

## Gov 10: Foundations of Political Theory

Danielle Allen

Syllabus

### *Course overview*

This course investigates the central problems of political theory that concern the justification and operation of democratic-republican forms of government. What are the proper purposes of political institutions? What political institutions can best achieve those ends and bring to life values of liberty, equality, sound judgment, and participation? What are the moral responsibilities of citizens—whose representatives exercise political power in their name? Is democracy a human right? We will take up these questions by reading the *Federalist Papers*, supplemented by canonical and contemporary works in political theory. While the focus on the *Federalist Papers* means that, this semester, the course will explicitly focus on the U.S. case study, the concepts at issue have origins in a variety of historical contexts and places and are pertinent to ongoing political debates around the globe. A key objective of the class will be to develop skills at attending simultaneously to the contextual particularities of the political society under consideration and to the conceptual building blocks of political thinking.

### *Prerequisites*

There are no official prerequisites for this course.

### *Requirements and assignments*

Attendance and Active Participation in discussion and engagement in lectures, section, and peer exchange process (20%).

Reading Responses (10%): For each weekly section meeting, students will be required to prepare two or three short written questions that they think merit discussion, with a brief statement of why they think the questions important, and to submit those questions by email to the Teaching Fellow responsible for their section not later than 6 p.m. on the day before the section meeting and to [hulaias2013@gmail.com](mailto:hulaias2013@gmail.com). Each student may opt not to submit written questions for any three weeks of his or her choosing.

First Assignment (10%): A five-page analytical paper is due on February 21. Students will exchange the first submitted draft with a peer, who will compose a two-page response, due on February 25. The revised paper is due on February 28.

Second Assignment (20%): A seven-page analytical paper is on April 11. Students will exchange the draft with a peer, who will compose a two-page response, due on April 13. The revised paper is due in-class on April 18.

We will make available detailed handouts on paper topics, guidelines on writing analytical papers, and the mechanics of the paper exchange.

Mid-Term Examination (15%): This take-home examination (5 page) integrates the themes and readings of the course, drawing on arguments/activities in lecture. Open books and notes. Due in-class on March 7.

Final Examination (25%): This take-home examination (6-8 page) integrates the themes and readings of the course, drawing heavily on arguments/activities in lecture. Open books and notes. Due on Monday May 7.

The following policies apply to written assignments: (1) All assignments are to be submitted to your Teaching Fellow by 5p, e.g., a paper submitted at 5:10p is one day late; (2) Late papers will be penalized at the rate of 1/3 of a letter grade for every 24 hours (A- to B+); however, late papers turned in within the first 24 hours after the deadline will be penalized only 1/6 a grade (A- to A-/B+) (3) This grade penalty will only be waived in the case of documented medical emergencies; (4) Plagiarism, the presentation of another person's work as one's own, will be reported to the Harvard administration; (5) All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course.

### *Academic Integrity*

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to the study of political theory, and I of course encourage you to talk with each other about the readings and the class. Nevertheless you must always bear in mind that *the work on your essays must be entirely your own*. If books, articles, websites, or discussions have helped you with your paper, cite them in proper footnote and bibliography form. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses, and will be treated as such.

### ***Accommodations for students with disabilities***

Students needing academic adjustments or accommodations because of a documented disability must present their Faculty Letter from the Accessible Education Office (AEO) and speak with me by the end of the second full week of the term, February 2. Failure to do so may result in our inability to respond in a timely manner.

### **Course Schedule**






#### **I. SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS**

1. INTRODUCTION (Mon. 22 Jan.)
2. THINKING ABOUT POLITICS (Wed. 24 Jan.)






- Federalist 1 [[pdf](#) 

- Bernard Williams, “Realism and Moralism in Political Theory” [[pdf](#) 





### 3. RICH, POOR, AND THOSE BEHIND THE VEIL (Mon. 29 Jan.)

- Aristotle, *Politics*, Bk 5, chs. 1-4 [[pdf](#) 
- John Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, ch. 1, secs. 3-4; ch. 2, sec. 11; ch. 3, 24 [[pdf](#) 
- W. E. B. DuBois, *Souls of Black Folk*, ch. 1 [[pdf](#) 
- Federalist 2 [[pdf](#) 
- Maryland Farmer, Essay VII, Part I, in “Essential Antifederalist,” pp. 281-287 [[pdf](#) 





### 4. SAFETY & HAPPINESS (Wed. 31 Jan.)

- Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. 13, ch. 30 [[pdf](#) 
- Abigail Adams to John Adams, “March 31-April 5, 1776” [[pdf](#) 
- Continental Congress, “Declaration of Independence,” July 4, 1776 [[pdf](#) 
- John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, chs. 1 and 3 [[pdf](#) 
- Federalist 3-5 [[pdf](#) 





### 5. FAIRNESS & PROSPERITY (Mon. 5 Feb.)

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Book 3, ch. 9 [[pdf](#) 
- Robert Nozick, “Distributive Justice” [[pdf](#) 
- Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom*, chs. 6 & 7 [[pdf](#) 
- Federalist 6-8, 11-13 [[pdf](#) 

### 6. LIBERTY & EQUALITY (Wed. 7 Feb.)

- Williams, “The Idea of Equality” [[pdf](#) 
- Lebron, “Equality from a Human Point of View,” pp. 126-132; pp. 148-152 [[pdf](#) 
- F.A. Hayek, “Freedom and Coercion” [[pdf](#) 
- Philip Pettit, *Just Freedom*, Prologue [[pdf](#) 

### 7. REPRESENTATION: THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE? (Mon. 12 Feb.)

- Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Bk 4 [[pdf](#) 
- [\(Links to an external site.\)](#)Links to an external site. John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, Chs. 3, 8, 10 [[pdf](#) 
- Federalist 9-10 [[pdf](#) 
- **Optional:** Urbinati, Nadia, 2011. “Political Representation as Democratic Process” [[pdf](#) 

### 8. REPRESENTATION: DELIBERATION & KNOWLEDGE (Wed. 14 Feb.)

- Aristotle, *Politics*, Book 3, Ch. 6-12 [[pdf](#) 

- Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson, “Why Deliberative Democracy?”: <http://assets.press.princeton.edu/chapters/s7869.pdf> (Links to an external site.)[Links to an external site.](#)
- Henry Farrell and Cosma Shalizi, “Pursuing Cognitive Democracy” [\[pdf\]](#)
- Federalist 14, 51 [\[pdf\]](#)

NO CLASS PRESIDENT’S DAY (Mon. 19 Feb.)

9. IN CLASS WRITING WORKSHOP (Wed. 21 Feb.)

- Federalist 37-39 [\[pdf\]](#)
- George Orwell, “Politics and the English Language” [\[pdf\]](#)
- Gov 10 Writing Handbook [\[pdf\]](#)

## **II. POWER**

10. POWER & SOCIETY (Mon. 26 Feb.)

- Steven Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*, Ch. 1 pp. 14-37 [\[pdf\]](#)
- Susan Moller Okin, *Justice, Gender, and the Family*, CH. 5, “Justice as Fairness for Whom” [\[pdf\]](#)
- Federalist 15-17 (18-22 optional) [\[pdf\]](#)

11. MONEY & ARMS (Wed. 28 Feb.)

- Plato, *Republic*, Book 2, 368c - 376c. [\[pdf\]](#)
- Adam Smith, Introduction and Book 4, Ch. 1. [\[pdf\]](#)
- G.A. Cohen, “Freedom and Money” [\[pdf\]](#)
- Federalists 23-25, 28, 30 (optional 26-27, 29, 31-36) [\[pdf\]](#)

12. VALUES (Mon. 5 Mar.)

- Aristotle, Book 3, ch. 1-5 [\[pdf\]](#)
- Mercy Otis Warren, excerpt from “The American Revolution” in *Essential Anti-Federalist* [\[pdf\]](#)
- Loren Lomasky and Geoffrey Brennan, “Is there a Duty to Vote?” [\[pdf\]](#)

13. ALLIANCES (Wed. 7 Mar.)

- Immanuel Kant, “Toward Perpetual Peace”, Second Section, First and Second Definitive Articles= pp. 72-81 [\[pdf\]](#)

- George Washington, “Farewell Address” [[pdf](#) 




SPRING BREAK: MARCH 10 - MARCH 18

### **III. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS & GOVERNANCE**

#### 14. TYPES OF REGIME (Mon. 19 Mar.)






- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Book 3 [[pdf](#) 
- Judith Shklar, “Liberalism of Fear” [[pdf](#) 
- Federalist 40-46 [[pdf](#) 

#### 15. BALANCING INTERESTS & POWERS (Wed. 21 Mar.)




- Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws*, Preface, Bks 1-3; Bk 11, chs. 1-13 [[pdf](#) ] **MOST IMPORTANT SEC IS BK 11, CH. 6.**
- George Mason, “Objections,” October 1787 in the *Essential Anti-Federalist* [[pdf](#) 
- Federalist 47-51 [[pdf](#) 

#### 16. JUDICIAL POWERS (Mon. 26 Mar.)

Guest Lecturer: Professor Jack Goldsmith, Harvard Law School (focus on Fed 78)


- *Brutus*, no. 15 [[pdf](#) 
- White, *Judicial Independence, in Hamilton’s Time and Ours*, *City Journal*, August 23, 2016. [[pdf](#) 
- *Has the Supreme Court Gone Too Far?*, Commentary Symposium, October 2003 (essays by Bartley, Bennett, Berkowitz, Dershowitz, Levinson, Lithwick, Rosen, Sunstein, Wilson). [[pdf](#) 
- Greenhouse, *A Conservative Plan to Weaponize the Federal Courts*, *NYT*, November 2017. [[pdf](#) 
- Federalist 78-83 [[pdf](#) 

#### 17. DEBATE: IS JUDICIAL REVIEW ANTI-DEMOCRATIC? (Wed. 28 Mar.)

- Ronald Dworkin, “The Moral Reading and the Majoritarian Premise” [[pdf](#) 
- Jeremy Waldron, “Judicial Review and the Conditions of Democracy” [[pdf](#) 
- Oral Argument, *Windsor v. United States* [<https://tinyurl.com/ybbg47j3> (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.]
- Federalist 78-83 [[pdf](#) 




#### 18. EXECUTIVE POWERS (Mon. 2 Apr.)

Guest Lecturer: Professor Jack Goldsmith, Harvard Law School (focus on Fed 75)






- Bradley & Goldsmith, Presidential Control Over International Law, *Harvard Law Review* (March 2018) (excerpts) [[pdf](#) 
- Federalist 74-77 [[pdf](#) 

#### 19. EXECUTIVE POWERS (Wed. 4 Apr.)






Guest Lecturer: Professor Jack Goldsmith, Harvard Law School (focus on Fed 69)

- Schmitt, *Going to War: The Constitutional and Strategic Roots of the Imperial Presidency*, in *The Imperial Presidency and the Constitution* (2017) [[pdf](#) 
- Goldsmith & Waxman, *The Legal Legacy of Light-Footprint Warfare*, 39 *Wash. Qu.* 7 (2016) [[pdf](#) 
- Federalist 67-73 [[pdf](#) 

#### 20. EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP (Mon. 9 Apr.)




- Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chapters 15-19 [[pdf](#) 
- George Washington & Alexander Hamilton, Letters, [[George Washington and Alexander Hamilton Correspondence July August 1792.pdf](#) 
- Walzer, Michael, 1973, "Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands" [[pdf](#) 
- Mantena, Karuna, "Another Realism: The Politics of Gandhian Nonviolence" [[pdf](#) 
- Federalist 67-73 [[pdf](#) 

#### 21. LEGISLATIVE POWERS (Wed. 11 Apr.)



- Locke, *Second Treatise*, Secs. 143-149 [[pdf](#) 
- Day, J.P., 1989, "Compromise" [[pdf](#) 
- **PICK EITHER:** Alexandra, Andrew, 2007, "Professional Ethics for Politicians?", in Igor Primoratz (ed.), *Politics and Morality*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 76–91. [[pdf](#) 
- **OR:** Claudia Mills, "Politics and Manipulation" [[pdf](#) 
- Federalist 52-66 [[pdf](#) 

### IV. THEORY TO PRACTICE





#### 22. SPEECH AND EQUALITY (Mon. 16 Apr.)

- T.M. Scanlon, "The Difficulty of Tolerance" [[pdf](#) 
- "The relationship between academic freedom and inclusion and belonging," Presidential Task Force on Inclusion and Belonging Report, pp. 24-25 [[pdf](#) 
- Federalist 84-85 [[pdf](#) 


#### 23. INEQUALITY, FEDERALISM, AND DEMOCRACY (Wed. 18 Apr.)

- Mansbridge, Jane, 2003. "Rethinking Representation" [[pdf](#) 
- Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, "The Rise and Decline of General Laws of Capitalism" [[pdf](#) 

#### 24. GLOBALIZATION AND DEMOCRACY? (Mon. 23 Apr.)

- Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" [[pdf](#) 
- John Rawls, "The Law of Peoples" [[pdf](#) 
- Dani Rodrik, "The Inescapable Trilemma of the World Economy" [[pdf](#) 
- Carol Gould, "Regional vs. Global Democracy: Advantages and Limitations" [[pdf](#) 

#### 25. IS DEMOCRACY A HUMAN RIGHT? (Wed. 25 Apr.)

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights [[pdf](#) 
- Glen Weyl and Eric Posner, "A Radical Solution to Global Income Inequality: Make the U.S. More like Qatar." [[pdf](#) 
- Michael Walzer, "On Promoting Democracy" [[pdf](#) 
- Amartya Sen, "Democracy as a Universal Value" [[pdf](#) 
- Charles Beitz, "Human Rights as a Common Concern" [[pdf](#) 