# AMS 2330: America: Great Debates
## Quest 2

## I. General Information

### Class Meetings

- Term: Fall 2025
- Required 100% In-Person, 35 residential students
- Tuesday, 1.55 pm—2.45 pm/Thursday 1.55 pm—3.50 pm
- Location: CSE 0487
- 3 Credits

### Instructor

- Instructor: Allen C. Guelzo
- Office: CSE 536
- Office hours: TBA
- Email: TBA
- Phone: TBA

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 debates in present-day America. One of the course's central themes is the three-centuries' long American conflict between liberty and equality, and thus between constitutionalism and democracy. Students will approach these debates by way of key texts, including legal and constitutional documents, speeches, pamphlets, speeches, sermons and book by the participants in the debates over what it means to be free and equal in the United States of America.

We usually think of 'debates' as political events, on political subjects (such as the Lincoln-Douglas Debates of 1858). But as soon as we say that, we realize that there are many other issues in American life which have been up for debate, but which nevertheless define the questions of liberty and equality even more dramatically than straight-forward political debating. Are we a nation founded on an idea, or on an ancestry? How do we discover what is truth? Are we a

republic, and what kind of a republic? What makes for a just economy? Is virtue important to public life? What do words like *virtue* or *justice* mean? Those 'other' kinds of debates are also this course is all about.

Of course, debates do not come with a specific nationality attached, nor for that matter is a thinker 'American' merely for having been a citizen of the United States. There are American thinkers who were not born in America – some, like the New England Puritans, retained on-going intellectual allegiances to other places – and a number who were, but who repudiated the mainstream of American ideas, either choosing a personal exile, or in a few cases actually becoming expatriates. But even in these cases, they all contributed decisively to one American debate after another.

Why do we debate so furiously? First, because the United States has always been a republic of *ideas*. Long before the Declaration of Independence began with an invocation of an Enlightenment philosophy, people were driven or attracted to the American shores in pursuit of ideas, and they continued to see the American landscape as a theater in which certain ideas struggled for supremacy. The American Revolution was an intellectual event as much as political or military one, and the American Civil War was fought over ideas about liberty and equality. Second, because we are a democracy of equal citizens, and a democracy of equals invites and encourages discussion, disagreement, and debate.

## 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

- The readings for the course are contained in a Digital Reader of primary sources and excerpts which will be made available as a PDF on Canvas; the specific items can be found listed below, on a week-by-week basis.
- The writing manual for this course is: *The Economist Style Guide*, 11th edition (2015). ISBN: 9781610395755. This available as a PDF on Canvas.
- Materials and Supplies Fees: N/A

## Course Objectives.

1. Identify the distinctive patterns of American debate;
2. Analyze the writings of major debaters relevant to those patterns; and
3. Understand and evaluate arguments and debates over the nature of these patterns.

# II. Graded Work

## Description of Graded Work

1. **Active Participation and Attendance: 20%**
    a. **Participation: 10%.** An exemplary participant shows evidence of having done the assigned reading before each class; consistently offers thoughtful points and questions for discussion; and listens considerately to other discussants. See participation rubric below.
    b. **Class Attendance: 10%.** On-time class attendance is required for this component of the course grade. You may have two unexcused absences without any penalty. Starting with the third unexcused absence, each unexcused absence reduces your attendance grade by 2/3: an A– becomes a B, and so on. Except for absence because of religious holiday observance, documentation is required for excused absences, *per* university policy. 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, on the 10th week of class at 11.59 pm, students will submit a minimum 200-word analysis assignment that responds to the central theme of the lecture.
3. **Two Short Papers: 15% each**
    a. These short papers (due week 7, Oct. 2 and week 14, Nov. 20) will be a 1000-word analytical essay that will focus on one excerpt from a text; the text will be selected by myself and posted on Canvas. We will place the text in its historical and intellectual context and analyze and explain its meaning in the overall context of the three major contours described in the Course Description above.
4. **Mid-Term Examination: 20%**
    a. Everyone will take an in-class, written midterm examination during Week 7. It will consist of a mix of short and long-form questions.
5. **Final Examination: 20%**
    a. Everyone will take a written final examination during the university-assigned final examination time for the class. It will consist of a mix of short and long-form questions.

I will evaluate and provide written feedback, on everyone's written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.

## III. Annotated Weekly Schedule

*Week One: Do Americans Prefer to Think or Act?*

The first week serves as an introduction to the intellectual geography of American debates, starting with its first settlements, and provides a broad overview of the subject and clarifications of the outline of the course. [3 pp.]

READINGS: Walt Whitman, "Pioneers! O Pioneers!" and "By Blue Ontario's Shore"; Josiah Royce, "On Certain Limitations of the Thoughtful Public in America"; Basil L. Gildersleeve, "**A Southerner in the Peloponnesian War**" (1897)

*Week Two: Puritans and the Pursuit of Perfection*

This week's topics will include the "technology" of Puritan thinking and how it demanded a contrast between the liberty to dissent from the established Church of England and why it denied such liberty once a Puritan settlement had been established in New England. This will include consideration of English Puritanism and how it was born from the world of the 16th-century Protestant Reformation; how dependent it remained on the scholastic tradition of intellectual inquiry; the movement of English Puritanism to American shores in the 1630s; and the institutions it created. We will pay special attention to the founding of Harvard College, the first American institution of higher learning, along with its curriculum, and its divisions over interpreting human psychology. [6 pp.]

READINGS: Cotton Mather, *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702); William Ames, *The Marrow of Divinity*

*Week Three: Should We Be Guided by Experience or Authority? The Enlightenment in America*

The intellectual world of Europe was rocked in the 17th century by the discoveries of Galileo and Isaac Newton, discoveries which undermined the role played by authority (especially the authority of Aristotle) on the mental geography of that world. Authority was now to be challenged by experience, which became evidence in the ideas of Rene Descartes and John Locke. This 'new philosophy' was known simply as 'the Enlightenment.' We will then move to consider the arrival of the European Enlightenment in New England, beginning with William Brattle's *Logick*, and the contrasting ways in which authority and experience struggled for dominance, as dramatically illustrated in the writing of two American contemporaries, Benjamin Franklin and Jonathan Edwards. [31 pp.]

READINGS: William Brattle, *Compendium of Logick*; Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography*; Edwards, *Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God* and *Freedom of the Will* (1754)

*Week Four: Why Revolt?*

The subjects before us will include how we formed the idea of a republic, based on natural law and Enlightenment ideas about God and society. This did not necessarily mean that the Revolution, which derived so much of its political core from the Enlightenment, produced a republic that necessarily favored religious revival, or much of any religion. But the partisans of a Protestant Enlightenment and the Awakening pointed out that even a secular republic requires a basis for ethics in public life, and the heirs of the Awakening swiftly moved to place Protestant evangelicalism in a significant place in American intellectual life. [19 pp.]

READINGS: John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*; (1688); James Otis, *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved*, Lyman Beecher, *Autobiography, Correspondence &c. of Lyman Beecher*, John Witherspoon, *Lectures on Moral Philosophy*, Samuel Hopkins, *An Inquiry Into the Nature of True Virtue*

*Week Five: Are Americans the Heirs of Hamilton or Jefferson?*

We will consider this week the creation of the Constitution, and especially the debate it generated over the shape of an American economy between Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson. This was the most volatile debate to erupt from the Revolutionary era. Jefferson argued for a frankly agrarian vision of the American economy, based on independent farmers and a noble countryside; Hamilton called for the cultivation of an aggressively commercial economy, based on trade, manufacture and cities. Lying behind both visions was a sharp divide over whether stability or dynamism was to be the guiding principle of economic life. This led to the emergence of the first American political parties – Federalist and Democratic – and eventually to the emergence of the Whig party in the 1830s. [19 pp.]

READINGS: Alexander Hamilton, "Opinion as to the Constitutionality of the Bank of the United States"; R.B. Hayes diary entry; *History of the County of Berkshire Massachusetts;* Jefferson, "Manufactures," from *Notes on the State of Virginia*; Jefferson, Letters to Albert Gallatin, the Marquis de Lafayette, and William B. Giles; John Taylor of Caroline, *New Views of the Constitution of the United States* and *Arator;* John Pendleton Kennedy, "Address of the Friends of Domestic Industry" and *A Defense of the Whigs*

*Week Six: Did Romantic Jacksonians Triumph in America?*

As Americans struggled and debated the shape of their economy, trying to prove which vision guaranteed a virtuous society took on increased urgency in the 1830s. The same era saw the first appearance of an American Romantic challenge to the Enlightenment, a challenge which lent new instruments of debate to the anti-commercial opposition. The struggle between Romanticism and the Enlightenment in America reached its peak in the 1840s and 1850s, finding its two most eloquent poles in Princeton, New Jersey, and in Mercersburg, Pennsylvania. The heirs of Jefferson's vision of an American democracy took intellectual strength from the three-way debate which emerged between faith, reason and Romanticism, and then migrated into the emerging political debate over slavery and abolition. That debate blossomed in tandem with the debut of organized opposition to slavery among Northern intellectuals, and the defence by Southern intellectuals of slavery as a "positive good." [36 pp.]

READINGS: Andrew Preston Peabody, *Harvard Reminiscences*; O.O. Howard, *Autobiography*; Archibald Alexander, *Outlines of Moral Science*; Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Divinity School Address"; Charles Grandison Finney, *Lectures on Systematic Theology*; John Williamson Nevin, *The Anxious Bench*; James P. Holcombe, "Is Slavery Consistent With Natural Law?"; William C. Daniel, *American Cotton Planter* (March 1854); Micajah Ricks advertisement; Frederick Douglass, "Oration Delivered in Corinthian Hall [What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?]" William Lloyd Garrison, *No Compromise with Slavery*; Charles Hodge, "Slavery" (1836)

*Week Seven: Is Democracy the Solution to Injustice?*

The Civil War and Abraham Lincoln marked the ascendency of a Hamiltonian kind of individual in America. Although Abraham Lincoln is thought of more as a politician than an intellectual, he was actually widely-read in the sources of 19th-century political economy. His presidency during the Civil War assured the triumph of a Hamiltonian economy and the destruction of legalized slavery. However, the most perceptive analysis of American democracy in Lincoln's time came, not from a politician, but from a French visitor, Alexis de Tocqueville. [16 pp.]

READINGS: Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* Selections from *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*

*FIRST SHORT PAPER DUE*
*MID-TERM EXAMINATION*

*Week Eight:*

The Civil War ended slavery and is supposed to have enshrined "free labor" as the only acceptable American model. But did it? In this week, we will examine the failure of the so0-called "genteel elite," the debut of Charles Darwin in America and the response to both provided by Social Darwinism. Much as the war ended legalized slavery, it also brought into dominance a new corporate economy which was not entirely what the admirers of a commercial economy, from Hamilton to Lincoln, had quite in mind. They also had to cope with a kind of anti-ethics implicit in Darwin's notion of evolutionary natural selection. The result was an extraordinary rear-guard retreat battle by Protestantism. But Darwin was not overly friendly to the heirs of the Enlightenment, either. [9 pp.]

READINGS: Charles Hodge, *What Is Darwinism?*; William Graham Sumner, "The Forgotten Man"

*Week Nine: Is What is True also What Works?*

Disillusionment with the outcome of the Civil War combined with the skepticism of Darwin to produce a new twist on the old combat of religion and the Enlightenment. This time, it came in the form of William James's 'pragmatism,' which combined the inwardness of Protestant evangelicalism with a willingness to regard ideas as no more than a "doctrine of relief." (*Pragmatism* was actually a term James borrowed from Charles Sanders Peirce). What James offered as a philosophical remedy, John Dewey offered as an educational and social remedy for American society. The most important dissent came from James's Harvard colleague, Josiah Royce, a lone and neglected voice in American debates, and in music, from Charles Ives. [21 pp.]

READINGS: C.S. Peirce, "The Fixation of Belief" and "How to Make Our Ideas Clear"; William James, *Pragmatism* (1907); John Dewey, "The Reflex Arc Concept" Josiah Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty*; John Dewey, *Reconstruction in Philosophy*

LISTENING: Charles Ives, *Symphony no. 3 "The Camp Meeting"* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qd50AGwaYOo or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XXII4v37lfg)

*Week Ten: Freedom and Inequality*

In this section, we will consider the emergence of an American socialism and consider how the rise of Progressive politics resisted and absorbed that emergence. Between 1875 and 1900, the American economy, based on a vast influx of European immigrant labor, developed into one of the premier industrial economies of the Western hemisphere. As it did so, it generated substantial urban working-class resentment and resistance, and the appearance of the first significant American socialist thinkers. Those who were not ready to embrace European-style socialism still responded through an American alternative, populism. Middle-class thinkers replied through the arguments of Progressivism, stressing the importance of efficiency, elite management, and government management of the economy, which achieved its most important breakthroughs in the presidency of Woodrow Wilson. [15 pp.]

READINGS: "People's Party Platform"; William Jennings Bryan, "Cross of Gold" Speech; Eugene V. Debs, "Opening Speech Delivered as Candidate of the Socialist Party"; Woodrow Wilson, *The New Freedom*, "Leaders of Men," and "First Inaugural Address" (March 4, 1913); Oliver Wendell Holmes, *The Common Law* (1881) and "The Path of the Law" (1897)

*Week Eleven: Why was the First World War a Moment of Disenchantment in American Ideas?*

Woodrow Wilson expected that American involvement in the First World War would make the world safe for democracy; instead, it led to the formation of three of the most savage forms of totalitarianism, in the Russian Bolsheviks, the Italian Fascists, and the German Nazis. Disenchanted American writers recoiled from democracy, and instead turned to vivid denunciations of what H.L. Mencken and Sinclair Lewis described as "the American booboisie." This turn to denunciation achieved its most refined form in the debates over social science and human behavior, which became the newest version of Progressivism, considered now as a social science rather than a value system. This posed a particularly painful way of dealing with race and the uneasy inheritance of American slavery. [23 pp.]

READINGS: Randolph Bourne, "The State"; Franz Boas, *The Mind of Primitive Man*; John Broadus Watson, "Psychology and Behavior"; Booker T. Washington, "The Atlanta Exposition Address"; *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) 163; W.E.B. Du Bois, "The Strivings of the Negro People" (1897) and "Of the Faith of the Fathers" from *The Souls of Black Folk* (1907); Dudley Randall, "Booker T. and W.E.B"

*Week Twelve: The New Deal and Its Critics*

The collapse of the world economy in the Great Depression triggered a vast revulsion against liberal capitalism and authorized Franklin D. Roosevelt, as president, to further the work of creating a Wilsonian-style interventionist government. This intervention took a number of cultural and intellectual, as well as economic, forms, including the development of a Bolshevik-inspired "Popular Front" in painting (William Gropper) and music (Aaron Copland). So, we will consider FDR and his relations with unhappy intellectuals, and how that unhappiness was channeled into the Second World War. The war diverted many of these energies into defeating Naziism and fascism, but it posed a new set of ethical dilemmas surrounding the use of the atomic bomb. [8 pp.]

READINGS: F.D. Roosevelt, First Inaugural Address; Three Popular Front Lyrics; The Szilard Petition (July 17, 1945); Norbert Weiner, "A Scientist Rebels" (January 1947) and Louis Ridenour, "The Scientist Fights for Peace" (May 1947)

LISTENING: Copland, *Appalachian Spring* (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_KMUKfj_wX8 or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tNcHf2M4il8)

*Week Thirteen: The Cold War*

The end of the Second World War ushered-in an unexampled season of prosperity in America. But prosperity has never sat well beside the ongoing American strain of Puritanism, and after 1945 it produced chastened judgments about the nobility of American democracy, bitter denunciation of mass culture and mass consumption, and a national struggle over racial integration and segregation. These debates found an unusual answer in a revived sense of Protestant purpose, illustrated nowhere so vividly than in the work of Reinhold Niebuhr. It received a surprising echo in a renewed movement for racial equality, which was led, not by politicians or sociologists, but by Protestant clergy, most notably Martin Luther King, and (on a more dissatisfied level) by Elijah Muhammed and the Nation of Islam. But the Progressive critique of the American economy remained a potent force in the 1950s, in both sociology (C. Wright Mills) and even popular literature (Sloan Wilson). [25 pp.]

READINGS: Herbert Marcuse, "Repressive Tolerance"; Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History*; C. Wright Mills, "The Higher Immorality"; Elijah Muhammed, "What Is Islam? What Is A Muslim?" and "Black Man of U.S.A. and Africa!"; Martin Luther King, "Letter from the Birmingham Jail"

*Week Fourteen: The New Left Against the Old Left Against the New Right*

American luxury in the 1950s and 1960s, far from guaranteeing satisfaction, actually bred a new species of elite discontent, the revolt of the privileged. This revolt found its most articulate voices in a new women's-rights movement that paralleled the racial civil rights movement, in resistance to the Vietnam War of 1963-73, in an American conservative movement which combined aspects of both social traditionalism, and a new critique of socialism. [36 pp.]

READINGS: Port Huron Statement of the Students for a Democratic Society (1962); National Organization of Women, "Statement of Purpose" (1966); The Combahee River Collective Statement (1977); Laurie Oullette, "Building the Third Wave: Reflections of a Young Feminist" (1992); John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (1971); William F. Buckley, "Our Mission Statement"; Friedrich Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*; Irving Howe, "New Styles in Leftism"

*SECOND SHORT PAPER DUE*

*Week Fifteen: America: What is Our Past, Present & Future?*

This week will be devoted, finally, to a 'state of the art' evaluation of where American ideas of politics are today, and are likely to go hence. The classroom environment and the readings will touch on will look the rise of 'identity politics' since 1965, how globalism has moved from being a dreamed-of aspiration to a seriously-resented reality, and the formation of a new populist movement that resented both immigration and mass bureaucracy. [10 pp.]

READINGS: James Burnham, *The Managerial Revolution* (1941); Nikole Hannah-Jones, *The 1619 Project* (2019); Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" (1989); Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations" (1993)

# 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 & Argumentation* | *Use of Surces* | *Organization* | *Grammar, Mechanics & 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 analytical writing assignments. 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

## A Personal Note

The right to free speech of everyone in our community of scholars and learners is sacrosanct in this class and is possessed by faculty and students alike. With the aim of advancing and deepening everyone's understanding of the issues addressed in the course, students are urged to speak their minds, explore ideas and arguments, play devil's advocate, and engage in civil but robust discussions. There is no thought or language policing. We expect students to do business in the proper currency of intellectual discourse—a currency consisting of reasons, evidence, and arguments—but no ideas or positions are out of bounds.