

Education and Citizenship in Modern and Contemporary Political Thought POLS 1826E—Fall 2025

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Class Location: Sayles Hall 305
Day and Time: Thursday 4-6:30 p.m.
Office Hours: Thursday 12-2:00 p.m., 25 George Street, Office 205

Course Description

In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in civic education among political theorists, politicians, and educators, with most insisting that we need to devote more time and resources to preparing students for citizenship. Yet, there are significant disagreements over what students should learn and what end(s) this learning should serve. This course will examine perennial debates at the intersection of education and citizenship in modern and contemporary political thought. What knowledge, capacities, and dispositions are necessary for citizenship in liberal democracies? How should they be taught and by whom? What is the proper distribution of educational authority between parents, children, and the state? Should civic education promote “patriotism?” What are the effects of socio-economic inequality on civic education and citizenship? How do the philosophical, economic, and political views of various thinkers influence their approaches to education for citizenship?

Learning Objectives

You are expected to attend class, complete all of the assigned readings, write two reflection essays, take an in-class midterm essay exam, and compose a 10–12-page term paper. Students who complete these tasks successfully will be able to:

1. Read, analyze, and discuss theories of education and citizenship in the history of political thought and contemporary political theory
2. Relate ideas and concepts from historical texts to contemporary debates at the intersection of education, politics, and economics
3. Articulate original interpretations and critiques of pedagogical, political, and economic theories through clear and concise writing
4. Collaborate with others and exchange knowledge and ideas through respectful dialogue and discussion

Mode of Instruction

This is a seminar (discussion-based) course. Active participation is required. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings *prior to* the session for which it is assigned. You are also expected to bring the readings to class (in physical or digital form).

Instructional Tools

This course will utilize Canvas for posting grades, readings, and other relevant material. Students will also submit written assignments via Canvas.

Required Texts

All readings for this course will be posted as PDFs on our Canvas site. Most are excerpts from much longer texts, which can be accessed through the Brown Library System. There are no books to purchase for this course.

Policies and Expectations

1. I will deduct one letter grade for each day an assignment is late. Please communicate with me if you need to request an extension.
2. This class requires in-class discussion and participation. Respectful debate is encouraged.
3. I will not police the use of cell phones or electronics in class. However, you will lose participation points if you are not engaged in lecture or discussion.
4. If you have more than four unexcused absences, you cannot pass this class.

Assignments

1. Two 4-pg. double-spaced reflection papers on a week's readings
2. Mid-term Essay Exam: in-class and open book
3. Weekly Readings—factored into participation
4. Final 10-12 pg. Term Paper

Grade Distribution

Reflection Papers (2x10%)	20%
In-Class Mid-term Exam	25%
Participation	20%
Final Paper	35%

Grading Scale:

A \geq 93.5
AB = 87.5-93.4
B = 82.5-87.4
BC = 77.5-82.4
C = 69.5-77.4
D = 60-69.4
F \leq 59.9

Description of Class Assignments

1. *Two 4-pg. double-spaced reflection papers on a week's readings*

I will distribute a basic grading rubric for these reflection papers. I want you to engage with any part of a week's readings that you found particularly insightful (or potentially incorrect or incoherent). This assignment is meant to get you to think deeply about the texts we are reading and how they relate to broader course themes. You must complete the first reflection paper by Week 7 and the second by Week 14. I recommend not waiting until these deadlines to submit your

reflection papers because they are close to other assignment deadlines like the midterm and final essay.

2. Mid-Term In-Class Essay Exam

This exam will be held in class on October 23rd and consist of one short and one long essay. On the previous class day, I will give you a list of potential essay topics that may appear on the exam. You can bring your texts, but no notes are allowed. If you pay close attention during lectures and participate in class discussions, there should be no surprises on the exam. Please come see me during my office hours if you have additional questions.

3. Weekly Readings and Participation

We will be reading primary texts in the history of political thought and contemporary political theory with the occasional addition of secondary articles. I've attempted to make each week's readings manageable and I expect students to come prepared with questions and comments. I will not quiz you on the readings, but your contributions to group and class discussions will serve as an evaluation of your reading effort and comprehension. Your participation score will be a combination of attendance and contributions to small and large group discussions. I allow each student **one** unexcused absence and each subsequent absence will result in a 5% reduction of your participation grade. If you have a legitimate excuse for absence, I will offer you a make-up assignment. Those who attend class and make consistent contributions (either in small or large group) should receive a high participation score.

4. Final Paper

You will be asked to write a 10–12-page (double-spaced, 12 pt. font) term paper due on the last day of class. I will distribute a paper prompt and rubric in Week 5. Please submit a one-paragraph abstract by the end of Week 11. Each student is required to meet with me at least once during office hours to discuss your paper. *Please do not underestimate the amount of time it takes to write a quality paper.*

Course Schedule

Week 1 (Sep. 4)

1. Syllabus Review and Course Overview

2. John Locke: *Second Treatise of Government*

- * Chapter 2 "Of the State of Nature," Chapter 5 "Of Property," Chapter 6 "Of Paternal Power," Chapter 8 "Of the Beginning of Civil Societies"

Suggested Readings (Week 1)

1. Walzer, Michael. 1989. "Citizenship." In *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*. Edited by Terence Ball, James Farr, and Russell L. Hanson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 211-219.
2. Kymlicka, Will and Norman, Wayne. 1994. "Return of the Citizen: A Survey of Recent Work on Citizenship Theory." *Ethics*, Vol. 104, No. 2: 352-381.
3. Pfeffer, Jacqueline L. 2001. "The Family in John Locke's Political Thought." *Polity*, Vol. 33, No. 4: 593-618.

Week 2 (Sep. 11)

1. John Locke: *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*
 - * Epistle Dedicatory, Sec. 1-3, 31-69, 73-82, 88-94, 100-110, 133-155, 184-187
2. John Locke: *Essay on the Poor Law* (pg. 183-198)

Suggested Readings (Week 2)

1. Grant, Ruth W. and Hertzberg, Benjamin R. 2015. "Locke on Education." In *A Companion to Locke*, Edited by Matthew Stuart. New York: Blackwell Publishing.
2. Bradizza, Luigi. 2008. "Elite Education and the Viability of a Lockean Society." *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 70. No. 4: 547-571.
3. Ward, Lee. "The Role of the Public in Locke's Educational Writings."

Week 3 (Sep. 18)

1. Jean-Jacques Rousseau: *Discourse on Inequality*
 - * Title Page, Frontispiece, Preface, Notice on the Notes, Introduction (pg. 51-63)
 - * Part I (pg. 65-73[middle], 73-75 [middle], 80[middle]-90, Notes X-XV)
 - * Part II (pg. 91-117)

Suggested Readings (Week 3)

1. Scott, John T. 2020. "Picturing Natural Man in the Discourse on Inequality." In *Rousseau's Reader: Strategies of Persuasion and Education*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press: 75-125.
2. Neuhouser, Fredrick. "Rousseau's Critique of Economic Inequality." In *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 41, No. 3: 193-225.

Week 4 (Sep. 25)

1. Jean-Jacques Rousseau: *Emile*
 - * Preface (pg. 33-35)
 - * Book I (pg. 37-43[top], 47-55[middle], 62-70)
 - * Book II (pg. 77-86)
 - * Book IV (pg. 222-244)
 - * Book V (pg. 450-475)

Suggested Readings (Week 4)

1. Bloom, Allan. 1979. "Introduction." In *Emile, or On Education*. New York: Basic Books: 3-28.
2. Gomes, Bjorn. 2018. "Emile the Citizen? A Reassessment of the Relationship Between Private Education and Citizenship in Rousseau's Political Thought." *European Journal of Political Theory*, Vol. 17, No. 2: 194-213.

Week 5 (Oct. 2)

1. Mary Wollstonecraft: *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*
 - * Introduction (pg. 71-75)
 - * Chapters 1-2 (pg. 76-104)
 - * Chapter 5 (pg. 150-166)
 - * Chapter 11 (pg. 241-265)

Suggested Readings (Week 5)

1. Gunther, Wendy. 2003. "Cultivating Virtue: Catherine Macaulay and Mary Wollstonecraft on Civic Education." *Journal of Women Politics and Policy*, Vol. 25, No. 3: 47-70.
2. Reuter, Martina. 2014. "'Like a Fanciful Kind of Half Being': Mary Wollstonecraft's Criticism of Jean-Jacques Rousseau." *Hypatia*, Vol. 29, No. 4: 925-941.

Week 6 (Oct. 9)

1. J.S. Mill: *Principles of Political Economy*
 - * Book II, Chapter I "Of Property" (pg. 85-99), Chapter II "The Same Subject Continued" (pg. 103-108), Chapter XIII "The Remedies for Low Wages Further Considered" (pg. 146-154)
 - * Book IV, Chapter VII "Of the Probable Futurity of the Laboring Classes" (pg. 192-204)
 - * Book V, Chapter XI "Of the Grounds and Limits of the Laissez-Faire or Non-Interference Principle" (pg. 277-304)

Suggested Readings (Week 6)

1. Ryan, Alan. 2011. "J.S. Mill on Education." *The Oxford Review of Education*, Vol. 37, No. 5: 653-667.
2. Jensen, Hans E. 2001. "John Stuart Mill's Theories of Wealth and Income Distribution." *Review of Social Economy*, Vol. 59, No. 4: 491-507.

Week 7 (Oct. 16)

1. J.S. Mill: *Considerations on Representative Government*
 - * Chapter 3 "That the Ideally Best Form of Government is Representative Government" (pg. 403[bottom]-412)
 - * Chapter 8 "Of the Extension of the Suffrage" (pg. 467-481)
2. J.S. Mill: *On Liberty*
 - * Chapter 3 "Of Individuality, as One of the Elements of Well-being" (pg. 52-69)
 - * Chapter 4 "Of the Limits to the Authority of Society over the Individual" (pg. 69-85)

Last Day to Turn in First Reflection Paper

Suggested Readings (Week 7)

1. Baum, Bruce. 2003. "Millian Radical Democracy: Education for Freedom and Dilemmas of Liberal Equality." *Political Studies*, Vol. 51: 404-428.
2. J.S. Mill: *Autobiography* (pg. 69-80, 90-96, 115-121)

Week 8 (Oct. 23)

1. Midterm Essay Exam

Week 9 (Oct. 30)

1. W.E.B. DuBois: *The Souls of Black Folk*
 - * Chapter 1 "Of Our Spiritual Strivings" (pg. 7-14)
 - * Chapter 3 "Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others" (pg. 33-44)
 - * Chapter 6 "Of the Training of Black Men" (pg. 63-76)
2. W.E.B. DuBois: *The Social Theory of W.E.B. DuBois*

- * “The Talented Tenth” [1930] (pg. 185-196)
- * “Of the Ruling Men” [1920] (pg. 117-125)

Suggested Readings (Week 9)

1. Alridge, Derrick P. 2015. “On the Education of Black Folk: W.E.B. DuBois and the Paradox of Segregation. *The Journal of African American History*, Vol. 100, No. 3: 473-493.
2. Darby, Derek. 2020. “DuBois’s Defense of Democracy.” In *Democratic Failure*. Edited by Melissa Schwartzberg and Daniel Viehoff. *Nomos*, LXIII.

Week 10 (Nov. 6)

1. John Dewey: *Democracy and Education*
 - * Chapter 1 “Education as a Necessity of Life” (pg. 1-9), Chapter 2 “Education as a Social Function” (pg. 10-23), Chapter 7 “The Democratic Conception in Education” (pg. 81-99)
2. John Dewey: “The Challenge of Democracy to Education” (pg. 30-39)
3. John Dewey: *The Public and its Problems*
 - * Chapter 3 “The Democratic State” (pg. 83-95)
 - * Chapter 5 “Search for the Great Community” (pg. 143-154, 173-184)

Suggested Readings (Week 10)

1. Perez, Ignacio. 2018. “Dewey’s Thought on Education and Social Change.” *Journal of Thought*, Vol. 52, No. 4: 19-31.
2. Fuller, Steven. 2024. “The Lippmann/Dewey Debate in the History of Twentieth-Century Progressivism.” In *The Problematic Public*. Edited by Kristian Bjørkdahl. University Park: Penn State University Press.

Week 11 (Nov. 13)

1. Henry Giroux: “Schooling, Citizenship, and the Struggle for Democracy” (pg. 3-36)
2. Peter McLaren: “Revolutionary Critical Pedagogy and Critical Global Citizenship” (pg. 1-15)
3. Bell Hooks: *Teaching to Transgress*
 - * Chapter 2 “A Revolution of Values” (pg. 23-34)
 - * Chapter 3 “Embracing Change” (pg. 35-44)

Paper Abstract Due

Suggested Readings (Week 11)

1. Freire, Paulo. 1968. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
2. Morris-Coker, Courtney B. 2023. “bell hooks: Exploring Intersectionality, Black Feminist Thinking, and Radical Love.” In *the Palgrave Handbook of Educational Thinkers*. New York: Palgrave.

Week 12 (Nov. 20)

Part 1 (Educational Equality vs. Adequacy)

1. Satz, Debra. 2007. “Equality, Adequacy, and Education for Citizenship.” *Ethics*, Vol. 117, No. 4: 623-648.

2. Brighouse, Harry and Swift, Adam. 2009. "Educational Equality Versus Educational Adequacy: A Critique of Anderson and Statz." *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, Vol. 26, No. 2: 117-128.

Part 2 (Educational Authority)

1. Burt, Shelley. 1994. "Religious Parents, Secular Schools: A Liberal Defense of Illiberal Education." *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 56, No. 1: 51-70.
2. Amy Gutmann: *Democratic Education*
 - * Chapter 1 "States and Education" (pg. 19-47)
 - * Chapter 4 "The Limits of Democratic Authority" (pg. 95-125)

Suggested Readings (Week 12)

1. Anderson, Elizabeth. 2007. "Fair Opportunity in Education: A Democratic Equality Perspective." *Ethics*, Vol. 117, No. 4: 595-622.
2. Macedo, Stephen. 1995. "Liberal Civic Education and Religious Fundamentalism: The Case of God v. John Rawls?" *Ethics*, Vol. 105: 468-496.
3. Warnick, Bryan. 2012. "Rethinking Education for Autonomy in Pluralistic Societies." *Education Theory*, Vol. 62, No. 4: 411-426.

Week 13 (Nov. 27)

Thanksgiving Break! No Class.

Week 14 (Dec. 4)

Part 1 (Civic Character and Education)

1. Slote, Michael. 1993. "Virtue Ethics and Democratic Values." *Journal of Social Philosophy*, Vol. 24, No. 2: 5-37.
2. Deen, Phillip. 2012. "Inquiry and Virtue: A Pragmatist-Liberal Argument for Civic Education." *Journal of Social Philosophy*, Vol. 43, No. 4: 406-425.

Part 2 (Civic Character and Situationism)

1. McTernan, Emily. 2014. "How to Make Citizens Behave: Social Psychology, Liberal Virtues, and Social Norms." *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, Vol. 22, No. 1: 84-104.
2. Callan, Eamonn. 2015. "Debate: Liberal Virtues and Civic Education." *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, Vol. 23, No. 4: 491-500.

Last Day to Turn in Second Reflection Paper

Suggested Readings (Week 14)

1. Galston, William. 2007. "Pluralism and Civic Virtue." *Social Theory and Practice*, Vol. 33, No. 4: 625-635.
2. Costa, Victoria M. 2006. "Galston on Liberal Virtues and the Aims of Civic Education." *Theory and Research in Education*, Vol. 4, No. 3: 275-289.
3. Aikin, Scott F., and J. Caleb Clanton. 2010. "Developing Group-Deliberative Virtues." *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, Vol. 27, No. 4: 409-24.

4. Ben-Porath, Sigal and Dishon, Gideon. 2015. "Taken Out of Context: Defending Civic Education from the Situationist Critique." *Philosophical Inquiry in Education*, Vol. 23, No. 1: 22-37.

Week 15 (Dec. 11)

Part 1 (Civic Capacities)

1. Danielle Allen: *Education and Equality*
* Chapter 2 "Participatory Readiness" (pg. 27-50)
2. Garrett, Jacob and Ottonelli, Valeria. 2025. "Democratic Prudence: The Philosophical and Empirical Grounding of Citizen Competence." *The Journal of Politics*, Vol. 87, No. 2: 424-436.

Part 2 (Patriotism: Virtue or Vice?)

1. MacIntyre, Alasdair. 2002. *Is Patriotism a Virtue?* Edited by Igor Primoratz. Lawrence: Kansas University Press.
2. Gombert, Paul. 1990. "Patriotism is Like Racism." *Ethics*, Vol. 101, No. 1: 144-150.
3. Nathanson, Stephen. 2020. "Moderate Patriotism." In *the Handbook of Patriotism*. Edited by Mitja Sardoč. New York: Springer, 141-162.

Final Paper Due

Suggested Readings (Week 15)

1. Kymlicka, Will and Donaldson, Sue. 2017. "Inclusive Citizenship Beyond the Capacity Contract." In *The Oxford Handbook of Citizenship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. Merry, Michael S. 2009. "Patriotism, History, and the Legitimate Aims of American Education." *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, Vol. 41, No. 4: 378-398.
3. Appiah, Kwame Anthony. 1997. "Cosmopolitan Patriots." *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 23, No. 3: 617-639.

**Schedule is subject to change. Students will always be given advance notice of any changes.*

Academic Integrity

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in Brown's community of scholars in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, unauthorized use of AI, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. For more information, please refer to the "Brown Academic Code" <https://college.brown.edu/sites/default/files/2022-04/Academic-Code.pdf>.

Accessibility and Accommodations

Brown University is committed to the full inclusion of all students. Please inform me early in the term if you may require accommodations or modification of any of course procedures. You may speak with me after class, during office hours, or by appointment. If you need accommodations around online learning or in classroom accommodations, please be sure to reach out to Student

Accessibility Services (SAS) for their assistance (seas@brown.edu, 401-863-9588). Students in need of short-term academic advice or support can contact one of the academic deans in the College.

Artificial Intelligence/ChatGPT

In this course, students can only use AI programs (e.g., Chat GPT) if instructor permission is obtained in advance. There may be legitimate uses of AI on your final essay assignment (for example), but you need to ask me first. Unless given permission to use these programs, each student is expected to complete their assignments without the assistance of automated tools.

Diversity & Inclusion

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for Brown. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. Brown fulfills this mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background. <https://odi.brown.edu>

Email/Contact

I will attempt to respond to all e-mails within 24 hours (usually within the hour). If you have questions on a paper or exam, please try to contact me prior to 24-hours before the deadline.

Office Hours

I will hold my office hours on Thursdays from 12-2:00 p.m. in 25 George (Office 205) and by appointment. Please come to me with any/all questions regarding readings and course material. I will also answer questions and provide feedback on written work if you bring it to our meeting.

I am also open to meeting via Zoom if you cannot make my office hours or schedule an in-person appointment.

Permanent Link to Zoom Meeting:

https://brown.zoom.us/join/chat?src=direct_chat_link&email=timothy_tennyson@brown.edu

Meeting ID: 759 708 8239

Writing Center

Brown is fortunate to have an excellent Writing Center that offers one-on-one advising and other resources to help with writing. See <https://sheridan.brown.edu/services/writing-center>. I am also happy to meet with you to discuss strategies for improving your writing.