Pols 602: American Political Ideas (66899) **Spring 2014**
Pols 710: American Public Philosophies (66914)

Class Meeting: Mondays and Wednesdays, 11-12:15 in 209 Blake

Professor: Paul Schumaker
Office: 522 Blake E-mail: schu@ku.edu Phone: 864-9038
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 12:30 – 3:00 pm, and by appointment

Course description: This course explores continuities and changes in the political beliefs and values of the American people. American political culture contains many continuities in prominent widely-accepted ideas about citizenship, government, capitalism, and social life. But American public philosophers – including politicians and other political leaders, scholars, columnists, and now bloggers – often challenge long-standing beliefs and provide new ideas that are sometimes embraced by the public. Thus, various eras in American history have exhibited different dominant political cultural values. In this course, we draw upon the work of some leading contemporary political theorists who have provided systematic descriptions and analyses of stability and change in the political ideas stressed by political leaders and public philosophers and embedded into our political culture.

The first part of the course (Sessions 1 through 7) will introduce our main authors – a few short readings by others will also be assigned and made available on Blackboard – and the themes they stress as important to understanding American political ideas. These authors and their books that we will read (and that are available at the Bookstore) are:

Samuel Huntington, *Who are We?* (Simon and Schuster, 2004)
Michael Sandel, *Democracy's Discontent* (Harvard, 1996)
Rogers M. Smith, *Civic Ideals* (Yale, 1997).
Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson, *Winner-Take-All-Politics* (Simon and Schuster, 2010)
David Seimers, *Presidents and Political Thought* (Missouri, 2009)

Their themes include:

1. How strong is (or was) **American (national) identity** and what is (or was) its characteristics? What inhibits and strengthens a strong sense of "being American" among residents of the U.S.A.?
2. How important to American identity are (were) various **ascriptive traits:** socio-economic status, ethnicity, race, gender (and sexuality). How and why has American culture excluded and included people having minority ethnic, racial, and sexual traits or living in poverty?
3. How important is (was) **religion** to American identity and inclusion in political life? What religious beliefs and practices have been most influential politically?
4. How evident is (was) the **liberal** political creed? What liberal values are or were stressed? How? Which ones are (or were) ignored or little emphasized? Why?
5. How evident was the **republican** political creed? What republican values are or were stressed? How? Which ones were ignored or little emphasized? Why?
6. How have Americans thought about economic life? What forms of **capitalism** do (did) they emphasize? How have they thought about economic freedom and equality?
7. How have Americans think about **democratic government**? What forms of democracy have they emphasized? What do (did) they think about citizen rights and obligations?

During the second part of the course, we will apply these themes to understand the key ideas that defined American political culture and public philosophy during various historical eras, beginning with Colonial America. During the third part of the course, we will continue to apply these themes to understand the political ideas that have united and divided Americans in recent times and that continue to do so in contemporary politics. Throughout, we will also want to understand the **conditions** most responsible for the stability and changes in these ideas. And we will want to explore the **legacies** (both positive and negative) of these ideas.

Course requirements and grading: Your grade will be based on the following four components of the course, each weighted 25%

(1) Attendance, preparation, quizzes, and participation: Each student is expected to be familiar with assigned readings and with "lecture notes" that will be posted in the Documents folder on Blackboard about 24 hours prior to class. There will normally be a short quiz over these materials at the beginning of each class meeting. At the end of class, students will hand in these quizzes along with two self-assigned scores: up to 5 points for their performance on the quizzes and up to 5 points for their participation in class discussions. Student attendance, preparation, performances on the quizzes, and general participation in class discussions, and the quality of two presentations to be given by each student (see 4 below) will be the bases for an overall attendance, quiz, and participation score on a 25-point scale provided at the end of the semester.

(2) A midterm exam will be given March 12: Lecture notes (L1-L14) will be distributed prior to each class and will include about five key concepts that will be the focus of discussion for that session. Thus, by March 12, we will have considered about 50-75 such concepts. A study guide containing 25 such concepts will be distributed on March 7. Six of these concepts will be on the midterm, and you will have to write short essays (about a page to a page and a half of a large bluebook in length) on five of them.

(3) A "final" exam will be given on May 15: However, it will not be a comprehensive final and will instead be like the midterm, covering materials from Sessions 15 to 27. A study guide containing 25 concepts covered since the spring break will be distributed by May 6 comprised of some of the 50-75 terms listed in the corresponding lecture notes (L15 to L27). Six of these concepts will be on the final and you will have to write short essays on five of them.

(4) A term paper will be due on May 7: By February 12, each student must select a term paper topic involving the description and analysis of the public philosophies that emerged or were dominant at two points in American history (as indicated on the calendar below). For example, one student might want to focus on the ideas of the American Revolution (S9) and the egalitarian social movements of the long 1960s (S19). Another student might want to focus on the ideas of the Constitutional founding (S10) and the revival of libertarian economic ideas in recent decades (part of S20). A third student might want to focus on the development of Jim Crow laws (part of S14) and McCarthyism (which occurred in the period covered by S18). Obviously, many combinations are possible.

For whatever points in history you select, you will be expected to make a 10-minute presentation summarizing main ideas about that period during the class session when it is on our schedule. To get each student involved in taking on such leadership roles fairly early in the semester and to have broad coverage in these presentations, students are urged to pick one earlier and one later point in history, but this is not an absolute requirement. However, if you were to choose two later periods (for example, neoliberalism (S24) and neoconservatism (S25)), you would be expected to accept a leadership role during discussions earlier in the semester.

What is required is that you provide me a first and a second choice of paper topics no later than February 12. If your first choice is problematic for some reason (such as other students also wanting to focus on one of both of the eras indicated in your first choice), I may instead approve your second choice. In approving choices when there are such conflicts, I will adopt the "first come, first served principle," which should give you an incentive to get me your choices well before February 12, indeed as soon as possible. I would like to post everyone's approved paper topics and a schedule for when each student would be a discussion leader by February 14, so that anyone focusing on Colonial America or the American Revolution (to be discussed on February 17 and 19) have some time to prepare. (Remember that the quality of your performances in this role will contribute to your grade for class participation – as mentioned in the first requirement above.)

By the time your paper is due, you will therefore already have researched, outlined, and presented in class some of its main components. Between your last presentation and May 7, you will want to incorporate into your final paper feedback from your presentations, additional research drawn from library and Internet sources, your analyses of the causes of the changes that occurred during the two periods you have focused upon, and your evaluations of the merits of the two public philosophies you have considered.

If you are enrolled in POLS602, your term papers should be between 2500-3500 words in length. If you are enrolled in POLS710, your term papers should be between 3500-4000 words in length. In either case, your papers should be well-researched, incorporate ideas taken from lecture notes, assigned readings, and outside sources, and include proper citations. Well-organized papers will have an introduction discussing key themes of the course that are the focus of your paper and a justification for the two periods you have decided to compare and evaluate. Then, several pages will be devoted to your discussion of each era, and your conclusion will discuss the causes of the changes in public philosophies that you have noticed in these two eras and your evaluation of these changes.

Your papers should, of course, reflect your own research and writing. To avoid any issues about academic misconduct, be sure to provide adequate citations of all sources. References should be made using the APSA-style citation method. (See http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocChicago.htlm for details.) In brief, if you provide any direct quotation or any summary of ideas drawn from an outside source (such as a books, journal articles, or materials drawn from the Internet), your presentation of such material must be immediately followed by indicating in parentheses the name(s) of the author, the year of the publication, and the pages that you are drawing upon. For example, an outside citation on pluralism might be: (Dewey, 1927: 85-6) or (Menand, 2001: 337-375). All outside sources should then be included in a "List of References" at the end of the paper. The following information should be included in those outside sources included on your list of references:

(a) for books and journal articles: Author, title, publisher, date, page

(b) for materials drawn from the Internet: Author, title, website address, date accessed

An extensive bibliography on American political ideas is available in the Syllabus folder on Blackboard and may provide some useful outside sources for completing your paper.

After both direct quotations and after any summary and/or interpretations of ideas contained on particular pages of our assigned readings, provide in parentheses the author's name and the page(s) of our assigned book (you need not include the title of the book). For example, if you draw the idea that the emergence of neoconservatism during the 1970s was due to "an organizational counterattack by business" (to the democratic reforms of the New Deal and the Great Society) your reference could be: (Hacker and Pierson, 118-120). References to lectures notes can also be made using this embedded method. For example, if you want to include information provided from Putnam and Campbell's *American Grace*, as outlined in my lecture notes, your citation would be: (Putnam and Campbell as described in L5: 2-3). Such "internal" sources need not be included in your List of References.

Your final grade: From your performance on these requirements, you can receive up to 100 points. Those earning 90 or more points will be assured an A; those earning between 80 and 89 will be assured a B; and so forth. I will not generally use "plus/minus" grading, but reserve the option to assign such grades for cases when students just miss the threshold for the higher grade.

Students having a disability that requires certain accommodations in fulfilling these requirements should contact the **Academic Achievement & Access Center** in 22 Strong Hall and then see me (privately after class or during office hours) as soon as possible.

Students are reminded that they may receive assistance with technical aspects of their term papers at the Writer's Roost, which has several locations across campus. For further information, check their website at www.writing.ku.edu or email them at writing@ku.edu.

Calendar

Part I: Course themes and approaches to understanding American public philosophies

S1, Jan. 22: Introduction: purposes, themes, and requirements
Recommended Reading: Siemers, chapter 1

S2, Jan. 27: American national identity: static or evolving?
Huntington, chapters 1-3

S3, Jan. 29: The central American philosophy: liberalism or republicanism?
Sandel, chapters 1-2

Recommended: Louis Hartz, *The Liberal Tradition in America*, chapter 1

S4, Feb. 3: Citizenship: inclusive or exclusive?
Smith, Introduction and chapter 1

S5, Feb. 5: Religion: Christian hegemony or religious freedom?
Huntington, chapters 4-5
Sandel, chapter 3

S6, Feb. 10: Capitalism: economic freedom and/or inequality?
Hacker and Pierson, chapter 1

Recommended: Theodore J. Lowi, *End of Liberalism*, chapter 1

S7, Feb. 12: Democracy: broadly dispersed or narrowly concentrated political power?
Hacker and Pierson, chapter 2

Recommended: Alan Wolfe, *Does American democracy Still Work?*, chapters 1 and 7

Part II: Historical Legacies

S8, Feb. 17: Colonial America
Smith, chapter 2

Recommended Reading: The Constitution of the Iroquois Nations (www.constitution.org.cons/iroquois.htm)

S9, Feb. 19: Revolution, independence, and confederation
Huntington, pp. 107-113
Smith, chapters 3-4

S10, Feb. 24: Founding a new nation and the American Constitution
Huntington, pp. 113-14
Sandel, pp.123-133
Hacker and Pierson, pp. 73-79
Smith, chapter 5
Siemers, chapter 2 (Adams) and pp. 74-92 (Madison as framer)

Recommended: Publius, *The Federalist* Numbers 1, 6, 9, 10, 39, 45, 51, and 85

S11, Feb. 26: The aristocratic-republican era
Huntington, pp. 115-16
Sandel, pp. 133-154
Smith, chapters 6 and 7
Siemers, chapter 3 (Jefferson) and pp. 92-103 (Madison as president)

S12, March 3: Jacksonian democracy and the Whigs
Huntington pp. 116-119
Sandel, pp. 154-167
Smith, chapter 8

S13, March 5: Civil War: slavery and states rights
Huntington, pp. 119-120
Sandel, pp. 168-184
Smith, chapter 9

S14, March 10: Reconstruction, backlash, and Jim Crow
Huntington, pp. 120-28
Smith, chapter 10

March 12: Midterm Exam

S15, March 24: The gilded age
Smith, chapter 11
Sandel, pp. 185-200

S16, March 26: The progressive era
Huntington, pp. 128-136
Hacker and Pierson, pp. 79-87
Sandel, chapter 7
Smith, chapter 12
Siemers, chapter 5 (Wilson)

Part III: Current controversies

S17, March 31: Pragmatism and the New Deal

Hacker and Pierson, pp. 87-91
Sandel, chapter 8
Siemers, chapter 6 (FDR)

S18, April 2: The post-war years: triumphalism, McCarthyism, and the end-of ideology
Huntington, pp. 136-38
Sandel, pp, 274-285
Lowi, "Pluralism and Interest Group Liberalism: America's New Public Philosophy (on Blackboard)

S19, April 7: Egalitarian social movements of the long-60s
Huntington, pp. 141-158
Sandel, pp. 285-304
Rawls, "A Kantian Conception of Equality" (on Blackboard)

S20, April 9: The revival of conservative economic and religious ideals
Nozick, "The Entitlement Theory" (on Blackboard)
Sandel, pp. 304-315

S21, April 14: The rise of conservative organizational power
Hacker and Pierson, chapters 4-6

S22, April 16: Emerging global forces
Huntington, chapters 8-10

Recommended: Robert Reich, *Supercapitalism*, especially introduction and chapters 2-3

S23, April 21: Multiculturalism
Huntington, pp. 158-177 and chapters 11-12
Smith, epilogue (pp. 470-506)

S24, April 23: Neoliberalism
Hacker and Pierson, chapter 7
Siemers, chapter 7 (Clinton)

S25, April 28: Neoconservatism
Hacker and Pierson, chapter 8

S26: April 30: Obama and the new pluralism
Hacker and Pierson, chapters 9 and 10
Siemers, Preface (pp. vii-xiv)
Schumaker, "Obama's Pluralism" (on Blackboard)

S27: May 5: A communitarian and republican revival?
Sandel, conclusion (pp. 317- 351)
Hacker and Pierson, conclusion (pp. 289-306)

S28: May 7: **Term papers due** and course wrap-up
Siemers, conclusion (pp. 180-195)

May 15 (Thursday) at 10:30: Final Exam