

POLSCI 290B
AMERICAN POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES: LEFT, RIGHT, & BEYOND (4CR)
TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS, 4:00-5:15PM
FALL 2018

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Course Description

What defines American liberalism and conservatism and how has each evolved since the founding of the United States? What about more radical voices on the left and right, and those Americans whose political worldviews do not neatly fit either basic orientation? We consider a diverse set of perspectives, both with respect to ideological commitments and to the identities (gender, race, class, etc.) of the communicators encountered, while paying careful attention to the historical contexts in which these perspectives have been forged.

Throughout the course, we focus on core concepts, the ideas that form the fundamental building blocks of ideologies (e.g., liberty, justice, equality, security, morality, democracy, progress, loyalty, dissent). We ask how American political philosophers, policy-makers, and commentators vary in the degree to which they emphasize each concept, how they interpret each, and how their values and beliefs provide a prism through which to view policy debates and partisan conflicts. Along the way, we reflect upon the degree to which elite perspectives may influence the political visions and rhetoric of ordinary Americans and whether – in the age of social media – ideas and rhetorical innovations may also flow upward from the mass public to its leaders. Finally, we consider the dynamics by which certain ideas become labeled as too extreme and how this may change over time, with formerly radical ideas normalized and previously accepted perspectives considered beyond the bounds of acceptable debate.

This is a general education course, fulfilling the **Historical Studies (HS) Gen Ed** designation. This means not only that there are no prerequisites to this course, but also that the goals of this course may be somewhat different than those of other political science courses. Although we focus on political ideas, events, and movements, the course is not strictly a traditional political science course. Students will be encouraged to devote particular attention to the ways in which our current ideological frameworks have evolved from earlier idea patterns. We will examine how the meanings of key concepts have changed or remained the same over time, consider the role of formal institutions such as political parties and news media in these developments, and identify key events and moments of transition that have brought us to our current historical moment. Finally, we will trace the roots of contemporary ideological conflicts and ask how new ideologies emerge (or, alternatively, whether all belief systems are formed by simply reshuffling of old ones).

Goals of the class:

- **Understand** the origins and evolution of American ideologies, prominent political values, and beliefs;
- **Analyze** the patterns of values and beliefs that tend to be shared by large numbers of people;
- **Appreciate** both the diversity of Americans' publicly articulated philosophies and the features that are widely shared across ideological divides;
- **Think critically** about which sorts of people are given priority under liberalism and conservatism and who find themselves excluded, at times challenging your own preconceived notions;
- **Compare** the meanings of conservatism, liberalism, progressivism, and other systems of thought at different points in history, and how they relate to the political parties of the day;
- **Discover** what differentiates mainstream ideologies from more radical or extreme visions and how the location of this boundary may change over time;
- Be able to **identify** the assumptions, and evaluate the claims and arguments offered by authors, commentators, and activists from the left, middle, and right of the political spectrum;
- **Connect** the ideologies prominent in earlier U.S. periods to those being articulated today.
- **Communicate** persuasively and effectively in writing and orally, conveying the results of all of the above considerations.

Assignments

Attendance and Participation	15%
Two Short Essays (1000-2000 words each)	35%
Quiz #1 (short quiz in class)	5%
Quiz #2 (long quiz in class)	15%
Final Paper	30%

You should expect to do more work for this 4-credit course than you would for a 3-credit class, including a **substantial amount of weekly reading**. Your **attendance** in class and discussion section meetings is expected. While I will not explicitly take attendance during lecture, I consider your use of the iClicker response system as an indicator of participation. Additionally, I will often begin class by having you respond to a writing prompt with a 5-minute reaction meant to help you transition into an appropriate mindset for class. These will not be graded, but will be collected and may later be considered as evidence of effort in cases where a student is struggling to pass the course. Discussion section leaders *will* take attendance and pass along feedback on student participation to me. If you miss more than three discussion section meetings, this will have a severe effect on your attendance and participation grade. Overall, I will grade attendance and participation holistically. You do not need to notify me or the teaching assistants if you will miss class, but please do get in touch if you will be out for an extended period.

Twice during the semester, you will submit a **short essay (1000-2000 words)** on a topic provided on Moodle the previous Friday. These two essays will be graded on a 0-100 scale based on a *rubric that will be posted on Moodle*. Your higher grade of the two will count for 20% and your lower grade for 15% of the final course grade.

A **final quiz**, on the last day of class, will serve as a check on your basic knowledge of factual information from the course. While the point of the course is not simply to learn a bunch of facts, it is important that you develop a familiarity with the relevant history, terminology, key figures, and political movements that serve as building blocks for talking intelligently about ideology in the United States. The final quiz will be closed-book, no notes. Questions will draw primarily from material covered in lecture and key ideas in

readings. In order to give you a sense of the kinds of questions that will appear on this final quiz, you will also take a **brief quiz** in class on Oct. 2, based on material from the first three weeks of the course.

A **final paper** will serve as a capstone project for the course, allowing you to apply various modes of analysis in describing and evaluating ideological texts on your own. You have two options:

- Option #1 **Ideological Analysis** Examine an ideology or ideological splinter group not covered in depth in class (e.g. radical environmentalism, anarcho-syndicalism, Christian communalism, anti-technology neo-Luddites) and research its history, commitments, and influences. Make sure to explain it in terms of values and premises, commitments, and assumptions. How does it connect to issues, policies, and interpretations of events?
- Option #2 **Ideological Comparison** You will choose from a list of pairs, comparing and contrasting related but distinct ideologies encountered in specific political magazines or websites. What values and premises do they have in common? What core values do they define, interpret, or apply in different ways? Among their shared beliefs, do they place different levels of emphasis on any, indicating different philosophical priorities? What are the consequences of any differences for their positions on policy issues?

Final Paper - steps

Topic selection – Friday, Sept. 21 in section
Partial Bibliography – Friday, Oct. 12 in section
Rough Draft – Friday, Nov. 30 in section
Final paper – Monday, Dec. 17 at 9am on Moodle

Essays (Upload to Moodle and print out copy to hand in at the start of discussion section)

Essay #1 – Friday, Sept. 28th in discussion section
Essay #2 – Friday, Nov. 2nd in discussion section

Knowledge Quizzes

Quiz #1 – Tuesday, Oct. 2nd in class (20-25 minutes)
Quiz #2 – Tuesday, Dec. 11th in class (entire class period)

Extra Credit – Attend a talk for 1pt towards final grade (up to 3)

Event #1 – Panel: Reawakening the Black Radical Imagination. 9/6 6pm, Mahar Auditorium
<https://www.umass.edu/history/event/feinberg-series-opening-event-reawakening-black-radical-imagination>
Event #2 – Free Speech on Campus, Nadine Strossen. 9/27 4-5pm, Old Chapel Great Room
<https://polsci.umass.edu/event/dean-alfange-lecture-free-speech-campus>
Event #3 – TBA

Accommodation Statement

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements.

Academic Honesty Statement

Since the integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in scholarship and research, academic honesty is required of all students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Instructors should take reasonable steps to address academic misconduct. Any person who has reason to believe that a student has committed academic dishonesty should bring such information to the attention of the appropriate course instructor as soon as possible. Instances of academic dishonesty not related to a specific course should be brought to the attention of the appropriate department Head or Chair. Since students are expected to be familiar with this policy and the commonly accepted standards of academic integrity, ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent (http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/).

Grading Scale

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89.9	C+ 77-79.9	D+ 67-69.9	
A 93-96.9	B 83-86.9	C 73-76.9	D 63-66.9	F < 60
A- 90-92.9	B- 80-82.9	C- 70-72.9	D- 60-62.9	

Grade Appeals

You may appeal any grade you receive. To appeal a grade, you must wait 24 hours after the work has been returned to you. Then submit the original work as well as any feedback you received on it to the instructor, along with a petition in writing detailing what errors you thought were made and what you think should happen. In the case of a subjectively graded assignment, someone who did not grade the original work (e.g. professor instead of T.A. or vice-versa) will then re-grade the assignment. Your grade may increase or decrease as a result of the re-grade.

The following books should be acquired, either in ebook format or hard copy format. I have also placed a copy on reserve at W.E.B. Du Bois Library. All other readings will be provided on Moodle.

1. Dionne Jr, E. J. (2013). *Our Divided Political Heart: The Battle for the American Idea in an Age of Discontent*. Bloomsbury Publishing USA. (Paperback or ebook)
<https://umass.amazon.com/Our-Divided-Political-Heart-Discontent/dp/1608194388>
<https://umass.amazon.com/Our-Divided-Political-Heart-Discontent-ebook/dp/B007N6JDEI>
2. Marietta, M. (2012). *A Citizen's Guide to American Ideology: Conservatism and Liberalism in Contemporary Politics*. Routledge. (Paperback or ebook)
<https://umass.amazon.com/Citizens-Guide-American-Ideology-Conservatism-ebook/dp/B007ZZRVL4>
<https://umass.amazon.com/Citizens-Guide-American-Ideology-Conservatism/dp/0415899001/>
3. Dicker, R. C. (2016). *A History of US Feminisms*. Seal Press. (Paperback or ebook)
<https://umass.amazon.com/History-U-S-Feminisms-Rory-Dicker/dp/1580055885>
<https://umass.amazon.com/History-U-S-Feminisms-Seal-Studies-ebook/dp/B016TX59D4>
4. Harris-Lacewell, M. V. (2010). *Barbershops, Bibles, and BET: Everyday Talk and Black Political Thought*. Princeton University Press. (Paperback or ebook)
<https://umass.amazon.com/Barbershops-Bibles-BET-Everyday-Political/dp/0691126097>
<https://umass.amazon.com/Barbershops-Bibles-BET-Everyday-Political-ebook/dp/B003TSEL8C>
5. Goldberg, J. (2012). *The Tyranny of Clichés: How Liberals Cheat in the War of Ideas*. Penguin. (Paperback or ebook)
<https://umass.amazon.com/Tyranny-Clichés-Liberals-Cheat-Ideas/dp/1595231021>
<https://umass.amazon.com/Tyranny-Clichés-Liberals-Cheat-Ideas-ebook/dp/B0064VHWK0>

Schedule. The following is intended to give students a rough outline of the reading and topics for the semester. The particular reading assignments may change from those listed below, so please use the syllabus as only a rough guide for particular topics and readings. The **official reading assignments and key questions** to help guide your reading **will be posted on Moodle each week**, so please refer to the Moodle calendar rather than the syllabus to stay on top of assigned reading and key questions. The assignment dates listed should be considered final unless we decide by class consensus for a change to avoid some unanticipated conflict.

Assigned readings should be in process during Tuesday and Thursday classes and completed by the time of discussion section on Fridays. Material covered in lecture will include broader historical context than what may be contained in readings and draw your attention to key themes and questions you should have in mind while reading assigned material.

All readings not in the required books will be provided, along with links to videos and other resources, on Moodle.

Tentative Schedule: See Moodle each week for assigned reading

PART I	Long View: Conflicting American Visions
Tuesday, Sept. 4	Revolutionary, Founding, & Early Republic Ideologies (1760s-1815) Party Ideologies: Federalists vs. Jeffersonian Democratic-Republicans
Thursday, Sept. 6	Ideologies of National Expansion, Slavery, and Abolition (1815-1861) Party Ideologies: Jacksonian Democrats vs. Whigs/Republicans
<u>Read</u>	Dionne, <i>Our Divided Political Heart</i> : Intro, Ch. 1, 2, 3, 6
Tuesday, Sept. 11	What is Ideology?
Thursday, Sept. 13	Configurations of Values & Premises
<u>Read</u>	Marietta, <i>A Citizen's Guide to American Ideology</i> : Intro, Ch. 1–13
Tuesday, Sept. 18	Reconstruction and Gilded Age Ideologies (1865-1892)
Thursday, Sept. 20	Reformist & Revolutionary Backlash (1892-1920) (Populists, Progressives, Socialists, Anarchists, & Communists)
<u>Read</u>	TBA, including Sumner, Carnegie, People's Party Platform, H. George, W.J. Bryan, Croly, E. Goldman, E. Debs, Du Bois Final Paper Topic Due Friday, Sept. 21 in section and Moodle
Tuesday, Sept. 25	FDR, New Deal Liberalism, & the Long Consensus
Thursday, Sept. 27	The Birth of Modern Conservatism & the Struggle to Define It
<u>Read</u>	TBA, including FDR, Hoover, Rossiter, Kirk, Buckley Essay #1 Due Friday, Sept. 28 in section and Moodle
PART II	Identities & Ideologies
Tuesday, Oct. 2	Who's Playing "Identity Politics"? Unity vs. Pluralism Quiz #1 in class Tuesday, Oct. 2 (20-25 minutes)
Thursday, Oct. 4	Second & Third Wave Feminism
<u>Read</u>	Dicker, <i>History of U.S. Feminisms</i> (selected chapters TBA)

Tuesday, Oct. 9	No Class – Monday Schedule
Thursday, Oct. 11	African-American Ideologies
<u>Read</u>	Harris-Lacewell, <i>Barbershops, Bibles, and BET</i> (chapters TBA) Partial Bibliography Due Fri., Oct. 12 in section and Moodle
PART III	Conservatives & Far Right Challengers
	<u>1. The Conservative Movement (1953-1968)</u>
Tuesday, Oct. 16	Fusionism & <i>The National Review</i>
Thursday, Oct. 18	Goldwater & Nixon; Security, Law & Order, & Southern Strategy
<u>Read</u>	TBA, including F. Meyer, B. Goldwater, R. Reagan, excerpts from R. Perlstein
	<u>2. Conservatives in Power (1980-2008)</u>
Tuesday, Oct. 23	The Reagan Years: Conservatism in Theory vs. Practice
Thursday, Oct. 25	Dems Move Right: Free Trade, Welfare Reform, & Super-predators
<u>Read</u>	TBA, including Reagan, George Will, Bill Clinton
PART IV	How Ideologies Characterize One Another
Tuesday, Oct. 30	Naïve and Misguided “Left-Wing Liberals”
Thursday, Nov. 1	Evil Leftists Hate America and Want to Destroy It
<u>Read</u> <u>View</u>	Goldberg, <i>The Tyranny of Clichés</i> (selected chapters) Ben Shapiro video Essay #2 Due Friday, Nov. 2 in section and on Moodle
Tuesday, Nov. 6	Greedy and Heartless “Far-Right Conservatives”
Thursday, Nov. 8	Conservatives Are Racist, Sexist, Fascists, Creating a Dystopia
<u>Read</u>	TBA, including McGowan, magazine articles, and blog posts

PART V | Ideologies & Polarization in the 21st Century: TOPICS

Tuesday, Nov. 13 Ron Paul, Modern Libertarians, and “South Park Conservatives”

Thursday, Nov. 15 Political Correctness and Free Speech on Campus

Read TBA

Tuesday, Nov. 27 The Contemporary American Far Left

Thursday, Nov. 29 New Populisms of Right and Left: Tea Party & Occupy Movements

Read TBA, including Dionne, Ch. 10
Draft of Final Paper Due Fri., Nov. 30 in section

Tuesday, Dec. 4 The Alt-Right

Thursday, Dec. 6 What Is Trumpism? Is There Such a Thing?

Read TBA

Tuesday, Dec. 11 **FINAL IN-CLASS QUIZ**

Monday, Dec. 17 **Final Paper Due at 9am** on Moodle