

The FORUM



EXPLORING IDEAS + INSTITUTIONS
THAT SUSTAIN A FREE SOCIETY

FALL 2022



Launched in July 2022, the Civitas Institute prepares students for lives of thoughtful and independent-minded leadership. Our programs—fellowships, courses, conferences—explore the foundational principles of Western liberal democracy: individual rights, constitutionalism, and free markets. We study these ideas through open and civil conversations that invite students to form lasting friendships based on a common intellectual endeavor and a common love of country.



Civic education is built into the founding mission of The University of Texas at Austin, as reflected both in the University's motto and its seal. The motto – *Disciplina Praesidium Civitatis* – is a condensed Latin rendering of Mirabeau Lamar's famous phrase that a "cultivated mind is the guardian genius of democracy."

After designing the University's seal around this motto, Professor William Battle described it as "at once the justification of the University's existence and the ideal of its future."

Universities are critical to the preservation of liberty, for no country can long remain free without leaders who understand the conditions of freedom. But it is especially critical at the present time, as American politics become increasingly polarized and American universities increasingly mired in disputes about higher education's present state and ultimate purpose. Our aim is to help American higher education return to itself by fostering the spirit of civic leadership and responsibility among our students, who are our future civic leaders and the future custodians of the American experiment.



The University of Texas at Austin
Civitas Institute

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No institute, however nobly conceived or generously endowed, can thrive in the absence of people who are able and willing to make its vision a reality. With experienced and dedicated staff and accomplished scholars, the Civitas Institute is in a unique position to offer its students an experience that is both intellectually rigorous and socially engaging.

Covering such varied disciplines as political science, philosophy, public affairs, international relations, and economics, our roster of faculty fellows models the multidisciplinary and well-rounded spirit that the Civitas Institute aims to foster in its students. A civically educated mind, after all, knows how to look at problems from many different points of view.

In succeeding editions of *The Forum*, we will feature profiles and interviews of our staff and faculty, so stay tuned.

LEADERSHIP AND STAFF



Justin Dyer is the executive director of the Civitas Institute, professor of government, and Jack G. Taylor Regents Professor at The University of Texas at Austin. He also is professor (by courtesy) of business, government, and society in the McCombs School of Business.

Dyer writes and teaches in the fields of American political

thought, jurisprudence and constitutionalism, with an emphasis on the perennial philosophical tradition of natural law. He is the author or editor of eight books and numerous articles, essays and book reviews. His most recent book, with Kody Cooper, is *The Classical and Christian Origins of American Politics: Political Theology, Natural Law, and the American Founding*, just published with Cambridge University Press. His previous books with Cambridge University Press include *C.S. Lewis on Politics and the Natural Law* (2016); *Slavery, Abortion, and the Politics of Constitutional Meaning* (2013); and *Natural Law and the Antislavery Constitutional Tradition* (2012). He also is co-editor of the two-volume constitutional law casebook *American Constitutional Law* (4th edition, West Academic), which has been adopted at leading universities across the country.

Previously, he taught for 13 years at the University of Missouri, where he was the founding director of the Kinder Institute on Constitutional Democracy, a signature academic center for the study of American political thought and history. After attending the University of Oklahoma on a wrestling scholarship, he completed his M.A. and Ph.D. in Government at The University of Texas at Austin.



Sarah Beth V. Kitch is Associate Director for the Civitas Institute. An award-winning teacher, she invites students to intentional opportunities to reflect on the task of being human. Kitch's teaching and research interests are in American political thought, African American political thought, political theology, and ethics. She has written for the *Journal of*

Church & State, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Law & Liberty*, and *Starting Points*. In a recent contribution to *Liberal Education in a Free Society* (forthcoming May 2023), she reflects on the kinds of ethical formation that prepare students to meet suffering in their own lives and in society. In the last decade, Kitch taught at St. Agnes Academy (Houston), was Assistant Professor at the University of Missouri, Visiting Assistant Professor at Northern Illinois University, the Thomas W. Smith Postdoctoral Research Associate in Religion & Public Life at Princeton University's James Madison Program, and Instructor of Political Science at Louisiana State University. A Baton Rouge native, Kitch earned an MA and PhD in Political Theory at Louisiana State University. She holds a BA in Mass Communication & Journalism from Southeastern Louisiana University.



Antonio Sosa is Associate Director for the Civitas Institute. In this capacity, he oversees the development of fellowships, conferences, and courses that invite students to reflect on the principles of a free society. Prior to joining the Institute, Antonio was an adjunct professor at the University of Dallas, where he taught classes on classical political philosophy, the

American Founding, modern European history, and the history of liberal arts education. He is primarily interested in the defense of liberal democracy that is found in the thought of Tocqueville, Ortega y Gasset, and Leo Strauss. He graduated with B.A.s in English and Film from Pennsylvania State University and earned his M.A. in International Relations from The New School. He is also a doctoral candidate in political philosophy at the University of Dallas. His dissertation focuses on Tocqueville's solution to what he called "the fate of civilized man," that is, that advances in equality and material well-being are necessarily accompanied by a loss of depth and vigor in the human soul. His writing has appeared in journals such as *Interpretation* and *Perspectives on Political Science* and in online magazines such as *Public Discourse* and *Law & Liberty*.



Allison Smythe is the Sr. Project Manager for the Civitas Institute. In this capacity, she oversees academic and community events; branding, marketing, and communications; and alumni engagement. Prior to joining the Civitas Institute, Allison was Sr. Program Coordinator at the Kinder Institute at the University of Missouri where she developed

strategic marketing campaigns for undergraduate and graduate student recruitment; designed an alumni engagement program; and promoted and coordinated academic and community events and conferences, locally and internationally. In addition, she continues to direct the award-winning boutique graphic design firm Ars Graphica on a limited basis. She graduated from Texas Tech with a BFA in Design Communication and studied creative writing as an MFA student at the University of Houston. Her essays and poetry have been published in the *Gettysburg Review*, *The Southern Review*, *Relief Journal*, and other literary journals, anthologies, and magazines.

FACULTY FELLOWS



Charity-Joy Acchiardo is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute and Associate Professor of Instruction in the Department of Economics at The University of Texas at Austin. She is the faculty lead for UT's OnRamps microeconomics course for high school students and is director of the Economic Education and Financial Literacy Program, both joint

projects of the Civitas Institute and the Department of Economics. She is an Economic Educator Fellow at the Fraser Institute, Canada's top-ranked think tank, and has served as the Executive Director of the *Journal of Economics Teaching*. Her websites econkahoots.com and econshark.com are dedicated to making the economics classroom more engaging. Professor Acchiardo's passion is sharing her joy about economics with others, and she is a frequent speaker, both domestically and internationally, at workshops for educators and students. She completed her Ph.D. in Economics at George Mason University.



Daniel Bonevac is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute and Professor of Philosophy and Human Dimensions of Organizations at the The University of Texas at Austin, where he teaches and does research in logic and ethics, especially organizational ethics. His book *Reduction in the Abstract Sciences* received the Johnsonian Prize from *The Journal of Philosophy*. His

other books include *Deduction* (Blackwell), *Simple Logic* (Oxford), *Worldly Wisdom* (Mayfield), and *Historical Dictionary of Ethics* (Rowman and Littlefield). Among his edited volumes are *Today's Moral Issues* (McGraw-Hill, seven editions) and *World Philosophy* (Oxford, with Stephen Phillips). Professor Bonevac's articles have appeared in such journals as *Philosophical Review*, *Mind*, *Noûs*, *The Journal of Philosophy*, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, *Synthese*, *Journal of Philosophical Logic*, *Ethics*, *Philosophical Studies*, and *Erkenntnis*. He was Chairman of the Department of Philosophy from 1991 to 2001. He earned his PhD at the University of Pittsburgh.



J. Budziszewski is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute and Professor of Government and Philosophy at The University of Texas at Austin, where he also teaches courses in the law school and the religious studies department. He specializes in political philosophy, ethical philosophy, legal philosophy, and the interaction of religion with philosophy. Among

his research interests are classical natural law, virtue ethics, conscience and moral self deception, human happiness or fulfillment, the institution of the family in relation to political and social order, religion in public life, and the problem of toleration. Professor Budziszewski is the author of nineteen books, including his recent four-part commentary on the works of Thomas Aquinas: *Commentary on Thomas Aquinas's Treatise on Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), its free online partner volume, *Companion to the Commentary* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), *Commentary on Thomas Aquinas's Virtue Ethics* (Cambridge University Press, 2017), *Commentary on Thomas Aquinas's Treatise on Happiness and Ultimate Purpose* (Cambridge University Press, 2020), and *Commentary on Thomas Aquinas's Treatise on Divine Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2021).



Richard V. Burkhauser is Senior Research Fellow of the Civitas Institute at The University of Texas at Austin and Emeritus Sarah Gibson Blanding Professor of Public Policy in the Jeb E. Brooks School of Public Policy at Cornell University. Previously, Burkhauser held tenured faculty positions in the Department of Economics at Vanderbilt University and in

the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. Between September 2017 and May 2019, he was a member of the Council of Economic Advisers in the Executive Office of the President. His professional career has focused on how public policies affect the employment and well-being of vulnerable populations. In 2010 he was the President of the Association for Public Policy and Management. He has published widely in the fields of economics, public policy, demography and gerontology. He received his Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Chicago.



Carlos M. Carvalho is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute and the La Quinta Centennial Professor of Business in the McCombs School of Business at The University of Texas at Austin. He is also Executive Director of the Salem Center for Policy, a research center that draws from multiple disciplines and empirical methods to help navigate the trade-offs

of public policy decisions in pursuit of human flourishing and the preservation of a free society. Originally from Brazil, Professor Carvalho received his Ph.D. in Statistics from Duke University in 2006 and was assistant professor at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business before joining UT in 2010. His research, which focuses on Bayesian statistics in complex, high-dimensional problems with applications ranging from economics to genetics, has been published widely in top journals including *Bayesian Analysis* and *Annals of Applied Statistics*.



Sheena Chestnut Greitens is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute and Associate Professor of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin. She also directs UT's Asia Policy Program, a joint initiative of the Clements Center for National Security and the Strauss Center for International Security and Law, and is concurrently a Jeane Kirkpatrick Visiting

Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI). Prof. Greitens' teaching and research focus on American national security, East Asia, and the politics of democracy and dictatorship. She is the author of *Dictators and their Secret Police: Coercive Institutions and State Violence* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), which won several academic awards. Her current book projects focus on authoritarianism and diaspora politics in North Korea, and on internal security as a driver of Chinese grand strategy. She completed her Ph.D. in Government at Harvard University.



Kishore Gawande is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute, Century Club Professor, and Chair of the Business, Government and Society Department in the McCombs School of Business at The University of Texas at Austin. Professor Gawande was previously Professor of International Economics and Development at Texas A&M University. He has served as a

consultant to the World Bank and has been a Visiting Associate Professor at the Stigler Center, University of Chicago. Professor Gawande's areas of research include international trade policy, international political economy, conflict and development. His research has been published across disciplines in Economics, Political Science and Management. He holds an MBA from the Indian Institute of Management and a PhD from the University of California at Los Angeles.



Rana Siu Inboden is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute and Senior Fellow with the Robert S. Strauss Center for International Security and Law at The University of Texas at Austin. She serves as a consultant on human rights, democracy and rule of law projects in Asia for a number of nongovernmental organizations and conducts research related to international

human rights, Chinese foreign policy, the effectiveness of international human rights and democracy projects and authoritarian collaboration in the United Nations. She is the author of *China and the International Human Rights Regime*, published in 2021 by Cambridge University Press. Previously, Dr. Inboden served in the U.S. State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, where her primary responsibilities included managing the State Department's Human Rights and Democracy Fund China program and promoting U.S. human rights and democracy policy in China and North Korea. She holds a DPhil from the Department of Politics and International Relations at Oxford University.



William Inboden is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute, William Powers, Jr., executive director of the Clements Center for National Security, and Professor of Public Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin. He is also a distinguished scholar at UT's Strauss Center for International Security and Law. Prof. Inboden's research and teaching interests are

in the history of U.S. foreign policy. His most recent book, on the Reagan administration's national security policies, is *The Peacemaker: Ronald Reagan in the White House and the World* (Basic Books, 2022). Previously, he served as senior director for strategic planning on the National Security Council, worked on the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, and was the director of the Legatum Institute, a foreign policy think tank based in London. A life member of the Council on Foreign Relations, he completed his Ph.D. in History at Yale University.



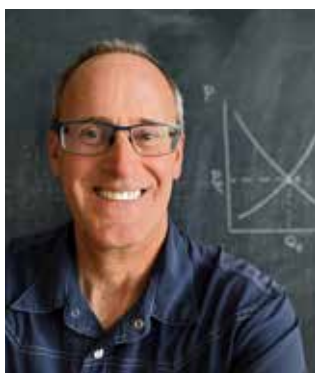
Rob Koons is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute and Professor of Philosophy at The University of Texas at Austin, where he has taught for 35 years. He is the author or co-author of five books, including: *Realism Regained* (Oxford University Press, 2000) and *The Atlas of Reality: A Comprehensive Guide to Metaphysics*, with Timothy H. Pickavance (Wiley-Blackwell,

2017). He is the co-editor (with George Bealer) of *The Waning of Materialism* (Oxford University Press, 2010), (with Nicholas Teh and William Simpson) of *Neo-Aristotelian Perspectives on Contemporary Science* (Routledge, 2018), and (with William Simpson and James Orr) of *Neo-Aristotelian Metaphysics and the Philosophy of Nature* (Routledge, 2021). He has been working recently on an Aristotelian interpretation of quantum theory, on defending and articulating Thomism in contemporary terms, and on arguments for classical theism. His forthcoming books include: *Is Thomas Aquinas's Philosophy of Nature Obsolete?* (St. Augustine Press) and *Classical Theism* (Routledge), co-edited with Jonathan Fuqua. He completed his M.A. at Oxford University and his Ph.D. at the University of California at Los Angeles.



David L. Leal is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute, Professor of Government, and Professor (by courtesy) of Mexican American Studies and Religious Studies at The University of Texas at Austin. Since 2018, he also has been a Senior Fellow of the Hoover Institution at Stanford University. Professor Leal is a scholar of Latino politics, and his work explores the political

and policy implications of demographic change. He has published over fifty journal articles and edited or co-edited a dozen scholarly books and journal symposia. His recent classes include Latino Politics, Immigration Politics, Politics and Religion, and British Politics. He has been an American Political Science Association Congressional Fellow, a Fulbright Distinguished Lecturer in Japan, and an Associate Member of Nuffield College at Oxford University. In 2021, he was recognized with the Distinguished Career Award from the Latina/o Caucus of the Midwest Political Science Association. He completed his Ph.D. in Government at Harvard University.



Dirk Mateer is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute and Professor of Instruction in the Department of Economics at The University of Texas at Austin. He is assisting with the development UT's OnRamps microeconomics course for high school students and is Senior Teaching Fellow in the Economic Education and Financial Literacy Program, both joint projects of the Civitas

Institute and the Department of Economics. Prior to coming to UT, he received Penn State University's highest teaching award and was voted the best overall teacher in the Smeal College of Business. While at the University of Arizona, Dirk received the University's Koffler Teaching Prize, a quadrennial award for his contributions in economic education. He is the author of *Economics in the Movies*, *Essentials of Economics* and *Principles of Economics*.



Brian Roberts is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute, Professor of Government in the College of Liberal Arts, and Professor of Business, Government and Society (by courtesy) in the McCombs School of Business at The University of Texas at Austin. Professor Roberts' teaching and research are in the fields of American political institutions, interest groups, and positive

political economy, with a focus on politics and financial markets, corporate political participation, and distributive politics. His scholarship has contributed to the literature in political science, economics, and finance. He has served in the past as Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and UT's Vice President of Information Technology. He is the co-author, with Daron Shaw and Mijeong Baek, of *The Appearance of Corruption: Testing the Supreme Court's Assumptions About Campaign Finance Reform* (Oxford University Press, 2021).



Daron Shaw is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute and Frank Erwin Centennial Chair in the Department of Government at The University of Texas at Austin. His research and teaching interests include campaigns and elections, political parties, public opinion, and voting behavior. Professor Shaw is the author of *The Appearance of Corruption* (Oxford University Press, 2021)

The Turnout Myth (Oxford University Press, 2020), *Unconventional Wisdom: Facts and Myths about American Voters* (Oxford University Press, 2008), *The Race to 270* (University of Chicago Press, 2006) and numerous articles in leading political science journals, including *American Political Science Review*, *American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Politics*, and *British Journal of Political Science*. He is co-director of the Fox News Poll, co-director of the University of Texas/Texas Tribune Poll, director of the Texas Lyceum Poll, and associate Principal Investigator for the 2020 and 2024 American National Election Studies. He completed his Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of California at Los Angeles.



Devin Stauffer is Faculty Fellow of the Civitas Institute and Professor of Government at The University of Texas at Austin. He specializes in classical and early modern political philosophy. Prior to coming to The University of Texas in 2004, Professor Stauffer taught at Kenyon College and St. John's College in Annapolis. During his time at Kenyon College, he received

two awards for teaching excellence, and he has since received two more teaching awards at UT. Professor Stauffer's books include *Plato's Introduction to the Question of Justice* (SUNY, 2001), *The Unity of Plato's Gorgias* (Cambridge, 2006), and *Hobbes's Kingdom of Light* (Chicago, 2018). His articles have also appeared in some of the top journals in the field, including *Review of Politics*, *Journal of Politics*, and *American Political Science Review*.

NONRESIDENTIAL FELLOWS



Paul Carrese is Nonresidential Fellow of the Civitas Institute at The University of Texas at Austin and is the founding director of the School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership at Arizona State University. For nearly two decades he was a professor at the U.S. Air Force Academy, where he co-founded a new honors program blending liberal arts education and

leadership education. His teaching and research interests are in political theory, constitutionalism, and civic education. His most recent book is *Democracy in Moderation: Montesquieu, Tocqueville, and Sustainable Liberalism*. He also is author of *The Cloaking of Power: Montesquieu, Blackstone, and the Rise of Judicial Activism*, and co-editor of three other books – on George Washington, constitutionalism, and American grand strategy. He has held fellowships at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar; Harvard University; the University of Delhi (as a Fulbright fellow); and Princeton University's James Madison Program. He co-led a national study funded by the NEH and US Department of Education, *Educating for American Democracy*, on improving American history and civics education in K-12 schools with partners from Harvard and Tufts Universities and iCivics (released in 2021). He completed his PhD in Political Science at Boston College.



Chiyuma Elliott is Nonresidential Fellow of the Civitas Institute and Associate Professor of African American Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, where she directs the African American Intellectual Traditions Initiative, a project that explores religious and classical influences on African American intellectual life. Her scholarly work and teaching

focus on poetry and poetics, African American literature, intellectual history from the 1920s to the present, and Black Geography/Cultural Geography. Prof. Elliott is the author of four books of poems: *Blue in Green* (2021), *At Most* (2020), *Vigil* (2017), and *California Winter League* (2015). She is currently at work on a poem cycle about technology and migration, and a scholarly monograph tentatively titled *The Rural Harlem Renaissance*, about rural life and art in the 1920s. She completed her Ph.D. in American Studies at The University of Texas at Austin.



Jesús Fernández-Villaverde is Nonresidential Fellow of the Civitas Institute at The University of Texas at Austin and Professor of Economics at the University of Pennsylvania, where he directs the Penn Initiative for the Study of Markets. He has also been a National Fellow of the Hoover Institution at Stanford University and a Kenen Fellow in International Economy at

Princeton University. Prof. Fernández-Villaverde's research and teaching focus on macroeconomics and econometrics, and he has also developed a popular series of undergraduate courses on the relationship between markets and human flourishing. He has made the lecture notes for those courses available at his personal website found at www.sas.upenn.edu/~jesusfv/. He is a Research Associate for the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) and Penn's Population Studies Center, and a Research Affiliate for the Centre for Economic Policy Research. He completed his Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota.



Vincent Phillip Muñoz is Nonresidential Fellow of the Civitas Institute at The University of Texas at Austin and Tocqueville Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame, where he is the founding director of the Center for Citizenship & Constitutional Government. Prof. Muñoz writes and teaches across the fields of constitutional

law, American politics, and political philosophy with a focus on religious liberty and the American Founding. He won a National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship to support his most recent book, *Religious Liberty and the American Founding: Natural Rights and the Original Meanings of the First Amendment Religion Clauses* (University of Chicago Press, 2022). The author of numerous articles in leading political science journals and law reviews, Prof. Muñoz' first book, *God and the Founders: Madison, Washington, and Jefferson* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), won the Hubert Morken Award from the American Political Science Association for the best publication on religion and politics in 2009 and 2010. He completed his Ph.D. at Claremont Graduate School.

2022-23 POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW



William M. R. Simpson is the John and Daria Barry Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Philosophy at The University of Texas at Austin, where he will continue work on the foundations of human freedom in physics and philosophy. He is also a Visiting Fellow in Philosophy at the University of Durham, a Research Associate of the University of Cambridge, and

an Honorary Fellow of the University of St. Andrews. Previously, he was a Junior Research Fellow of Wolfson College, Cambridge. He holds a doctorate in physics from St. Andrews, for which he was awarded the Springer thesis prize, and a doctorate in philosophy from Cambridge, for which he received the Expanded Reason Award. In 2021, he was awarded the Cardinal Mercier Prize in Philosophy. He is the co-editor, with Robert Koons and Nicholas Teh, of *Neo-Aristotelian Perspectives in Contemporary Science* (Routledge 2017), and the co-editor, with Robert Koons and James Orr, of *Neo-Aristotelian Metaphysics and the Theology of Nature* (Routledge 2021).

FACULTY RECRUITMENT

The University of Texas at Austin's Civitas Institute, a university-wide initiative to support the study of the ideas and institutions that sustain a free society, invites applications for multiple tenured or tenure-track faculty positions to be affiliated with the Civitas Institute and appointed in a relevant academic department within the College of Liberal Arts, McCombs School of Business, and/or Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs.

We seek outstanding candidates from a broad range of disciplines, including (but not limited to) political science, public affairs, philosophy, economics, and business, whose work speaks to the Civitas Institute's broad thematic areas of interest: individual rights and civic virtue; constitutionalism and the rule of law; and free enterprise and markets.

Ideal candidates will have excellent records of scholarship and ongoing research agendas, will be valuable members of core academic departments or schools, and will contribute to the intellectual life, governance, and programmatic development of the Civitas Institute. Although preference is for advanced associate or full professors with tenure, exceptional candidates for appointment at the tenure-track assistant professor level will also be given full consideration.

QUALIFICATIONS

Candidates must have completed a Ph.D. degree in a relevant field prior to their start date. Successful candidates will have a record of excellence in research commensurate with an appointment to a top-tier research university and a demonstrated commitment to teaching and mentoring undergraduate and graduate students.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Candidates are invited to submit application materials through Interfolio.

Applicants should submit a cover letter, statement of teaching and research interests, and curriculum vitae. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis, and positions will remain open until filled.

The position posting may be found at <https://apply.interfolio.com/115429>.

The programs of the Civitas Institute share a single, overriding goal: to foster an awareness of the value of constitutionalism, individual rights, and free markets. We may say that while the Cincinnatus Fellowship gives students an overview of the political and social conditions of a free society, EEFL and OnRamps prepare students to be entrepreneurial and financially responsible members of such a society.

CINCINNATUS FELLOWSHIP

An intellectual community of UT students from across the political and ideological spectrum who are interested in civil, open, and honest exploration of the most pressing issues facing our society today.

The Cincinnatus Fellowship provides unique opportunities for undergraduate students to meet with prominent visiting scholars and public figures, attend invitation-only dinners and receptions, engage in in-depth analysis of cutting-edge scholarship, and debate enduringly relevant ideas – all in a spirit of intellectual discovery and truth seeking.

Visitors for 2022-23 academic year include:

Jennifer Doleac – Texas A&M University

Ryan Streeter – American Enterprise Institute

Paul Carrese – Arizona State University

Yaron Brook – Ayn Rand Institute

Micah Watson – Calvin University

Vincent Phillip Muñoz – University of Notre Dame

Jesús Fernández-Villaverde – University of Pennsylvania

Chiyuma Elliot – University of California at Berkeley

ONRAMPS

OnRamps is a dual enrollment program offering courses designed by university faculty and made available to high school students across Texas. The Civitas Institute and Department of Economics are partnering to create an OnRamps micro economics course to introduce students to the principles, models, and conditions that influence how consumers, businesses, governments, and workers make and evaluate economic decisions. The course emphasizes microeconomics concepts and quantitative reasoning as students employ logic, mathematics, and technology to interpret basic statistics and apply economic analysis. It also features macroeconomics topics and personal financial literacy content in addition to core concepts like scarcity and opportunity costs, supply and demand, market structures, competition, and behavioral economics.

Students will engage in flipped and adaptive learning to drive understanding of their own mastery. In addition, they will

collaborate with peers in class discussions and problem-solving exercises to apply and extend their knowledge of economics concepts. By the end of the course, students will possess deeper comprehension of a highly complex and evolving world tied to entrepreneurship, business, and daily life.

ECONOMICS BIG IDEAS

FOUNDATIONS OF ECONOMICS

Understand underlying concepts of economic decision-making: incentives, trade-offs, opportunity cost, marginal thinking, and how trade creates value.

THE ROLE OF MARKETS

Discover how markets work and the nature of competition through studying the formal model of supply and demand, how the two forces interact to create market equilibrium, how consumers and producers respond to price changes, and how taxes impact the market economy.

THEORY OF THE FIRM

Examine different types of competition and how businesses make cost and production decisions to impact their ability to compete.

CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Explore factors that influence how consumers make individual economic decisions including choice, customer satisfaction, risk, and irrational behavior.

EEFL

The mission of the **Economic Education and Financial Literacy Program** is to enhance economic understanding and financial literacy across the Lone Star state. The Program is a partnership between the Civitas Institute and the Department of Economics that provides avenues for civil discussions on topics related to economics and personal finance, delivers professional development for economics teachers throughout Texas, and fosters robust economic inquiry among students.

WHAT WE HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH:

- Host invited lectures throughout the academic year featuring prominent national and international scholars on salient topics for K-12 teachers, the UT-Austin campus, and greater Austin community.
- Provide professional development workshops throughout Texas.
- Work closely with undergraduate Cincinnatus Fellows to help them become better citizens.
- Equip graduate students in the Department of Economics to become effective instructors.
- Disseminate cutting edge pedagogy to empower teachers and help students become fluent in economics and finance.

The Fall of 2022 showcased the Civitas Institute's balanced approach to civic education: theory and practice, reflection and leadership, thinking and doing, go together in the well-rounded mind. To this end, Civitas Institute events covered a variety of themes, from the philosophic principles of the right of nations in Montesquieu's thought, to the question of free speech in an age of pervasive social media, to the search for a moderate foreign policy in the present day, to the differences between C.S. Lewis and Ayn Rand in their understandings of liberty and human flourishing.

This alternation between academic and topical subjects, between the discussion of what is of enduring importance for human beings always and everywhere and what is of urgent importance for us living here and now, is a signature mark of Civitas Institute events.



COFFEE TALK with JENNIFER DOLEAC and RYAN STREETER

Jennifer Doleac, Associate Professor of Economics at Texas A&M University, and **Ryan Streeter**, Director of Domestic Policy at the American Enterprise Institute, discussed their respective career paths and ongoing projects. This event was geared toward graduate students in the social sciences but was open to enterprising undergraduate students as well.

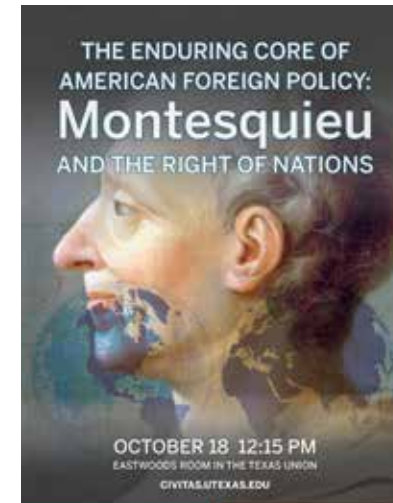
Jennifer Doleac is Associate Professor of Economics at Texas A&M University, Research Fellow at the Institute for Labor Economics, and Senior Fellow at the Niskanen Center. She is an accomplished scholar and public intellectual whose work focuses on the economics of crime and discrimination. She holds a Ph.D. in economics from Stanford University.

Ryan Streeter is the State Farm James Q. Wilson Scholar and director of domestic policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute, where he oversees research in education, technology, housing, poverty studies, workforce development, and public opinion. He holds a Ph.D. in philosophy from Emory University.



THE ENDURING CORE OF AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY: MONTESQUIEU AND THE RIGHT OF NATIONS

The following excerpt is from Paul Carrese's lecture at the Civitas Institute on October 18, 2022.



My argument today is that the Enlightenment philosopher Montesquieu is a thinker of first importance for the study of grand strategy and the Western tradition of justifying war but seeking to moderate force in affairs among nations; and further, that his philosophy of a right of nations is arguably the single deepest influence on the basic principles of American thinking

about war, peace, and international affairs. That American view, echoing Montesquieu's philosophy about how moderate, decent governments would conduct themselves in international affairs, is that ours would be a constitution of liberty, but this included a principle that we would deter war or succeed in war when we had to – through ensuring we were a militarily capable, defensible republic. If we try to map Montesquieu, and America's core and enduring principles, onto today's predominant schools of international relations theory, we would say his philosophy and the American approach fall in a middle ground between realism and liberal idealism; and while the third school, constructivism, has some purchase on the Montesquieuan approach given its inclusion of political culture or regime type as a crucial indicator of a nation's conduct, the thoroughgoing relativism of the constructivist view doesn't fit the Montesquieuan and American view of a right of nations or law of nations, rooted in principles of natural justice about human nature.



I should acknowledge that these claims about the importance of Montesquieu's philosophy of international affairs, and his deep influence on America's strategic thinking, sound strange or even outlandish in academic discourse today. That said, given a small surge of interest recently in Montesquieu's philosophy and its influence on America's founding principles -- thus on our constitutionalism still today -- I have been asked to present versions of this talk recently in Paris at the Sorbonne, at an international conference on law and social philosophy in Bucharest, and to the graduate students in the James Madison Memorial Fellowship Foundation's summer program in Washington, D.C. So, if you are being treated to a seemingly bizarre argument, at least you are in good company!

This thesis on the importance of Montesquieu's philosophy and its American legacy seems strange today because the dominant academic and policy debates about American foreign policy in the post-Cold War era have turned away from the core principles that had informed American views of war, justice, and peace since our founding. Rival camps today look either to a modern school of realism traceable to Machiavelli and Hobbes or to a modern school of liberal idealism traceable to Kant. I will sketch the contrasting argument that from Washington and Lincoln to the Roosevelts, Eisenhower, and Reagan, the dynamic but enduring core of successful American foreign policies instead sought to balance sobriety about international affairs with an exceptional commitment to universal principles prioritizing peace and stability. The foundation informing this core is Montesquieu's right of nations, best encapsulated as a principle of enlightened self-interest among moderate states. I will move back and forth between what is more familiar to us, our American constitutional principles, and the less familiar philosophy of Montesquieu, to show how they together indicate a clear approach to, and enduring kinds of arguments about, war, peace, international commerce, and international affairs. If we consider America's challenges today, we are debating how we should continue to respond to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, how we should lead the NATO alliance or even whether NATO should continue, how we should build partnerships or alliances to address the seemingly threatening power of authoritarian China. I suggest a deeper study of our constitutional principles and the philosophy behind them could provide guidance on these difficult policy questions.

Paul Carrese is the founding director of the School of Civic and Economic Thought and Leadership at Arizona State University and is Nonresidential Fellow of the Civitas Institute at The University of Texas at Austin. For nearly two decades he was a professor at the U.S. Air Force Academy, where he co-founded a new honors program blending liberal arts education and leadership education. His most recent book is *Democracy in Moderation: Montesquieu, Tocqueville, and Sustainable Liberalism*.

This event was co-sponsored by the Clements Center for National Security.

BRAVER ANGELS DEBATE

On Wednesday, November 9th the Civitas Institute hosted a debate by Braver Angels examining whether social media companies should suppress disruptive voices. Braver Angels is a unique organization that got its inception following the 2016 Presidential election gathering both Clinton and Trump supporters in an Ohio home to see whether respectful disagreement was still possible. From this began a new approach to political depolarization that has gradually grown across the country to include debates, workshops, forums, and even book clubs. Braver Angels took its inspiration from the words of Abraham Lincoln's first inaugural address, which called on Americans to summon the "better angels" of our nature in order to pursue a more perfect union, "with malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right."

The topic of censorship by social media companies was a timely one, on the heels of the acquisition of Twitter by business magnate Elon Musk in late October 2022. In his takeover of the \$44 billion social media company, Musk has proposed several reforms to promote free speech, including the creation of a "content moderation council." Along with Twitter, Google and Facebook have been under fire for deleting and blocking access to information on a variety of topics including the pandemic and recent elections. Even companies like Amazon and YouTube, have gotten in the censorship game by declining to promote books or videos that do not meet their content standards.

In many ways, the censorship debate is the new front line of the culture war. As the role of social media in our lives continues to expand, concern about information censorship also grows. According to a 2021 survey by Pew Research Center, just under half — 48% — of U.S. adults get their news from social media "sometimes" or "often." Current estimates suggest Facebook has 2.9 billion monthly users worldwide, while Google boasts 8.5 billion searches per day. Social media platforms play an increasingly dominant role in the lives of all Americans so the implications are significant if information presented on these platforms is censored or removed. It was a worthwhile investment of time for students to consider the question posed by Braver Angels: should social media companies suppress disruptive voices?

Braver Angels debates are not competitive, but instead a self-described "collective exercise in thoughtfulness, respect and searching for truth." Using what they term a light parliamentary format and chaired by a trained moderator, Braver Angels teaches students to express their views, frame persuasive arguments,

listen deeply, and engage respectfully with each other around issues that are typically difficult and divisive. Trained Braver Angels moderator Chandler Skinner was a welcome presence as he explained the format for the evening: two speakers would each make four-minute speeches in the affirmative or negative around the resolution. After each speech, the chair invites a few questions from anyone in the room, which are directed in the third person through the chair rather than to the speakers themselves. After opening speeches conclude, the floor is opened to everyone present to make their own speeches or ask questions of other speakers.

The first speaker spoke in support of the resolution, saying that social media has become increasingly rife with dangerous misinformation. She noted how easy it has become for both individuals and organizations to say things on social media without evidence, noting this was especially true during the pandemic. So for these reasons, she argued that social media companies have an obligation to censor and monitor the information it publishes.

The next speaker spoke in opposition to the resolution, saying social media companies should not censor content since it threatens the right to free

speech established by America's founding fathers. Citing George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, this student suggested it was impossible to determine what was considered disruptive and such a notion is too subjective to be enforced fairly. Rather than suppress free speech, the speaker recommended countering bad speech with good speech and promoting civil discourse as a way to balance differing views in the public square.

Following the first two speakers, many other students felt comfortable speaking up and volunteered to share their views. Several interesting discussions ensued among the participants, echoing many of the most pressing and complex questions in the media surrounding this topic.

One common thread that occurred across speakers on both sides was how terms are defined and the subjective nature of these definitions. For example, is an offensive statement always hate speech, or just something that one party finds offensive? One student suggested that hate speech is defined as pointing at something a person can't control, such as race or national origin. The term "disruptive speech" also varies greatly by the party claiming to be disrupted. Similarly, satire can also be grossly mis-interpreted and labeled "disruptive."



One noteworthy point of discussion was how to evaluate a social media company's moral obligation vs. their legal obligation with regard to dangerous or false information. Most all students seemed to agree that social media companies should be held accountable to filter any illegal content such as trafficking, pornography, and threats of violence or harm. But beyond that, views vary greatly and include whether we consider social media companies to be a publisher of information rather than a platform for information sharing. Section 230 of the 1996 Communications Decency Act prohibits interactive internet providers, such as social media companies, from being considered a publisher, thus protecting them from being legally responsible for what others say and do. Much like the general public, students had a range of views regarding whether Section 230 should be updated or repealed.

Students also considered what steps have already been taken by social media companies to self-regulate, such as Twitter's use of Birdwatch Notes that can accompany a tweet and provide links or sources to additional information about the topic in the tweet. Several students wondered whether this was sufficient or could be expanded. Others noted that because the algorithms used by these companies are not open-source, the actions by these companies to regulate information will never be fully transparent and thus cannot be trusted to be objective.

Another interesting discussion among students was the role of the government and whether they should step in to regulate. Several students expressed concern about giving power to state governments or federal entities such as the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or the FBI. Other students suggested it was the only way to ensure oversight and public accountability of social media companies. It was noted that the government already regulates public utilities and corporations, so perhaps social media companies should be no exception. However, once politicians gain regulatory control over these companies, they are unlikely to let it go.

Ultimately, students noted that the distinction between self-regulation by social media companies or regulation by government entities becomes a question of who we want to be in charge. Decisions are going to be made about what content is allowed to be posted and what is not. Should it be the social media companies or the government? The Supreme Court may

end up determining the answer to the question, as recent state laws in Florida and Texas dealing with censorship by social media companies are likely to face ongoing legal challenges and ultimately make their way before the high court.

After around an hour of discussion, the debate was adjourned by Chandler asking students to share what they learned, what they enjoyed, and what they would tell another student about this format. This opportunity for reflection provoked much positive feedback, including speakers expressing they felt comfortable sharing their views and that the environment felt more like a conversation than a debate. Another student noted that their goal was not to "win" the argument but to learn from other points of view. One professor noted that it was a useful format to consider using in the classroom.

While the evening may have raised more questions than it answered about the role of Big Tech in suppressing disruptive content, it was a victory for the principle of free speech in general. Through their unique parliamentary style, the Braver Angels model teaches students to "honor ideological diversity, foster civil discourse on college campuses, and cultivate student and faculty leaders to carry the movement forward." This is not unlike the mission of the Civitas Institute at UT Austin in seeking to explore the ideas and institutions that sustain a free society and enable individuals to flourish. By valuing independent thought, civil discourse, free speech, reasoned deliberation and intellectual curiosity, the Civitas Institute summons President Lincoln's "better angels of our nature" to help tackle complex issues like social media censorship.



AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY with WALTER RUSSELL MEAD



Civitas students and staff enjoyed the opportunity for coffee and conversation on November 10th with **Walter Russell Mead**, professor of Foreign Affairs and Humanities at Bard College as well as the Global View columnist for the *Wall Street Journal* and a Distinguished Scholar at the Hudson Institute. Professor Mead shared his views on current foreign policy conundrums including Ukraine, as well as his view on China, Russia, and other countries he views as revisionist powers. Students also engaged with Professor Mead on foreign policy theory and his description of the four main guiding philosophies that have influenced the formation of American foreign policy in history: the Hamiltonians, the Wilsonians, the Jeffersonians, and the Jacksonians. Participants were challenged to consider how each of these schools of thought define national interest and how current political figures align with each school of thought.

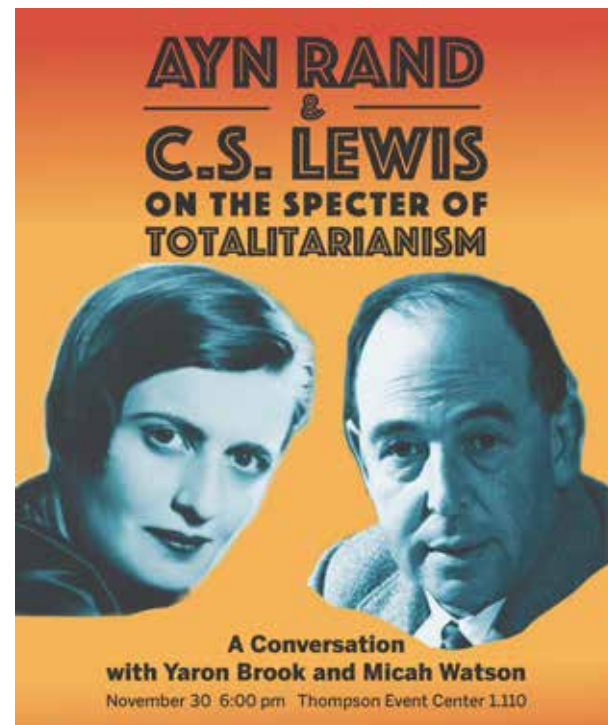


AYN RAND & C.S. LEWIS ON THE SPECTER OF TOTALITARIANISM: A CONVERSATION with YARON BROOK and MICAH WATSON

Together with the Salem Center for Policy at The University of Texas, the Civitas Institute hosted a conversation with **Yaron Brook** and **Micah Watson**, scholars of two of the most consequential thinkers of the twentieth century, Ayn Rand and C.S. Lewis. As chairman of the board of the Ayn Rand Institute, Brook offered a unique perspective on Rand's rejection of a totalitarian form of government. Watson, having co-authored (with Justin Dyer) the book *C.S. Lewis on Politics and the Natural Law*, spoke to Lewis' similar skepticism of authoritarian rule.

Both Rand and Lewis made significant contributions to 20th century literature. Each abhorred the twentieth century shift to totalitarianism, but each offered a different diagnosis of and prescription for the ills of modern political and economic life. Through lunchtime conversations with students and an evening event, both Brook and Watson suggested areas where the two authors might have agreed as well as where they differed.

A Russian-born American novelist and philosopher, Rand founded the philosophical school of Objectivism and sold tens of millions of copies of her novels extolling free enterprise, individual rights, and private property. Her goal as a novelist was to portray the ideal man as heroic and virtuous because of his freedom to reason and ability to act on his own independent judgment. She viewed the government's role as existing to protect this freedom.



Lewis, an Irish-born Anglican writer and professor at both Oxford and Cambridge, made a significant mark across multiple genres as he sought to reclaim a classical understanding of human nature and its implied moral limits on collective power. As both a writer and a Christian apologist, Lewis believed in the existence of natural law and that mankind was created with a fallen nature that would rebel against such law. He saw democracy as the most viable modern option to combat political tyranny.

Both Rand and Lewis lived through the rise of authoritarian governments in Europe and the Soviet Union and saw its impact on the human condition. Their shared disdain of these political realities, however, did not endear them to one another. In the margin notes discovered in her copy of Lewis' seminal work *The*



Abolition of Man, Rand called the famous apologist an “abysmal bastard,” a “monstrosity,” a “cheap, awful, miserable, touchy, social-metaphysical mediocrity,” and a “pickpocket of concepts.”

Rand and Lewis likely understood totalitarianism in much the same way, but most certainly did not share the same view of its opposite, liberty and what human freedom should look like. Rand would argue that man's capacity to reason is what gives him liberty. An authoritarian government, in her estimation, goes backward by rejecting reason and ultimately the rejection of the individual. Conversely, Lewis held the view of the corrupt nature of man and believed such corruption would be magnified when combined with political power. He viewed authoritarian governments harshly for failing to account accurately for man's fallen state.

Although both were shaped by the study of philosophy, the differences between Rand and Lewis may best be boiled down to their divergent theological views. As a Christian apologist, Lewis was very interested in presenting an argument from reason against metaphysical naturalism and for the existence of God. Rand viewed faith an abdication of individual responsibility — the foundation of her Objectivism philosophy — and an insult to the human intellect as well as a sign of psychological weakness.

Despite their differing views on many issues, both Rand and Lewis served as intellectual giants of the 20th century and continue to offer important insight into how we understand the role of government and authority in our lives.



Faculty Fellows of the Civitas Institute teach a number of courses on philosophy, politics and economics. In the Spring 2023 Term, Fellows are offering the following courses for UT Austin students

EXPERIMENTAL ECONOMICS

Charity-Joy Acchiardo

Have you ever wondered if humans are fair by nature? Why do we often willingly trust strangers or cooperate with them even if those actions leave us vulnerable to exploitation? Does this inclination towards fairness or trust have implications in the market? Traditional economic theory would perhaps think not, perceiving human interaction as self-interested at heart. There is increasing evidence, however, that social norms and norm-driven behavior such as a preference for fairness, generosity, or trust have serious implications for economics. In order to examine human nature, we will be turning to experimental economics and behavioral economics this semester to understand how economic agents make decisions.

Experimental/Behavioral Economics is probably the fastest growing field in economics today. It is a field committed to the idea that economics, like all of the natural sciences, can be an experimental science using carefully controlled laboratory or field experiments. This course will look at what economic theory has to say about economic choices and strategic interactions and what people actually do when faced with strategic decisions. We will conduct a large number of in-class experiments in order to either identify systematic deviations or to confirm theoretical predictions.

HONORS SOCIAL SCIENCES: ANIMAL CROSSING TO ZELDA – LEARNING ECONOMICS THROUGH GAMES

Charity-Joy Acchiardo

Humans have been playing games and developing winning strategies for a very long time! Towards the beginning of last century, economists and mathematicians began to formalize and model games and strategic behavior. They have used their work to gain insight into social interactions and develop mechanisms to improve the efficiency and value of those exchanges. Their work has impacted many spheres – from the cellular network you can access today, to business mergers, to nuclear disarmament!

In this class, we're going to use games and experiments to learn the economic principles underlying human behavior. You'll have the opportunity to create, collect, and analyze data from our interactions in class. It's a two-for-one value: master economic principles while perfecting your gaming strategy!

ETHICAL THEORIES

Dan Bonevac

This course examines four central approaches to ethical theory on the contemporary scene – virtue ethics, deontology, consequentialism, and intuitionism – by a close reading of key texts from which they spring. The works we will be focusing on are Confucius' *Analects*, Plato's *Laches*, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Immanuel Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Jeremy Bentham's *Principles of Morals and Legislation*, John Stuart Mill's *Utilitarianism*, and W.D. Ross's *The Right and the Good*.

BUSINESS, ETHICS, AND PUBLIC POLICY

Dan Bonevac

This course examines ethical questions relating to business from theoretical and practical points of view. The basic questions of ethics are: What should I (or we) do? What should I (or we) be? How do I (or we) decide? We'll identify the main dimensions of moral reasoning, as well as the major sources of temptation and moral mistakes. We'll pay special attention to ethical dilemmas and techniques for resolving them. We will discuss theories of economic justice; the nature, rationale, and limitations of the free enterprise system; the ethics of competition; decision making in business; the obligations of corporations; advertising; conflicts of interest; corporate social responsibility; employee rights and duties; relations to consumers and other stakeholders; regulation; and issues arising from international business and globalization.

NATURAL LAW THEORY

J. Budziszewski

"Natural law" refers to moral law – in particular, the fundamental moral principles that are built into the design of human nature and lie at the roots of conscience. Natural law thinking is the spine of the Western tradition of ethical and legal thought. The founders of the American republic also believed in the natural law — in universal and "self-evident" principles of justice and morality which the Declaration of Independence called "the laws of Nature and of Nature's God." For generations afterward, most Americans took the reality of natural law for granted. Thomas Jefferson appealed to it to justify independence; Abraham Lincoln appealed to it to criticize slavery; Martin Luther King appealed to it to criticize Jim Crow laws. You would hardly guess any of this from the present day, because belief in natural law has come to be viewed as "politically incorrect." Nevertheless, the tradition of natural law is experiencing a modest renaissance.

Is there really a natural law? What difference does it make to society and politics if there is? Is it really "natural"? Is it really "law"? To consider these questions, we will read a variety of influential works on natural law from the middle ages to the present. Probably, most of your liberal arts education has implicitly rejected the whole idea, but in this course, for a change, you have an opportunity to hear the other side.

We will focus on the classical natural law tradition, not revisionist versions such as the one promoted by the social contract writers of

the early modern period. The first two units of the course focus on the ethical and legal thought of the most important and influential classical natural law thinker in history, Thomas Aquinas. He is a difficult writer, but we will work through his *Treatise on Law* carefully and I will provide lots of help. In the final unit, which is about the continuing influence of the classical natural law tradition, we will read a number of authors including Thomas Jefferson, U.S. Supreme Court Associate Justices John McLean and Benjamin Curtis, Abraham Lincoln, Justin Buckley Dyer, Martin Luther King, C.S. Lewis, John Hittinger, Robert C. Koons, Matthew O'Brien, and myself.

CONSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE OF POWER

Justin Dyer

This course is about how the U.S. Constitution frames the way we organize our life together as a political community. We will examine the constitutional allocation of authority to set public policy; analyze the design of our national political institutions; and the contested boundaries between them, and look at the interplay of democratic politics and constitutional government. In his 2009 retirement letter, Supreme Court Justice David Souter numbered these issues among "those things that matter to decent people in a civil society." Using the Supreme Court's published opinions as our entry point into this conversation, we will explore and analyze foundational questions and debates that continue to shape the project of constitutional government 235 years after the drafting of our basic law.

WRITING AND COMMUNICATIONS FOR GLOBAL POLICY

Sheena Chestnut Greitens

Students in this course, which is required for the LBJ School's Masters in Global Policy Studies, explore how to effectively, professionally, and creatively communicate about policy issues. We begin by practicing fundamentals of good writing: clarity, concision, persuasiveness, use of evidence, and audience awareness. We then turn to exploring – and practicing – different writing/communication products that policy professionals use, first within their organizations and then externally. These products include briefing and decision memos, cables, intelligence analysis, press releases, talking points, speechwriting, social media content, television, think tank reports, op-eds, and Congressional testimony. Students engage in regular processes of revision and peer review. The course also typically welcomes 8-10 guest speakers, who discuss the role that writing and communications play in their policy work.

CHINESE POLITICS AND FOREIGN POLICY

Sheena Chestnut Greitens

This course is a graduate seminar on Chinese politics and foreign policy, designed to help students understand China's development as a world power and its impact on global politics. It covers the history of China's domestic politics and foreign policy since 1949; how contemporary Chinese domestic politics work;

what factors shape China's changing global engagement and its role in the world; and the future of U.S.-China relations and the changing international environment. Students will leave the course familiar with the key events, debates, and questions in the study of Chinese politics and foreign policy, and able to use this knowledge to assess current policy debates on China.

ETHICS IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Will Inboden

What is the relationship between morality and policy? In the statecraft of international affairs, is it enough to develop effective policies, or should they be ethical policies as well? If so, what are the foundations of ethics in foreign policy, and how do ethical considerations apply in particular issues and situations?

This course will examine the normative questions of international relations and challenge students to consider what those questions mean for our conduct as citizens and as aspiring policymakers. There are many vexing normative issues in international politics. When, if ever, is the use of force justified? Should one state impose its moral code on another? To what extent do normative considerations influence the way states behave? To what extent ought they? Is there a different standard of morality for individuals than for governments? What about non-governmental and transnational organizations?

The course will begin with a consideration of various philosophical, religious, and psychological foundations for ethics. It will then explore how ethics might apply to a range of specific issues and circumstances, including war and pacifism, human rights and humanitarian intervention, refugee policy, foreign assistance and poverty, torture and detention, and the complex relationship of personal conscience, citizenship, and duties to the state. Readings will include philosophical and religious texts, issue case studies, and historical treatments, and class activities will include extensive discussions and simulations of various ethical dilemmas. The class will not offer easy answers, but will attempt to equip students for ethical reflection and action throughout their careers. It will also equip students to better understand the moral judgments that people from other traditions make, which is essential for functioning in a pluralistic policy world.

FOUR MODERN POLITICAL THEORIES

Robert Koons

In this course, will examine four modern political theories (classical liberalism, Marxism, social democracy, and traditional conservatism), with close reading and analysis of central texts.

PHILOSOPHY AND THE DYSTOPIAN NOVEL

Robert Koons

In this course, we will explore the philosophical, ethical, epistemological, and anthropological issues that dystopian novels raise and how to develop strategies to avoid possible catastrophes such as those depicted in the dystopian novels.

BRITISH POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

David Leal

This course examines key aspects of British politics and government. While no longer as powerful as during its days of empire, Britain is a longstanding ally of the United States and remains an important global power. To understand US, European, Atlantic, and global politics requires an understanding of the UK. We begin with an overview of modern British political history, including the ideas, actors, laws, structures, and events that set the stage for contemporary politics. We then examine the major political institutions, including Parliament (Commons and Lords), the parties, the Prime Minister, the Civil Service, the media, and the judiciary. The next section covers elections and public opinion, including campaigns, candidates, constituencies, rules, voters, and recent contests. Lastly, we discuss emerging developments, including Brexit, social policies, and the possible political futures of the nation. Throughout the class, we will ask about the nature of democracy and freedom in the UK, make comparisons with US politics and government, and discuss the relationship of Britain with the US and the world in a post-empire era.

PRINCIPLES OF MICROECONOMICS

Dirk Mateer

The purpose of the class is to provide you with a firm understanding of the structure and workings of the micro-economy. Course topics include: supply and demand; elasticity; efficiency and equity; markets in action; utility; possibilities, preferences, and choices; theory of the firm; output and costs; perfect competition; monopoly, monopolistic competition, and oligopoly; behavioral economics; and public goods and externalities.

INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Daron Shaw

This course is an introduction to American government and politics. While our main focus is on the national level, additional attention is paid to the state and local governments of Texas. In some instances, the American case is placed in a comparative context derived from the experience of other western democratic nations. In other instances, we focus on changes over time within the American political system to demonstrate how principles often change with context. At all times, we are interested in a better understanding of how this particular system has developed and what it means for citizens of the United States.

There are three primary objectives in this course. The first is to provide basic descriptive information about the American and Texas political systems by examining important political

processes, institutions, and actors. The second is to develop analytical skills with which to understand complex relationships and phenomena. The third is to introduce the work of the political scientist by concentrating on the paradigms and techniques of the discipline.

CAMPAIGNS AND ELECTIONS

Daron Shaw

This course is designed to introduce you to American political campaigns and elections through lectures and readings. It is not designed to serve as a “how to” manual for aspiring politicians or consultants. Often, it is more theoretical than practical. Still, some nuts and bolts information is essential and will be part of the curriculum. My focus is on federal elections, though references are made to state and local elections. We spend some time revisiting past campaigns and elections to contrast and explicate contemporary American electoral politics. In particular, the lectures and readings pay attention to the presidential elections of 2012 and 2016. The races between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney and Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton (respectively) are not only the most recent, but provide vivid details supplementing the theoretical and descriptive points raised in the course.

The course has three primary objectives. The first is to provide basic information about American elections and electioneering by examining both the rules of the game and the players. The second is to develop analytical skills with which to analyze complex relationships and phenomena. The third is to introduce you to the work of the political scientist by concentrating on paradigms and techniques of the discipline. Unlike the lower division version of the course, the emphasis is on the latter two goals.

CLASSICAL QUEST FOR JUSTICE

Devin Stauffer

The questions at the heart of classical political philosophy are very simple, even if the treatments of them by the ancient philosophers are extremely complex. What is justice? What does it ask of us as individuals? What does it demand of political communities in their internal structures and in their interactions with other communities? Are the demands of political life in harmony with the radical questioning of philosophy? In this course, we will consider these and other such questions through a careful study of three masterpieces of classical antiquity: Plato’s *Apology of Socrates*, Plato’s *Republic*, and Thucydides’ *History of the Peloponnesian War*. These works will be approached not only as crucial documents for our understanding of a distant age, but as works that speak directly to permanent questions of moral and political life.

The Dallas Morning News

December 4, 2022

REDISCOVER THE FOUNDERS’ COMMITMENT TO LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

Reports of the death of liberalism are greatly exaggerated

In this disorienting moment for American conservatism, everything is up for grabs, including whether America’s founding principles are worth conserving. They are, and we must make the case for them anew.

America, in President Abraham Lincoln’s words, is a nation conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. The key components of that liberty are individual and communal. We are individually endowed by our creator with certain unalienable rights, but the habits of ordered liberty are taught by the social institutions of civil society.

Constitutional government respects the limits implied by individual rights, and the just powers of government are derived from the common consent of the governed elicited through fairly administered elections. Those revolutionary principles led to a new birth of freedom after the Civil War, underwrote our civic ideals of widespread economic opportunity and equal protection of the law, and guided the 20th-century civil rights movement.

It is a linguistic irony that the conservative movement at the turn of the last century was chiefly committed to conserving liberalism, understood as a political tradition that prioritizes legal equality, individual rights, constitutionalism, and free markets. Progressives long ago shed the liberal label, claiming instead to have progressed beyond the liberalism of the founding. Now, many on the political right are urging us to reject America’s founding principles and build a postliberal future. To take one prominent example, the University of Notre Dame’s Patrick Deneen argued in his influential book *Why Liberalism Failed* that the liberal principles of the American founding are precisely what led to our current political pathologies in the first place. It is best then not to return to eat the fruit of the poisoned tree.

The postliberal indictment contains three charges against our founding. First, the liberal focus on individual rights creates a society of atomized individuals free of any sense

of duty to family, place, or community. Second, liberal constitutionalism – with its emphasis on separation of powers and limited government – naïvely neglects the reality that the growth of the administrative state coincided with a concentration of power and erosion of constitutional limits that cannot easily be undone. Finally, markets are morally vacuous because no central authority guides them to a moral end, and market logic is the acid that continues to wash over communal ties and social obligations to family and neighbor. The solution, for postliberals, is to wrest the reins of national government power and build anew.

But America’s founding principles are not the caricature presented in these indictments. In the dominant intellectual traditions shaping the American founding, natural rights are derived from natural duties, constitutionalism is bound by a higher law, institutions such as the family and church provide the pre-political moral foundations of liberal government, and markets are justified by the ends they serve.

The ideas in the *Declaration of Independence* and the principles undergirding the U.S. Constitution were nested in a rich moral and theological tradition that subordinates will to reason, preserves the rule of law, prudentially limits government power, and protects individual rights in order to promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty for posterity.

There is in America’s founding principles “a finality that is exceedingly restful,” as Calvin Coolidge observed nearly a century ago. “If anyone wishes to deny their truth or their soundness, the only direction in which he can proceed historically is not forward, but backward toward the time when there was no equality, no rights of the individual, no rule of the people.”

The founding is not sacrosanct, but for posterity’s sake we must rediscover and conserve what is best and noblest in America’s liberal tradition.



Justin Dyer is executive director at the Civitas Institute at the University of Texas at Austin. This essay was adapted from his forthcoming book *The Classical and Christian Origins of American Politics*.



COMING NEXT SEMESTER:

Justin Grimmer, Kim Holder, Phillip Muñoz, Paul Rogge, Jesús Fernández-Villaverde, AEI National Executive Summit, John List, Glory Liu, Chiyuma Elliott, and more!

See civitas.utexas.edu for more information on dates and topics.



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