

**Political Science 1001.01**  
**Fundamental Issues of Politics**  
**Louisiana State University**  
**Spring 2015**

**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.**  
[poston@lsu.edu](mailto:poston@lsu.edu)  
225-578-2538

Teaching Assistant:

**Cory Sukala**  
[cory.sukala@gmail.com](mailto:cory.sukala@gmail.com)

**Office Hours:**

M, 1:30-3:00,  
W, F, 9:00-10:00, and by appointment  
Stubbs 208B

MW, 12:00-1:00  
and by appointment  
Stubbs 216

**Class Time, and Location:**

MWF 10:30 – 11:20 am      143 Coates Hall

**General Education Credit:**

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. While our focus for much of the course is the American regime, we look as well at other cultures—for example, Greek antiquity and Renaissance England—and at forms of thought that do not take for granted the value of democracy or freedom.

### 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*, 4th ed. (New York: Basic Books, 2006) [ISBN: 978-0465037070]
- 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*, Carnes Lord, trans. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985) [ISBN: 978-0226026695]
- David Wootton, ed., *Essential Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers* (Hackett, 2003) [ISBN: 978-0-87220-655-7]
- 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]
- Peter Thiel, *Zero to One: Notes on Startups, or How to Build the Future* (New York: Crown Business, 2014) [ISBN 978-0804139298]

NOTE: You will need TWO Scantron cards for the daily quizzes, beginning on Friday, January 16. Additional Scantrons will be needed for the exams.

### Grading:

Daily quizzes (make-ups only if arranged beforehand)	25%
In-class test (Fri., Feb. 27)	20%
In-class test (Wed., Apr 1)	20%
Final Exam (Sat, May 9, 7:30-9:30 a.m.)	35%

### Grading scale:

90%-100% = A ; 80%-89.9% = B ; 70%-79.9% = C ; 60%-69.9% = D ; <60% = F

## SYLLABUS:

Wed, Jan 14: Introduction

### I. War and Peace

Fri, Jan 16:

Washington's Farewell Address (1796)

Woodrow Wilson, "Fourteen Points" (8 January 1918)

Ronald Reagan's 1982 Speech to the British Parliament

[Martin Luther King Day Break]

Wed, Jan 21: Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, chapter 1, 2

Fri, Jan 23: Walzer, chapters 3, 4

Mon, Jan 26: Walzer, chapter 5, 6

Wed, Jan 28: Walzer, chapters 8, 9

Fri, Jan 30: Walzer, chapters 12, 16

### II. Wealth and Poverty

Mon, Feb 2: John Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action*, chapter 1

Wed, Feb 4: Dewey, chapter 2

Fri, Feb 6: Dewey, chapter 3

Mon, Feb 9: F.A. Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, Introduction, chapters 1-2

Wed, Feb 11: Hayek, chapters 3-5

Fri, Feb 13: Hayek, chapters 6-8

[Mardi Gras Break]

Fri, Feb 20: Hayek, chapters 9, 14

Mon, Feb 23:

FDR, "Commonwealth Club Address" (1932)

FDR, "State of the Union Address" (1944) ("Second Bill of Rights")

Reagan, "First Inaugural Address" (1981)

Reagan, State of the Union Address" (1984)

Wed., Feb 25:

Thomas Piketty & Emmanuel Saez, "Inequality in the Long Run," *Science* 344 (2014): 838-843

Tyler Cowen, "Capital Punishment: Why a Global Tax on Wealth Won't End Inequality," *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2014)

**Fri, Feb 27: Test**

### III. First Principles

- Mon, Mar 2: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book 1  
 Wed, Mar 4: Aristotle, Book 3  
 Fri, Mar 6: Aristotle, Book 7
- Mon, Mar 9: [Thomas Hobbes, \*Leviathan\* \(1651\), chapters 13-15, 17-18](#)
- Wed, Mar 11: [John Locke, \*Second Treatise of Government\* \(1690\), chs. 5, 19](#)
- Fri, Mar 13: [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)

### IV. Forming and Re-Forming Government

- Mon, Mar 16: 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 18: *The Federalist* ##1, 10, 14-15, 39 in Wootton, pp. 140-143, 167-174, 179-190, 225-231
- Fri, Mar 20: *The Federalist* ##47-52 in Wootton, pp. 231-254
- Mon, Mar 23: Brutus #15, *The Federalist* ##55, 57, 62, 70, 78 in Wootton, pp. 92-96, 254-268, 275-289
- Wed, Mar 25:  
[Keith E. Whittington, “How to Read the Constitution” \(2006\)](#)  
[William Brennan, “Constitutional Interpretation” \(1985\)](#)
- Fri, Mar 27:  
[Henry Kissinger, “The Pitfalls of Universal Jurisdiction,” \*Foreign Affairs\* \(July/August 2001\)](#)  
[Kenneth Roth, “The Case for Universal Jurisdiction,” \*Foreign Affairs\* \(Sept/Oct 2001\)](#)
- Mon, Mar 30:  
 “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, Apr 1: Test**

[Spring Break]

## V. Character and Culture

Mon, Apr 13: Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind*, pp. 25-61

Wed, Apr 15: Bloom, pp. 62- 138

Fri, Apr 17: Bloom, pp. 336-382

Mon, Apr 20: Shelby Steele, *White Guilt*, pp. 3-56

Wed, Apr 22: Steele, pp. 57-110

Fri, Apr 24: Steele, pp. 113-181

Mon, Apr 27: Peter Thiel, *Zero to One*, pp. 1-58

Wed, Apr 29: Thiel, pp. 59-117

Fri, May 1: Thiel, pp. 118-151, 173-195

**FINAL EXAMINATION: Saturday, May 9 (7:30-9:30 a.m. )**