

INTRODUCTION AND THE FOUNDING

J. Alexander Branham

Spring 2016

THIS CLASS

THIS CLASS

- GOV 310L

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- GOV 310L
- MWF 11 - 11:50

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- Unique #: 38305

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- Satisfies the first half of the legislative requirement

Goals for students of the course:

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2. Participate knowledgeably in the American political process
3. Critically examine key concepts from political science

- Most materials will be available on the course's website

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INTRODUCTION TO POLITICS

WHAT IS GOVERNMENT?

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- These can be simple or complex

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- We're all farmers and one of us proposes to build an irrigation system. How do we decide what happens? Does it get built? Who pays for it? Who maintains it?
- Tragedy of the commons

- Maintain order

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- Protect property

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- Provide public goods

Coercion!

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Democracy system that allows citizens to play a significant role in the governmental process, usually through selection of officials

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Totalitarian No formal limits and the state seeks to expand to basically all areas of life

WHAT IS POLITICS?

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- Conflict and struggles over the leadership, structure, and policies of government

THE FOUNDING

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- Raised taxes on colonies, as they defended the colonies during the war
- This did not go over well

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 - Life
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 - The pursuit of happiness
- Is it just to revolt against your government?
- Yes, when said government does not respect these rights
- Laundry list of complaints

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these united Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved;

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

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- Independence granted in the Treaty of Paris (1783)

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 - No standing army

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- Quickly became apparent that the Articles needed to be scrapped and rewritten

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 - Three-fifths compromise

Articles of Confederation one vote per state

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Virginia Plan representation based on population

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Connecticut compromise bicameral, House based on population and Senate representation equal by state

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 - Federal government ability to veto state legislation

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 - Electoral college

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 - Several other agreements between states (extradition of fugitives, for example)

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 - Conventions in 3/4 of the states (used only once)

- Article VI: Federal powers

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- Article VII: Ratification

THE AMENDMENTS

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- These are designed to limit the power of the federal government

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- 9th Bill of rights isn't exhaustive
- 10th "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people"

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Prohibition (XVIII, XXI)