

AMS 2330: America: Great Debates

Quest 2

I. General Information

Class Meetings

- Fall 2025
- 3 credits
- Required 100% In-Person, no GTAs, 35 residential students
- MWF, 3.00-3.50 pm
- CSE 0487

Instructor

- Jeremy D. Bailey, Professor
- CSE 0478
- Jd.bailey@ufl.edu
- Office hours: MWF 1.30-2.30 pm and by appointment
- 352-294-2037

If you need to schedule an appointment outside of office hours, please email the course instructor.

Course Description

This multidisciplinary course surveys political concepts and debates regarding liberty and equality in American thought from the colonial period to the present. These ideas still influence political debates in present-day America. One of the course's central themes is the three centuries' long American conflicts between liberty and equality and between constitutionalism and democracy. Students will approach these debates by way of key texts, including legal and constitutional documents, speeches, pamphlets, sermons and books by the participants in the debates over what it means to be free and equal in the United States of America.

Quest and General Education Credit

- Quest 2
- Social & Behavioral Sciences
- Writing Requirement (WR) 2000 words

This course accomplishes the Quest and General Education objectives of the subject areas listed above. A minimum grade of C is required for Quest and General Education credit. Courses intended to satisfy Quest and General Education requirements cannot be taken S-U.

The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning.

Course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course.

Required Readings and Works

- Required Readings:
 - a. Isaac Kramnick & Theodore J. Lowi, *American Political Thought: An Anthology* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2019).
- Additional *required* readings will be available as PDFs on Canvas.
- The writing manual for this course is: *The Economist Style Guide*, 11th edn. (2015). ISBN: 9781610395755.
- Materials and Supplies Fees: N/A

Course Objectives

1. Identify, describe, and explain the methodologies used across the social sciences to examine debates in society.
2. Identify, describe, and explain key ideas and questions raised in the great debates of America from colonial times to the present.
3. Analyze different approaches to great debates in America from philosophical, political and historical works.
4. Evaluate competing accounts of human reaction to concepts that challenge our own notions of America, using close reading, critical analysis, class discussion, and personal reflection.
5. Develop and present clear and effective written and oral work that demonstrates critical engagement with course texts, and experiential learning activities.
6. Communicate well-supported ideas and arguments effectively within class discussion and debates, with clear oral presentation and written work articulating students' personal experiences and reflections on America.
7. Connect course content with students' intellectual, personal, and professional lives at UF and beyond.
8. Reflect on students' own and others' experience with debates in American society, in class discussion and written work.

II. Graded Work

Description of Graded Work

1. Active Participation and Attendance: 20%

a. Participation: 10%

- i. An exemplar participant shows evidence of having done the assigned reading before each class, consistently offers thoughtful points and questions for discussion, and listens considerably to other discussants. See participation rubric below. (R)

b. Class Attendance: 10%

- i. On-time class attendance is required for this component of the course grade. Class attendance will be recorded daily. You may have two unexcused absences without any penalty, but starting with the third class missed your grade will be affected. Starting with the third unexcused absence, each unexcused absence reduces your attendance grade by 2/3: an A- becomes a B, and so on.
- ii. Except for absence because of religious holiday observance, documentation is required for excused absences, per university policy. Excessive unexcused absences (10 or more) will result in failure of the course. If you miss 10 or more classes (excused or not), you will miss material essential for successful completion of the course.

2. Experiential Learning Component: 10%

- a. During this semester, the class will attend a public lecture on campus that touches on the course theme of debates in American thought. Students will be asked to prepare questions to ask the speaker. By Friday, October 10, at the beginning of class, students will submit a minimum 200-word analysis assignment that responds to the central themes of the lecture. (R)

3. In-class Reading Quizzes: 20%

- a. Reading quizzes will be administered at the start of class on Wednesday, five times throughout the semester. They will test the student's knowledge of the week's readings and will be short answer/short essay. Professor will provide written feedback. See examination rubric below. Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped. (R)
- b. Quiz dates: Sept. 3, Sept 17, October 15, November 5, and December 3

4. Midterm Examination: 25%

- a. In Week 7, on Friday, October 3rd, a midterm examination will be administered in class. The examination will be an in-class, 50-minute exam including essay and short answer. Professor will provide written feedback on your essay and/or short-answer questions. See examination rubric below. (R)

5. Final Analytical Paper: 25%

- a. On November 14, at the beginning of class, you will submit a 2,000 word (minimum) analytical essay addressing a prompt provided to you by Week 5. You will develop an analytic argument based on your own thesis responding to the prompt. Your paper must incorporate at least four course readings. See Canvas for more details. Professor will provide written feedback. See writing rubric below. (R)
- b. Professor will evaluate and provide written feedback, on all the student's written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.
- c. You may want to access the university's Writing Studio.

III. Annotated Weekly Schedule

WEEK 1: AUGUST 22 DEBATE BETWEEN ANCIENTS AND MODERNS

This week's readings consider the larger intellectual context preceding the settling of North America and the creation of the United States. We begin with ancient Sparta, specifically Plutarch's account of Lycurgus's legal reforms. We then consider John Locke's *Second Treatise*, written in response to the English Civil Wars, and which will later influence the American founders. These items will be available as pdf on Canvas.[36pp.]

Readings

1. Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus* (Dryden translation, Online Library of Liberty), pp. 67-89.
2. John Locke, *Second Treatise*, Chapters I-IV and IX, (1690) (Project Gutenberg), 14 pages in pdf.

WEEK 2: AUGUST 25-29
PURITAN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL IDEALS

This week's readings concentrate on Puritan political and social ideas, examining particularly what early Puritans thought constituted a godly society. Students will examine the Puritans' focus on a covenant community, where religious principles were deeply connected to social and political life. They explore the significance of John Winthrop's 'city upon a hill' metaphor, which depicted Puritan society as a model of moral virtue. Students will also examine Puritan views on governance, highlighting collective responsibility, the importance of scripturally-based laws, and the merging of faith with public life. [33 pp.]

Readings

1. *The Mayflower Compact* (1620), in Isaac Kramnick and Theodore J. Lowi (eds.), *American Political Thought: An Anthology* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2019), pp. 11-16.*
2. John Winthrop, *A Model of Christian Charity* (1630), 62.
3. John Winthrop, *Little Speech on Liberty* (1645), pp. 17-18.
4. Roger Williams, *The Bloudy Tenant of Persecution* (1645), pp. 19-20.
5. John Wise, *A Vindication of the Government of New England Churches* (1717), pp. 21-31.
6. Benjamin Franklin, *The Way to Wealth* (1758), pp. 42-49
7. Benjamin Franklin, *The Art of Virtue* (1784), pp. 49-55

* Unless otherwise noted, all readings in this course are drawn from Kramnick & Lowi (eds.), *American Political Thought: An Anthology*.

WEEK 3: SEPTEMBER 3-5
WHY REVOLT?

This week's syllabus covers the justifications for the American colonial revolt during the 1760s and 1770s, focusing on the ideological, political and economic arguments that fueled the drive for independence. This week's readings explore the growing tensions between the North American colonies and metropolitan Britain, highlighting issues such as taxation, colonial rights and the perceived threats to liberty. Students examine works by figures like Samuel Adams, John Adams, Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson, which articulated the colonists' grievances and their rationales for breaking away from British rule. [39 pp.]

Readings

1. Samuel Adams, *The Rights of the Colonists* (1772), pp. 77–82.
2. Jonathan Boucher, *On Civil Liberty, Passive Obedience and Non-Resistance* (1774), pp. 82–88.
3. John Adams, *Thoughts on Government* (1776), pp. 89–94.
4. Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (1776), pp. 95–112.
5. Thomas Jefferson *et al.*, *The Declaration of Independence* (1776), pp. 115–118.

**Quiz on Wednesday, September 3

WEEK 4: SEPTEMBER 8-12
THE CONSTITUTION AND ITS CRITICS

This week's readings examine the U.S. Constitution and the arguments for and against it during its formation and ratification. Readings will focus on the debates between Federalists, who supported the Constitution, and Anti-Federalists, who opposed it. Key topics include the structure of the new government, the balance of power between the federal and state governments and the protection of individual rights.. [46 pp.]

Readings

1. *Articles of Confederation* (1778), pp. 119-127.
2. *The Constitution of the United States* (1787), pp. 134-145.
3. James Madison, *Federalist Nos. 10, 39, 48, 51*, pp. 164-170, 174-189
4. Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist Nos 23 and 84*, pp. 170-174, 202-209
5. Thomas Jefferson, *Letters on the Constitution* (1787, 1789), pp. 210-214.

WEEK 5: SEPTEMBER 15-19
CRITICS OF THE CONSTITUTION

This week's readings examine the U.S. Constitution and the arguments for and against it during its formation and ratification. Readings will focus on the Anti-Federalists, who opposed it. Key topics include the structure of the new government, the balance of power between the federal and state governments and the protection of individual rights. Students will explore how these debates shaped the final document and the subsequent inclusion of the Bill of Rights. [34 pp.]

1. Patrick Henry, *Debate in the Virginia Ratifying Convention* (1788), pp. 232-240.
2. Richard Henry Lee (?), *Letters from the Federal Farmer* (1787), pp. 214-22.
3. Robert Yates (?), *Essays of Brutus* (1787-1788), pp. 222-232.
4. Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist No. 78*, pp. 195-202.
5. *The Bill of Rights* (1791), pp. 240-242.

**Quiz on Wednesday, September 17

WEEK 6: SEPTEMBER 22-26
FEDERALIST & JEFFERSONIAN VISIONS

This week's readings explore the contrasting visions of the Federalists, led by Alexander Hamilton, and the Jeffersonians, led by Thomas Jefferson, regarding the direction of the early United States. The readings highlight their differing views on government power, the economy and foreign policy. Central topics include Hamilton's advocacy for a strong central government, a national bank and industrial development; these contrasted with Jefferson's emphasis on states' rights, agrarianism and limited federal authority. Students will also consider other key texts in the history of the early Republic, including Washington's farewell address and John Marshall's seminal judicial opinions in *Marbury v. Madison* and *McCulloch v. Maryland*. [42 pp.]

Readings

1. Alexander Hamilton, *Opinion on the Constitutionality* (1791), pp. 262–267.
2. Alexander Hamilton, *Report on Manufactures* (1791), pp. 267–277.
3. Thomas Jefferson, *Opinion on the Constitutionality of the Bank* (1791), 307–310.
4. George Washington, *Farewell Address* (1796), pp. 277–282.
5. John Marshall, *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), pp. 282–286.
6. John Marshall, *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), pp. 286–294.
7. Thomas Jefferson, *First Inaugural Address* (1801), pp. 310–314.
8. Thomas Jefferson, *Second Inaugural Address* (1805), pp. 314–317.

WEEK 7: SEPTEMBER 29 - OCTOBER 3
INDIVIDUALISM IN AMERICA

This week's syllabus examines the theme of individualism in America, focusing on the works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau and Walt Whitman. Students will begin by reading Emerson's *Self-Reliance*, which championed individual authenticity, and *Politics*, which asked what sort of American politics would best cultivate the democratic individual. Henry David Thoreau shared much of Emerson's attitudes towards the American state; students will come to appreciate the affinities of his thought with Emerson's by reading Thoreau's *Resistance to Civil Government* and his *Life without Principle*. Finally, Whitman's vision of a democratic society celebrates the uniqueness of each person while advocating for a collective, inclusive national identity. [36 pp.]

Readings

1. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Self-Reliance* (1840), pp. 396-401.
2. Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Politics* (1849), pp. 401-409.
3. Henry David Thoreau, *Resistance to Civil Government* (1849), pp. 409-416.
4. Henry David Thoreau, *Life without Principle* (1863), pp. 416-422.
5. Walt Whitman, *Democratic Vistas* (1871), pp. 422-431.

**Exam on Friday, October 3

WEEK 8: OCTOBER 6-10
FREE & UNFREE LABOR

This week's readings explore the complex dynamics of free and unfree labor in America. The readings include writings by Thomas Jefferson, William Lloyd Garrison, Frederick Douglass, and John C. Calhoun, offering often starkly divergent perspectives on slavery, freedom and labor rights. The week's aim is for students to gain a comprehensive understanding of the debates surrounding free and unfree labor in America, the ideological divides that fueled these conflicts, and the moral and political challenges that shaped the nation's history. [43 pp.]

Readings

1. Thomas Paine, *African Slavery in America* (1775), pp. 459–463.
2. Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1784), pp. 463–471.
3. William Lloyd Garrison, *The Liberator* (1831), pp. 471–476.
4. William Lloyd Garrison, *Declaration of Sentiments of the American Anti-Slavery Society* (1833), pp. 476–480.
5. Frederick Douglass, *Lectures on Slavery* (1850), pp. 502–506.
6. Frederick Douglass, *What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?* (1852), pp. 506–510.
7. John C. Calhoun, *Speeches on Slavery* (1837, 1838), pp. 513–519.
8. John C. Calhoun, *A Disquisition on Government* (1848), pp. 519–536.

**Analysis of lecture due at the beginning of class on Friday, October 10

WEEK 9: OCTOBER 13-15
CRISIS OF THE HOUSE DIVIDED

This week's readings examine the crisis over slavery that led to the Civil War. In particular, it introduces the debate between Chief Justice Roger Taney and Abraham Lincoln concerning the place of slavery in the Constitution and Declaration. It also considers Lincoln before he became president and then as president. [36pp.]

1. Roger B. Taney, *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857), pp. 556-559.
2. Abraham Lincoln, *Speech at Peoria* (1854), pp. 561-567.
3. Abraham Lincoln, *Speech on the Dred Scott Decision* (1857), pp. 567-573.
4. Abraham Lincoln, *Cooper Union Address* (1860), pp. 577-578.
5. Abraham Lincoln, *First Inaugural Address* (1861), pp. 579-587.
6. Abraham Lincoln, *Address to Congress* (1861), pp. 587-590.
7. Abraham Lincoln, *Second Annual Message* (1862), pp. 590-594.
8. Abraham Lincoln, *Gettysburg Address* (1863), p. 594.
9. Abraham Lincoln, *Second Inaugural Address* (1865), p. 595.

**Quiz on Wednesday, October 15

WEEK 10: OCTOBER 20-24
FREEDOM & INEQUALITY

This week focuses on the historical struggle for freedom and equality in the United States, examining how these concepts have been shaped and challenged over time. We will explore the impact of constitutional amendments, landmark court decisions, and the differing perspectives of key African American leaders on the path toward racial justice and civil rights. [36 pp.]

Readings

1. *Thirteenth, Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments* (1865, 1868, 1870), pp. 817-819.
2. Henry Brown and John Marshall Harlan, *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), pp. 847-852.
3. Booker T. Washington, *Atlantic Exposition Address* (1895), pp. 852-855.
4. W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903), pp. 856-870.
5. W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Talented Tenth* (1903), pp. 870-875.
6. Marcus Garvey, *The True Solution of the Negro Problem* (1922), pp. 875-882.

WEEK 11: OCTOBER 27-31
PROGRESSIVISM

This week examines the Progressive Era (1890s-1920s), a time of significant social, political, and economic reforms in the United States. Through the works of influential thinkers, activists, and politicians, we will explore how the Progressives sought to address the challenges of industrialization, urbanization, and inequality. The readings will provide insights into the diverse strategies and philosophies that shaped the movement, highlighting both its accomplishments and its limitations. [70 pp.]

Readings

1. Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (1906), pp. 895-903.
2. Jane Addams, *The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets* (1909), pp. 904-909.
3. William James, *Pragmatism: A New Name for Old Ways of Thinking* (1907), pp. 919-925.
4. Herbert Crowley, *The Promise of American Life* (1909), pp. 948-979.
5. Theodore Roosevelt, *New Nationalism* (1910), pp. 971-980.
6. Woodrow Wilson, *The New Freedom* (1913), pp. 984-995.

WEEK 12: NOVEMBER 3-7
THE NEW DEAL & ITS CRITICS

This week examines the New Deal, Franklin D. Roosevelt's sweeping set of programs and policies designed to combat the Great Depression, along with the diverse critiques it faced. Through readings from FDR himself, conservative opponents, and intellectual critics, we will explore the New Deal's impact on American society and the contentious debates it sparked about the role of government in economic life. [60 pp.]

Readings

1. Herbert Hoover, *Rugged Individualism* (1928), pp. 1015-1019.
2. Herbert Hoover, *The Fifth Freedom* (1941), pp. 1019-1022.
3. Twelve Southerners, *I'll Take My Stand* (1930), pp. 777-781.
4. John Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action* (1935), pp. 1031-1040.
5. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, *Speech at Ogelthorpe University* (1932), pp. 1040-1045.
6. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, *Commonwealth Club Speech* (1932), pp. 1045-1055.
7. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, *The Four Freedoms*, (1941), pp. 1055-1058.
8. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, *A Second Bill of Rights* (1944), pp. 1058-1059.
9. Walter Lipmann, *Planning in an Economy of Abundance* (1937), pp. 1069-1074.
10. Henry Hazlitt, *Economics in One Lesson* (1942), pp. 15-22, 191-202.

**Quiz on Wednesday, November 5

WEEK 13: NOVEMBER 10-14
THE COLD WAR

This week delves into the ideological, moral, and political debates that shaped the American response to the Cold War. Through readings from theologians, intellectuals, politicians, and jurists, we will explore how the Cold War influenced American thought on issues such as democracy, communism, individualism, and national security. The readings will highlight the diverse perspectives on how best to confront the Soviet threat while preserving American values. [40 pp.]

Readings

1. Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness: A Vindication of Democracy and a Critique of its Traditional Defense* (1944), pp. 1074–1080.
2. William F. Buckley, *God and Man at Yale* (1950), pp. 1080–1083.
3. Whittaker Chambers, *Witness* (1952), pp. 1083–1088.
4. Learned Hand, *A Plea for the Freedom of Dissent* (1955), pp. 1088–1092.
5. Louis Hartz, *The Concept of a Liberal Society* (1955), pp. 1092–1101.
6. Barry Goldwater, *The Conscience of a Conservatism* (1960), pp. 1101–1109.
7. Dwight Eisenhower, *Farewell Address* (1961), pp. 1009–1114.

**Final analytical paper due on Friday, November 14, at the start of class

WEEK 14: NOVEMBER 17-21
THE 1960S

This week explores the turbulent 1960s, a decade marked by significant social, political, and cultural upheaval in the United States. The readings reflect the diverse voices and movements that defined the era, including critiques of power, civil rights struggles, feminist thought, and the emerging conservative backlash. Through these readings, students will examine the complex dynamics of the 1960s and the competing visions for America's future. [75 pp.]

Readings

1. C. Wright Mills, *Letter to the New Left* (1960), pp. 1115–1120.
2. Young American for Freedom, *The Sharon Statement* (1960), pp. 1120–1121.
3. Students for a Democratic Society, *The Port Huron Statement* (1962), pp. 1121–1133.
4. Martin Luther King, Jr., *The Power of Nonviolence* (1957), pp. 1133–1137.
5. Ayn Rand, *The Virtue of Selfishness* (1962), pp. 1177–1181.
6. Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), pp. 1158–1164.
7. Martin Luther King, Jr., *Letter from a Birmingham City Jail* (1963), pp. 1137–1146.
8. Malcom X, *The Ballot or the Bullet* (1964), pp. 1147–1153.
9. Phyllis Schlafly, *A Choice Not an Echo* (New York, 1964), pp. 78–95, 102–116.

WEEK 15: DECEMBER 1-3
AMERICA: PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

This week examines the philosophical, political, and cultural debates that have shaped, and continue to shape, the trajectory of American society. Through readings from influential thinkers on justice, freedom, democracy, and the nature of liberalism, we will explore the competing visions of America's past, the challenges it faces in the present, and the potential paths it might take in the future [70 pp.]

Readings

1. John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (1971), pp. 1181-1193.
2. Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia* (1974), pp. 1193-1207.
3. Milton and Rose Friedman, *Free to Choose* (1980), pp. 1219-1234.
4. Bell Hooks, *Feminist Theory from Margin to Center* (1984), 1264-1271.
5. Thurgood Marshall, *The Constitution's Bicentennial* (1987), 1271-1276.
6. Allan Bloom, *The Closing of the American Mind* (1987), pp. 1271-1276.
7. Francis Fukuyama, 'The End of History?', *The National Interest* 16 (1989), pp. 3-18.

**Quiz on Wednesday, December 3

IV. Grading Scale and Rubrics

Grading Scale

For information on UF's grading policies for assigning grade points, see [here](#).

A	94 - 100%		C	74 - 76%
A-	90 - 93%		C-	70 - 73%
B+	87 - 89%		D+	67 - 69%
B	84 - 86%		D	64 - 66%
B-	80 - 83%		D-	60 - 63%
C+	77 - 79%		E	<60

Grading Rubrics

Participation Rubric

A (90-100%)	Typically comes to class with pre-prepared questions about the readings. Engages others about ideas, respects the opinions of others and consistently elevates the level of discussion.
B (80-89%)	Does not always come to class with pre-prepared questions about the reading. Waits passively for others to raise interesting issues. Some in this category, while courteous and articulate, do not adequately listen to other participants or relate their comments to the direction of the conversation.
C (70-79%)	Attends regularly but typically is an infrequent or unwilling participant in discussion. Is only adequately prepared for discussion.
D (60-69%)	Fails to attend class regularly and is inadequately prepared for discussion. Is an unwilling participant in discussion.
E (<60%)	Attends class infrequently and is wholly unprepared for discussion. Refuses to participate in discussion.

Examination Rubric: Essays and Short Answers

	Completeness	Analysis	Evidence	Writing
A (90-100%)	Shows a thorough understanding of the question. Addresses all aspects of the question completely.	Analyses, evaluates, compares and/or contrasts issues and events with depth.	Incorporates pertinent and detailed information from both class discussions and assigned readings.	Presents all information clearly and concisely, in an organized manner.
B (80-89%)	Presents a general understanding of the question. Completely addresses most aspects of the question or address all aspects incompletely.	Analyses or evaluates issues and events, but not in any depth.	Includes relevant facts, examples and details but does not support all aspects of the task evenly.	Presents information fairly and evenly and may have minor organization problems.
C (70-79%)	Shows a limited understanding of the question. Does not address most aspects of the question.	Lacks analysis or evaluation of the issues and events beyond stating accurate, relevant facts.	Includes relevant facts, examples and details, but omits concrete examples, includes inaccurate information and/or does not support all aspects of the task.	Lacks focus, somewhat interfering with comprehension.
D (60-69%)	Fails fully to answer the specific central question.	Lacks analysis or evaluation of the issues and events beyond stating vague, irrelevant, and/or inaccurate facts.	Does not incorporate information from pertinent class discussion and/or assigned readings.	Organizational problems prevent comprehension.
E (<60%)	Does not answer the specific central question.	Lacks analysis or evaluation of the issues and events.	Does not adduce any evidence.	Incomprehensible organization and prose.

Writing Rubric

	Thesis and Argumentation	Use of Sources	Organization	Grammar, mechanics and style
A (90-100%)	Thesis is clear, specific, and presents a thoughtful, critical, engaging, and creative interpretation. Argument fully supports the thesis both logically and thoroughly.	Primary (and secondary texts, if required) are well incorporated, utilized, and contextualized throughout.	Clear organization. Introduction provides adequate background information and ends with a thesis. Details are in logical order. Conclusion is strong and states the point of the paper.	No errors.
B (80-89%)	Thesis is clear and specific, but not as critical or original. Shows insight and attention to the text under consideration. May have gaps in argument's logic.	Primary (and secondary texts, if required) are incorporated but not contextualized significantly.	Clear organization. Introduction clearly states thesis, but does not provide as much background information. Details are in logical order, but may be more difficult to follow. Conclusion is recognizable and ties up almost all loose ends.	A few errors.
C (70-79%)	Thesis is present but not clear or specific, demonstrating a lack of critical engagement to the text. Argument is weak, missing important details or making logical leaps with little support.	Primary (and secondary texts, if required) are mostly incorporated but are not properly contextualized.	Significant lapses in organization. Introduction states thesis but does not adequately provide background information. Some details not in logical or expected order that results in a distracting read. Conclusion is recognizable but does not tie up all loose ends.	Some errors.
D (60-69%)	Thesis is vague and/or confused. Demonstrates a failure to understand the text. Argument lacks any logical flow and does not utilize any source material.	Primary and/or secondary texts are almost wholly absent.	Poor, hard-to-follow organization. There is no clear introduction of the main topic or thesis. There is no clear conclusion, and the paper just ends. Little or no employment of logical body paragraphs.	Many errors.
E (<60%)	There is neither a thesis nor any argument.	Primary and/or secondary texts are wholly absent.	The paper is wholly disorganized, lacking an introduction, conclusion or any logical coherence.	Scores of errors.

V. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the [Quest](#) and [General Education](#) student learning outcomes as follows:

[Social Science](#) (S) courses must afford students an understanding of the basic social and behavioral science concepts and principles used in the analysis of behavior and past and present social, political, and economic issues. Social and Behavioral Sciences is a sub-designation of Social Sciences at the University of Florida.

Social and behavioral science courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and underlying theory or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. Students will learn to identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures or processes. These courses emphasize the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques. Students will apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions, as well as the evaluation of opinions, outcomes or human behavior. Students are expected to assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.

Content: *Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, theories and methodologies used within the discipline(s).*

- Identify, describe, and explain the methodologies used across the social sciences to examine debates in society (Quest 2, S). **Assessment:** midterm exam, analytical paper, in-class reading quizzes.
- Identify, describe, and explain key ideas and questions raised in the great debates of America from colonial times to the present (Quest 2, S). **Assessment:** midterm exam, analytical paper, in-class reading quizzes.

Critical Thinking: *Students carefully and logically analyse information from multiple perspectives and develop reasoned solutions to problems within the discipline(s).*

- Analyse different approaches to great debates in America from philosophical, political and historical works (Quest 2, S). **Assessment:** analytical paper, midterm exam.
- Evaluate competing accounts of human reaction to concepts that challenge our own notions of America, using close reading, critical analysis, class discussion, and personal reflection. (Quest 2, S). **Assignments:** analytical paper, discussion questions, midterm exam.

Communication: *Students communicate knowledge, ideas and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the discipline(s).*

- Develop and present clear and effective written and oral work that demonstrates critical engagement with course texts, and experiential learning activities (Quest 2, S). **Assessments:** experiential learning and discussion, analytical paper, midterm exam.
- Communicate well-supported ideas and arguments effectively within class discussion and debates, with clear oral presentation and written work articulating students' personal experiences and reflections on America (Quest 2, S). **Assessments:** active class participation, experiential learning component, discussion questions.

Connection: *Students connect course content with meaningful critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond.*

- Connect course content with students' intellectual, personal, and professional lives at UF and beyond. (Quest 2). **Assessments:** experiential learning component, analytical paper, discussion questions.

- Reflect on students' own and others' experience with debates in American society, in class discussion and written work (Quest 2). **Assessments:** experiential learning component, analytical paper, discussion questions.

VI. Quest Learning Experiences

1. Details of Experiential Learning Component

During this semester, the class will attend a public lecture on campus that touches on the course theme of debates in American thought. Students will be asked to prepare questions to ask the speaker. By Friday, on the 10th week of class at 11:59pm, students will submit a minimum 200-word analysis assignment that responds to the central themes of the lecture.

2. Details of Self-Reflection Component

Self-reflection is built into class discussions, the in-class reading quizzes, the experiential learning assignment, the midterm examination, and the final analytical paper. This is indicated in the description of graded work section of this syllabus with an (R). Students will be continuously asked to reflect on how course activities and readings change their perspective on salient themes (American debates) and affect their view of themselves in the contemporary world.

VII. Required Policies

UF Policies

Students should familiarize themselves with UF policies here: <https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolicies>