

**COMMERCIALISM, IDENTITY, AND DIFFERENCE**  
**American Political Thought**

Political Science 4603  
American Political Thought  
Fall 2009

Hours: MW 2:00 – 4:00  
TTh 1:00 – 3:00  
(or by appointment)

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**PURPOSE:** The American founders put it this way: freedom and minority rights are best protected by a large extended commercial republic. Commercial culture, diversity, and justice, they claimed, would all thrive together. The results are mixed. The tie that binds Americans together and protects their freedoms is commerce, and commercialism has provided freedom and opportunity for millions. Yet commercialism has also aided and abetted great evils, like slavery and near-genocide against a people judged to be insufficiently commercial, indigenous Americans. The American political identity has often been achieved at the expense of those who do not easily fit its imperatives. This course is designed to introduce students to major debates surrounding diversity and commercial culture, to familiarize them with the problems they pose for justice, to offer them conceptual strategies for living ethically amid diversity and commercialism, and to glimpse, perhaps, a new yet unapproachable America.

**MATERIALS:**

- BUTLER, Octavia, *Kindred*
- TOCQUEVILLE, Alexis *Democracy in America*
- JOHANNSEN, *The Lincoln-Douglas Debates*
- HAMILTON, MADISON & JAY, *The Federalist*,
- FRANKLIN (Ed.), *Three Negro Classics [Up From Slavery & Souls of Black Folk]*

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Through a series of short papers students will demonstrate a superior ability to read, analyze and discuss major texts and ideas in the American political tradition, including concepts like freedom, commercialism, individualism, community, democracy, and justice.

**RELATION TO MISSION:** The course enhances students= knowledge pertaining to American Political Thought comparing differing visions of American freedom. Students demonstrate the ability to interpret political theory texts and to argue for their interpretations in writing.

**REQUIREMENTS:** The emphasis in the course will be on close textual analysis rather than on research. Writing is a very important part of this course. WAC is discussed more fully below. There will be four essay assignments, six to eight pages, and an essay final exam. The four essays will cover the debates represented in the class readings. They will be weighted as follows:

|            |          |
|------------|----------|
| Essays     | 20% each |
| Final exam | 20%      |

**Plagiarism will be rewarded with an F for the course.**

| <u>Week</u> | <u>Date</u> | <u>Assignment</u>                                   |
|-------------|-------------|---|
| I           | Aug 14      | Introduction: Declaration of Independence (handout) |

|      |                                |   |
|------|--------------------------------|---|
| II   | Aug 17<br>Aug 19<br>Aug 21     | BUTLER, <i>Kindred</i><br>BUTLER, <i>Kindred</i><br>BUTLER, <i>Kindred</i>  |
| III  | Aug 24<br>Aug 26<br>Aug 28     | <b>1<sup>ST</sup> Essay Due</b><br>Arendt, “Foundation II: <i>Novus Ordo Saeclorum</i> pp. 179-195. (handout)<br>Arendt, “Foundation II: <i>Novus Ordo Saeclorum</i> pp. 195-215. |
| IV   | Aug 31<br><br>Sep 1<br>Sep 3   | <b>1<sup>st</sup> (Alternative) Essay Due</b><br>Federalist Papers Nos. 1-10, 15,<br>Federalist Papers Nos. 23, 24, 37, 38, 39, 40.<br>Federalist Papers No. 51                   |
| V.   | Sep 7<br>Sep 9<br>Sep 11       | Federalist Papers Nos. 52-66.<br>Federalist Papers Nos. 67-77.<br>Federalist Papers Nos. 78-85.   |
| VI   | Sep 14<br>Sep 16<br>Sep 18     | Wolin, “Tending and intending a Constitution” (handout)<br>Wolin, “Montesquieu and Publius: The Crisis of Reason (handout)<br>Wolin, “E Pluribus Unum” (handout)                  |
| VII  | Sep 21<br><br>Sep 23<br>Sep 25 | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Essay Due</b><br>TOCQUEVILLE pp. 39-61.<br>TOCQUEVILLE pp. 62-100<br>TOCQUEVILLE pp. 100-137  |
| VIII | Sep 28<br>Sep 30<br>Oct 2      | TOCQUEVILLE, pp. 111-142<br>TOCQUEVILLE, pp. 143-184.<br>TOCQUEVILLE, pp. 189-219.  |
| IX   | Oct 5<br>Oct 7<br>Oct 9        | TOCQUEVILLE, pp. 221-249; 253-260.<br>TOCQUEVILLE, pp. 289-313.<br>Connolly, “Tocqueville, Territory and Violence.” (handout)   |
| X    | Oct 12<br>Oct 14               | Walters, “Constitutionalism and Political Morality” (handout)<br>Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience” (handout)<br>Emerson, “Self-Reliance” “Politics” (handout)                         |
| XI   | Oct 19<br>Oct 21<br>Oct 23     | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Essay Due</b><br>Storing, “Slavery and the Moral Foundations” (handout)<br>Storing, “Slavery and the Moral Foundations” (handout)                               |
| XII  | Oct 26<br>Oct 28<br>Oct 30     | JOHANNSEN, pp. 3-36.<br>JOHANNSEN, pp. 37-74.<br>JOHANNSEN, pp. 75-161.   |
| XIII | Nov 2<br><br>Nov 4<br>Nov 6    | JOHANNSEN, pp. 162-244.<br><br>JOHANNSEN, pp. 245-329.<br><b>4<sup>th</sup> Essay Due</b>   |

|     |        |                                    |
|-----|--------|------------------------------------|
| XIV | Nov 9  | FRANKLIN, (Washington) pp. 29-91   |
|     | Nov 11 | FRANKLIN, (Washington) pp. 91-157  |
|     | Nov 13 | FRANKLIN, (Washington) pp. 157-205 |
| XV  | Nov 16 | FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 209-239.    |
|     | Nov 18 | FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 240-270.    |
|     | Nov 20 | FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 270-301     |
| XVI | Nov 23 | FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 301-337.    |
|     | Nov 30 | FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 301-337.    |
|     | Dec 2  | FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 337-354.    |
|     | Dec 4  | FRANKLIN, (DuBois) pp. 337-389.    |

**Final Exam: Wednesday, December 9, 8:00 – 10:00.**

No early exams, no special deals

### Writing Across the Curriculum

MISSION STATEMENT: “Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) is based on the premise that students learn most effectively and thoroughly about a subject through writing about it. Thus WAC encourages writing intensive courses in all disciplines ranging from philosophy to physics. Through various methods of integrating writing as a tool for *both learning and communication*, the student will be better able to succeed both academically as well as professionally.” In other words, this is not make-work, but a source of your future strength and confidence.

OFFICIAL REQUIREMENT: “All students majoring in disciplines in the School of Arts and Sciences will be required to satisfy the requirements for WAC to graduate.” To fulfill this requirement students must take English 1101 and 1102 and at least two 3000/4000 level WAC courses. At least one of these upper level courses must be in the major. Thus, this course is one of the four courses you need to complete this requirement.

OUR COURSE: WAC usually comes in two flavors: Writing to Learn and Writing to Communicate. We will do some of both. Writing to Learn assignments will include submitting responses/questions on Wednesdays. Writing to Communicate assignments will include the take-home tests and final exam.

### **Writing to Learn**

*“Writing to Learn exercises will help students realize the idea-generating potential of writing and its value even when it is not graded. Primarily, these writing strategies help students focus their ideas as they prepare to write for communication. [Also] students will gain practice in the sort of single-draft writing expected of them in exam situations or quick-draft career writing projects.”*

Informal impromptu writing will be integrated into the course.

## Writing to Communicate: Formal Essays

*“Writing Across the Curriculum courses require at least one formal writing assignment appropriate to the discipline. . . . The paper should be evaluated on content, form, grammar, and spelling. It should also represent a sustained effort on the part of the student.”*

Students will write original papers on the course material. These assignments meet WAC requirements for writing to communicate. In these assignments, you wish to communicate your understanding of the material and to argue for your point of view. It is formal, a public presentation. The course is organized around important debates in American political thought; for instance, the debate between Federalists and Anti-federalists. One week before the essay is due the instructor will distribute an assignment sheet with the essay topic and requirements. Typically the assignment will ask students to write about six to eight pages which demonstrate that they have read and understood the material, can relate the material to the main themes of the course, and can use the material creatively in relation to their own concerns. Close textual reading and exegesis are necessary. No outside sources are required beyond assigned course materials. Be thorough but concise. Write clearly in standard English, organize tightly, and proofread the final version.

Write an original paper. An original paper is at least eighty-five percent *your own words*. Direct quotes are supposed to illustrate *your* point or to be texts that exemplify an author’s position which *you* plan to explicate or interpret. Direct quotes are normally only a sentence or two. If your paper is largely or primarily verbatim quotes from other authors—whether clauses, sentences, paragraphs, multiple paragraphs, pages, whole essays, or chunks of chapters—even if you change a few (or many) words and **even if you cite the source**, it is not an original paper, and, in fact, is not even college-level work. (Think of it this way: if you were in an in-class test and copied the answer from the student next to you, Suzanne, and if you then earnestly and honestly wrote at the bottom of your paper that you had copied your answer from Suzanne, it would still be an answer you copied from Suzanne, not *your* work.) Never copy other people’s work. Period. You are expected to provide original explications and analysis of arguments, and original interpretations of what these things mean to us all. How, according to you, ought we to understand or think about or respond to the ideas and arguments presented in the texts? What, according to you, *does* justice require? But note: “original” does not necessarily mean “publishable quality.” New learners often do raggedy work—that in itself is no problem. Students are expected only to be conscientiously learning these skills. Do not be afraid to be who you are, especially if you want to improve.