

Political Science 3363
Class Time, 12:30-1:50
Classroom, 116 Dallas Hall
Office, Carr Collins 214

Southern Methodist University
American Political Thought
Professor Cal Jillson

Spring 2017
Phone 8-4321
Office Hours:
2-3 TuTh, 1-3 W

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Course Design

This course in American Political Thought has been adapted to focus on the American Dream. The American Dream is a phrase that has long been used to describe the promise that the country holds out to its citizens and to those who would be citizens. At each major stage in American history we will ask two questions: (1) What was the nature and content of the American Dream, and (2) How approachable, how realistic and tangible, was the American Dream for most Americans. We ask how Americans have understood the dream and what they have said about it, pro and con, in history, politics, and fiction. Finally, we will also want to ask these same questions for our own day. What promise do we take the American Dream to hold out to us? How attractive is the American Dream today? And how attainable is it; can we reach out and touch it, grab it, hold it for our own and live it? Major lectures and class discussions will cover the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution; the principles of Jeffersonian republicanism and Jacksonian democracy; Lincoln, the Civil War and Laissez-faire economic development; Populist, Progressive, and Socialist alternatives at the turn of the century; Roosevelt and the growth of positive government; as well as the claims made for and concerns expressed about the current state of the American democracy.

Grading in the Course

You will earn four grades in the course on one paper and three exams. The paper (15 pages) and the midterms will be worth 20% each and the final will be comprehensive and worth 40%. Attendance and effective class participation are required and will be monitored. I reserve the right to drop students from the class for non-attendance at my discretion who miss the first two classes or who miss five classes over the course of the semester. To facilitate attention to lectures and discussions, no electronic devices, including laptops, may be used in class.

Books to Purchase

I have ordered five books for the course that you may purchase at the campus and adjacent bookstores.

Cal Jillson, The American Dream in History, Politics, and Fiction, hereafter AD, (University of Kansas Press, 2016).

Richard Hofstadter, American Political Thought, hereafter APT, (Vintage Books, 1948).

Richard Sinopoli, From Many, One, hereafter FMO, (Georgetown University Press, 1997).

Benjamin Franklin, The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin (Simon & Schuster, 1997).

Horatio Alger, Ragged Dick (Penguin USA, 1990).

Student Learning Outcomes

Historical Contexts

Students will be able to analyze both secondary and primary historical evidence. Students will be able to develop and support extended historical discussions in their own prose based on both critical understanding of specific historical problems and on evaluation of secondary and primary evidence.

Individuals, Institutions, and Culture

Students will be able to analyze different theoretical or interpretive perspectives in the study of individual, social, cultural, political, or economic experiences. Students will be able to evaluate critically the research outcomes and theoretical applications in the study of individual, social, cultural, political, and economic experiences.

Disability Accommodations

Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first register with Disability Accommodations & Success Strategies (DASS). Students can call 214-768-1470 or visit <http://www.smu.edu/Provost/ALEC/DASS> to begin the process. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with the professor as early in the semester as possible, present a DASS Accommodation Letter, and make appropriate arrangements. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

Religious Observance

Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)

Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities

Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalogue)

Introduction

Jan. 24, Introduction and Description of the Course. Cal Jillson, AD, Chap. 1, “The Ambiguity of the Dream in American History,” pp. 1-16.

Jan. 26, No Class.

Colonies in the Wilderness

Jan. 31, Jillson, AD, Chap. 2, “American Dreams: The Promise and Peril of Life in the New World,” pp. 17-49. FMO, John Winthrop, “Little Speech on Liberty,” pp. 332-335.

Feb. 2, Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, pages 1-62.

Feb. 4, Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, pages 62-112. Franklin, “The Way to Wealth,” <http://www.swarthmore.edu/socsci/bdorseyl/41docs/52-fra.html>

Independence as the Founding Vision

Feb. 9, Jillson, AD, Chap. 3, “The Founders Dream and Its Limits,” pp. 50-82. FMO, “Declaration of Independence,” pp. 27-31; Crèvecoeur, “Letters From An American Farmer,” pp. 181-184; James Madison, “Against Religious Assessments,” pp. 335-340; “Letters of John and Abigail Adams,” pp. 105-108; Benjamin Rush, “An Address... Upon Slave-Keeping,” pp. 247-254.

The Conflicting Visions of Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson

Feb. 14, APT, “The Founding Fathers: An Age of Realism,” pp. 3-21. Constitution of the United States, FMO, pp. 421-438.

Feb. 16, FMO, “The Anti-Federalists, Brutus and Cato,” “The Federalist Papers,” and Washington’s “Farewell Address,” pp. 32-67; Judith Sargent Murray, “On the Equality of the Sexes,” pp. 112-117.

Feb. 21, APT, “Thomas Jefferson: The Aristocrat as Democrat,” pp. 23-56. FMO, Thomas Jefferson, “Letter to the Danbury Baptists,” pp. 344-345; Samuel Kendal, “An Election Sermon,” pp. 346-352; Alexis de Tocqueville, “Influence of Religious Opinions,” pp. 353-357.

1st Midterm, Feb. 23

Andrew Jackson and Abraham Lincoln: From Equality to Individualism

Feb. 28, Jillson, AD, Chap. 4, "Democracy and Melancholy: The Visions and Fears of Emerson, Melville, and Lincoln," pp. 83-116.

Mar. 2, APT, "Andrew Jackson and the Rise of Liberal Capitalism," pp. 57-86. FMO, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Declaration of Sentiments" and Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I a Woman," pp. 118-125.

Mar. 7, APT, "Abraham Lincoln and the Self-Made Myth," pp. 119-173.

Mar. 9, FMO, Abraham Lincoln, "The Perpetuation of our Political Institutions," and "Gettysburg Address," pp. 77-85; "Second Inaugural Address," pp. 267-268; Frederick Douglass, "Memory of Abraham Lincoln," pp. 269-277; Susan B. Anthony, "Constitutional Argument," 126-136.

Spring Break, Mar. 13-17.

The Age of the Robber Barons: From Individualism to Laissez-Faire

Mar. 21, Horatio Alger, Ragged Dick or Street Life in New York With the Boot Blacks, chapters 1-14, pp. 1-99.

Mar. 23, Alger, Ragged Dick, chapters 15-end, pp. 100-186.

2nd Midterm, Mar. 28

Mar.30, Jillson, AD, Chap. 5, "Individualism and Combination in the Age of the Robber Barons," pp. 117-152.

Apr. 4, APT, "The Spoilsmen: An Age of Cynicism," pp. 211-238. FMO, Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," and Lord Bryce, "The Uniformity of American Life," pp. 86-96.

Progressivism and the Emergence of Social Regulation

Apr. 6, Jillson, AD, Chap. 6, "The Dream in Prosperity and Depression," pp. 153-190.

Apr. 11, last day to drop.

Apr. 11, APT, "Theodore Roosevelt: The Conservative as Progressive," pp. 265-306. FMO, Roosevelt, "True Americanism," pp. 196-199; Booker T. Washington, "Democracy and Education," pp. 288-293; W.E.B. DuBois, "The Conservation of Races," pp. 278-282.

Apr. 13, APT, “Woodrow Wilson: The Conservative as Liberal,” pp. 307-365.

Apr. 18, APT, “Herbert Hoover and the Crisis of American Liberalism,” pp. 367-408.

Paper Due, Apr. 18

FDR, LBJ and the Emergence of the Social Welfare State

Apr. 20, APT, “Franklin D. Roosevelt: The Patrician as Opportunist,” pp. 409-456.
“Commonwealth Club Address,” September 23, 1932.

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/fdrcommonwealth.htm>

Apr. 25, Jillson, AD, Chap. 7, “The Dream Unmoored: The Rise of Entitlement from Truman to LBJ,” pp. 191-224; FMO, “Brown vs. Board of Education,” pp. 299-303; Martin Luther King, “I Have A Dream,” pp. 304-08; “The National Organization for Women: ‘Statement of Purpose,’” pp. 150-155.

The Reagan Revolution and its Aftermath

Apr. 27 and May 2, Jillson, AD, Chap. 8, “The Dream in Doubt: Opportunity to Uncertainty from Reagan to Obama,” pp. 225-258.

May 4, Jillson, AD, Chap. 9, “American Dreams and Doubts in the Twenty-First Century,” pp. 259-288.

Final Exam, Saturday, May 13, 11:30am-2:30pm

Preparing Your Paper

Most of the papers that you will be asked to write in the social sciences, including in this class, will be analytical essays. Analytical essays are intended to explore a topic systematically. Analytical essays present an important question, describe how that question will be addressed, present the ideas, arguments, and information that are critical to understanding the elements, aspects, or dimensions of the issues involved, and then draw and present appropriate conclusions.

Analytical essays have a particular structure. While individual papers will vary somewhat, most should have the following basic structure: (1) A clear introduction in two parts. The first part of the introduction presents the topic or issues to be confronted in the paper and explains why it is interesting or important. The second part of the introduction explains how the topic will be dealt with in the paper. In a fifteen page paper, the introduction might be three or four paragraphs covering a page and a half or two pages. (2) The body of the paper will be the bulk of the paper, probably ten or eleven pages in a fifteen page paper. The body of the paper should be explicitly organized, usually into three to five subsections, to present the information needed to understand the topic or answer the question raised in the paper. For example, if your paper is intended to explain the origins of American democracy, you might organize the body of your paper into three subsections, the cultural, political, and economic origins of democracy. (3) Your paper should have an explicit conclusion, often organized in two parts, a summary and conclusion. The summary essentially says, "I have shown that..." and the conclusion says, "therefore, I contend, or I expect, or I argue..." (4) Once you have your paper in a draft form, you must spend appreciable time editing and refining it. Your paper must be well organized and well written; the details of spelling, punctuation, word choice, sentence and paragraph structure are all part of writing coherently and convincingly.

As you write your paper, you should keep your reader, your professor, in mind. You are trying to convince this person that you have taken the essay assignment seriously, sought out the best information available on the topic, and presented your findings and conclusions in a clear and articulate way. Help is available and you should take advantage of it. The SMU Writing Center is located at 202 Loyd and their number is 8-4253. They have writing coaches who will work with you.

Now let me offer you several suggestions that should help you to get off to a good start. (1) Develop an outline of your paper early in the research process. An outline will focus your efforts and help sort useful from useless information. (2) Maintain control of your writing. The point is to communicate your thoughts clearly. Use plain words that you know you understand. Don't overreach. (3) Watch the details. The quality of your writing is a powerful indicator of how much effort went into your paper. Edit your paper. Run the spellcheck. (4) Use complete sentences and tight paragraphs. As a rule of thumb, paragraphs usually contain four to six or seven sentences. A paragraph makes a particular point before you move on to a related but separate point. Most pages will have at least one, usually two, paragraph indentations. (5) Footnotes are important because they tell the

reader where you got your information. Common knowledge (Abraham Lincoln was president) does not need to be footnoted. More specific or detailed information or interpretation does need to be footnoted. Footnotes should identify the referenced or quoted material to a particular page in case the reader wants to look it up. There are two basic kinds of footnote styles used in the social sciences. Embedded footnotes occur right in the text. For example, you quote a sentence from Lincoln, “forescore and seven years ago” (Lincoln, 1864, p. 6). With embedded footnotes you need a bibliography at the end of the paper to give the full citations to the books and articles you used. Or, following the quote, you put a superscript footnote, ¹, and put the citation at the bottom of the page or the end of the paper. Unless your professor requires one style or the other, either is fine so long as you are consistent. (6) Finally, what you footnote is a critical signal about how seriously you have taken your paper assignment. Very contemporary topics may require you to depend upon the Internet; but the Internet includes a wide variety of sources, some are to be taken seriously and some are not. Hint – Wikipedia is not a dependable source. Do not depend exclusively on the Internet unless you have no other choice. Go to the library and find the books and articles that your professor uses.

I expect you to find and use the best recent and contemporary sources in your paper. You will be held accountable for the quality of your writing and the quality of your research. The quality of your research is evident in your footnotes and bibliography. Finally, when you turn your paper in, put the title at the top of the first page, but make the title page where your name is the last page of your paper. I want to read the papers without knowing who wrote them.

The Honor Code

All work submitted in this course is governed by the University’s Honor Code. The relevant section of the Code, taken from the Preamble of the Honor Council’s Constitution, is as follows:

“Intellectual integrity and academic honesty are fundamental to the processes of learning and of evaluating academic performance, and maintaining them is the responsibility of all members of an educational institution. The inculcation of personal standards of honesty and integrity is a goal of education in all the disciplines of the University....”

“Students must share the responsibility for creating and maintaining an atmosphere of honesty and integrity. Students should be made aware that personal experience in completing assigned work is essential to learning. Permitting others to prepare their work, using published or unpublished summaries as a substitute for studying required materials, or giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in the preparation of work to be submitted are directly contrary to the honest process of learning. Students who are aware that others in a course are cheating or otherwise acting dishonestly have the responsibility to inform the processor and/or bring an accusation to the Honor Council.”

The Honor Pledge is: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this work.” A signed copy of this pledge must be appended to any work tendered in this class. A violation of the Code will result in an “F” for the course, and the student will be taken before the Honor Council. If you are unclear about this policy – either in general or in its particular application – please see the instructor immediately.

Submitted by Professor Joseph Kobyłka