

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.

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M, 1:30–3:00,
W, F, 9:00-10:00, and by appointment
Stubbs 214

MW, 11:30–12:30
and by appointment
Stubbs 332

MWF 10:30–11:20 am 002 Lockett Hall

General education credit for the social sciences will be earned by students in this course, since our study aims at a number of the goals of the general education program at LSU. According to a LSU catalogue, “General education courses are not hurdles to be overcome; 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-long learning.” In the social sciences, the learning outcome sought is “an understanding of factors associated with global interdependence, including economic, political, psychological, cultural and linguistic forces.” From our initial study of just war theory, through our consideration of economic policy, constitutional design, and civic

culture, we keep an eye on the global dimension of the political issues we consider.

- Mon, Feb 29: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book 1
 Wed, Mar 2: Aristotle, Book 3
 Fri, Mar 4: Aristotle, Book 7
- Mon, Mar 7: Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651), chapters 13-14, 17-18
- Wed, Mar 9: John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (1690), chs. 5, 19
- Fri, Mar 11: The Declaration of Independence
James R. Stoner, Jr., “Is There a Political Philosophy in the
Declaration of Independence?,” *Intercollegiate Review* 40, no.
2 (Fall/Winter 2005)
- Mon, Mar 14: Constitution of the United States;
 “Address of the Minority of the Penn. Convention,” in Wootton,
 ed., *Essential Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers*, pp. 326-337,
 3-24
- Wed, Mar 16: *The Federalist* ##1, 10, 14-15, 39 in Wootton, pp. 140-143, 167-
 174, 179-190, 225-231
- Fri, Mar 18: *The Federalist* ##47-52 in Wootton, pp. 231-254
- [Spring Break]
- Mon, Mar 28: Brutus #15, *The Federalist* ##55, 57, 62, 70, 78 in Wootton, pp.
 92-96, 254-268, 275-289
- Wed, Mar 30:
 “Resolved: Political Parties Should Nominate Candidate for the Presidency
 through a National Primary,” in Richard J. Ellis & Michael Nelson, eds.,
Debating the Presidency: Conflicting Perspectives on the American Executive:
 Pro: Michael Nelson
 Con: Andrew E. Busch
- Fri, Apr 1:
Keith E. Whittington, “How to Read the Constitution” (2006)
William Brennan, “Constitutional Interpretation” (1985)
- Mon, Apr 4:
 “Is Democracy in Decline?” *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 26, no. 1 (Jan. 2015):
 Francis Fukuyama, “Why Is Democracy Performing So Poorly?” (pp. 11-
 20)
 Tarek Masoud, “Has the Door Closed on Arab Democracy?” (pp. 74-87)

Wed