

POLS 440: American Political and Legal Thought

Professor: Marcus E. Green
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Quarter: Spring 2010 | Mar 29 – Jun 9
Section #: 01
Schedule #: 20601
Class Time: MWF 11:00–12:20
Location: Towers Hall 121
Website: access through Blackboard

Course Description

POLS 440 is designed as “a study of the mainstream and radical currents in American legal and political thought which have shaped the American legal and political process.” The course is intended to provide students with an introduction to some of the key texts and themes in the history of American political thought. Although we will not be able to discuss nearly all the prominent political writers or politically significant ideas in U.S. history, we will cover several of the more important texts, many of which have had a substantial influence on later political debates and on citizens’ attitudes today. We will also begin to get some sense of the different ways in which theorists, politicians, and political activists have thought about politics in the United States. Moreover, we will learn about some of the major political issues, problems, and dilemmas we have faced as a country, some of which we still confront.

The themes, readings, and topics will address the U.S. Constitution, the Federalist Papers, democracy (its associated values, institutions, practices, and definitions) and the issue of defining equality, liberty, and justice at various periods in U.S. history.

Prerequisites: POLS 100 or POLS 115, or permission of instructor.

Course Objectives and Learning Goals

1. To develop an awareness of the normative aspects of American political thought and some of the controversies within it.
2. To develop a critical understanding of the U.S. Constitution.
3. To introduce students to a number important American political thinkers.
4. To assist students in the development of their analytical, critical thinking, writing, and communicative skills.

Required Texts

1. Kenneth M. Dolbeare & Michael S. Cummings (eds.), *American Political Thought*, 6th edition. CQ Press, 2010. ISBN-13: 978-0872899728
2. Sanford Levinson, *Our Undemocratic Constitution: Where the Constitution Goes Wrong*. Oxford University Press, 2006. ISBN-13: 978-0195365573

Assignments & Grading Criteria

Essays

Students are expected to write two essays for this course, each worth 25% of the final grade. There are no exams. Each essay is intended to address particular readings, issues, and concepts covered in a particular period. The essay assignments are designed for you to demonstrate your

knowledge and understanding of the material and issues under review and to provide a critical analysis of them. “Critical analysis” does *not* mean a dismissal of particular ideas or concepts. Rather, it entails a critical investigation of a set of ideas or issues in order to reveal the limits, flaws, and/or problems related to them. I will provide a list of recommended questions and detailed instructions for each essay assignment at least two weeks prior to the due date.

Presentations

Students are required to conduct four in-class presentations during the term and submit a one page outline for each presentation. The four presentations will be worth 25% of the final grade. Each presentation will be graded on the 4-point scale, and the grades from the four presentations will be averaged at the end of the term. Students will be asked to sign up for particular readings to present.

Presentation Instructions

- The in-class oral presentations should be between 6 and 12 minutes.
- Students are required to submit a one page outline of their presentation, due on the day of the presentation. The outlines should be typed (single-space, 12 point font) and should be one page.
- The outline of the presentation should follow the format below.

Introduction

1. Provide your own argument or theme to encompass presentation.
2. State the author’s argument.
3. Provide social, political, and/ intellectual context to frame the author’s argument.

Summary Section

4. Summarize the author’s evidence to support his/her argument,
5. Identify the most important concept(s)/point(s) in the text.
6. Cite brief passages that demonstrate your points

Concluding Section

7. Introduce your views of the text. Possible topics to discuss:
 - a. The strengths and weaknesses of the author’s work
 - b. Discuss the issues that you find interesting
 - c. Discuss the issues that require further elaboration/detail
8. How does the material compare and contrast with other readings that we have already studied in the course?
9. (in-class) address student’s and professor’s questions.

Participation Grade

Students are graded on class participation. In addition to the formal essay requirements, successful achievement of course objectives requires active class participation, which is an important and valuable aspect of the learning experience. Therefore, 25% of the final course grade is determined by class participation. This means that I expect you to contribute and participate in class discussions. You will only receive an acceptable grade for class participation if you regularly participate in discussions. Class attendance alone is not participation. You should come to class prepared to discuss particular issues, topics, and readings. You will receive credit for participation when you provide significant contributions to class discussions that either enhance or provide greater meaning to the discussion.

Participation Grade Breakdown

Participation Points	Grade
12	4.0
11	3.8
10	3.7
9	3.3
8	3.0
7	2.7
6	2.3
5	2.0
4	1.7
3	1.3
2	1.0
1	0.7
0	0.0

Participation grades will be determined by the quality and quantity of student performance. This course will meet for 10 weeks, and I will grade participation on a scale of 0-to-12. At the end of the term, I will calculate students' participation grades based upon their total participation points following the scale to the left. For instance, a student with 11 participation points, will receive a grade of 3.8 for participation.

As stated above, class attendance does not equal participation. You will receive credit for participation when you provide significant contributions to class discussions that either enhance or provide greater meaning to the discussion.

Assignments & the Determination of Final Grade

Assignments	Date	Points	Grades
Essay 1 (8 – 10 pages)		4	
Essay 2 (8 - 10 pages)		4	
4 Class Presentations (1 page each)	varies	4	
Participation	n/a	4	
Total Possible Points		16	
Average		4	

Due date TBA, after class sets agenda

Due date TBA, after class sets agenda

Average of the four presentations

Final Grade = average of assignments & participation

- deductions for absences

Calculation of Final Grade

The calculation of the final grade for the course is determined by the average of the two essay grades, the four presentations, and the class participation grade. The final grade recorded for the course follows the grade scale below. The final grade average must meet the minimum threshold of the grade scale for each corresponding grade. For example, to receive an A- in the course, a student's final grade average must be 3.7 or above. In the case of a marginal final grade within .05 of a point, I will round up. For instance, if a student's final grade average is 3.66, I will record the final grade as an A-, but a final grade average of 3.60 will be recorded as a B+.

Grade Scale

The grading system for this course follows Otterbein College's four-point grade scale found in the College Catalog: <http://catalog.otterbein.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=213#Grading>

Grade Scale	Letter Grade	Grade Points	Description
3.85 – 4.00	A	4.0	Exceptional
3.7 – 3.84	A-	3.7	Excellent
3.3 – 3.69	B+	3.3	Above Average
3.0 – 3.29	B	3.0	Above Average
2.7 – 2.99	B-	2.7	Above Average
2.3 – 2.69	C+	2.3	Average
2.0 – 2.29	C	2.0	Average
1.7 – 1.99	C-	1.7	Below Average
1.3 – 1.69	D+	1.3	Below Average
1.0 – 1.29	D	1.0	Below Average
0.0 – 0.99	F	0.0	Failure

Grades for assignments and final grade averages will follow the Grade Scale in first column. This Grade Scale will be used to determine the final Letter Grade.

Course Policies

Course Format

Class meetings will be divided between lectures, student presentations, and directed class discussions. The lectures are designed to provide students with a framework of meaning through which they are better able to understand and discuss the texts. The student presentations and class discussions will be based upon readings from the required texts. The discussions shall provide students with a forum in which they can discuss and debate the key concepts of the texts under review with their classmates and the instructor.

Lectures and Readings

Students are responsible for knowing the material covered in the assigned readings and the material covered in lectures. Lectures will address information found in the readings as well as information not found in the readings. I do not distribute my lecture notes to students. Therefore, students are encouraged to attend class and to take notes.

Attendance

Attendance is required but you are not graded for it. You are permitted up to 3 unexcused absences without penalty. After your third unexcused absence, I will deduct .1 of a point from your final grade average for each additional absence. For example, 4 absences = -.1 point; 5 absences = -.2 point, etc. If you need to miss more than three classes for college approved reasons, please see me to make arrangements. Sickness short of hospitalization or incapacitation does not constitute grounds for an excused absence. I may make exceptions for truly unusual and unanticipated events, but such arrangements must be discussed with me. Colds, flus, hangovers, broken bones, dental work, doctor appointments, changes in work schedules, etc. do not count as either unusual or unanticipated. You are permitted three unexcused absences to deal with such events.

Tardiness

If you are regularly late to class, I reserve the right to reduce your final grade average by .1 point for each instance of tardiness.

Classroom Environment

This course is designed to challenge your written and verbal communicative skills, which are, in my view, not only necessary to the learning process but vital to the development of democratic culture and citizenship. Just like writing, the public exchange of ideas requires skill. It requires a level of confidence to speak in front of others and a level of maturity and respect to listen to others. It can be said that this course is Socratic in the sense that our discussions are similar to workshops in which we workout different thoughts and ideas in coordination with one another. Because of this, I will work to make the classroom environment respectful and comfortable for all, and I expect you to do the same.

Blackboard

I will distribute course information and materials on Blackboard. Therefore, it is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with Blackboard and to login periodically for course updates.

Submitting Essays

I require students to submit a hard copy of each paper and to submit an electronic copy through Blackboard. Make a copy of each paper before you turn it in. It is the responsibility of students to keep duplicate copies of their papers.

Late Essays (and “free days”)

I grant each student a three day extension for the first assigned essay. This means that you can turn the paper in three days late (not counting weekends) and still receive full credit. After the paper is three days late, I will deduct .5 of a point (out of 4) each day the paper is late. If you plan to use any “free days,” you do not need to tell me; just submit a hard copy and an electronic copy of the paper when you are finished. I do not accept emailed papers. I will consider papers “turned in” when I receive the hardcopy, not the electronic copy. The second essay cannot be turned in late.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

Otterbein policies regarding academic integrity will be strictly enforced. All submitted work must be your own – *including the case briefs* – and it is the responsibility of all students to understand the methods of proper citation and to apply those methods in all written assignments. I will investigate indications of copied or plagiarized work, and I reserve the right to administer an oral exam and to question the student, if I suspect a student has submitted work that may be plagiarized.

According to the Otterbein Campus Life Handbook, “any use of the words or ideas of someone else as though they were the student's own words, constitutes plagiarism. This definition applies to the use of both printed and unprinted sources, including the work of other students or faculty.” (See: http://www.otterbein.edu/CLH/code_of_conduct_policies.asp#sec_4).

Plagiarism occurs when a writer reproduces the words of another author without acknowledgment or when a writer paraphrases the ideas or arguments of another author in such away as to lead the reader to believe that the ideas or arguments originated with the writer. Plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional. According to Andrea A. Lunsford in *The Everyday Writer* (4th ed): “If your paraphrase is too close to the wording or sentence structure of a source (even if you identify the source); if you do not identify the source of a quotation (even if you include the quotation marks); or if you fail to indicate clearly the source of an idea that you obviously did not come up with on your own, you may be accused of plagiarism even if your intent was not to plagiarize” (p. 191).

I will report violations of academic dishonesty to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. According to Otterbein policy, students who violate standards of academic integrity are subject to disciplinary sanctions, which include the “failure on the given assignment or a failing grade for the course.”

Disability Accommodation

If you need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, you should contact me to arrange an appointment as soon as possible. At the appointment we can discuss the course format, anticipate your needs and explore potential accommodations. I rely on the Disability Services Coordinator for assistance in verifying the need for accommodations and developing

strategies. If you have not previously contacted the Disability Services Coordinator (x1618 or LMonaghan@otterbein.edu), I encourage you to do so.

Email

Outside of my office hours, I can be reached via email, and I will usually respond within 24 hours. Note: In the subject, include the course number (POLS 420), and in the body of the message, please include your first and last name.

Electronic Devices

Recording Lectures: In accordance with federal regulations, students may not make audio recordings of class lectures without the prior written consent of the instructor. Students who have registered and documented disabilities may make audio recordings with the consent of the instructor.

Cell Phones & iPods: Please turn off cell phone ringers during class, no texting, and no iPod listening in class. If I see students texting in class, I will automatically subtract one point from your participation grade.

Drop Dates & Withdrawal Policy

Students who wish to drop the course may do so using the regular procedures. It is not the responsibility of the professor to drop students from the course.

- Last day to add course: Thursday, April 1
- Last day to drop classes with no grade recorded on transcript: Monday, May 3
- Last day to drop with “W” on transcript: Monday, May 17

Class Schedule and Readings. This is a tentative schedule and may change with notice.

Week	1	Topic/Reading	Presentations
Mon	Mar 29	Introduction to the course	
Wed	Mar 31	No Class	No Class
Fri	Apr 2	No Class - Good Friday	No Class
Week 2			
Mon	Apr 5	Determine Course Agenda & Reading Schedule Dolbeare, Introduction, pp. xxiii-xxxi Dolbeare, A Revolutionary Experiment, pp. 1-14	
Wed	Apr 7		
Fri	Apr 9	Handouts	
Week 3			
Democracy			
Mon	Apr 12	Dolbeare, 4. Ben Franklin, Great Law of Peace of the Iroquois Nations Dolbeare, 10. John Adams Dolbeare, 12. In Favor of Adoption of the Constitution, pp. 88-91 Dolbeare, 12. James Madison, Federalist No. 10, pp. 91-6 Dolbeare, 12. James Madison, Federalist No. 51, pp. 103-6 Dolbeare, 13. Against the Adoption of the Constitution, pp. 124 Dolbeare, 13. Sam Adams & Richard Henry Lee's letters, pp. 130-7	Intro – no pres Intro – no pres
Wed	Apr 14	Dolbeare, 15. Thomas Jefferson Dolbeare, 16. George Washington Dolbeare, 21. Henry David Thoreau Dolbeare, 24. John C. Calhoun	
Fri	Apr 16	Dolbeare, 31. Populism Dolbeare, 41. Progressivism Dolbeare, 43. Woodrow Wilson Dolbeare, 44. John Dewey Dolbeare, 49. Students for a Democratic Society	
Week 4			
Our Undemocratic Constitution			
Mon	Apr 19	Levinson, Introduction Levinson, Ch. 1 Levinson, Ch. 2, pp. 25-38.	Intro – no pres
Wed	Apr 21	Levinson, Ch. 2, pp. 38-77. Richie and Hill (1996) "Proportional Representation" (handout)	
Fri	Apr 23	Levinson, Ch. 3	
Week 5			
Our Undemocratic Constitution			
Mon	Apr 26	Levinson, Ch. 4 Dolbeare, 12. Alexander Hamilton, Federalist No. 78, pp.119-23	
Wed	Apr 28	Levinson, Ch. 5 Levinson, Ch. 6	
Fri	Apr 30	Levinson, Ch. 7 Levinson, Afterword	
Week 6			
Conservatism			
Mon	May 3	Ball & Dagger, "Conservatism" (handout) Dolbeare, 14. Alexander Hamilton Dolbeare, 17. John Marshall Dolbeare, 28. William Graham Sumner	Intro – no pres
Wed	May 5	Dolbeare, 30. Andrew Carnegie Dolbeare, Triumph of Neoconservatism: 1980–2006, pp. 537-40 Russell Kirk, "Why I Am A Conservative" (handout) Dolbeare, 55. Ronald Reagan Dolbeare, 57. Glenn C. Loury	Intro – no pres
Fri	May 7	<i>Peer Review for Essay 1 – Bring first draft of essay to class</i>	
Week 7			
Conservatism (continued). Liberalism			
Mon	May 10	Conservatism (continued) Dolbeare, 58. Paul Wolfowitz Dolbeare, 59. Patrick J. Buchanan Dolbeare, 63. George W. Bush Dolbeare, 69. Andrew J. Bacevich	
Wed	May 12	Liberalism Ball & Dagger, "Liberalism" (handout) Dolbeare, 35. Mark Twain Dolbeare, 40. Herbert Croly	Intro – no pres

		Dolbear, The Rise of the Positive State: 1900–1945, pp. 363-73 Dolbear, 45. Franklin Roosevelt - Commonwealth Club Address Dolbear, 45. Franklin Roosevelt - Campaign Address, Economic Bill of Rights	
Fri	May 14	Dolbear, Liberalism in the Post-War Period: 1945–1980, pp. 471-7 Dolbear, 47. John F. Kennedy Dolbear, 54. Summary of an Era: Amendments Ratified and Not Ratified Dolbear, 56. National Conference of Bishops	Intro – no pres
Week 8		Liberalism (continued). Anarchism & Socialism	
Mon	May 17	Liberalism (continued) Dolbear, A New Era in American Politics? 2006 and Beyond, pp. 594-99 Dolbear, 64. Eric and Liu Hanauer Dolbear, 65. Third Way Dolbear, 68. Al Gore Dolbear, 71. Barack Obama – 2004 Keynote, Father’s Day, Victory, Inaugural	Intro – no pres
Wed	May 19	Anarchism, Civil Disobedience, and Cynicism Dolbear, 27. Susan B. Anthony Dolbear, 34. Ambrose Bierce Dolbear, 38. Emma Goldman, “Anarchism: What It Really Stands For” Dolbear, 39. Eugene V. Debs, Speech to the Jury Dolbear, 70. Maureen Dowd	
Fri	May 21	Socialism Ball & Dagger, “Socialism” (handout) Dolbear, 19. Orestes Brownson Dolbear, 33. Henry Demarest Lloyd Dolbear, 39. Eugene V. Debs, “Revolutionary Unionism”	Intro – no pres
Week 9		Feminism, Sex, and Politics / Race & Ethnicity	
Mon	May 24	Sylvia A. Law “Women and the Framers,” pp 106-109 Dolbear, 10. John Adams: Correspondence With Abigail Adams Dolbear, 22. Elizabeth Cady Stanton Dolbear, 27. Susan B. Anthony Dolbear, 38. Emma Goldman, The Tragedy of Woman’s Emancipation	
Wed	May 26	Dolbear, 51. Betty Friedan Dolbear, 66. Hillary Rodham Clinton Dolbear, 67. Kathleen Hall Jamieson & Bill Moyers	
Fri	May 28	Race & Ethnicity Dolbear, 6. Benjamin Rush Dolbear, 12. James Madison, Federalist No. 54 Dolbear, 18. William Lloyd Garrison Dolbear, 23. Frederick Douglas	
Week 10		Race & Ethnicity (continued)	
Mon	May 31	No Class May 31– Memorial Day	No Class
Tue	Jun 1	<i>Tues, June 1 follows Mon Schedule</i> Dolbear, 25. George Fitzhugh Dolbear, 26. Abraham Lincoln Dolbear, 27. The Civil War Constitutional Amendments Dolbear, 37. W.E.B. Du Bois	
Wed	Jun 2	Dolbear, 46. Langston Hughes Dolbear, 48. Martin Luther King Dolbear, 60. Winona LaDuke Dolbear, 71. Barack Obama, Speech on Race, pp. 646-53	
Fri	Jun 4	Peer Review for Essay 2. Bring draft of essay to class	Peer Review
Week 11		Exam Week	
Mon	Jun 7	No Class	No Class
Wed	Jun 9	Second Essay Due	Essay Due