
Term Information

Effective Term Autumn 2025

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area Philosophy
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org Philosophy - D0575
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences
Level/Career Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog 2490
Course Title American Civic Philosophy
Transcript Abbreviation America Civic Phil
Course Description This course supports American civic literacy by exploring key traditions of American civic philosophy, including political economy, from the nation's founding to today. Students will study foundational texts and influential writings, reflecting on important ideas and values that have shaped public debates, contributed by philosophers, political economists, and social and political leaders.
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No
Grading Basis Letter Grade
Repeatable No
Course Components Lecture
Grade Roster Component Lecture
Credit Available by Exam No
Admission Condition Course No
Off Campus Never
Campus of Offering Columbus, Lima, Mansfield, Marion, Newark, Wooster

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites
Exclusions
Electronically Enforced No

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 38.0101
Subsidy Level Baccalaureate Course
Intended Rank Freshman, Sophomore, Junior

Requirement/Elective Designation

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

Course Details

Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- Students will develop a broad understanding of American civic philosophy including foundational texts that define key periods in its development.
- Students will learn to formulate clear and persuasive arguments about American civic philosophy through class discussion and written assignments.
- Students will undertake an in-depth exploration of a foundational text of American civic philosophy.

Content Topic List

- American political philosophy

Sought Concurrence

Yes

Attachments

- PHILOS 2490 American Civic Philosophy sample Syllabus.pdf: 2490 sample syllabus
(Syllabus. Owner: Shuster, Amy Lynne)
- Chase concurrence 3.2025.pdf: Chase Center concurrence
(Concurrence. Owner: Shuster, Amy Lynne)
- Political Science concurrence 3.2025.pdf: Dept of Political Science concurrence
(Concurrence. Owner: Shuster, Amy Lynne)

Comments

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Shuster, Amy Lynne	03/20/2025 02:49 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Lin, Eden	03/20/2025 03:20 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal	03/25/2025 04:54 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Jenkins, Mary Ellen Bigler Hanlin, Deborah Kay Hilty, Michael Neff, Jennifer Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal Steele, Rachel Lea	03/25/2025 04:54 PM	ASCCAO Approval

PHILOSOPHY 2490

American Civic Philosophy

Autumn 2025 [sample] (full term)

Lecture/Discussion (in person), 3 credit hours

T/Th [Time] [Location]

Instructor

Instructor: Piers Turner

Email address: turner.894@osu.edu

Office hours: [hours and location]

COURSE OVERVIEW

Course description

In support of American civic literacy, this course examines leading traditions of American civic philosophy, including political economy, from the nation's founding to the current day. Students will study foundational texts that define key periods in the development of American civic philosophy, reflecting on important ideas and values that have shaped American public debates over time. Readings will be drawn from the writings of influential philosophers and political economists as well as from social and political leaders who made significant philosophical contributions to the American civic tradition.

Course goals

1. Students will develop a broad understanding of American civic philosophy including foundational texts that define key periods in its development.
2. Students will learn to formulate clear and persuasive arguments about American civic philosophy through class discussion and written assignments.
3. Students will undertake an in-depth exploration of a foundational text of American civic philosophy.

General education goals and expected learning outcomes

This course fulfills the requirements and expected learning outcomes for the GE Foundation: Historical and Cultural Studies

Goals - Historical Studies:

1. Successful students will critically investigate and analyze historical ideas, events, persons, material culture, and artifacts to understand how they shape society and people.

Expected Learning Outcomes - Historical Studies:

Successful students are able to:

- 1.1. Identify, differentiate, and analyze primary and secondary sources related to historical events, periods, or ideas.
- 1.2. Use methods and theories of historical inquiry to describe and analyze the origin of at least one selected contemporary issue.
- 1.3. Use historical sources and methods to construct an integrated perspective on at least one historical period, event, or idea that influences human perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors.
- 1.4. Evaluate social and ethical implications in historical studies.

Students will satisfy these expected learning outcomes through close reading of assigned texts, active participation in class discussion, successful completion of written assignments, and critical engagement with fellow students and the instructor. More specifically, the course will:

1. Engage influential texts that have shaped American civic philosophy since the country's founding, drawing connections among these writings over time.
2. Require a substantive written project (approximately 2000 words) that (a) examines debates surrounding a key text in American civic philosophy and (b) relates those debates to a contemporary issue. See below for details.
3. Encourage reflection and self-assessment through a series of 10 short reading response papers that ask students to reflect on how the readings inform their own understanding of American civic philosophy.

Specific course learning outcomes include:

- Understand questions about key themes in American civic philosophy from the founding to the present day.
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of competing theories concerning key civic values including liberty, equality, well-being, property, democracy, and legitimate authority.
- Articulate (orally and in writing) competing arguments concerning American civic philosophy

COURSE MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Readings

- Course readings will be posted on the Carmen course website

Technology support

For help with your password, university email, Carmen, or any other technology issues, questions, or requests, contact the Ohio State IT Service Desk. Standard support hours are available at ocio.osu.edu/help/hours, and support for urgent issues is available 24/7.

- **Self-Service and Chat support:** ocio.osu.edu/help
- **Phone:** 614-688-4357(HELP)
- **Email:** servicedesk@osu.edu
- **TDD:** 614-688-8743

ASSESSMENT

How your grade is calculated

ASSIGNMENT CATEGORY	POINTS
Class Participation (ongoing)	20
Reading Responses (10) (see readings marked *****, due before class on day marked)	20
Midterm Exam (October 14)	20
Final Essay (due December 10)	20
Final Exam (Finals week, TBD)	20
Total	100

See course schedule below for due dates.

Descriptions of major course assignments

Class Participation

Description: Regular attendance and participation during class is part of your learning process. Participation involves active engagement with the course material, listening attentively to classmates, contributing to class discussion, including offering opinions about the readings and responding constructively to the views of others. *I will ensure that all sincere and constructive input is taken seriously and that class discussion remains respectful. Personal attacks will not be tolerated.*

Some questions to ask yourself before every class: (1) What were the main concepts and arguments in the readings? (2) Against whom or what is the author arguing? (3) What does the author hope to accomplish in this piece? (4) How does this reading connect to other readings so far?

Attendance will affect your participation grade. I reserve the right to take attendance at any class. If you must miss a class or exam, it is your responsibility to notify me *before the day of class*, or (in the case of exams) *as far ahead of time as possible*.

Reading Responses (10)

Description: For 10 of the readings (marked with **** on the topics/readings outline) you must submit a brief 200-250 word written response paper on Carmen intended to encourage critical and creative engagement with the reading. Each response must address how the reading informs your understanding of American civic philosophy as it concerns your own life. Your response papers must be typed and uploaded onto Carmen before class on the day for which the relevant readings are assigned. No late submissions allowed. They are graded as full credit (2 point each), partial credit (1) or no credit (0). (20 points).

Final Essay

Description: Write an essay in which you respond to a debate generated in class by one of the following texts: (1) the Declaration of Independence, (2) the Constitution of the United States, (3) parts of the *Federalist Papers*, (4) the Emancipation Proclamation, (5) the Gettysburg Address, (6) Letter from Birmingham Jail, and (7) excerpts from *The Wealth of Nations*. In the second half of the semester, you will meet individually with me to propose a topic and thesis, and discuss an outline. Your argument must show how a debate concerning one of these central texts remains relevant to a problem in contemporary society and then take a stand on that problem consistent with, or challenging, philosophical themes from writings in the course. The paper will be graded according to a rubric, provided in advance, addressing clarity of thesis and argument, engagement with texts, structure and organization, effective written expression, and creative thinking.

Exams (2)

Description: Both exams (1 midterm and 1 final exam) will include a series of multiple-choice and short answer questions about course material assigned in the course to that point in the semester. A study guide of possible questions will be distributed, we will review this study guide during class prior to the exam, and a subset of these questions will appear on the exam. The midterm exam will be conducted during a regular class meeting time. The final exam will take place at the Registrar-appointed time during final exam period. If you require extra time for your exam, please be in touch with me well in advance so that we can make alternative arrangements.

Late assignments

Late submissions will not be accepted except under special circumstances. Please refer to Carmen for due dates.

Grading scale

93% – 100%	A
90% – 92.9%	A-
87% – 89.9%	B+
83% – 86.9%	B
80% – 82.9%	B-
77% – 79.9%	C+
73% – 76.9%	C
70% – 72.9%	C-
67% – 69.9%	D+
60% – 66.9%	D
Below 60%	E

COURSE POLICIES

Academic integrity policy, including generative AI

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-48.7 (B)). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct.

The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. Students must recognize that failure to follow the rules and guidelines established in the University's Code of Student Conduct and this syllabus may constitute Academic Misconduct.

The Ohio State University's Code of Student Conduct (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process. Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's Code of Student Conduct is never considered an excuse for academic misconduct.

Specifically, students are not to use unauthorized assistance such as generative AI tools on a course assignment unless such assistance has been authorized specifically by the course instructor. In addition, students are not to submit their work without acknowledging any word-

for-word use and/or paraphrasing of writing, ideas or other work that is not your own.

If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. If COAM determines that you have violated the University's Code of Student Conduct (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct can significantly affect your undergraduate career.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me. For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Disability services and requesting accommodations

The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions, please let me know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.

If you are ill and need to miss class, including if you are staying home and away from others while experiencing symptoms of a viral infection or fever, please let me know immediately. In cases where illness interacts with an underlying medical condition, please consult with Student Life Disability Services to request reasonable accommodations. You can connect with them at slds@osu.edu; 614-292-3307; or slds.osu.edu.

Religious accommodations

Ohio State has had a longstanding practice of making reasonable academic accommodations for students' religious beliefs and practices in accordance with applicable law. In 2023, Ohio State updated its practice to align with new state legislation. Under this new provision, students must be in early communication with their instructors regarding any known accommodation requests for religious beliefs and practices, providing notice of specific dates for which they request alternative accommodations within 14 days after the first instructional day of the course.

Instructors in turn shall not question the sincerity of a student's religious or spiritual belief system in reviewing such requests and shall keep requests for accommodations confidential.

With sufficient notice, instructors will provide students with reasonable alternative accommodations with regard to examinations and other academic requirements with respect to students' sincerely held religious beliefs and practices by allowing up to three absences each semester for the student to attend or participate in religious activities. Examples of religious accommodations can include, but are not limited to, rescheduling an exam, altering the time of a student's presentation, allowing make-up assignments to substitute for missed class work, or flexibility in due dates or research responsibilities. If concerns arise about a requested accommodation, instructors are to consult their tenure initiating unit head for assistance.

A student's request for time off shall be provided if the student's sincerely held religious belief or practice severely affects the student's ability to take an exam or meet an academic requirement and the student has notified their instructor, in writing during the first 14 days after the course begins, of the date of each absence. Although students are required to provide notice within the first 14 days after a course begins, instructors are strongly encouraged to work with the student to provide a reasonable accommodation if a request is made outside the notice period. A student may not be penalized for an absence approved under this policy.

If students have questions or disputes related to academic accommodations, they should contact their course instructor, and then their department or college office. For questions or to report discrimination or harassment based on religion, individuals should contact the **Office of Institutional Equity**. (Policy: **Religious Holidays, Holy Days and Observances**)

COURSE SCHEDULE

Reading responses due for readings marked with ****

Week	Dates	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Aug 26	INTRODUCTION
		Unit #1: Inspiring Sources
	Aug 28	Locke on the Social Contract I John Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> (1689), excerpts from chapters 1-3 (8pp)
2	Sept 2	Locke on the Social Contract II **** John Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> (1689), chapter 5 (9pp) Thomas Jefferson, Letter to Reverend James Madison (1785) (2pp)
	Sept 4	Locke on the Social Contract III

		John Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> (1689), excerpts from chapters 7-9, 15, 17-19 (22pp)
3	Sept 9	<p>Locke on Toleration</p> <p>John Locke, “Letter Concerning Toleration” (1689), excerpts (13pp) Thomas Jefferson, “A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom” (1777) (2pp) **** Thomas Jefferson, Letter to a Committee of the Danbury Baptist Association (1802) (1p)</p>
	Sept 11	<p>Smith on the Division of Labor, Growth, and Virtue</p> <p>**** Adam Smith, <i>The Wealth of Nations</i> (1776), excerpts (23pp) Adam Smith, <i>The Theory of Moral Sentiments</i> (1759), excerpts (6pp)</p>
4	Sept 16	REVIEW AND REFLECT DAY
		Unit #2: Founding Principles
	Sept 18	<p>Declaration of Independence I</p> <p>**** Thomas Jefferson et al, “The Declaration of Independence” (1776) (4pp) Jeremy Bentham, “A Short Review of the Declaration” (1776) (7pp) and <i>Anarchical Fallacies</i> (1796), excerpt (10pp)</p>
5	Sept 23	<p>Declaration of Independence II</p> <p>Thomas Paine, “African Slavery in America” (1775) (4pp) Abigail Adams, Letter to John Adams (1776) (1p) Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “The Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions” (1848) (5pp)</p>
	Sept 25	<p>Declaration of Independence III</p> <p>Danielle Allen, “How the Declaration of Independence Offers a Roadmap to a Better Union” (2020) (4pp) Stephen Carter, <i>The Dissent of the Governed</i> (1998), excerpts (30pp)</p>
6	Sept 30	<p>Constitution I</p> <p><i>The Constitution of the United States</i> (Articles I-VII) (1787)</p>

	Oct 2	Constitution II Alexander Hamilton, <i>Federalist Papers</i> #1 and 9 (1787) (9pp) **** James Madison, <i>Federalist Papers</i> #10 (1787) (7pp)
7	Oct 7	Constitution III John Adams, "Thoughts on Government" (1776) (8pp) James Madison, <i>Federalist Papers</i> #39 and 51 (1788) (11pp)
	Oct 9	Constitution IV **** <i>The Bill of Rights</i> (1791) Amendments I-X (3pp) Alexander Hamilton, <i>Federalist Papers</i> #84 (1788) (8pp) Thomas Jefferson, Letter to James Madison (1787) (3pp)
8	Oct 14	MIDTERM
	Oct 16	NO CLASS – Autumn break
		Unit #3: Liberty and Democratic Equality
9	Oct 21	Individuality in Democracy Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Self-Reliance" (1840), excerpts (6pp) Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Politics" (1849), excerpts (8pp)
	Oct 23	Women's Individuality and Equality Angela Grimke, Letter to Catharine E. Beecher (1837) (4pp) Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "Address to the New York State Legislature" (1860) (3pp)
10	Oct 28	Slavery and Abolition William Lloyd Garrison, "Declaration of Sentiments of the American Anti-Slavery Society" (1833) (5pp) Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" (1852) (5pp) **** Abraham Lincoln, "Emancipation Proclamation" (1863)
	Oct 30	Justifying Disobedience David Walker, "Appeal... to the Colored Citizens of the World..." (1829), excerpts (8pp) Henry David Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government" (1849), excerpts (8pp)

11	Nov 4	The Second Founding **** Abraham Lincoln, “Gettysburg Address” (1863) (1p) Amendments XIII, XIV, and XV to the Constitution (1865, 1868, 1870) Frederick Douglass, “Why Reconstruction Failed” (1880) (3pp)
	Nov 6	REVIEW AND REFLECT DAY
11	Nov 11	NO CLASS – Veterans Day
		Unit #4: Market Society and Democratic Planning
	Nov 13	Property John Stuart Mill, <i>Principles of Political Economy</i> (1848) excerpt (11pp) Henry George, <i>Progress and Poverty</i> (1879), excerpts (7pp)
12	Nov 18	Capitalism and Virtue Andrew Carnegie, “The Gospel of Wealth” (1889), excerpts (8pp) Thorstein Veblen, <i>The Theory of the Leisure Class</i> (1899), excerpt (5pp) Jane Addams, “The Spirit of Youth and the City Streets” (1909), excerpt (4pp)
	Nov 20	Democracy and Science John Dewey, “Science and Free Culture” (1939) excerpt (11pp) John Dewey, “Creative Democracy: The Task Before Us” (1939) (5pp)
13	Nov 25	Democracy and race W. E. B. Du Bois, “The Souls of Black Folk” (1903) excerpts (13pp) **** Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail” (1963) (17pp)
	Nov 27	NO CLASS- Thanksgiving
14	Dec 2	Post-War Challenges John Kenneth Galbraith, <i>The Affluent Society</i> (1958) excerpts (10pp) Betty Friedan, “The Feminine Mystique” (1963) excerpt (6pp)

	Dec 4	Market Society Milton and Rose Friedman, <i>Free to Choose</i> (1980), chapter 1 (29pp)
15	Dec 9	The Original Position **** John Rawls, <i>Theory of Justice</i> (1971) excerpts (13pp)
	Dec 10	FINAL PAPER due by midnight
	[Finals Week]	FINAL CUMULATIVE EXAM

RE: request for concurrence on new course in American Civic Philosophy

From Kurtz, Marcus <kurtz.61@osu.edu>
Date Thu 3/20/2025 2:31 PM
To Shuster, Amy <shuster.67@osu.edu>

Dear Amy,

I am happy to concur with this, and I look forward to your concurrence when a related course (American Civic Politics) comes through the approval process.

Thanks!

Marcus.

Marcus J. Kurtz, interim chair
ASC Distinguished Professor of Political Science
Ohio State University
[website](#)
+1.614.292.0952

From: Shuster, Amy <shuster.67@osu.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 5:15 PM
To: Kurtz, Marcus <kurtz.61@osu.edu>; Kogan, Vladimir <kogan.18@osu.edu>
Subject: Re: request for concurrence on new course in American Civic Philosophy

Dear Marcus and Vlad (if I may),

Please let me know if Political Science can issue a concurrence for the attached course. I would appreciate your response by Friday, March 21.

Many thanks,
Amy

From: Caldeira, Gregory <caldeira.1@polisci.osu.edu>
Sent: Friday, March 7, 2025 1:20 PM
To: Shuster, Amy <shuster.67@osu.edu>
Cc: Kurtz, Marcus <kurtz.61@osu.edu>; Kogan, Vladimir <kogan.18@osu.edu>
Subject: FW: request for concurrence on new course in American Civic Philosophy

Dear Amy,

Hi. I am no longer the boss around here. Marcus Kurtz, who I cc here, is, and I am sure he will be able to handle this, along with Vlad Kogan, our DGS.

Greg

From: Shuster, Amy <shuster.67@osu.edu>

Sent: Friday, March 7, 2025 11:53 AM

To: Caldeira, Gregory <caldeira.1@polisci.osu.edu>

Subject: request for concurrence on new course in American Civic Philosophy

Dear Gregory (if I may),

The Department of Philosophy will propose a new course entitled American Civic Philosophy (PHILOS 2490). We kindly request concurrence from the Department of Political Science.

Please let me know if you have any questions. We would be grateful for your response by March 21.

Cheers,

Amy



Amy L. Shuster, PhD

Academic Program Specialist

Associated Faculty Member

Department of Philosophy

230 N. Oval Mall

350B University Hall

Columbus, OH 43210

+1(614)688-0715 Office

shuster.67@osu.edu / philosophy.osu.edu

Pronouns: they/them/theirs

Honorific: Dr.

Re: request for concurrence on new course in American Civic Philosophy

From Strang, Lee <strang.69@osu.edu>
Date Thu 3/13/2025 7:24 PM
To Shuster, Amy <shuster.67@osu.edu>
Cc Holland, Molly <holland.418@osu.edu>; Fortier, Jeremy <fortier.28@osu.edu>

Thank you Amy!

Sorry for our delay.

Yes, this looks like an excellent course.
Lee



Lee J. Strang
Executive Director, [Salmon P. Chase Center for Civics, Culture, and Society](#)
Professor of Law, Moritz College of Law
The Ohio State University
(c) 734-277-0719
[Originalism's Promise: A Natural Law Account of the American Constitution](#) (2019)
You can access my papers on [SSRN](#)
For more information on my case book visit [Carolina Academic Press](#)

From: "Shuster, Amy" <shuster.67@osu.edu>
Date: Friday, March 7, 2025 at 11:46 AM
To: "Strang, Lee" <strang.69@osu.edu>
Cc: "Holland, Molly" <holland.418@osu.edu>
Subject: request for concurrence on new course in American Civic Philosophy

Dear Lee (if I may),

The Department of Philosophy will propose a new course entitled American Civic Philosophy (PHILOS 2490). We kindly request concurrence from the Chase Center.

Please let me know if you have any questions. We would be grateful for your response by March 21.

Cheers,
Amy

Amy L. Shuster, PhD

Academic Program Specialist

Associated Faculty Member

Department of Philosophy

230 N. Oval Mall

350B University Hall

Columbus, OH 43210

+1(614)688-0715 Office

shuster.67@osu.edu / philosophy.osu.edu

Pronouns: they/them/theirs

Honorific: Dr.