Course Description:

Behind political conflict and the game of politics—campaigns and elections, pundits and commentators, policy analysts and advocates, protesters and authorities, behind even those who fight and die—lie certain fundamental issues that persist from generation to generation and that give political life its energy and form. In this course, we will begin to explore several such issues: the question of justice at war, the question of the role of government in relation to the economy, the question of constitutional design, and the question of the cultural foundations of political freedom.

We will read several books in this course, most of them written relatively recently, but we will also sample several great works of political philosophy. Lectures, quizzes, and tests will be designed around the reading assignments, which are given in the syllabus class by class. To succeed in the course, you should come to class having read the assignment for that day—a daily quiz will give you an incentive to keep up—and having thought about its significance for our study.

Professor: James R. Stoner, Jr.  poston@lsu.edu  225-578-2538

Teaching Assistant: Peidong Wu  pwu6@lsu.edu

Office Hours:  M, 1:00–2:30 p.m.,
F, 9:00–10:00 a.m., and by appointment
Stubbs 214

Class Time, and Location:  MWF 10:30–11:20 a.m.  143 Coates

Attendance: Attendance in class is expected, unless you are ill, have been required to isolate or quarantine due to covid-19, or find attendance impossible during a covid-outbreak on campus. For those who cannot attend in person, the lecture will be webcast synchronously via a link on Moodle and quizzes will be available that way, too.

Class Discussion: The instructor will pause for questions during lecture and encourages you to speak up. For students, the Chatham House Rule applies: no student question or comment made in class should be attributed to the speaker outside of class. Please show courtesy to one another, of course.
Course Materials:
The following books are required and are (or will soon be) available in the bookstore. Please obtain these specific editions so that we can all work from the same translations and/or page numbers. The books are listed in the order in which we will study them. Additional articles are available through the Moodle website, either in pdf or as an internet link; some materials are hyperlinked in the online version of the syllabus.


NOTE: You will need to bring to class every day an electronic device that can access the internet (specifically, the Moodle site for the course): a smartphone, a tablet, or a laptop.

Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily quizzes (open book; make-ups only if arranged beforehand)</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class test (Fri., Oct. 1)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class test (Wed., Nov. 10)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam (Sat., Dec. 11, 7:30-9:30 a.m.)</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grading scale:

- A+ (98%-100%), A (93%-97%), A- (90%-92%)
- B+ (88%-90%), B (83%-87%), B- (80%-82%)
- C+ (78%-80%), C (73%-77%), C- (70%-72%)
- D+ (68%-70%), D (63%-67%), D- (60%-62%)
- F (below 60%)

General Education Credit and the Integrative Learning Core:
General education credit for the social sciences will be earned by students in this course, since our study shares the goals of the general education program at LSU. According to an earlier LSU catalogue, “General education courses are not hurdles to be overcome; rather, they are means by which students learn to think, describe, interpret, and analyze the world. Their primary aim is to educate rather than train, and to instill a desire for life-
long learning.” We are now mandated to add the following: “Integrated learning allows students to make simple connections among ideas and experiences and across disciplines and perspectives. The LSU Integrative Learning Core (ILC) curriculum is designed to develop student abilities to transfer their learning to new situations, and demonstrate a sense of self as a learner. A fundamental goal of the ILC is to foster students’ practical and intellectual capacities associated with integrative learning in preparation for high competence and functionality in their post-baccalaureate careers. This course fulfills the BOR Area of Social/Behavioral Sciences and provides students experience with the ILC proficiency of Inquiry and Analysis.”

SYLLABUS:

Mon., Aug. 23: Introduction

I. War and Peace

Fri., Aug. 27: Walzer, chapters 2, 3
Mon., Aug. 30: Walzer, chapters 4, 6
Wed., Sept. 1: Walzer, chapters 8, 9
Fri., Sept. 3: Walzer, chapters 11, 12

[Labor Day Break]

Wed., Sept. 8: Walzer, chapters 14, 16
Fri., Sept. 10: Walzer, chapters 18, 19

II. Wealth and Poverty

Wed., Sept. 15: Dewey, chapter 2
Fri., Sept. 17: Dewey, chapter 3

Wed, Sept. 22: Hayek, chapters 3-5
Fri, Sept. 24: Hayek, chapters 6-8
Mon, Sept. 27: Hayek, chapters 9, 14

Wed, Sept. 29: Mathieu Desan & Michael A. McCarthy, “A Time to be Bold,” *Jacobin*, July 31, 2018
Conor Friedersdorf, “The Hunger for a Bold Socialism,” *Atlantic*, August 2, 2018

Fri, Oct. 1: Test
III. First Principles

Mon., Oct. 4: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book 1
Fri., Oct. 8: Aristotle, Book 7

Mon., Oct. 11: Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, q. 91, aa. 1-4; q. 94, aa. 1-6; q. 95, aa. 1-2; q. 97, aa. 1-4
Fri., Oct. 15: John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (1690), chs. 5, 19
Mon., Oct. 18: The Declaration of Independence

IV. Forming and Re-Forming Government


[Fall Break]

Wed., Oct. 27: *The Federalist* ##47-52 in Wootton, pp. 231-254
Keith E. Whittington, “How to Read the Constitution” (2006)
Burdett Loomis (pro) and Byron E. Shafer (con), “Resolved, The president should be elected directly by the people,” in Richard


Mon., Nov. 8: Henry Kissinger, “The Pitfalls of Universal Jurisdiction,” *Foreign Affairs* (July/August 2001)

**Wed., Nov. 10:** Test

**V. Character and Culture**

Mon., Nov. 15: Bloom, pp. 62-81, 313-335
Wed., Nov. 17: Bloom, pp. 336-382

Fri., Nov. 19: Shelby Steele, *White Guilt*, pp. 3-56
Mon., Nov. 22: Steele, pp. 57-110
Wed., Nov. 24: Steele, pp. 113-181

[Thanksgiving Break]

Mon., Nov. 29: Christina Hoff Sommers, *Freedom Feminism*, intro., ch. 1-2

Fri., Dec. 3: George Washington, “Farewell Address,” September 19, 1796
Barack Obama, “Farewell Address,” January 10, 2017

**FINAL EXAMINATION:** Saturday, December 11 (7:30-9:30 a.m.)