



SYLLABUS SUMMARY

Responsible Citizenship

POL 101

Section 2

Semester Spring 2024
Length 16 Weeks
Credit Hours 3
Course Location Harold Miller Center 154A
Course Schedule MWF 9:00-9:50; 11:00-11:50

Instructor Kevin Walker, Ph.D.
Office Location Welder Library (downstairs)
Office Hours MWF 12-1; TTh 1-2
Email KMWalker@umary.edu
Website kevinmatthewwalker.com

Course Description

The question for all free people, whether in the U.S. or elsewhere, whether at the time of the Founding or today, is this: “whether societies are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice, or whether they are forever destined to depend for their political constitutions on accident and force” (Alexander Hamilton, Federalist #1). In this course, we will examine the principles, institutions and practices designed to meet that challenge, both in the highest regions of government, as well as our own individual lives. We will combine the best insights of political science with political philosophy to gain a strong understanding of our own citizenship, the duties involved, but also the joy that comes with being a good steward of our regime. The unique features of the American political tradition will be engaged as the basis from which students will learn to make responsible choices as citizens, assess contemporary political movements, and develop the acumen needed to ensure the common good.

Required Texts

The following texts are *required* for the course.

Readings on Citizenship.

Tocqueville, Alexis. *Democracy in America*. Translated by Richard Heffner. New York: Signet Classics, 2010. ISBN: 9780451531605.

Springer, Mark M. *Responsible Citizenship: Restoring Civic Community Action*. Kendall Hunt. ISBN: 9781792469619.

Workload Expectations and Grades

Since this is a 3-semester credit undergraduate level class, students can expect to spend a minimum of 6 hours per week instructional time and another 12 hours per week studying outside of instructional time.

- **Participation and Reading Questions (5%).** Come to class every day and be ready to contribute to the conversation. Following the Socratic Method, be prepared to respond to the reading questions which will be passed out each week.
- **Reading Quizzes (15%).** These are short multiple choice Canvas quizzes that will be given throughout the semester.
- **Discussion Responses (10%).** These are short responses to questions on the readings on Canvas.
- **Three Exams (60% -- 20% each).** These are exams on each of the three major parts of the class. There will be study guides.

All late assignments will receive no higher than a B+ unless other arrangements are made by contacting the professor with a specific explanation.

Class Policies

- **Academic Honesty.** Students are expected to read the [University of Mary's Academic Honor Code and Honor System](#) and abide by all the standards of conduct and requirements contained therein. When a student is in doubt about whether or not an action might constitute an Academic Honor Code violation, s/he should request clarification from the instructor *before* the action in question is undertaken. The Academic Honor Code is available for review on my.umary.edu under the General University Policies link. To clarify: *Cheating* is copying one's own notes (e.g., a cheat-sheet) or someone else's exam. *Plagiarism* is copying text you did not write without proper citation as if it was your own, whether it is from online or from another essay.
- **Artificial Intelligence.** The whole purpose of artificial intelligence software like ChatGPT is to generate fake text. There is therefore absolutely no reason for using AI software for this course. Use of these tools is strictly prohibited, and all assignments will be carefully screened by TurnItIn.com and ZeroGPT.com. Students will be notified about all incidents and offered a chance to explain, but their submission will be reported to the Vice President of Student Affairs.
- **Technology.** For all its uses, certain attitudes toward technology threaten to overwhelm everything distinctly human in us and replace our best qualities with machine functions. This class is focused on preserving humanity. Everything you need to know will be in the assigned texts, the classroom discussions, and your own reasoning and personal insights. There is no need for laptops in class unless you have an accommodation.
- **Reasonable Accommodations.** The University of Mary, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and in the spirit of our mission, offers support for disabled students who provide required documentation. Students with disabilities who need accommodations should apply to the [Office of Student Accessibility Services](#). For further information, contact Dr. Lynn Dodge, coordinator of Student Accessibility Services, in the Student Success Center (lower level of Welder Library) at (701) 355-8264 or ljdodge@umary.edu.
- **Channel for Communication Relating to this Course**
Aside from the instructor, students may report or appeal decisions to: Dr. Mark Springer, Department Chair (mmspringer@umary.edu); Dr. David Tamisiea, Dean of Arts and Sciences (datamisiea@umary.edu).

Benedictine Values

Each of the Benedictine values – hospitality, service, community, moderation, respect for persons, and prayer – are emphasized at different points throughout the course in discussing the pursuit of the common good. Still, a political philosophy course is focused on two:

- **Community.** All human communities are political in some way or another. As Aristotle taught, we are “political animals,” meaning that whenever any group of people tries to live together, they will get political. Like all aspects of our human nature – our bodies, our minds, our relationships, our fine art, etc. – politics is meant to be a glorious reflection of the image of God in us; like all of those things, it too is corrupted by sin. Our response should be to discern its original glory and become agents of redeeming our political life. This class will offer the tools to help us do that, whether as public officials or as private citizens.
- **Respect for Persons.** Any just political order depends entirely on the acceptance of the dignity of the human person. It is the standard we appeal to every time we get angry: complaints about injustice are themselves revelations of justice that exists by nature. It is Jesus Christ's maxim to “do under others as you would have them do unto you” (Matthew 7:12); the Declaration of Independence's claim that it is “self-evident that all men are created equal”; Abraham Lincoln's statement that “as I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master” (Fragment from c. 1858); or Martin Luther King's observation that “[a]ny law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust” (Letter from a Birmingham Jail, 1963).

Course Outline

Students are required to read the following readings for each day of class. If classes get behind schedule, we will just continue in order of the readings.

I. Political Philosophy of Citizenship

Week 1 – What is Politics?

January 10
Aristotle, *Politics*, Book I (in class)

January 12
Aristotle, *Politics*, Book III

Week 2 – Cities and Regimes

January 15
Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*

January 17
Community Learning Day

January 19
Plutarch, *Life of Solon*

Week 3 – Philosophy and Politics

January 22
Plato, *Apology of Socrates*

January 24
Plato, *Republic* – On Democracy

January 26
Polybius, *The Roman Constitution*

Week 4 – Rome and the Kingdom of God

January 29
Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Republic* – Why Enter Politics?; The Dream of Scipio

January 31
Lucius Anneas Seneca, *An Anger*

February 2
The Bible, Matthew 4:1-11; Matthew 5-7; Matthew 22; John 18:36; Romans 13; Revelation 21

Week 5 – Modernity

February 5
Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651)

February 7
John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government* (1689)

February 9
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract* (1762)

II. The American Regime

Week 6 – The Founding

February 12
President's Day

February 14
The Declaration of Independence; Abigail Adams, *On the Declaration and Women*; Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1781); Letter to Henry Lee (1825); Letter to Roger Weightman (1826)

February 16
Exam on Weeks 1-6

Exam I – February 16

Week 7 – The Constitution

February 19
The U.S. Constitution

February 21
Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist #1 and 9*

February 23
James Madison, *Federalist #10*

Week 8 – Government

February 26
James Madison, *Federalist #48 and 51*

February 28
George Washington, *Farewell Address* (1796)

March 1
Spring Break

III. Responsible Citizenship in Practice

Week 9 – Political Discourse

March 4

Abraham Lincoln, The Perpetuation of our Political Institutions (1838); William Lloyd Garrison, No Compromise with the Evil of Slavery (1854)

March 6

Abraham Lincoln, Fragments on Slavery (c. 1854); Stephen Douglas, First Lincoln-Douglas Debate (1858)

March 8

Abraham Lincoln, First Lincoln-Douglas Debate (1858)

Week 10 – On the Issues

March 11

Issue Debates

March 13

Issue Debates

March 15

Exam Weeks 6-10

Exam 2 on March 15

IV. How to Train a Democracy: Lessons from Alexis de Tocqueville (REVISED)

Week 11 – Origins of Democracy

March 18

Democracy in America, Introduction

March 20

Democracy in America, Chapters 1-3

March 22

Democracy in America, Chapters 12-15

Week 12 – Democratic Mind and Spirit

March 25

Democracy in America, Chapters 16-18

March 27

Democracy in America, Chapters 19-21

March 29

Easter Break

Week 13 – Democratic Psychology

April 1

Easter Break

April 3

Democracy in America, Chapters 26-29

April 5

Democracy in America, Chapters 30-32

Week 14 – Manners, Customs and Morals

April 8

Democracy in America, 35-36

April 10

Democracy in America, 38-41

April 12

Democracy in America, Chapters 43-46

Week 15 – Hopes and Fears

April 15

Democracy in America, Chapter 48

April 17

Democracy in America, Chapters 56-57

April 19

Discussion and Review

9am Class Exam 3 – Tuesday, April 23, 10:15-12:15
11am Class Exam 3 – Wednesday, April 24, 10:15-12:15