

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

Harkness Hall 319

Email: gerald.gamm@rochester.edu

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, slavery, constitutional design, representation, the paradox of voting, collective action problems, political ambition, the development of the American party system, congressional organization, racism and civil rights, women's rights, substantive due process, the politics of contraception and abortion and LGBTQ rights, partisan polarization, and democratic erosion. Readings are drawn from classic texts in American thought—the Declaration of Independence, *The Federalist*, Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, speeches by Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln, Supreme Court cases—as well as from books and articles written by contemporary political scientists.

Books. Five books are available for purchase in the campus bookstore and at various places online, including [AbeBooks](#) and [Amazon](#). *Be certain to get the correct translation of Tocqueville; our edition is translated by George Lawrence and edited by J. P. Mayer. It is unabridged, with ISBN 9780061127922.* All of these books are available on reserve and some are also available as electronic editions through [Rush Rhees Library](#):

1. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, **unabridged, translated by George Lawrence.**
2. John Aldrich, *Why Parties?: A Second Look.*
3. Nancy Woloch, *Muller v. Oregon.*
4. Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White.*
5. Paul Pierson and Eric Schickler, *Partisan Nation.*

Course website. Blackboard contains lots of information essential to the course—selected student papers (for discussion in recitation), links to all required readings not in the books listed above, and folders for uploading your papers each week. To access readings off-campus, you will need to download and run VPN (so that your computer can be viewed as part of the University's network). You can install VPN [here](#). *If any link on the website does not work, please let Professor Gamm know immediately by email.*

Credit hours. This course follows the College credit hour policy for four-credit courses. This course meets three times weekly for three hours per week. For the fourth credit hour, students should review the student papers in advance of recitation. This course also includes substantial reading and writing assignments, as well as a midterm and final exam.

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 University's [Academic Honesty Policy](#). In this class, students are encouraged to discuss readings and course material with anyone they choose—including the professor, TA's, and other students. But, unless all assignments have been submitted, they may not share, receive, or discuss written work for this class, including outlines, plans, and notes for papers, except with Writing Fellows acting in their official capacity. Under no circumstances may students receive help of any sort with their papers from current or former students in this class.

Keep papers short and to the point. Papers should be 800-1,000 words in length (about 3 pages). *No paper may exceed 1,000 words.* Double-space the papers, use 12-point font, and no funny stuff with the margins; an inch on each side is about right. Place your recitation leader's name at the top of your paper. **All papers are due in that week's Blackboard assignment folder no later than 1:00 p.m. on Tuesdays.** Requests for extensions will be granted only on a case-by-case basis; except in the case of a genuine and unforeseen emergency, no late papers will be accepted without prior permission. If you do need an extension, contact your teaching assistant as early as possible.

Students are strongly discouraged, but not forbidden, from using AI-powered tools, like ChatGPT, to summarize readings or to write drafts of papers. Not only will the use of these tools undermine the learning objectives of this course—to develop the ability to read with precision, to think clearly, and to respond to prompts with clearly argued papers grounded in evidence from the readings—but the use of these tools will, ironically, also make it *much harder* for students to complete required assignments and could trigger an academic honesty violation. **Every submitted essay must meet these two conditions:**

1. Include 8-10 citations, in parentheses, giving exact page numbers (or paragraph number, for a reading lacking page numbers) for ideas that come from the readings. About 3-5 of these citations should be for brief exact quotes, with the others being paraphrases of ideas. Because of this requirement, it is crucial that all students be using the same editions of the five books. If you do not own or rent the required edition, you should plan to borrow a copy from the library to get correct page numbers for citations.
2. Include no material that does not appear in the assigned readings.

As long as you do the reading, outlining, and writing on your own—writing down page numbers as you take notes—there is no risk of you violating either of these rules. Papers that follow these rules will be graded normally. Should a paper violate one or both of these rules, it will be returned ungraded and with no credit for the assignment, the presumption being that AI-powered tools were used exclusively or primarily to develop the paper. Should a second (or any other subsequent) paper violate these rules, both (or all) papers will be turned over to the Academic Honesty Board, and the absence of accurate citations and/or inclusion of non-assigned material will be regarded as [evidence of academic dishonesty](#).

Should you choose to use AI-powered tools for your papers, therefore, it is essential that you know the assigned material incredibly well—better, in fact, than almost anyone else in the class—since you will be responsible for identifying the specific page numbers where 8-10 of the ideas in the paper originated, and you will be responsible for removing any statements, facts, or ideas that did not appear anywhere in the assigned material. This will be much more time-consuming, and much riskier, than simply doing the work on your own and without any aid. Note that AI-powered tools struggle to provide accurate citations, and they often “hallucinate”—i.e., include material that does not appear in the original source.

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 credit simply for writing their names, full credit if they also answer the question correctly. If you are not present, you cannot get credit for the quiz *unless you notified your teaching assistant, in advance of the lecture, that you cannot attend that lecture for some legitimate reason.* Anyone who notifies their TA in advance of the class of a legitimate reason for the absence will get full credit for any pop quiz that day.

Midterm exam (10%). Administered in class on Friday, October 18.

Short papers and the final exam are worth the remaining 70% of your grade.

The [final exam schedule](#) is set by the registrar. The exam for this class is on Sunday, December 15, at 12:30 pm. You must be in Rochester to take the exam in person, so please make your travel arrangements accordingly—taking into account that the exam could keep you on campus as late as 3:30 pm that day.

You must write between five and eleven papers and write them on a regular basis throughout the semester. At least one paper must come from each of these five groupings*:

- Paper 1: Unit B
- Paper 2: Unit C or D
- Paper 3: Unit E or F
- Paper 4: Unit G, H, or I
- Paper 5: Unit J, K, or L

You must submit at least five papers (according to this schedule) to receive credit for the course. If you write exactly five papers, all five grades count. If you write between six and nine papers, we drop the lowest grade. If you write ten or eleven papers, we drop the two lowest grades. Should you wish to count every paper grade, you may do so if you notify your teaching assistant by e-mail before the final exam. *The number of papers you write determines the relative weight of your papers and final exam—*

Five or six papers (five paper grades)	35% papers, 35% final exam
Seven papers (six paper grades)	40% papers, 30% final exam
Eight papers (seven paper grades)	45% papers, 25% final exam
Nine or ten papers (eight paper grades)	50% papers, 20% final exam
Eleven papers (nine paper grades)	55% papers, 15% final exam

Three anonymous student papers will be posted to the course website each Wednesday evening. You are responsible for reading those three anonymous papers as preparation for your recitation on Thursday or Friday; you should bring copies of those papers with you to recitation.

* THE FINE PRINT: If you skip one pair of units, you will receive a “0” as one of your paper grades, and this “0” may not be dropped. If you skip two pairs of units, you will receive *two* paper grades of “0,” and these grades may not be dropped. *You may not skip more than two pairs of units and still receive credit for the course. Whether or not you skip any pairs of units, you still must write five serious papers to receive credit for the course.*

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.

Jeffrey Ostler, “[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.

William Lloyd Garrison, “[The American Union](#),” *The Liberator*, 10 Jan. 1845.

Frederick Douglass, “[What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?](#)” Rochester, N.Y., 5 July 1852.

State of Mississippi, [Declaration of Secession](#), 1861.

Abraham Lincoln, [Gettysburg Address](#), 19 Nov. 1863.

Unit B—Institutional Design

- Sept. 9 Lecture
Sept. 11 Lecture
Sept. 12/13 Recitation

Paper due Sept. 10. In *The Federalist* No. 48, James Madison attacks the inefficacy of “parchment barriers” against the tyranny of a democratic majority. What does he mean by this term? And how does Madison make the case that representation, an extended republic, federalism, and checks and balances (including a bicameral Congress) are necessary mechanisms to preserve liberty? In answering this question, there is no need to cite the Constitution explicitly.

[Constitution of the United States](#), 1787.

The Federalist Nos. [10](#), [46](#), [48](#), [51](#), [62](#), and [63](#).

Unit C—Representation

Sept. 16 Lecture
Sept. 18 Lecture
Sept. 19/20 Recitation

Paper due Sept. 17. Drawing on each assigned reading, consider the ways in which representatives should (or do) relate to their constituents.

Edmund Burke, [Speech to the Electors of Bristol, England](#), 3 Nov. 1774.

Melancton Smith, [Objections to the Constitution in the New York Ratifying Convention](#), 20–23 June 1788.

The Federalist Nos. [35](#), [55](#).

Jane Mansbridge, [“Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent ‘Yes.’”](#) *Journal of Politics* 61 (1999), 628–57.

Daniel M. Butler and David E. Broockman, [“Do Politicians Racially Discriminate against Constituents? A Field Experiment on State Legislators.”](#) *American Journal of Political Science* 55 (2011), 463–77.

Unit D— Social Choice and the Origins of American Political Parties

Sept. 23 Lecture
Sept. 25 Lecture
Sept. 26/27 Recitation

Paper due Sept. 24. How does Aldrich draw on social choice theory to explain the rise of Republicans and Federalists in the 1790s? In what ways, according to Aldrich and also to Pierson and Schickler, did the persistence of multidimensional state-level interests and attachments shape the emergence of the two parties?

John Aldrich, *Why Parties?*, 3–28, 35–43, 67–83, 97–99.

Paul Pierson and Eric Schickler, *Partisan Nation*, 27–35.

Recommended, but not required: [“The Room Where It Happens,”](#) *Hamilton* (original Broadway cast).

Unit E—Democratic Tyranny

Sept. 30 Lecture
Oct. 2 Lecture/Discussion
Oct. 3/4 No class—Rosh Hashanah

Paper due Oct. 1. In a democratic age, according to Tocqueville, what challenges do individuals face in securing their freedoms to act, to think for themselves, to build social connections, to govern their own lives, and to flourish in their chosen fields? Very briefly, note also how Willick draws on Tocqueville to understand how the Democratic party managed the shift from Biden to Harris as its presidential nominee—and how Hahn draws on Tocqueville to provide one explanation for Trump’s appeal—and consider whether these are, in fact, reasonable applications of Tocqueville’s ideas.

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. J. P. Mayer and transl. George Lawrence:
xiii-xiv (Author’s Preface to the Twelfth Edition)
9–20 (Vol. 1, Author’s Introduction)

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)

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

Steven Hahn, “[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—“habits of the heart,” ingrained into the lives of ordinary Americans—shaped behaviors that allowed a democratic people to be free, according to Tocqueville. In his analysis, where are the primary arenas where Americans learned these habits and developed these mores? How would Tocqueville regard the decline in churchgoing described by Thompson?

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. J. P. Mayer and transl. George Lawrence:

61–70, 87–98 (Vol. 1, Part 1, Chap. 5, first five sections and final section)
189–95 (Vol. 1, Part 2, Chap. 4)
241–45 (Vol. 1, Part 2, Chap. 6, final section)
262–76 (Vol. 1, Part 2, Chap. 8)
287–94 (Vol. 1, Part 2, Chap. 9, third, fourth, and fifth sections)
301–11 (Vol. 1, Part 2, Chap. 9, seventh, eighth, and ninth sections)
395–400 (Vol. 1, Part 2, Chap. 10, fifth section)
509–28 (Vol. 2, Part 2, Chaps. 4–8)

Derek Thompson, “[The True Cost of the Churchgoing Bust](#),” *The Atlantic*, 3 Apr. 2024. [PDF version](#)

Interlude

Oct. 14 *No class—Fall Break*
Oct. 16 Review/Q&A
Oct. 18 Midterm Exam

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: “It Has Happened Here.”

Peniel E. Joseph, “[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-term implications of the inclusion of the word “sex” in Title VII of the Civil Rights 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.

Jo Freeman, “[How ‘Sex’ Got Into Title VII: Persistent Opportunism as a Maker of Public Policy](#),” *Law and Inequality* 9 (1991), 163-84.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, “[The Need for the Equal Rights Amendment](#),” *Women Lawyers Journal* 60 (Winter 1974), 4–15.

Bostock v. Clayton County, [selections](#) (from syllabus, opinion of the Court, and Alito dissent).

Unit J—The Nationalization of American Political Parties

Nov. 11 Lecture
Nov. 13 Lecture
Nov. 14/15 Recitation

Paper due Nov. 12. How do Pierson and Schickler account for the transformation of American politics between the 1960s and 1990s? And, according to Gamm and Phillips, how did changes in one mediating institution—state parties—affect the distribution of partisan stances on abortion rights?

Paul Pierson and Eric Schickler, *Partisan Nation*, 73–125.

Gerald Gamm and Justin H. Phillips, “[Party Reform and the Origins of Abortion Politics](#),” manuscript.

Unit K—The Supreme Court and the Culture War

Nov. 18 Lecture
Nov. 20 Lecture
Nov. 21/22 Recitation

Paper due Nov. 19. What did the Supreme Court rule in *Griswold*, and how did the majority justify its ruling? How did the Court’s majority in *Roe v. Wade*, along with the brief for Jane Roe, draw on *Griswold* and on the Fourteenth Amendment to explain their positions? And how did the majority in *Obergefell* and the dissent in *Dobbs* draw on those precedents and the Constitution? Finally, analyze how opponents of the earlier decisions justified an opposing view of constitutional law—in the brief for Henry Wade, in the dissents in *Roe* and *Obergefell*, and as the majority in *Dobbs*.

Griswold et al. v. Connecticut (1965), [opinion of the Court](#).

Linda Greenhouse and Reva B. Siegel, [Before Roe v. Wade](#) (New Haven: Yale Law School, 2012), 121-25, 223-251.

Obergefell v. Hodges (2015), [selections](#) (from syllabus, which summarizes the opinion of the Court, and Roberts dissent).

Dobbs v. Jackson Women’s Health Organization (2022), [selections](#) (from syllabus, which summarizes the opinion of the Court; Thomas concurring opinion; and dissent of Breyer, Sotomayor, and Kagan).

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 danger, and why do they conclude that the very political arrangements that Madison believed would sustain a free republic are helpless to prevent democratic erosion? In answering this question, feel free to draw briefly from the other assigned material, but nearly all (or, if you wish, all) of your essay should be grounded in Pierson and Schickler.

Paul Pierson and Eric Schickler, *Partisan Nation*, 1–24, 129–87.

For background: a sample of presidential concession telegrams and speeches—

William Jennings Bryan, [telegram to William McKinley](#), 5 Nov. 1896.

Thomas Dewey, [telegram to President Harry S. Truman](#), 3 Nov. 1948.

Richard Nixon, [speech on election night](#), 8 Nov. 1960, video, from 3:50 to 6:19 of speech.

Hubert Humphrey, [speech on election night](#), 5 Nov. 1968, video, first 1:30 of speech.

Jimmy Carter, [speech on election night](#), 4 Nov. 1980, video, first 1:48 of speech.

George H. W. Bush, [speech on election night](#), 3 Nov. 1992, video, first 1:18 of speech.

Mitt Romney, [speech on election night](#), 6 Nov. 2012, video, first 1:08 of speech.

Hillary Clinton, [speech the day following the election](#), 9 Nov. 2016, video.

(For a comprehensive list of presidential concession statements, see [this page](#).)

For background: video remarks of President Trump following his defeat in the 2020 election—

Donald J. Trump, [video statement during the attack on the Capitol](#), 6 Jan. 2021. (Note: In a break with 224 years of precedent, President Trump never formally conceded that he had lost the election.)

For background: concerns that other Republican leaders have enabled Trump's attacks on democracy—

Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, "[Democracy's Assassins Always Have Accomplices](#)," *New York Times*, 8 Sept. 2023. [PDF version](#)

For background: concerns that Democratic policies also contribute to democratic erosion—

"[Democrats and Democratic Norms: There's a Reason Voters Don't See Trump as a Unique Threat to Democracy](#)," *Wall Street Journal*, editorial, 20 Aug. 2024. [PDF version](#)

Unit M—Conclusion

Dec. 9	Lecture/Discussion
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