

Political Science 202W

Fall 2024

Lectures on Mondays and Wednesdays (and occasional Fridays), 10:25-11:15

Recitations on Thursdays or Fridays

Argument in Political Science

Professor Gerald Gamm

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Office hours (PSCI 202W only): Monday afternoons, 1:00-2:00

Additional office hours: Monday afternoons, 2:00-3:00; Friday mornings, 9:15 10:00

Recitation leaders: [Henry Cramer](#), [Dylan Heller](#), [Chloë Humphrey](#), [Seulgi Dianne Lee](#), [Kayla Liss](#), and [Alexander Yang](#).

This course introduces students to the questions, concepts, and analytical approaches of political scientists and emphasizes careful reading and analytical writing. For its subject matter, this class focuses on the tension between majority rule and minority rights in the American political tradition. Topics include tyranny of the majority,

Excused absences from class. *Please do NOT attend class if you are sick!* We recognize a number of reasons for legitimate absences from class: illness; severe injuries or other medical conditions; religious or cultural holidays; athletic or debate competitions; or weddings, funerals, or other major life-cycle events. *If you need to miss a recitation or lecture for an excused reason, be sure to notify your teaching assistant in advance.* As long as you notify them in advance, you will not be penalized for the occasional excused absence. We will also gladly share lecture notes for those with excused absences. Absences without prior notification will be treated as unexcused, except in cases of unexpected emergencies.

Paper guidelines and academic honesty. Students must conduct themselves in accordance with the [Academic Honesty Policy](#). In this class, students are encouraged to discuss readings and course material with anyone they choose. If all assignments have been submitted, they may not share, receive, or discuss written work for this class,

Requirements and basis for grading

To receive credit for the course to pass the course you must, at minimum, attend recitation on a regular basis, submit at least five papers (according to the schedule below), and take the final exam. Anyone who does not fulfill these minimal requirements will not receive credit for the course.

Participation in recitation (15%). You are expected to attend lectures and recitations regularly. We will not penalize occasional absences for legitimate reasons, as defined above. Your participation grade is determined by attendance and active, informed participation in recitations. *You must attend recitation on a regular basis defined, at a bare minimum, as a majority of recitations to receive credit for the course.* If you cannot commit to doing that, however good your reasons, you should not take this course.

Brief pop quizzes (5%). At a handful of lectures, randomly chosen and unannounced in advance, we will distribute pop quizzes. These will be easy a line or two at most designed to give full credit to anyone doing the readings and showing up for (and paying attention to) lectures. Students will get half

Unit A Freedom and Slavery

Aug. 26 Lecture
Aug. 28 Lecture, with discussion of syllabus and recitation assignments
Aug. 30 Lecture, with tips for reading and notetaking
Sept. 2 *No class Labor Day*
Sept. 4 Lecture
Sept. 6 Discussion: Special class on how to write effective, strong papers

No paper assignment.

[Declaration of Independence](#), 4 July 1776.

[The Shameful Final Grievance of the Declaration of Independence](#) *The Atlantic*, 8 Feb. 2020. [PDF version](#).

Thomas Jefferson to John Holmes, [Letter](#), 22 Apr. 1820.

[The American Union](#)

What to the Slaq0.0>7004C5005600520051000F000300B3JFJETQ EMC /Span /MCID17(o3(e)-n A

50 60 (Vol. 1, Part 1, Chaps. 3 4)
173 (Vol. 1, Part 2, Chap. 1)
196 99, 226 30 (Vol. 1, Part 2, Chap. 5, first two sections and final section)
231 35 (Vol. 1, Part 2, Chap. 6, first section)
246 61 (Vol. 1, Part 2, Chap. 7)
433 36 (Vol. 2, Part 1, Chap. 2)
469 70 (Vol. 2, Part 1, Chap. 12)
503 9 (Vol. 2, Part 2, Chaps. 1 3)
535 38 (Vol. 2, Part 2, Chap. 13)
667 79 (Vol. 2, Part 4, Chaps. 1 4)
690 705 (Vol. 2, Part 4, Chaps. 6 8)

21 Aug. 2024. [How Alexis de Tocqueville Explains Democratic Party Conformity](#) *Washington Post*,
[PDF version](#)

[The Deep, Tangled Roots of American Illiberalism](#) *New York Times*, 4 May 2024. [PDF version](#)

Unit F Democratic Liberty

Oct. 7 Lecture
Oct. 9 Lecture
Oct. 10/11 Recitation

Paper due Oct. 8. Mores the lives of ordinary Americans shaped behaviors that allowed a democratic people to be free, according to Tocqueville. In his analysis, where

Unit G Collective Action, Ambition, and Mass Party Politics

Oct. 21 Lecture
Oct. 23 Lecture
Oct. 24/25 Recitation

Paper due Oct. 22. How does Aldrich draw on the problem of collective action and ambition theory to analyze the formation of mass political parties in the 1820s and 1830s and the success of the new Republican party in the 1850s? What do Pierson and Schickler emphasize in their own account of this era?

John Aldrich, *Why Parties?*, 28–32, 43–56, 102–59.

Paul Pierson and Eric Schickler, *Partisan Nation*, 35–39.

Unit H The Failures of Multiracial Democracy

Oct. 28 Lecture
Oct. 30 Lecture
Oct. 31/Nov. 1 Recitation

Paper due Oct. 29. How did the formal institutions of American democracy fail to protect the rights of Black people in the 1880s and 1890s, and also in the 1930s and 1940s? Drawing on Levitsky and Ziblatt, as well as Joseph, explain the collapse of multiracial democracy in the 1890s. Then, drawing on Katznelson, identify the central features of the mid-20th-century Congress—including committees, the seniority system, and party organization—and how those features shaped welfare policy, labor legislation, and benefits for veterans.

Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, [*Tyranny of the Minority: Why American Democracy Reached the Breaking Point*](#) (New York: Crown, 2023), Chap. 3:

[How Black Americans Kept Reconstruction Alive](#) *The Atlantic*, Dec. 2023. [PDF version](#)

Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White*, 12-79, 113-41.

Unit I The Fourteenth Amendment, Title VII, Sex, and Gender

Nov. 4 Lecture
Nov. 6 Lecture
Nov. 7/8 Recitation

Paper due Nov. 5. How did the Fourteenth Amendment and the subordinate place of women in early-20th-century America shape the *Lochner* and *Muller* decisions? After answering that question, analyze the politics and long-Act of 1964, the argument of Ruth Bader Ginsburg in 1974 that a new constitutional amendment was required to secure the rights of women, and the decision of the Supreme Court in *Bostock* to extend Title VII protections to LGBTQ people.

[If We Were Married](#) *Suffs* (original Broadway cast).

Nancy Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon*, 1-46, 65-73, 93-107, 108-33 (skim), 133-51.

Unit L Polarization and Democratic Erosion

Nov. 25 Lecture

Nov. 27 *No class--Thanksgiving*

Nov. 29 *No class--Thanksgiving*

Dec. 2 Lecture

Dec. 4 Lecture

Dec. 5/6 Recitation

Paper due Dec. 3. In what specific ways do Pierson and Schickler believe American democracy is in