

IDS 101

Fall 2008

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Regular Class Time: MWF 12:40-1:40

Ellis Office Hours: M 11:30-12:30, 4:00-4:40; F 11:30-12:30, 1:45-2:45; and by appointment.

Smullin 324

## COLLEGE COLLOQUIUM: TOCQUEVILLE'S *DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA*

In 1831 Frenchman Alexis de Tocqueville and his friend Gustave Beaumont visited the United States of America. For over nine months they traveled through the new nation, observing and interviewing its citizens. The result of that journey is the most famous book ever written on American politics and culture: *Democracy in America*. In this seminar we will read this classic text and wrestle with Tocqueville's efforts to understand the meaning of America as well the significance of democratic equality in the modern world. Along the way we will have the occasion to ponder the role of slavery and race, the extermination of Native Americans, the relationship between religion and democracy, the importance of citizenship, the dangers of individualism, the power of the comparative method, and the continuing significance of American exceptionalism.

At the heart of each of the many sections of the college colloquium are writing, reading, and discussion. This is emphatically not a course in which the instructor lectures and the student passively if attentively listens. Rather it is a course that requires the active involvement of each class member, as we come together around a shared set of texts and work through their meaning and significance. The chief objectives of the course are to help you become: (1) a clearer and more self-conscious writer, (2) a more careful and critical reader, and (3) a more confident and reflective participant in discussion.

Because the course is discussion based, it is critically important that you do the reading for each class session. Students who miss a class, whether excused or unexcused, must write a 600 word paper analyzing the reading that was assigned for the day they miss. Your participation grade in the course will be lowered by 1/3 for every short paper you do not turn in within a week of your return to class. More than two unexcused absences will result in a full grade deduction from your final course grade; each additional unexcused absence will result in an additional deduction of one full grade from your final grade. Persistent lateness or failure to prepare adequately for class discussions can also result in deductions from the final grade.

You should familiarize yourself with Willamette University's plagiarism policy, which you can find at <http://www.willamette.edu/cla/catalog/Sect3/aca.html#plag>. Plagiarism can take different forms, but its essence is presenting the words or work of another as your own. When you are quoting from a source you must place that material in quotation marks and correctly cite the source of the quotation. If you are paraphrasing the words of another you must provide the source from which you are paraphrasing. A plagiarized paper will receive an "F" and cannot be rewritten. Depending on the severity of the plagiarism, the penalty may very well also extend to failing the course. In accordance with university policy, any instance of plagiarism will be promptly reported to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

Your grade will be based on three papers (50%) and class participation (50%). The participation grade includes a written component (20%) and an oral component (30%). The

written component of the participation grade will be based on short response papers, in-class writing, and written peer responses. The oral component consists of participation in class discussion and small group work. The first paper will be worth 10% of your grade, and the second and third papers will be worth 20% each.

The required texts for this course are: (1) Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, translated by Arthur Goldhammer (Library of America, 2004); and (2) Diana Hacker, *A Pocket Style Manual* (Bedford, 2008; 5th edition). The former will be given to you on the first day of class, the latter is available for purchase at the Willamette Bookstore. There will also be several readings that will be available electronically or will be distributed in class.

The following is a *tentative* schedule of class sessions, readings, and paper assignments. It is unlikely we will follow it in every particular detail.

8/28 (Thurs) Introduction: What a Traveler Sees

#### VOLUME ONE

8/29 (Fri) The Thesis in Capsule Form  
*Democracy in America*, 3-17

8/30 (Sat) The Point of Departure  
*Democracy in America*, 21-51

9/1 (Mon) Social State of the Anglo-Americans  
*Democracy in America*, 52-65  
Pierson, *Tocqueville in America*, 14-39

9/3 (Wed) Local Government  
*Democracy in America*, 66-82

9/5 (Fri) Administrative Centralization  
*Democracy in America*, 97-110

9/8 (Mon) First Impressions  
Pierson, *Tocqueville in America*, 43-92

9/10 (Wed) Executive Power  
*Democracy in America*, 136-155

9/12 (Fri) Federalism  
*Democracy in America*, 171-193  
Paper #1 assignment to be distributed

9/15 (Mon) Parties, Associations, and the Press  
*Democracy in America*, 197-223

9/17 (Wed) The Virtues of Concise Writing

9/19 (Fri) Peer Response

9/22 (Mon) The Government of Democracy  
*Democracy in America*, 224-34, 253-63

9/24 (Wed) Advantages of Democratic Government  
*Democracy in America*, 264-82

9/26 (Fri) Omnipotence of the Majority in the U.S.  
*Democracy in America*, 283-302

9/29 (Mon) Lawyers, Juries, and Democracy  
*Democracy in America*, 302-318

**Paper #1 due 9am, Monday Sept. 29**

10/1 (Wed) Religion and the Causes of America Democracy  
*Democracy in America*, 319-56

10/3 (Fri) The Current State and Probable Future of the Indian Tribes  
*Democracy in America*, 365-391

10/6 (Mon) Fortnight in the Wilderness  
Pierson, *Tocqueville in America*, 229-82

10/8 (Wed) A Nation in Black and White  
*Democracy in America*, 392-419

10/10 (Fri) Devising Paper Topics

10/13 (Mon) The Destiny of the United States  
*Democracy in America*, 427-36, 470-76  
Paper topic(s) #2 to be distributed

10/15 (Wed) The Exile of Lake Oneida  
“An Excursion to Lake Oneida”

10/17 (Fri) Mapping Answers

10/20 (Mon) Peer Response

10/22 (Wed) No class; Individual Meetings

10/24 (Fri) Midsemester Day

VOLUME II

10/27 (Mon) Democracy and the Intellect

*Democracy in America*, 479-500

**Paper #2 due 9am, Monday Oct. 27**

10/29 (Wed) Individualism, Liberty, and Equality

*Democracy in America*, 581-94

10/31 (Fri) The Importance of Associations

*Democracy in America*, 595-609

11/3 (Mon) Social Capital

Robert Putnam, "Bowling Alone," *Journal of Democracy* (1995), 65-78, available through  
*Project Muse*

11/5 (Wed) The Doctrine of Self-Interest Properly Understood

*Democracy in America*, 610-632

11/7 (Fri) Industry and Aristocracy

*Democracy in America*, 642-52

11/10 (Mon) Gender and the Family

*Democracy in America*, 685-708

Paper assignment #3 distributed

11/12 (Wed) The Argument Recapped I

*Democracy in America*, 787-802

11/14 (Fri) The Argument Recapped II

*Democracy in America*, 816-30

11/17 (Mon) Peer Response

11/19 (Wed) Individual Meetings

11/21 (Fri) Between Two Worlds

*Democracy in America*, 831-34

11/24 (Mon) Last Day of Class

11/26 (Wed) **Paper #3 due at 12:40 pm**