

# America's Founding Principles

Spring 2012

## Constitutional Principles: Core Texts and Ideas GOV 312P Unique # 38575

**Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:30-4:45 P.M.**  
**Location: Parlin 201**

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Office Hours:  
Tuesdays and Fridays 11-12:30  
in Batts 1.118

Office Hours (tentative): Mondays 12-3

### **This course fulfills the second half of the legislative requirement for Government.**

This course examines the principles that lie at the core of the American political system. Why do we, as Americans, stand for liberty, equality, and democracy? How did these come to be our principles? How has our commitment to these principles manifested itself in our political history? How has our understanding of these principles changed over time, and what do these principles demand of us today?

We will begin by considering the theoretical foundations of our liberal democracy in the thought of John Locke. Then we will consider how the political theory of modern liberalism found expression in the American Founding. We will examine the considerations that led the Founders to design the Constitution as they did, as well the arguments of those who opposed the Constitution, the Anti-Federalists. We will turn from the Founding period to Alexis de Tocqueville's great work *Democracy in America*, and consider his analysis of American political life and of the American character more generally. After that, we will consider how liberty and equality became thematic issues in the debate over slavery. We will examine how the ways in which Americans conceived of liberty and equality changed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. And we will conclude by considering some of the most compelling and provocative assessments of American life today.

The course aims first to give students a better understanding of the origins and evolution of American principles and beliefs about politics. Second, it aims to provide students with a theoretical framework that will allow them to think critically about those principles and beliefs. Finally, it seeks to enable them to make informed judgments about how well America has achieved its ideals.

### **Required Texts (4):**

1. COURSE READER, available at Jenn's Copying and Binding, 2518 Guadalupe St., at the corner of Guadalupe and Dean Keeton, tel. 482-0779.

2. *Second Treatise of Government* by John Locke. Hackett edition, edited by C.B. Macpherson.
3. *The Federalist Papers* by John Jay, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton. Signet Classics edition, edited by Clinton Rossiter.
4. *Democracy in America*, Volume Two, by Alexis de Tocqueville. Vintage Classics edition.

### **Grading and Requirements:**

<u>Option 1 (No paper):</u>	<u>Option 2 (With paper):</u>
Midterm Exam: 40%	Midterm Exam: 20%
Pop Quizzes: 10%	Pop Quizzes: 10%
Final Exam: 50%	Final Exam: 30%
	Paper: 40%

**Exams:** The mid-term will be an in-class examination comprised of an essay and short answer questions. The final exam will be cumulative. It will consist of an essay section, a short answer section, and some quote identifications. For both exams, I will announce in advance a list of themes from which the essay questions will be drawn.

The **optional paper** will be assigned in the second half of the term. I will distribute a list of possible questions. The task of the paper will be to analyze and/or evaluate the readings in the course. Papers must be between 4-6 double-spaced, typed pages, in 12- point font. Papers that do not meet these specifications will not be accepted. You must *not* use secondary sources for this paper. Plagiarism will result in an automatic F. Since this paper is optional, late papers will not be accepted. Papers may not be submitted by email. They must be submitted in hard copy form. If you choose to submit a paper, your grade will be calculated according to “Option 2” described above; the grade you receive on the paper will be counted toward your final grade.

**Unannounced pop quizzes:** These quizzes will be multiple choice. They will be designed to reward you for doing the reading. You will be expected to bring a #2 pencil to each class. Makeup quizzes will not be given. However, I will drop your lowest quiz grade.

**Attendance and Classroom Etiquette:** I will take attendance frequently, either by passing around an attendance sheet or by taking roll, either at the beginning or at the end of class. On the days on which there is a quiz, attendance will be registered by handing in the quiz. Absences will be excused with a doctor’s note only. **Students with 4 or more unexcused absences will be docked a letter grade for the course.** *Example: the grade of a student with a B+ average who has four or more unexcused absences will be a C+.*

Much of the lecture will proceed by way of textual analysis. Frequently, I will quote from the readings and refer to page numbers, so you should bring the assigned reading to every class.

**Laptops, cell phones, blackberries, and gadgets of any sort must be turned off during class.** If you have a special need for a laptop, please explain that need to me.

**Supplemental Instruction:** The TA for the course, Lewis Fallis, will offer Supplemental Instruction in the form of **optional weekly discussion sections** on a day and time to be announced shortly after the start of the course. These discussion sections are a great way to get additional help with challenging material, discuss the ideas and themes of the course, and to get to know your TA.

**Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd>.

Notification of a need for disability accommodations must be given to the professor at least 14 days prior to a paper due date or exam.

**Notice regarding accommodations for religious holidays:** By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**Emergency Evacuation Policy:** In the event of a fire or other emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate a building rapidly. Upon the activation of a fire alarm or the announcement of an emergency in a university building, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building without instruction to do so from the Austin Fire Department, University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Students should familiarize themselves with all the exit doors of each room and building they occupy at the university, and should remember that the nearest exit routes may not be the same as the way they typically enter buildings.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructors in writing during the first week of class. Information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at <http://www.utexas.edu/emergency>.

**Academic Honesty:** In all of your work for this course, you are expected to know and to adhere to University of Texas policies regarding academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of F for the course.

Here is a link to the academic honor code: <http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html>.

**Course Schedule:** “CR” means “Course Reader”

*Note: This course schedule is approximate. I will announce the official reading assignment for the next class at the beginning of each class. So be sure to listen carefully at the beginning of each lecture! If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out the precise reading assignment for the next class.*

January 17	Introduction
January 19	John Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapters 1-4
January 24	John Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapters 1-4; beginning of Chapter 5
January 26	John Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapter 5
January 31	John Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapters 6-7
February 2	John Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapters 8-12
February 7	<i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapter 18-end
February 9	John Locke, <i>Letter Concerning Toleration</i> (In CR)
February 14	<i>Declaration of Independence</i> (In <i>The Federalist Papers</i> Reader) <i>Articles of Confederation</i> (In <i>Federalist Papers</i> Reader)
February 16	Federalist Papers 1, 2, 9
February 21	Federalist Paper 10
February 23	Federalist Papers 49 and 51
February 28	Anti-Federalists <i>Centinel</i> I and <i>Brutus</i> I (In CR)
March 1	Midterm Review
<b>March 6</b>	<b>Midterm Exam</b>
March 8	Alexis de Tocqueville, <i>Democracy in America</i> , Volume II, Book II, Chapters 1-5
March 20	Alexis de Tocqueville, <i>Democracy in America</i> , Volume II, Book II, Selections

March 22	Alexis de Tocqueville, <i>Democracy in America</i> , Volume II, Book II, Selections
March 27	Alexis de Tocqueville, <i>Democracy in America</i> , Volume II, Book II, Selections
March 29	Alexis de Tocqueville, <i>Democracy in America</i> , Volume II, Book III, Selections
April 3	Alexis de Tocqueville, <i>Democracy in America</i> , Volume II, Book IV, Selections <b>Optional Paper Assigned</b>
April 5	Abraham Lincoln, “A House Divided” Speech (In CR)
April 10	Selections from the Lincoln – Douglas Debates (In CR)
April 12	Henry David Thoreau, “The Law of God and the Law of the Land” Frederick Douglass, “Fourth of July Oration” (In CR)
April 17	Abraham Lincoln, Address at Cooper Institute (In CR) <b>Optional Paper Due</b>
April 19	John Stuart Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , Chapter One, “Introductory” selections from Chapter Two, and Chapter Three, “Of Individuality” (In CR)
April 24	Theodore Roosevelt, “The Man in the Arena: Citizenship in a Republic,” (In CR)
April 26	Woodrow Wilson, <i>The New Freedom</i> , Selections (In CR)
May 1	Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, “A World Split Apart” (In CR)
May 3	Robert Goldwin, “Of Men and Angels: A Search for Morality in the Constitution” (In CR)

**Final Exam: Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 9 am-12 noon**