

**Political Science 1001.01**  
**Fundamental Issues of Politics**  
**Louisiana State University**  
**Spring 2018**

**Course Description:**

Behind the game of politics – campaigns and elections, pundits and commentators, policy analysts and advocates, behind even those who fight and die – lie certain fundamental issues that persist from generation to generation and that give political life its energy and form. In this course, we will begin to explore several such issues: the question of justice at war, the question of the role of government in relation to the economy, the question of constitutional design, and the question of the cultural foundations of political freedom.

We will read several books in this course, most of them written relatively recently, but we will also sample several great works of political philosophy. Lectures, quizzes, and tests will be designed around the reading assignments, which are given in the syllabus class by class. To succeed in the course, you should come to class having read the assignment for that day—a daily quiz will give you an incentive to keep up—and having thought about its significance for our study.

**Professor:**

**James R. Stoner, Jr.**  
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**Teaching Assistant:**

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**Office Hours:**

M, 1:30–2:30,  
W, 1:30–3:30, and by appointment  
Stubbs 214

Th, 10:30–11:30  
F, 1:00–2:00  
Stubbs 232

**Class Time, and Location:**



**SYLLABUS:**

Wed, Jan 10: Introduction

**I. War and Peace**

Fri, Jan 12:

[George Washington's Farewell Address \(1796\)](#)

[Woodrow Wilson, "Fourteen Points" \(8 January 1918\)](#)

[Ronald Reagan's 1982 Speech to the British Parliament](#)

[Barack Obama's Cairo Speech \(2009\)](#)

[Martin Luther King Day Break]

Wed, Jan 17: Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, chapter 1, 2

Fri, Jan 19: Walzer, chapters 3, 4

Mon, Jan 22: Walzer, chapter 5, 6

Wed, Jan 24: Walzer, chapters 8, 9

Fri, Jan 26: Walzer, chapters 12, 16

**II. Wealth and Poverty**

Mon, Jan 29: John Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action*, chapter 1

Wed, Jan 31: Dewey, chapter 2

Fri, Feb 2: Dewey, chapter 3

Mon, Feb 5: F.A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, Introduction, chapters 1-2

Wed, Feb 7

**Fri, Feb 23: Test**

### **III. First Principles**

Wed, Apr 4:

Yoram Hazony, "Nationalism and the Future of Western Freedom," *Mosaic*  
(September 2016)

**Fri, April 6: Test**

## **V. Character and Culture**

Mon, Apr 9: Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, pp. 25-61

Wed, Apr 11: Bloom, pp. 62-138

Fri, Apr 13: Bloom, pp. 336-382

Mon, Apr 16: Shelby Steele, *White Guilt*, pp. 3-56

Wed, Apr 18: Steele, pp. 57-110

Fri, Apr 20: Steele, pp. 113-181

Mon, Apr 23: Christina Hoff Sommers, *Freedom Feminism*, intro., ch. 1-2

Wed, Apr 25: Sommers, ch. 3, concl.

Fri, Apr 27: Barack Obama, "Farewell Address," January 10, 2017

James R. Stoner, Jr., "Why We Respect the Dignity of Politics," in  
James R. Stoner, Jr., and Harold James, eds., *The Thriving Society:  
On the Social Conditions of Human Flourishing*, pp. 81-96

**FINAL EXAMINATION: Friday, May 4 (10:00 a.m. -- noon)**