THE PURPOSE OF THIS COURSE

This course—the first of a two part sequence in American Political Thought—will explore the American polity and the ideas that animated its creation and subsequent development through the period of great crisis culminating in the Civil War. Rather than attempt a brief survey of every political perspective that surfaced during this period of time, we will attempt to delve a little deeper into the thought of the most important statesmen (and other political observers and participants), as their genius was called forth by the greatest challenges of the nation’s early history.

The course will be conducted as a seminar with frequent class discussion. You should come to every class prepared to participate in and contribute to an engaging conversation.

Required Texts

- Miscellaneous Readings individually linked in Syllabus and on Blackboard. Please print these out and bring them to class.


COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Blogs
This assignment entails writing one blog “entry” and two “responses” every week (at a minimum of 1200 words total each week). The class will be divided into groups of three blog partners. Every Tuesday, prior to coming to class, students must post an entry of 600 words or more on the readings assigned for that week. Every Thursday, by the end of the day, students must post 2 responses, each 300 words or more (i.e. one to each of your two partners). No late work will be accepted.

Important: This assignment is not for the purpose of summarizing the readings, cheerleading your partners, or simply repeating what has already been said elsewhere. Please do not do these things.

The idea behind this assignment is to be both a spur to, and a continuation of, the class discussions. The goal is to use this written conversation with your partners to advance the course in a meaningful way, while exercising and developing your ability to write and think clearly. To do this you may find some question or idea in the reading that you wish to explore further. You may make connections or draw distinctions between various readings, or between the ideas of the past and the ideas/practice of the present, or between your opinions and your classmates (or professor’s) opinions--just as long as there is a clear connection to the readings.

Exams
There will be a midterm exam and a final exam composed of short answer identifications and essays. All your answers will be written down in bluebooks, and all tests will be administered in our regular classroom. The midterm is scheduled for Thursday, March 8th, at the normal class time. The final is scheduled for 12/12 at 10:30am.

Attendance
This course works best when students are present and ready to participate. Attendance therefore is expected and rewarded. Attendance is defined as being present in the classroom, on time, and undistracted. Please do not come to class late or leave the room before the class is over, as this is disrespectful and disruptive to the class. Students will be considered absent not only when they are missing altogether, but also when distracted, late without prior notification to the professor, or who leave early without prior notification to the professor. Good attendance is an important factor of your participation grade.

Participation
Students who regularly attend class, come on time and prepared, and intelligently engage in the class discussions will receive the highest grades in this area. Unexplained absence, lateness, lack of preparation, lack of attention, and failure to engage in class discussion will each have a negative effect on your participation grade. Students with more than 5 absences or who use their
cell phones in class will receive zero points for this part of their grade.

Grading

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blogs</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>20%</td>
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Grading Scale: A = 90 and above, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 60-60, F = anything below 60

Policies

Electronic Devices: Use of electronic devices such as cell phones, tablets, and laptops is strictly prohibited. Such devices should not be seen or heard by anyone, including (especially) yourself. Students are to keep these stowed away in the classroom. Violators of this rule will be asked to leave and counted absent.

Students with Disabilities: If you have particular learning needs that are documented with the university’s Student Life Office, please contact let me know so arrangements for testing can be made in advance. See http://www.angelo.edu/content/files/14216-op-1015-providing-accommodations-for-students-with. If not yet documented, please contact them at: Rm 112 University Center, (325) 942-2126, Student.Life@angelo.edu

Honor Code: Cheating, plagiarism, and other violations of the honor code will not be tolerated. Any and all violations will result in failure for the entire course, and the violator will be reported to the Office of Student Affairs. See ASU’s policies at http://www.angelo.edu/forms/pdf/honorcode5.pdf