

Political Science 1001.01
Fundamental Issues of Politics
Louisiana State University
Fall 2021

Course Description:

Behind political conflict and the game of politics—campaigns and elections, pundits and commentators, policy analysts and advocates, protesters and authorities, 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, 1:00–2:30 p.m.,
F, 9:00–10:00 a.m., and by appointment
Stubbs 214

Class Time, and Location:

MWF 10:30–11:20 a.m. 143 Coates

Attendance: Attendance in class is expected, unless you are ill, have been required to isolate or quarantine due to covid-19, or find attendance impossible during a covid-outbreak on campus. For those who cannot attend in person, the lecture will be webcast synchronously via a link on Moodle and quizzes will be available that way, too.

Class Discussion: The instructor will pause for questions during lecture and encourages you to speak up. For students, the Chatham House Rule applies: no student question or comment made in class should be attributed to the speaker outside of class. Please show courtesy to one another, of course.

Course Materials:

The following books are required and are (or will soon be) available in the bookstore. Please obtain these specific editions so that we can all work from the same translations and/or page numbers. The books are listed in the order in which we will study them. Additional articles are available through the Moodle website, either in pdf or as an internet link; some materials are hyperlinked in the online version of the syllabus.

Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars* 5th ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2015) [ISBN: 978-0465052714]

John Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action* (1935; reprint, Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1999) [ISBN: 978-1573927536]

F.A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* Bruce Caldwell, ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007 [1944]) [ISBN: 978-0226320557]

Aristotle, *The Politics* 2nd ed., Carnes Lord, trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013) [ISBN: 978-0226921846]

David Wootton, ed., *Essential Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers* (Hackett, 2003) [ISBN: 978-0872206557]

Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1987; 2d ed., 2012) [ISBN: 978-1451683202]

Shelby Steele, *White Guilt: How Blacks and Whites Together Destroyed the Promise of the Civil Rights Era* (New York: Harper, 2006) [ISBN 978-0060578633]

Christina Hoff Sommers, *Freedom Feminism: Its Surprising History and Why It Matters Today* (Washington: AEI Books, 2013) [ISBN 978-0844772622]

NOTE: You will need to bring to class every day an electronic device that can access the internet (specifically, the Moodle site for the course): a smartphone, a tablet, or a laptop.

Grading:

Daily quizzes (open book; make-ups only if arranged beforehand)	25%
In-class test (Fri., Oct. 1)	20%
In-class test (Wed., Nov. 10)	20%
Final Exam (Sat., Dec. 11, 7:30-9:30 a.m.)	35%

Grading scale:**General Education Credit and the Integrative Learning Core:**

General education credit for the social sciences will be earned by students in this course, since our study shares the goals of the general education program at LSU. According to an earlier LSU catalogue, rather, they are means by which students learn to think, describe, interpret, and analyze the world. Their primary aim is to educate rather than train, and to instill a desire for life-

We are now mandated to add the following:
 students to make simple connections among ideas and experiences and across disciplines and perspectives. The LSU Integrative Learning Core (ILC) curriculum is designed to develop student abilities to transfer their learning to new situations, and demonstrate a sense of self as a learner and intellectual capacities associated with integrative learning in preparation for high competence and functionality in their post-baccalaureate careers. This course fulfills the BOR Area of Social/Behavioral Sciences and provides students experience with the ILC proficiency of Inquiry and Analysis.

SYLLABUS:

Mon., Aug. 23: Introduction

I. War and Peace

Wed., Aug. 25: Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, preface, chapter 1

Fri., Aug. 27: Walzer, chapters 2, 3

Mon., Aug. 30: Walzer, chapters 4, 6

Wed., Sept. 1: Walzer, chapters 8, 9

Fri., Sept. 3: Walzer, chapters 11, 12

[Labor Day Break]

Wed., Sept. 8: Walzer, chapters 14, 16

Fri., Sept. 10: Walzer, chapters 18, 19

Ellis and Michael Nelson, eds., *Debating the Presidency*, 4th ed. (CQ Press, 2018)

Fri., Nov. 5:

Journal of Democracy (January 2020)

Mon., Nov. 8: Henry Kissinger
Foreign Affairs (July/August 2001)

Foreign

Affairs (Sept/Oct 2001)

Wed., Nov. 10: Test

V. Character and Culture

Fri., Nov. 12: Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, pp. 25-61

Mon., Nov. 15: Bloom, pp. 62-81, 313-335

Wed., Nov. 17: Bloom, pp. 336-382

Fri., Nov. 19: Shelby Steele, *White Guilt*, pp. 3-56

Mon., Nov. 22: Steele, pp. 57-110

Wed., Nov. 24: Steele, pp. 113-181

[Thanksgiving Break]

Mon., Nov. 29: Christina Hoff Sommers, *Freedom Feminism*, intro., ch. 1-2

Wed., Dec. 1: Sommers, ch. 3, concl.

Fri., Dec. 3: _____ September 19, 1796

James R. Stoner, Jr., and Harold James, eds., *The Thriving Society: On the Social Conditions of Human Flourishing*, pp. 81-96

FINAL EXAMINATION: Saturday, December 11 (7:30-9:30 a.m.)