

PLS 310/335: U.S. Political Thought

Instructor: Yukie SUEHIRO

Semester: Winter 2010

Schedule: (Thu) 15:30-18:00, 19:00-20:40

Credits: 3

Course Description:

This course will examine American political thought through the viewpoint of early American political conditions and modern American political problems. We will discuss each topic based on the ideas of Alexis de Tocqueville who observed early American democracy and is an important political thinker. The goal of this course is to give students the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the connections between the content and method of early American political thought and current U.S. political thought. Our discussion will include a variety of issues: the separation of powers; freedom and equality; inequality; individualism; materialism; the tyranny of the majority; democratic armies; citizen participation; the election system; the position of business; and the national security system. Through these discussions, students will be able to gain an understanding of the transformation of American political thought from early time to the present.

Course Objectives:

1. Students will acquire a better understanding of the origins of American political thought.
2. Students will develop an understanding and awareness of modern American political problems.
3. Students will develop a better understanding of the unique aspects of American democracy.

Prerequisites:

None

Class Materials:

No textbook

Handouts and selected short readings will be given in the class.

Features will be shown using statistical tables, maps, slides, videos, etc.

We will also watch some films on related topics such as “the Candidate” and “Far and Away”.

Reference Books and Materials:

Alexis de Tocqueville, Phillips Bradley ed., *Democracy in America*. Vol. 1 and Vol. 2 (New York : Vintage Books, 1990)

邦訳：『アメリカの民主政治』上・中・下巻 井伊玄太郎訳（講談社学術文庫、1999）

Grading Methods:

Final examination: 50%

Attendance & participation in discussions: 35%

Review papers: 15%

Class Rules

Attendance and punctuality are required.

Class Schedule:

1st class	Course Introduction The Federal Constitution
2nd class	The Constitution and the Presidency (1) The Constitution and the Presidency (2)
3rd class	The National Security State (1) The National Security State (2) The National Security State (3)
4th class	Military Organizations A Consideration of Democratic Armies (1) A Consideration of Democratic Armies (2)
5th class	Citizen Participation Trivialized Elections (1) Trivialized Elections (2)
6th class	The Effect of Freedom and Equality (1) The Effect of Freedom and Equality (2)

7th class	Racial Inequality (1) Racial Inequality (2)
8th class	Economic Inequality (1) Economic Inequality (2)
9th class	The American Dream (1) The American Dream (2) The American Dream (3)
10th class	The “Privileged Position” of Business Materialism Materialism and Religion
11th class	The Origins of American Individualism Radical Individualism The Tyranny of the Majority
12th class	Final Examination

Footnotes:

The order of lecture may be partly changed.