Notwithstanding the unprecedented success of the American regime, there have been (and continue to be) ongoing debates about the adequacy and worthiness of the principles and institutions upon which it is based. Since any serious criticism presupposes an accurate understanding of the object of that criticism, our aim in this course will be to uncover and understand the major principles underlying American liberal or pluralistic democracy.

The first part of the course is devoted to examining the religious and philosophic sources of those principles, as they come to light during the Colonial and Founding periods. We begin with the influential and emphatically religious seventeenth-century Puritan foundations in New England. We then turn to the founding events of the eighteenth-century, with special attention to the political and philosophic principles incorporated into the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. The first half of the course is intended to provoke reflection about the unique (and sometimes uneasy) combination of both religious and philosophic principles which anchor the American political experience. Students are invited to consider the different ways in which these two distinct wellsprings of the American experiment converge and/or diverge.

The second part of the course builds upon the first. Students are invited to consider the intersection and collision of religious and philosophic principles in contemporary American politics. We will do this with the help of two nineteenth-century authors, both of whom were partisans of liberal democracy, and both of whom remain very influential at the beginning of the twenty-first-century. Alexis de Tocqueville’s Democracy in America is considered by some to be both “the best book ever written on democracy and the best book ever written on America.” John Stuart Mill’s most famous book, On Liberty, provides a classic, powerful and inspiring argument for the importance of liberty in democracies. Both Tocqueville’s attempt to explain the compatibility and usefulness of religion for modern democratic politics, and Mill’s argument for a secular and philosophic humanism continue to frame the contemporary debate about religion and politics in America.

REQUIRED TEXTS (available in University Book Store):
Hamilton, Madison, Jay, The Essential Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers, ed. David Wooten (Hackett) (EFA)
Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, edited and translated by Harvey Mansfield and Delba Winthrop (Chicago) (DA)
John Stuart Mill, On Liberty, ed. Elizabeth Rapaport (Hackett) (OL)
COURSE REQUIREMENTS:
Regular attendance and class participation

- Students are urged to purchase the book editions assigned for the course (all are paperback and reasonably priced)
- All students are required to bring the text under discussion to class on a daily basis
- No computers are to be used during class-time

Three examinations (September 26; October 28; December 12)

- No cell phones or technological devices can be used or taken out during exams. Failure to comply will result in an F for the exam.

Participation Grade: determined on the basis of attendance, the quantity and quality of class participation on a weekly basis (check, plus, minus), and occasional quizzes on assigned material. Students can also boost their participation grade by writing a short optional paper (2-3 pages), which can be turned in on one of the following dates: September 26, October 28 or December 5 (our last class). All paper topics MUST be cleared by me ahead of time.

Final Grade: average of exams and participation grade (25% each)

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
Students with more than two unexcused cuts adversely affect their participation grade. Beginning with the third unexcused absence, each missed class is penalized one-third of a letter grade. Participation can be raised on the basis of the quality of a student’s active engagement with course materials on a weekly basis.

OFFICE HOURS:
Johns Hall 111E; Telephone extension: 3331
Officially: MW 4-5; TuTh 3-4; and by appointment. However, I’m in my office a lot and you are always welcome to come by. If I am busy at the moment, we will schedule a mutually convenient time to meet.

DISABILITIES:
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services (294-2320). The office is located in (and below) the Earl Infirmary in Room 002. After this meeting, please see me to discuss any needed accommodations. It is in your interest to attend to this EARLY in the term.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:
Integrity gives the educational enterprise its legitimacy. Honesty, respect, and personal responsibility are principles that guide academic life at Furman, in and
out of the classroom. Academic misconduct in any form (plagiarism, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, and other efforts to gain an unfair academic advantage) threatens the values of the campus community and will have severe consequences, such as failure in the course, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university.

If you have any question about what constitutes plagiarism or any other form of academic misconduct, it is your responsibility to speak with me so that we can dispel any and every ambiguity. Given the severity of the consequences, it is crucial that you fully understand what is expected of you in this regard. If you have any doubts, just ask! You should also be familiar with the information available at www.furman.edu/main/integrity.htm. A copy of Furman’s policy on academic dishonesty can also be found at this site.

**COURSE SCHEDULE:** (note: This syllabus contains more than we can cover in class. Although most of the material included below will be treated in class, additional readings are included for those who may wish to go a little further on their own.)

**PART ONE: FOUNDATIONAL SOURCES OF AMERICAN POLITICS**

**I. The Puritans**

A. The Mayflower Compact (Moodle)
   Tocqueville, “On the Point of Departure and its Importance” *DA* 1.1.2, pp. 27-45

B. John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity” and “On Liberty” (Moodle)

C. John Cotton, “Christian Calling” (Moodle) (Optional)

D. Nathaniel Niles, “Discourse on Liberty” (Moodle)

**II. The Challenges of Independence (esp. Thomas Jefferson)**

A. Enlightenment and Independence
   To John Trumbull, *PTJ*, 434-35.
   To William Ludlow, *PTJ*, 583-84.
   John Locke, *Second Treatise*, chaps. 2 and 9 (Moodle)

   *Declaration of Independence*, *PTJ*, 235-41.
   John Adams to Abigail Adams, July 3, 1776 (Moodle, last two paragraphs)
   To Roger C. Weightman, *PTJ*, 584-85.

B. The Meaning of Equality and the Problem of Slavery
To David Rittenhouse, PTJ, 361-63.
To Thomas Law, PTJ, 540-44.
To Maria Cosway, PTJ, 400-412 (Optional).

Notes on Virginia, PTJ, 184-93, 214-15.
Benjamin Banneker to Jefferson (Moodle)
To Benjamin Banneker, PTJ, 454-55.
To Henri Gregoire, PTJ, 517.
To Edward Coles, PTJ, 544-47.
To John Holmes, PTJ, 567-69.

C. Religious Freedom
Notes on Virginia, PTJ, 208-13.
To Nehemiah Dodge et. al., PTJ, 303-04.
To Benjamin Rush, PTJ, 490-94 (Jefferson’s personal views) (Optional).

FIRST EXAM: MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

III. Inventing and Defending the Constitution
A. Before the Constitution
   Articles of Confederation, EFA, 317-324
   Preface: Notes on the Constitutional Convention, Madison (Moodle)
   Constitution of 1787, EFA, 326-338

B. Anti-Federalist Objections
   "Brutus," Essay #1 (Moodle)
   "Centinel" #1, EFA, 65-74
   Patrick Henry, June 5, 1788, EFA, 25-41

C. Federalist Responses
   Necessity and Safety of Union:
      Federalist Papers, #1, 2, 37; 6, 9, 23 (EFA)
   Checks and Balances:
      Federalist Papers, #10 (EFA)
   Separation of Powers:
      Federalist Papers, #47, 48, 51, 55 (EFA)
   Senate, Executive, Judiciary (Recommended Reading)
      Federalist Papers, #62-63; (23), 70; 78, 85 (EFA)

SECOND EXAM: FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28
P ART  T WO:  D EFENDING  L IBERAL  D EMOCRACY

I.  Tocqueville on America and the Democratic Soul

A.  The Democratic Revolution and the American Constitution
   Author’s Introduction, DA 1.1, pp. 3-15

   The Federal Constitution, DA 1.1.7, pp. 105-110
   The Genius of the Legislator, DA, 1.1.8, pp. 128-130
   Superiority of Federal Power, DA, 1.1.8, pp. 143-146
   Distinctive Character of Federal Constitution of America, DA, 1.1.8, pp. 146-149
   Advantage of the Federal System, DA, 1.1.8, 149-154

   Sovereignty of the People, DA 1.1.4, pp.53-55
   Omnipotence of the Majority, DA 1.2.7, pp. 240-245

B. Religion in a Democratic Age
   Point of Departure, DA 1.1.2, pp. 27-45
   Religion as a Political Institution, DA 1.2.9, pp. 275-282
   The Power of Religion in America, DA 1.2.9, pp. 282-288

   The Influence of Democracy, DA 2.1.5-8, pp. 417-428
   Self-Interest and Religion, DA 2.2.9, 504-506
   Religion, Materialism, and Distant Goals, DA 2.2.15-17, pp. 517-524

C. On the Democratic Soul
   Philosophical Method and Principal Beliefs, DA 2.2.1-2, pp. 403-410

   The Problem of Individualism, DA 2.2.2, pp. 482-484
   The Need for Associations, DA 2.2.4-6, pp.485-496
   The Principle of Self-Interest Well-Understood, DA 2.2.8, pp. 500-503

   Well-Being, Material Comfort, and Restlessness, DA 2.2.10-14, pp. 506-517
   The Possibility of Democratic Greatness, DA 2.4.8, pp. 673-676

II. Mill on Liberty and Religion

A. On Liberty

B. The Utility of Religion (Moodle)

C. Debate on the Distinctive Character of Modern Ethics, Tocqueville-Gobineau Correspondence (Hancock translation), pp. 1-11 (Moodle) (time-permitting)

F INAL  E XAMINATION:  M ONDAY,  D ECEMBER  12 @  N OON