PAL: 257-270</i>
Final Emancipation Proclamation	<i>PAL: 271-273</i>
Order of Retaliation	<i>PAL: 285-286</i>
Address at Sanitary Fair	<i>PAL: 305-307</i>
To Charles D. Robinson	<i>PAL: 308-310</i>
Address at Gettysburg, PA	<i>PAL: 295</i>
Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction	<i>PAL: 296-299</i>
To Albert G. Hodges	<i>PAL: 302-304</i>
Reply to a Southern Woman	<i>PAL: 319-320</i>
Second Inaugural Address	<i>PAL: 320-321</i>
Speech on Reconstruction	<i>PAL: 324-329</i>

**JULY 9 CONTINUED: FREDERICK DOUGLASS (ALL IN PACKET I)**

“Change of Opinion Announced”
“The Dred Scott Decision”
“The Destiny of the Colored Americans”
“Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln”