

University of Texas at Dallas
PSCI 4396.001
Radical Freedom and American Founding Thought
Syllabus

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This course will explore a lost or neglected ideal of freedom and self-government. With the rise and influence of movements such as Marxism, socialism, fascism and globalization, the American polity's understanding of freedom and representative government have undergone a significant transformation—so much so that some commentators believe the American people are no longer truly free in the sense understood by the American Founders. It is argued that due to lost understanding, most Americans are ignorant of their liberal and republican heritage, and as a result, American citizens have unknowingly abandoned authentic democratic practice and politics. There is a current academic and political discussion on the influence of republican and liberal theory on the Revolutionary generation's conception of political liberty. To comprehend this change, we will examine four texts fundamental to influencing the original American idea of freedom (Niccolo Machiavelli's *Discourses on Livy*, Algernon Sidney's *Discourses Concerning Government*, John Locke's 2nd *Treatise of Government* and John Trenchard and Thomas Gordon's *Cato's Letters*); and we will do so with a view to the possibility and/or desirability of recovering vanished ideals.

Required texts:

Thomas Gordon and John Trenchard; Ronald Hamowy, ed. *Cato's Letters (volumes 1 & 2)*. Liberty Fund.
Volume 1 ISBN:0-86597-131-5
Volume 2 ISBN:0-86597-133-1

John Locke; Paul Sigmund ed. *The Selected Writings of John Locke*. Norton Critical Editions
ISBN 0-393-96451-5

Niccolo Machiavelli; *Discourses on Livy*. University of Chicago Press, ISBN 0226500365

Algernon Sidney; Thomas Wes, ed. *Discourses Concerning Government*. Liberty Fund
ISBN 0-86597-142-0

Requirements, grading and participation:

There will be three exams and a quiz/participation grade for this course. Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Three exams	30% each
Quiz/participation	10%
Total	100%

Attendance, etc.

Attendance is expected and required. Should you miss an exam due to an absence or *tardy*, a grade of "F" will be assigned and will stand; the only exception will be for a previously approved *excused* absence. When challenging a grade, it is the responsibility of the student to produce the requisite materials. 10% of your final grade will be determined by attendance and quiz performance. Failure of four quizzes will result in the loss of 5% of your participation grade; failure of six quizzes will result in the loss of your full participation grade. There will be a

course grade reduction of 5% for every two additional quiz failures. Should you miss a quiz due to an absence or **tardy**, a grade of “F” will be assigned and will stand. There are **no** make-up quizzes or exams. Final grades are determined at the instructor’s discretion. Attendance is expected and required. The exams will consist almost equally of lecture and reading material. Cell phones, pagers, palm pilots and any other electronic device that rings, beeps, clicks, whirrs, etc.; turn them off.—should a student need to be reminded more than once, it is possible that he or she could lose 10% of the final grade or suffer removal from class.

Class rules and grades:

1. In order for you to receive an excused absence, you **must** notify me **prior** to class; or you **must** have a documented medical emergency; otherwise, all absences and each tardy will be considered unexcused.
2. All grades are final (unless there is a mistake when determining a grade—this does happen).
The time to be concerned with a grade is during the semester, not after. When challenging a grade, it is the responsibility of the student to produce the requisite materials. There is no extra credit given in this class.
3. **NO LAPTOP COMPUTERS MAY BE USED IN THIS CLASS.**

University Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty:

It is the policy of the University of Texas at Dallas that cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Violations will result in immediate disciplinary action to the fullest extent of the policy. See the University catalog for a detailed explanation.

Reading and exam schedule:

Jan 12—course introduction
Jan 14—*Discourses on Livy*, Book I, Preface, chs 1-7, 10,
Jan 19—*Discourses on Livy*, Bk I, chs 16-18, 24, 25, 32, 33
Jan 21—*Discourses on Livy*, Bk I, chs 34-40
Jan 26—*Discourses on Livy*, Bk I, chs 44-47, 53, 55
Jan 28—*Discourses on Livy*, Bk I, chs 58,
Feb 2—*Discourses on Livy*, Bk II, Preface, chs 2, 4, 5, 15, 22, 23, 28, 29
Feb 4—*Discourses on Livy*, Bk III, chs 1, 3, 7-9, 16
Feb 9—**exam #1**
Feb 11—introduction to Sydney, Locke and Cato
Feb 16—*Discourses Concerning Government*, Bk I, secs. 1, 3, 5, 10, 11
Feb 18—*Discourses Concerning Government*, Bk I, secs. 17, 18, 20; Bk II, secs. 1, 3
Feb 23—*Discourses Concerning Government*, Bk II, secs. 5, 8, 10, 11, 13, 14
Feb 25—*Discourses Concerning Government*, Bk II, secs. 15-18, 20
Mar 2—*Discourses Concerning Government*, Bk II, secs. 24, 26, 28, 31
Mar 4—*Discourses Concerning Government*, Bk III, secs. 6, 9-13, 21, 33
Mar 9—*2nd Treatise*, chs 1-4
Mar 11—*2nd Treatise*, chs 5, 7
Mar 15-20—SPRING BREAK
Mar 23—*2nd Treatise*, chs 8, 9, 11
Mar 25—*2nd Treatise*, chs 17-19
Mar 30—**exam #2**
Apr 1—*Cato’s Letters*: Editor’s Introduction; Dedication, letters 13, 15-18
Apr 6—*Cato’s Letters*: 19, 20, 22, 24, 25, 27
Apr 8—*Cato’s Letters*: 31-33, 38-40
Apr 13—*Cato’s Letters*: 42-46
Apr 15—*Cato’s Letters*: 47-49, 51
Apr 20—*Cato’s Letters*: 59-63
Apr 22—*Cato’s Letters*: 67, 68, 72, 71,
Apr 27—*Cato’s Letters*: 72, 75, 84, 96
Apr 29—*Cato’s Letters*: 105, 110, 111, 115

MAY 6—FINAL EXAM 11:00 A.M!