

NB This is a heavily adapted version of the sample syllabus that Trygve Throntveit distributes to professors interested in working with his organization, [Third Way Civics](#). The adaptations were necessary because, for a variety of annoying bureaucratic reasons, I am required to spend at least 50% of my time in this course on “global” (i.e., ex-US) topics.

Though the specific content I’ve chosen to include may not be particularly relevant, I look forward to sharing some of my experience teaching with the Third Way Civics method, as Trygve was not able to join us this time around.

[Basic information](#)

Instructor information

Instructor: Prof. Scott Arcenas

Office: LA 263

Email: scott.arcenas@umontana.edu

Office hours: Wednesday, 1:30PM - 2:30PM; and by appointment

Zoom link: <https://umontana.zoom.us/j/5913929282>

Course information:

Time: 12:00 - 13:20, MW

Place: GLI Seminar Room (Mansfield Library, Room 417)

Course description

Who is (or should be) considered a citizen? What rights and responsibilities does citizenship entail? How do citizens come together to address important issues? How do they resolve (potential) disagreements? Finally, what happens when fellow-citizens start to believe that they no longer have enough in common to justify going on together?

These are hard questions, made harder by deep divisions in modern society, both in America and abroad. This course seeks to contextualize these divisions and turn them into opportunities for individual and collective growth: growth among the students who take the course and, by extension, in the peer groups, dormitories, workplaces, hometowns, and other communities they animate and shape through their actions.

To do so, it employs a novel pedagogical approach pioneered by [Third Way Civics](#), which asks students to confront the long and continuing tradition of disagreement in citizen-centered governments: over the purposes and features of self-government, over the general narratives of their collective histories, and over the legacies and lessons of the past for the present. The purpose is not to dwell on discord; stories of genuinely creative, collaborative citizenship as well as destructive conflict and injustice abound. The purpose is to help students widen their perspectives, foster tolerance and understanding, substantiate their opinions, and challenge others—with courage and compassion—to do the same.

This course also encourages students to value both civic knowledge of history and government as well as civic capacity for collaborative inquiry and action, and to view both types of civic learning as essential to responsible, productive, personally rewarding, and publicly meaningful lives. The pre-class and classroom work, especially, is designed to enhance students’ critical engagement with course texts while also testing, revising, and retesting their conclusions—about

the texts themselves and their implications for contemporary life—through repeated sharing and deliberation with their peers.

Ultimately, this course is designed to help students act as collaborative and productive citizens (of their local communities, nations, and the world as a whole), equipped and motivated to recognize common interests, formulate common values, and devise common strategies for acting across even deep differences of experience and perspective. My hope is that it will provide students with an opportunity to gain knowledge and skills that will foster civic identity and build civic capacities by thinking and acting now like the citizens they are: citizens whose impact on others is a present and significant fact, as well as an eternally recurring and open-ended choice.

Learning Outcomes:

By taking this course, you will:

- Develop a historically grounded sense of how and why citizen-centered forms of government (including but not limited to democracy) come into existence, endure, and fail;
- Learn about the challenges faced by citizen-centered societies around the world, with attention to both similarities and differences;
- Develop an appreciation for the contingency of our modern, American perspectives on important questions related to citizenship;
- Learn about the tensions between traditional conceptions of citizenship and our increasingly globalized world;
- Acquire knowledge of and learn to use some of the ethical theories, concepts, and methods necessary to address important questions of (global) citizenship;
- Develop skills of civil discourse by discussing important and potentially controversial questions in a civic-like environment of mutual respect, tolerance, and openness to difference.

Alongside these course-specific learning objectives, we will also focus on two of UM's [Career-Readiness Competencies](#): **teamwork** and **professionalization**. We will discuss precisely what this focus entails during the first week of the term.

Assessment and Grading

Grading breakdown

Grades will be calculated by the following breakdown:

Participation and discussion: 30%

Weekly writing assignments: 30%

Mid-term presentation: 10%

Final presentation or project: 10%

Final reflection paper: 20%

Schedule of Classes:

For readings, assignments, etc., please see our class Canvas page.

Acknowledgements

This syllabus is adapted from a syllabus developed by my collaborator at Third Way Civics, Trygve Throntveit.

Weeks 1-2: Introduction

1. Mon, Aug 26

No reading

Pre-class [survey](#)

2. Wed, Aug 28

Reading

- Herodotus, [The Constitutional Debate](#)

Guiding questions (first-order: basic understanding)

- What does Otanes want to do, now that the (false?) king is dead? What arguments does he use to justify that preference?
- What does Megabyzos want to do? What are his arguments?
- What does Darius want to do? What are his arguments?
- What special rights and privileges do the conspirators obtain? Why?
- Who becomes king? How and why?
- What is the relationship between the king and the territories he rules?

Written work:

- Please answer all of the guiding questions, remembering that this assignment is about basic, first-order understanding, rather than higher-order interpretation. This should take no more than a few hundred words altogether, and you are welcome to use bullet points.

Mon, Sept 2: no class (Labor Day)

3. Wed, Sept 4

Reading

- Aristophanes, [Assemblywomen](#) (with [notes](#))

Directions

- Step 1: Read the play once, carefully and taking full advantage of the notes and the contextual information provided by the introduction. This first time through, your goal is general comprehension of the plot. If, after your first read-through, you are struggling to understand the plot, proceed to step 2, option a; if you feel confident in your understanding of the plot, proceed to step 2 option b.
- Step 2 (option a): Read the play a second time, even more carefully and paying even closer attention to the notes and contextual information. Then explain the central conflict of the play in 500 words or less.
- Step 2 (option b): Respond to two of the following prompts in 500 words or less.
- How and why is the reading relevant to this course?
- What are the 1-2 most significant questions and/or insights the reading raised?

- Please choose 1-2 particularly interesting passages and explain their relevance to citizenship and/or the questions that motivate this course.
- NB Unlike the questions you answered last week, these are primarily interpretive. Before you can address them properly, however, you will need to make sure that you've answered all of the relevant first-order questions for yourself. In other words, you will need to make sure that you know what is going on, both in the play overall and in the sections you are discussing—at least insofar as possible.

Other material

- Read President Bodnar's email on civil dialogue (sent at 1pm, Monday August 26)
- Familiarize yourself with the [Unify Challenge College Bowl](#)

Week 3: Early America: communities, conflicts, and consequences

4. Mon, Sept 9

Notes

- Per our discussion in class, I've created a [discussion forum](#) that you can use to talk about the reading with the members of your group.
- Group A will read the odd clusters ([1&3](#))
- Group B will read the evens ([2&4](#))
- Remember to look at the reading response [rubric](#) before you start writing

Readings (pre-class)

- [Close reading handout](#)
- [Reading response rubric](#)
- Cluster 1: Arthur Barlowe, from *The First Voyage Made to the Coast of America...* (1584); Powhatan, speech to Captain John Smith (1609); Articles, Laws, and Orders...for the Colony of Virginia (1610-11)
- Cluster 2: William Penn, *Frame of Government of Pennsylvania* (1682); Elizabeth Sprigs on indentured servitude (1756); Pontiac, "The Master of Life Speaks to the Wolf" (1763)
- Cluster 3: John Winthrop, "Model of Christian Charity" (1630); Anne Hutchinson, from "Examination of Mrs. Anne Hutchinson at the Court at Newtown" (1637); John Hammond on indentured servitude (1656)
- Cluster 4: William Bradford, et al., "The Mayflower Compact" (1620); Virginia Slave Laws (1662, 1667, 1668, 1669); Benjamin Franklin, from the *Autobiography* (1784-88)

Guiding questions

1. How did the English colonists conceptualize community and citizenship (thinking of our definition; not the term itself)?
2. What role did religion play in colonial development?
3. What role did economic interest play?
4. Why did English colonists adopt slavery and wage war with Indians?

Written work:

- Write out answers to TWO of the three guiding questions, in roughly 500 words

5. Wed, Sept 11

Reading

- Review your readings, in light of our discussion on Monday
 - Start to think about how our discussion in class changed/reinforced your initial opinions; this will be a major topic of conversation on Wed
- Look at indigenous cosmological schema and European maps of North America ([link](#))
 - Pick 2; jot down notes and be prepared to talk in class about relationship to readings + discussion questions
- Prepare for reading response workshop
 - Read my [announcement](#) about feedback on your reading responses, including the suggestions at the end.
 - Look at the two examples I've provided ([#1](#), [#2](#))
 - Evaluate both examples, as well as your own reading response, using the rubric. Then write down at least two recommendations for each response you evaluate, including your own.

Written work:

- Bring a paper copy of your evaluations (just the numbers for each category with a brief explanation is fine), recommendations, and notes on the maps to class, so that you can refer to it in class and turn it in afterward.
- Revisions to your reading response will be due on Saturday, at noon.

Week 4: Revolution and Constitution

6. Mon, Sept 16

Readings (pre-class)

- [Cluster 1 \(whole class\)](#): Boston Gazette on the Stamp Act riots, Aug. 19 and Sep. 2, 1765; Declaration of Independence (1776); Benjamin Banneker to Thomas Jefferson, August 19, 1791
- [Cluster 2](#): Madison, from The Federalist 10 and 51 (1788); “Brutus” IV (1788); Mercy Otis Warren, from Observations on the New Constitution (1788)
- [Cluster 3](#): John Adams to Samuel Adams, October 18, 1790; Judith Sargent Murray, “On the Equality of the Sexes” (1790); General Council of the Ohio Valley Tribes to the Commissioners of the United States, August 16, 1793

Guiding questions

1. What seems to have united advocates of independence and, later, more centralized govt? What divided them?
2. Are divisions in a democratic republic a bad thing or a good thing, and why? Or does it depend—and if so, on what?
3. Who was left out of the “Founding Fathers” conversations and decisions regarding the future of the United States, and how did they respond?

Written work

- Answer two of the three guiding questions in roughly 500 words.

7. Wed, Sept 18

Reading

- Review Monday readings
- Read these [selections](#) from the US Constitution (Preamble, 3/5 Clause, Bill of Rights)

- Find at least one phrase or idea in the Preamble, 3/5 Clause, or Bill of Rights that supports, complicates, or directly challenges one or more of your answers to the guiding questions for this week. Be prepared to explain how this phrase/idea influenced your thoughts to a partner and/or the class as a whole.
- Read these [instructions](#) for the College Challenge Bowl, which will replace our Wednesday class next week.
- Sign up for the Challenge bowl using this [link](#).

Written work

- Look back at your answers to the guiding questions for Weeks 3-4. Do you still feel the same way? In 500 words or less, please discuss how our class discussion (or any other aspect of the course) has changed (or, alternatively, reinforced) your original thoughts on the material we've covered. NB This response may but need not necessarily involve the word/phrase you've identified in the Preamble, etc.

Shared texts (in-class)

- [Selected letters concerning Shays Rebellion](#)

Weeks 5-8: The French Revolution

8. Mon, Sept 23

Readings

- Whole class
 - [Encyclopedia Britannica entry on the French Revolution](#)
 - This is not an academic discussion, but it should provide you with enough contextual information to understand the sources we will read over the next few weeks.
 - [What is the Third Estate?](#) (January, 1789, Abbé Sieyès)
 - The [Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen](#) (August 26, 1789)
- Odds (Ellsie, Emma, Luke, Brody, Jack, James, Calli)
 - [Reply to the Parlement of Paris](#) (Louis XVII, 1788)
 - [Recollections of the Comtesse d'Adhémar](#) (June 1789)
 - [Addresses to the National Assembly by the Marquis de Lafayette \(July 11, 1789\) and Duke Mathieu de Montmorency \(Aug 1, 1789\)](#)
 -
- Evens (Elysa, Juliana, Kenna, Rachel, Robbin, Reagan, Cooper)
 - [Address to the National Assembly, August 1, 1789 \(Pierre Victor Malouet\)](#)
 - [Royal Address of 4 February 1790](#) (Louis XVI)
 - [L'Ami du Peuple, nos. 324 \(29 December 1790\) and 374 \(17 February 1791\)](#) (Jean-Paul Marat)

Guiding questions

- What did the participants in the French Revolution (on all sides) view as the proper role of the king, the nobility, the Third Estate, and/or the individual citizen in French society? How and why did views vary depending on social status, socioeconomic status, and/or political context?
- What role did ideas (esp. religious or Enlightenment) play in the French Revolution? What about class and/or economic interests?

- How universal was the French Revolution? To what extent, in other words, were the ideas and actions of the Revolution intended to apply to everyone, regardless of race, gender, nationality, religion, chronology, etc.? To ask this same question in a slightly different way, what limits did the revolutionaries place on their calls for “liberté, égalité, fraternité”?

Written work

- Please answer 1-2 of the guiding questions in 500 words.

9. Wed, Sept 25 (NO CLASS; REPLACED BY UNIFY CHALLENGE BOWL)

Reading

- [Pre-session info for Unify Challenge](#)
- [Links to an external site.](#)

Assignments

- Complete the Unify Challenge at whatever time you signed up for
- In 500 words or less, respond to at least three of the following questions AFTER completing the Unify Challenge. This assignment will be due on Saturday, at noon.
 1. What expectations did you have going into the Unify Challenge? How did your experience meet or differ from your expectations?
 2. What were the most important similarities between your partner's perspective and your own? What were the most important differences?
 3. Was your experience talking with another college student in the Unify Challenge similar to i) how you talk to your peers on campus about political issues, ii) how you see political issues discussed in (social) media, or iii) how you see political issues discussed in your personal life and relationships? Why (not)?
 4. What did this process teach you about civil discourse?
 5. Did this process make you more likely to engage in potentially controversial discussions across political/ideological lines in the future?
 6. What was one strength of the session, whether it was the guide or the format? What was one weakness?
 7. How did this experience affect your feelings about the future of our country?
 8. What key insights or lessons did you gain from this experience?
 9. Do you think this program should be included in future classes? Why (not)?
 10. NB This response will be graded according to the simple, 15-point rubric used for provisional responses

10. Mon, Sept 30

Reading

- Re-read the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, with particular attention to the guiding questions I provided last week.
- Choose whichever of the separate readings from last week (i.e., the ones assigned to “evens” and “odds”) you found to be the most interesting/important) and re-read it, with particular attention to the guiding questions I provided last week.
- Read one of the short texts linked below with particular attention to the following prompts:

- Please compare, contrast, and/or discuss the relationship between your new text and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and The Citizen?
- How and why does your new text change, complicate, strengthen your initial response to one of the guiding questions from last week?
- Elucidate (i.e., summarize and clarify the argument; then explain the significance of) one short paragraph (similar in size to the ones we discussed last week, from Abbé Sieyès) that you found particularly interesting.
- Texts
 - Odds: Olympe de Gouges, Sept 1791: [Declaration of the Rights of Woman](#)
 - Evens: Condorcet, July 1790: [On the Admission of Women to the Rights of Citizenship](#)

Written work:

- In lieu of our regular reading responses, please submit whatever notes you take in preparation for our class discussion. This will involve, in no particular order:
 - Explaining your chosen text (from the separate readings for last week, on which see above) to a partner who has not read it, with particular attention to the ways in which it shaped your answers to the guiding questions for last week.
 - Explaining your assigned text (i.e., the new text I've asked you to read for this week) to a partner who has not read it, with particular attention to the three prompts I've provided.
 - Discussing the relationship between the new texts we've read for this week and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen.

11. Wed, Sept 30

Read [selections from Burke's Reflections on the Revolution in France](#) according to the following guidelines:

- Read through once, skimming to try and get the gist.
 - Summarize the argument, insofar as you can
 - Don't worry if you don't understand everything at this point; I'd be VERY surprised if you could
- Read through a second time, more slowly and carefully, with pencil in hand to underline, annotate, etc.
 - Identify key (i.e., particularly significant) passages
 - Identify passages you are struggling to understand
 - Ask questions in the margins
 - Note vocabulary that you don't understand and/or think might have a different meaning from the one you are used to
 - Note points of contact w/ other texts we've read
 - What other things should be on this sheet?
 - Look for general sense + general relevance to material we are discussing.
 - You can of course underline the first time through, but annotations should be a big point of emphasis the second time. For example:
- Read through a third time, making sure that you can answer the [comprehension questions](#) I've provided

- Unlike the guiding questions, these are focused on the first-order analysis we've discussed
- Read through a fourth time, focusing on your annotations
 - Do everything you can (e.g., looking up words, asking a classmate) to understand difficult passages
 - Extend/elaborate any insights
 - Develop preliminary answers to any questions
 - Jot down a few notes on the most interesting/important things you've learned

Written work

- To be turned in on Canvas, BEFORE CLASS
 - Follow the directions provided on the [comprehension questions](#) document.
- To be turned in after class
 - Annotated text of Burke

12. Mon, Oct 7

Readings

- Whole class: Selections from [Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Men, in a letter to the Right Honourable Edmund Burke](#)
- Odds (Ellsie, Emma, Luke, Jack, James, Calli): [Selections from Thomas Paine, The Rights of Man](#)
- Evens (Elysa, Juliana, Kenna, Rachel, Reagan, Brody): [Selections from Catharine Macaulay, Observations on the Reflections of the Right Hon. Edmund Burke, on the Revolution in France, in a Letter to the Right Hon. The Earl of Stanhope](#)

Start by close reading your sources, making sure to read them multiple times as you did the selections from Burke. The readings I've assigned for Monday are all similar in length to the selections from Burke, so I'd highly recommend splitting them up—by, for example, reading one source on Friday and one over the weekend.

After you've finished close reading your sources, please answer two of the guiding questions. Note also that your first task in class will be to summarize and explain your separate reading to someone for the other group. Accordingly, I'd recommend taking some notes in preparation for this.

- What are your assigned authors' major objections to Burke's Reflections? How do you think Burke would respond? Alternatively, how would you respond if asked to defend Burke?
- What are your assigned authors' most important positive arguments (i.e., arguments in favor of the Rights of Man or similar principles, rather than against Burke)? How do you think Burke might have responded? Alternatively, how would you respond if asked to write a letter in support of
- How would you describe the tone of your assigned readings? How does the tone affect your interpretation of the readings? How does it affect your understanding of political discourse in eighteenth century America/England?
- Notes: Be sure to indicate which passages your answers rely on. To facilitate this, I've added page numbers, so you can simply cite by paragraph and page numbers. (e.g., p4, para3)

For your reading response, please turn in your answers to the guiding questions, as well as any notes you took in preparation for explaining your separate reading.

Other readings TBD