

# **CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES: CORE TEXTS (GOV 312P, UNIQUE #38515)**

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

Spring 2021

Professor: Timothy Brennan

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Class Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3.30-5.00

Location: Zoom on Tuesdays and MEZ 1.306 on Thursdays (unless otherwise notified)

Office Hours (on Zoom): Fridays 1.30-3.00, or by appointment

Zoom link for classes: <https://utexas.zoom.us/j/94360840247>

Zoom link for my office hours: <https://utexas.zoom.us/j/3126459878>

## **I. Course Description**

This class is devoted to the underlying principles of American political life. We will proceed entirely through a close reading of primary sources. There will be units on: the American constitutional order; Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*; and slavery and civil rights. The class carries a Cultural Diversity in the U.S. Flag: our final unit will explore the writings of Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, W.E.B. Du Bois, and other African American authors. The class also carries an "Ethics" flag: we will consider the difficult practical questions faced by figures like Madison, Lincoln, Douglass, and Du Bois.

## **II. Required Texts**

Please make sure you purchase hard-copy versions of the exact editions mentioned below. Electronic versions or different editions are not acceptable substitutes.

1. Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay. *The Federalist Papers*. Introduction by Charles Kesler, edited by Clinton Rossiter. Signet Classics. ISBN 0451528816.
2. Alexis de Tocqueville. *Democracy in America*. Trans. Harvey Mansfield and Delba Winthrop. University of Chicago Press. ISBN 0226805360.
3. Frederick Douglass. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. Signet Classics. ISBN 0756967104.
4. Booker T. Washington. *Up From Slavery*. Dover Classics. ISBN 0486287386.
5. W.E.B. DuBois. *The Souls of Black Folk*. Dover Classics. ISBN 0486280411.
6. Course Packet.

## **III. Assignments and Grading**

Participation (15%)

First Exam (15%)

Analytical/Interpretive Essay (30%)

Final Exam (40%)

#### IV. Course Policies

**Books.** You are required to have a physical copy of every book (second-hand is fine, but make sure you have the exact book editions listed above). You are also required to have the relevant readings with you in class. If you choose not to purchase the Course Packet, which will be posted on Canvas, you should print out copies of the relevant readings and bring them with you to class, on the days that we are meeting in person.

**Participation.** You will need to be in class on time, and you should be prepared to discuss the readings in detail. (Make sure you do each reading carefully before coming to class.) Frequent absence will substantially lower your participation grade.

**Exams.** The date for the first exam is tentatively set for Thursday, February 11 (in class time). The date for the final exam is Monday, May 17, 2.00-5.00. Information about the format of the exams will be sent out as the dates approach.

**Essays.** You will receive essay topics and guidelines approximately two weeks before the due date.

**Office Hours.** I will hold “office hours” via a Zoom meeting room. If you’d like to talk to me but you are not free at the scheduled time, please send me an email with a couple of possible meeting times. If you just have a brief question that could be answered in a sentence or two, feel free to email me any time.

**Zoom Classes.** These classes will be “synchronous” (i.e., live, at the normal class time) and will not be recorded. It is your responsibility to minimize distractions as much as possible. This means not only switching off your cell phone, but also completely shutting down Facebook, Instagram, Amazon, TikTok, etc., for the duration of each class. Please keep your camera on to stay visible throughout every session. Please avoid doing distracting things (like walking around or chatting to a roommate) while on camera. Please keep your microphone muted unless you are speaking. And please click “Raise Hand” if you have a question or comment at any time.

**In-Person Classes.** The use of laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices is not permitted during in-person classes. Using a cell phone during class time will result in an F for the participation portion of your grade.

**Academic Integrity.** Academic dishonesty will be treated extremely seriously. Plagiarism will result in an F for the course. The university’s Honor Code, with information on the meaning of academic integrity, can be found online (<http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/the-university/>).

**Disabilities.** Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities (471-6259, or <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>).

## COURSE READING SCHEDULE

The schedule below is subject to revisions, as dictated by the pace of our discussions.

Readings found in the course packet are marked “CP.”

### Class Dates

#### UNIT 1: THE AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER

Tuesday, January 19:

The Declaration of Independence (in the assigned edition of *The Federalist Papers*)  
The Articles of Confederation (in *The Federalist Papers*)  
U.S. Constitution, Preamble (in *The Federalist Papers*)  
Federalist 1

Thursday, January 21:

Federalist 9-10, 14

Tuesday, January 26:

U.S. Constitution, Article I, Section 8  
Federalist 39 and 46  
Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 107-8, 149-54

Thursday, January 28:

Federalist 47-51

Tuesday, February 2:

U.S. Constitution, Article I  
Federalist 52-53, 55-57, 62-63

Thursday, February 4:

U.S. Constitution, Article II  
Federalist 68-73

Tuesday, February 9:

U.S. Constitution, Articles III-VII  
Federalist 78, 84 (pp. 509-16), 85  
James Madison, Speech to Congress (CP)

U.S. Constitution, Amendments I-X (the Bill of Rights)

Thursday, February 11:

First exam (date to be confirmed)

## **UNIT 2: DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA**

Tuesday, February 16:

Tocqueville, 3-15, 27-44

Thursday, February 18:

Tocqueville, 45-55, 187-92, 220-35

Tuesday, February 23:

Tocqueville, 235-49, 278-88

Thursday, February 25:

Tocqueville, 399-400, 403-415, 433-39, 469-72

Tuesday, March 2:

Tocqueville, 479-84, 485-92, 500-506  
Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography* (CP)

Thursday, March 4:

Tocqueville, 506-14, 517-21

Tuesday, March 9:

Tocqueville, 535-39, 577-78, 587-88, 589-99, 599-604

Thursday, March 11:

Tocqueville, 639-45, 661-76

March 16: No class (Spring Break)

March 18: No class (Spring Break)

### UNIT 3: SLAVERY AND CIVIL RIGHTS

Tuesday, March 23:

Benjamin Franklin, "Petition" (CP)  
Patrick Henry, Letter to Robert Pleasants (CP)  
Tocqueville, 326-348

Thursday, March 25:

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative*, 1-128

Tuesday, March 30:

William Lloyd Garrison, "On the Constitution and the Union" (CP)  
Douglass, "The Meaning of the Fourth of July for the Negro" (CP)  
Douglass, "The Constitution of the United States: Is It Pro-Slavery or Anti-Slavery?" (CP)

Thursday, April 1:

John C. Calhoun, "Speech in the Senate on the Oregon Bill" (CP)  
Alexander Stephens, "Cornerstone Speech" (CP)

Tuesday, April 6:

Abraham Lincoln, "Peoria Speech" (CP)

Thursday, April 8:

Lincoln, First Inaugural (CP)  
Lincoln, Emancipation Proclamation (CP)  
Lincoln, "Gettysburg Address" (CP)  
Lincoln, Second Inaugural (CP)  
Douglass, "Oration" (CP)  
W.E.B. Du Bois, "Abraham Lincoln" (CP)  
Du Bois, "Again, Lincoln" (CP)

Tuesday, April 13:

No class

Thursday, April 15:

U.S. Constitution, Amendments XIII-XV (the Reconstruction Amendments)  
Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, v-vi, 1-24

Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery*, 1-11

Tuesday, April 20:

Washington, *Up From Slavery*, 11-85

Thursday, April 22:

Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 25-35

Washington, *Up From Slavery*, 105-115

Tuesday, April 27:

Du Bois, "Agitation" (CP)

Du Bois, "An Open Letter to Warren Gamaliel Harding" (CP)

Washington, "Democracy and Education" (CP)

Washington, "The Intellectuals and the Boston Mob" (CP)

Thursday, April 29:

Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 55-67, 155-64

Tuesday, May 4:

Martin Luther King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (CP)

Martin Luther King, "I Have a Dream" speech (CP)

Malcolm X, "The Ballot or the Bullet" (CP)

Thursday, May 6:

James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time*, 82-106 (to be posted as a PDF on Canvas)