

HIST 2650 - CL History of American Democracy

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 13, CRN 44121,

Credit hours: 3

Instructor

Brian Moffat

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Public Instructor Information

Instructor Title: Professor

Instructor Professional Qualifications:

*Master's, History, Southern New Hampshire University, 2024

*Bachelor's, History, Franciscan University of Steubenville, 2003

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Course Description

2650. CL History of American Democracy. A one semester survey of the American past focusing on history and civic literacy. The emphasis will be on important developments in American political, economic, and social history; particularly on the emergence and evolution of the concepts of democracy and the American economic system. No prerequisite. Meets state "Civic Literacy" requirements. 3 s.h.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	The Declaration of Independence	Thomas Jefferson	
Required	United States Constitution	James Madison	
Required	Federalist Papers (No. 10, 39, 42, 51, 78)	James Madison/Alexander Hamilton	
Required	The Wealth of Nations	Adam Smith	
Required	The Emancipation Proclamation	Abraham Lincoln	
Required	The Gettysburg Address	Abraham Lincoln	
Required	Letter from the Birmingham Jail	Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.	

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.

Daily Schedule

Day	Date	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
Mon	8/24		Class Orientation	
Wed	8/26	Declaration of Independence	The enlightenment's effect on Independence	
Fri	8/28	Declaration of Independence	Why Independence?	
Mon	8/31	Declaration of Independence	Dissecting the text	
Wed	9/2	Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity" Maryland's "Act of Religious Toleration"	Class discussion on the readings	
Fri	9/4	Statues of Virginia (1667-1682) Haudenosaunee "Great Law of Peace" (c. 1750)	Class discussion on the readings	Comparative Analysis Primary Analysis



Mon	9/7	NO CLASS		
Wed	9/9	Federalist Paper No. 10: faction/partisanship	What are the Federalist Papers? Class discussion on the readings	
Fri	9/11	No. 39: Republicanism	Class discussion on the readings	
Mon	9/14	No. 42: powers of Congress/states	Class discussion on the readings	
Wed	9/16	No. 51: federalism/checks and balances	Class discussion on the readings	
Fri	9/18	No. 78: independent judiciary	Class discussion on the readings	
Mon	9/21	Articles of Confederation Constitution of the United States	Why the Articles of Confederation Failed Federalism versus Democratic Republicanism.	
Wed	9/23	Constitution of the United States	The Bill of Rights	
Fri	9/25	Constitution of the United States	The amendments and the future	Comparative Analysis Primary Analysis Comparative Analysis Primary Analysis
Mon	9/28	Smith, The Wealth of Nations	Class discussion on the reading Building America on Capitalism	
Wed	9/30	Owen, "Discourses"	Class discussion on the reading	
Fri	10/2	from De Tocqueville, Democracy in America	Class discussion on the reading	
Mon	10/5	"Declaration of Rights & Sentiments"	Class discussion on the reading	
Wed	10/7	Dred Scott v. Sandford	Class discussion on the reading	Comparative Analysis Primary Analysis
Fri	10/9	Stephens, "Cornerstone Speech"	Class discussion on the reading	
Mon	10/12	Lincoln, The Emancipation Proclamation	The Civil War and the Union on the brink Class discussion on the reading	
Wed	10/14	Lincoln, The Gettysburg Address	Class discussion on the reading	
Fri	10/16	The Reconstruction Amendments (1865-1870)	Overview of Reconstruction Class discussion on the reading	
Mon	10/19	The Reconstruction Amendments (1865-1870)	Class discussion on the reading	
Wed	10/21	Chief Joseph, "An Indian's View on Indian Affairs"	Class discussion on the reading	Comparative Analysis Primary Analysis #1 Primary Analysis #2
Fri	10/23	from Riis, How the Other Half Lives	Class Discussion on the pictures	
Mon	10/26	from Turner, "The Sig. of the Frontier"	Video on How the Other Half Lives Class Discussion on the reading	
Wed	10/28	DuBois, "Returning Soldiers"	Class Discussion on the reading	
Fri	10/30	Roosevelt, "The Four Freedoms"	Class Discussion on the recording	
Mon	11/2	Nixon, "The Kitchen Debate"	Class Discussion on the video	
Wed	11/4	King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail" Protest songs	Video of Civil Rights Movement Listen/Watch a few examples	
Fri	11/6	King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail"	Class Discussion on reading	
Mon	11/9	Hernandez v. Texas	Class Discussion on reading	
Wed	11/11	NO CLASS		
Fri	11/13	The Port Huron Statement	Class Discussion on reading	
Mon	11/16	from Friedan, The Feminine Mystique (1963)	Class Discussion on reading	
Wed	11/18	"Practice" Exam Review		
Fri	11/20	"Practice" Final Exam	If you pass the "Practice" Final (60%+) you do not have to take the Final Exam. If you want to take the Final to get a better score, I will give you the higher of the two scores.	Comparative Analysis Primary Analysis
Mon	11/23	Schlafly, "What's Wrong with 'Equal Rights' for Women"	Class Discussion on reading	

Wed	11/25	NO CLASS	
Fri	11/27	NO CLASS	
Mon	11/30	Carter, "Crisis of Confidence"	Watch and discuss the video
Wed	12/2	Reagan, First Inaugural Address	Watch and discuss the video
Fri	12/4	Bush, State of the Union	Watch and discuss the video
Wed	12/9	Final Exam	

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