

The Politics of National Memory
Syllabus – Spring 2023

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Course Information

PSCI 4373

The Politics of National Memory

Spring 2023

Tuesday 6:30-9:30 pm

Class meets at the Archer Center and at designed sites in Washington, D.C.



Professor Contact Information

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Lecturer Contacts

(All Office Hours by Appointment)

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Note: To ensure student privacy, and in accordance with FERPA guidelines, all official communications via email should be conducted using the UTD email addresses. Faculty will return your email or telephone call within 24 hours. If you do not hear back, please assume your message or email never arrived, and call or write again.

Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions

Acceptance into the Archer Fellowship Program

Course Description

This course uses the National Mall, which we define as the area between Arlington National Cemetery and Capitol Hill, as a classroom, textbook, and laboratory to explore and interrogate the stories that the United States tells about itself. In each class, we connect physical tokens of memory (e.g., monuments, statues, and museums) with selected readings to facilitate student engagement with difficult but essential civic and political questions: What is democracy? What is truth? What do we owe each other? How do we use our country's past to inform and shape its future, striving towards the ideals set out at its inception? How do we both reconcile the low points in America's history and amplify its moments of glory and pride to shape a more perfect Union? How do we reconcile the America that is with the America we aspire to be? In doing so, we seek to encourage students to acquire a lifelong relationship with the nation's capital; feel competent and excited about "reading" statues, memorials and museums no matter where they are; and acquire critical and analytic skills that enhance their confidence and effectiveness as citizens in a democracy.

The course focuses on the politics of national memory by fostering an ongoing, critical conversation—in class, in discussion groups, and beyond the academic setting—about the statues, memorials, and museums in Washington, D.C. Along with visiting many of these sites, students will use historical analysis; science reports; a range of art forms—poetry, fiction, theater, sculpture, video and other visual media—as well as primary texts to inform and stimulate their thinking.

As the semester proceeds, students are asked to reflect upon and explore their personal experience of the National Mall, and many of the structures that define Washington and national memory today.

Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes

Through an examination of storytelling, readings, discussions and first-hand experiences students will learn three primary skills:

1. How to "read" components of the National Mall using **Statue Literacy, Memorial Literacy, and Museum Literacy**—rules that we can use to understand how tokens of national memory came into being and to acquire meaning; and how each token invites us to participate in the creation of new meaning today.
2. Use this literacy **to define concepts like "democracy;" "truth;" and "equality."** With these definitions students will:
 - a. better understand democracy, particularly American democracy;
 - b. see how and why democracy must seek the truth about its own past;
 - c. decipher how what is remembered relates— through stories—to what happened;
 - d. analyze the degree to which every argument about the past is about the future; and

- e. explore (as emphasized on the Mall) art and science as distinct avenues to truth.
3. **“Think in Time” about societal and public policy issues;** have a reliable, systematic, and accurate way to apply practical lessons from the past.

Required Textbooks and Material

The following will be posted to the PSCI 4373 Teams channel:

- **Notes from Virginia** by Thomas Jefferson (selected excerpts)
- Speech at Dedication of Emancipation Memorial delivered by Frederick Douglass
- **The Structure of Scientific Revolutions** by Thomas Kuhn (selected excerpts)
- **The Fire Next Time** by James Baldwin
- **The Collapse of Western Civilization** by Naomi Oreskes and Erik Conway
- **A New Americanism: Why A Nation Needs A National Story** by Jill Lepore
- **How Germany Remembers the Holocaust (And what America can learn about atonement)** by Clint Smith
- **The Persuaders: At the Front Lines of the Fight for Hearts, Minds, and Democracy** by Anand Giridharadas (excerpts)
- **Public Women: Woman’s Power and Woman’s Place in the United States 1630-1970** by Glenna Matthews (Chapter 1)
- **Sisters: The Lives of America’s Suffragists** by Jean Baker (Chapter 5)
- **Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place** by Nirmal Puwar (Excerpts)
- State of the Union Address from 1941
- Introduction to the 2022 National Security Strategy
- Speech on Conservation as a National Duty by Theodore Roosevelt

In addition: To encourage critical and creative thinking (Walt Whitman tells us that “poetry is the shortest distance between reality and the human heart”), we will begin each class by discussing a poem.

Suggested Course Materials

Warm clothes, comfortable walking shoe, and an inquisitive mind

Assignments & Academic Calendar

Role of Lecturers

Each Lecturer will be assigned to a Discussion Group of up to twelve (12) students. The Discussion Group assignments will be posted on Teams. The Lecturers will assess their students’ engagement and participation in the course, including review and grading of written assignments. Lecturers are available for discussions, to answer questions, and to address concerns. Students who wish to meet with any of the lecturers should schedule a meeting during the Lecturer’s office hours.

Graded Assignments

Each week, your lecturer will assess your participation in the class Discussion Group. Your lecturer will also assess and provide feedback on written assignments.

During class-time, and throughout the semester, periodic assessments may be made to verify that you are doing the reading and learning the basic concepts of the course.

Grading Policy

Final grades, which are based on your participation in class and your Lecturer's assessment of your written assignments and your contributions to your discussion group, will be determined by Prof. Mbyirukira.

Students who complete all assignments satisfactorily and in a timely manner will receive a B. Students who display excellence through class participation and written work will receive an A. Other students will receive lower than a B.

An excellent written assignment should be an engaged response to what you have read and/or class discussion. As such, a summary is not sufficient. Argument must be offered. This could take several forms, including:

- Critique - noting a flaw or something you think is missing in the piece.
- Support - offering reason(s) as to why this is a useful or important article.
- Comparison - with another political system or country(s). Explain how the argument or description offered differs from another political context.

Your response should conclude with a few suggestions of questions for in-class discussion.

Final grades will be reported to your home UT System institution by **April 30, 2023** and posted in accordance with their respective grade submission deadlines.

Course Policies

Reading Materials

The instructors will provide reading materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class. These materials may be downloaded during the course; however, these materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Class Attendance

Regular and punctual class attendance is expected. Students who fail to attend class regularly should expect the absences to negatively impact their final grade for the class. Students who have an excuse to miss a lecture need to inform the Lecturer in charge of their Discussion Group at least 24 hours before the expected absence.

Class Participation

Regular class participation is expected. A portion of the grade for this course is directly tied to your participation in this class. It also includes engaging in groups or other activities during class that solicit your feedback on homework assignments, readings, or materials covered in the lectures (and/or labs). Class participation is documented by faculty. Successful participation is defined as consistently adhering to university requirements, as presented in this syllabus. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Classroom Citizenship

All students and faculty are expected to adhere to the Archer Fellows guiding principles outlined here (also discussed during your pre-departure orientation training):

Guiding Principles for Archer Fellows – (Also listed in your Archer Fellowship Program Guidebook)

- Archer Fellows represent not only themselves, but their home institutions, the Archer Center, the UT System, and the State of Texas.
- The Archer Center expects all Archer Fellows to abide by the highest standards of conduct, demonstrating the utmost integrity, character, respect, and professionalism.
- The Archer Center is committed to ensuring a diverse cohort and learning environment by selecting students with varying backgrounds, interests, fields of study, and political perspectives.
- The Archer Center is committed to bringing together students who value constructive and respectful dialogue among individuals and groups with varying ideas.
- Archer Fellows are expected to respect varying political, personal, and religious beliefs within the cohort and throughout the program.
- As an educational program, the Archer Center sees all aspects of the Archer Fellowship experience as an opportunity for learning: from the application and internship search process to the academic, networking, professional and fellowship opportunities provided throughout the semester.
- The Archer Center and Archer Fellows have a shared commitment to open, honest, and timely communication.

Archer Guiding Principles

Appreciation
Responsibility
Character
Humility
Enthusiasm
Respect

Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

Academic Support Resources

The information contained in the following link lists the University’s academic support resources for all students. Please see <http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources>.

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please review the catalog sections regarding the credit/no credit or pass/fail grading option and withdrawal from class.

Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.

Academic Calendar **Class Schedule**

In general, the weekly class meetings will follow this format:

6:30-7:30 pm General Meeting with all Lecturers and full cohort
7:45-8:45 pm Discussion Groups with your Lecturers
9-9:30 pm Wrap-up with all Lecturers

Class 1a: Monday, January 9, 7-8 am

All Faculty

Sunrise at the Lincoln Memorial

The Lincoln Memorial is the most visited site in Washington, D.C. For many, it is a sacred space where people gather to call upon America to live up to its ideals. It is famously the site where Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his "I Have a Dream" speech.

Activity: What is your dream for the semester?

Class 1b: Tuesday, January 10, 6:30-8:30pm

All Faculty (Archer Center)

The Politics of National Memory – The stories we tell about "We the People"

Introduction of lecturers and themes for the class. Review of syllabus. Lecture on literacies and other key tools for the class.

Classes 2 and 3 (on same day): Tuesday, January 17

Dr. Reinemeyer & Prof. Mbyirukira

Museum Day

Pre-Reading:

- A New Americanism: Why a Nation Needs a National Story by Jill Lepore

All Sections – Meet at the National Museum of the American Indian (outside entrance at 10am)

Lunch provided

National Museum of the American Indian

Discussion with museum curator, Paul Chaat Smith, followed by self-guided tour of the museum.

National African American History and Culture Museum

While in the Museum, we will break into teams that will each address:

- What does Museum Literacy tell you about this museum?
- Find something in the Museum and use it to Think in Time.

Class 4: January 18, 19

Museum Walk

- Wednesday, January 18 - Capital and Dupont Groups meet
- Thursday, January 19 – Anacostia and Brookland Groups meet

10:30 – 12:00 pm Meet at Air and Space Museum

Lunch provided at the National Gallery of Art

2:00-4:00 p.m. National Gallery of Art (located on the National Mall between 3rd and 9th Streets at Constitution Ave.)

Class 5: Tuesday, January 24

All Faculty (Archer Center)

Engaging Across Differences

Pre-Reading:

- Anand Giridharadas: *The Persuaders: At the Front Lines of the Fight for Hearts, Minds, and Democracy* (selected excerpts)

Set ground rules for upcoming discussions; large and small group discussions on how to engage across differences; tips from both lecturers and students.

Class 6: Tuesday, January 31, 6:30-9:30pm

Guest Lecturer (Archer Center)

Fireside Chat with Dr. Michelle Robinson on National Memory and Equity

***No class Tuesday, February 7**

Class 7: Thursday, February 9, 6:30-9:30pm

Kennedy Center

Alvin Ailey Performance

***No class Tuesday, February 14**

Class 8: Tuesday, February 21, 6:30-9:30pm

Prof. Mbyirukira and Guests (Verizon Technology Center)

Lecture on the Black Experience and Panel on the Latino and Asian-American Experiences

Pre-Readings:

- Clint Smith: *How Germany Remembers the Holocaust (And what America can learn about atonement)*.

- James Baldwin: *The Fire Next Time*

Class 9: Tuesday, February 28, 6:30-9:30pm

Dr. Nugent (Archer Center)

Women: A part and apart

Pre-Readings:

- Chapter 1 from 'Public Women: Woman's Power and Woman's Place in the United States 1630-1970' by Glenna Matthews
- Chapter 5 from 'Sisters: The Lives of America's Suffragists' by Jean Baker

Class 10: Tuesday, March 07, 6:30-9:30pm

Dr. Nugent (Archer Center)

Political Institutions: Made by and for whom?

Pre-Reading:

- Extracts from 'Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place' by Nirmal Puwar

Class 11: Tuesday March 14th

Prof. Mbyrukira (Emancipation Memorial)

Icons: Who Are Our 'Founders' and How Should They Be Remembered?

Pre-Reading:

- Frederick Douglass: Speech at Dedication of Emancipation Memorial
- Select excerpts from *Notes from Virginia* by Thomas Jefferson

Class 12: Tuesday, March 21, 6:30-9:30pm

Dr. Reinemeyer (Teddy Roosevelt Island)

What Does One Generation Owe the Next?

Pre-Reading:

- *Speech on Conservation as a National Duty* by Theodore Roosevelt

Class 13: Tuesday, March 28, 6:30-9:30pm

Dr. Conrado (Smithsonian Castle Garden)

Science and Art on the National Mall, and the Pursuit of Truth

Class 14: Tuesday, April 4, 6:30-9:30pm

Dr. Conrado (Albert Einstein Statue)

Science and Society: Combating Misinformation, Facing Crises, and Strengthening Democracy

Class 15: Tuesday, April 11, 6:30 – 9:30pm
Dr. Reinemeyer (Franklin Roosevelt Memorial)
Foreign Policy: Roosevelt and the Four Freedoms

Pre-Reading:

- *State of the Union Address from 1941*
- *Introduction to the 2022 National Security Strategy*

Activity: Why do we intervene and when? Why do we use different tools for different fights? The roots are all in the Four Freedoms

Class 16: Tuesday, April 18, 7 pm
All Faculty (National Archives)
Sunset Class

Meet at steps to National Archives (Constitution Avenue side) at 7 p.m. for sunset class and candle lighting tradition.