Politics in the Early American Republic
History 311.01 Fall 2024

Prof. Sarah J. Purcell (she/her)

Monday & Wednesday 2:00-3:50 pm ARH 3243

Open Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 9:00-11:00 am & by appointment

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Please come and see me during office hours, or make an appointment, so I can
meet you one-on-one. Please email, call, or text me any time for help with class,
or with anything else. I encourage you to take care of yourself. Let me know what
you need, and try to share any concerns before they become severe. I am VERY
flexible, and I will always listen to you. Share your triumphs, too. I expect
flexibility from you, and you may expect it from me. Please communicate, so we
can help one another.

Please get in the habit of contacting me frequently and of connecting with your
classmates. Our main objective in history seminar is for each person to produce
excellent historical scholarship, and to do so within a supportive peer community
(that's all of us). We will stay connected!

Content Focus:
Students in this seminar will discover and debate recent developments in the
study of political history by focusing intensely on one of its most exciting periods,
the early American republic. During roughly the years 1789-1824, the American
political system first took shape as federal and state governments established
themselves, as the country experienced its first era of party conflict, and as
philosophical ideas about the structures of American power and concepts such as
"republicanism" and "democracy" were put to the test. The seminar will analyze
traditional topics of political interest in this period such as political party
formation and interaction among WKH ³IRXQGHUV,´ and it will also explore the
many ways that recent historians have broadened their view of politics to include
such factors as political culture, female involvement in politics, and the
politicization of everyday life.

We will study the content of political history in the early republic, and we will
also give a great deal of attention to the style, theory, and method of political
historical study. While political history of the United States in the founding era is
a very popular branch of historical writing, it is also often highly controversial.
We will immerse ourselves in a number of hot debates about the theory and
practice of political history.

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t ime. If you have any questions or need help of any kind, you can always

start by asking Prof. Purcell.

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Books: Required books for this class are for sale/rent at Pioneer Bookshop; they
are on 2-hour reserve at Burling library; and Zagarri (Jstor) and Pasley (Project
Muse) are also available for free online as e-books²consult the library catalog for
access.

Caitlin Fitz, Our Sister Republics: The United States in an Age of American
Revolutions (2016)

Jeffrey L. Pasley, The First Presidential Contest: 1796 and the Founding of
American Democracy (2016)

Rosemarie Zagarri, Revolutionary Backlash: Women and Politics in the Early
American Republic (2007)

Supplemental Readings will be handed out in class and/or available online and
on P-web. Most readings are linked directly in this syllabus.

Assignments: While this course is mainly focused around the major primary
research paper, students are expected to keep up with reading assignments for
discussion in class. Students will complete a short ³VFKRODUVKLS QRWH´ essay due
on October 18. On November 1, each student will turn in a paper proposal that
outlines a proposed thesis and argument. On November 18, students will turn in
a bibliography and deliver an oral presentation about one, major primary source.
The research paper is due December 4, and class presentations and peer review
will follow. The final, revised version of the research paper is due December 18.

The research paper is expected to be 20-30 pages long, based upon significant
primary sources informed by context and methods from the relevant scholarly
secondary sources.

Written assignments for this class should be turned in on PioneerWeb by
attaching a file to the assignment. If you use a Mac or a word processing program
other than Microsoft Word, you should save your file in rich text format (.rtf).

Grades will be assigned in the course according to the following formula:
Scholarship note 5%
paper proposal 10%
bibliography 5%
primary source presentation 5%
research presentation 5%
class engagement 10%
research journal 10%
final research paper 50%

Attendance is important to this class, so please attend if at all
possible. That being said, we all know that illness can/will happen,
and you should NOT attend class if you are ill. Please email Prof.

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Purcell (if at all possible) when you are ill, and we will make
arrangements for how you can keep up with course work on a flexible
schedule (as your illness allows).

If you need to miss class for a religious holiday, athletic team event, or other co-curricular activity, please let Prof. Purcell know in advance, and she will support
you.

I have a chronic illness that necessitates extra COVID precaution. Please consider
wearing a mask in class (especially if you are or have been ill), and wear a mask
when you visit my office. I will always have masks to share!

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3:30 PM²Peer accountability

FRIDAY at NOON Research Journal entry due on P-web

Week Five: Early Elections and Voting Records
Monday, September 23 Reading Due: Explore “A New Nation Votes”
https://elections.lib.tufts.edu/; Special Issue of The Journal of the Early

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http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_of_the_early_republic/v031/31.1.

zagar ri.html

*Before class, p

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FRIDAY at NOON Research Journal entry due on P-web

Week Twelve: Research and Writing
Monday, November 11 Writing Day
Co-working: meet in regular classroom

Wednesday, November 13 Writing Day
Co-working: meet in regular classroom

FRIDAY at NOON Research Journal entry due on P-web

Week Thirteen: Source Presentations & Bibliographies
Monday, November 18 Bibliographies Due, Begin Source Presentations

Wednesday, November 20 Source Presentations

FRIDAY at NOON Research Journal entry due on P-web

Week Fourteen: Drafting
Monday, November 25 Writing Day
Co-working: meet in regular classroom during class time

Wednesday, November 27 Writing Day
Work on your own; no class meeting

NOVEMBER 28 & 29 THANKSGIVING BREAK

Friday: No Research Journal entry due today

Week Fifteen: Drafting
Monday, December 2 Writing Day
Co-working: meet in regular classroom during class time

Wednesday, December 4 PAPERS DUE
During class: Research Presentations
[peer group meetings outside class time]

FRIDAY at NOON Research Journal entry due on P-web

Week Sixteen: Revision & Research Presentations
December 9 & 12 Research Presentations
[peer group meetings outside class time]

FRIDAY at NOON Research Journal entry due on P-web

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18 5:00 p.m. FINAL VERSION OF
PAPERS DUE on P-Web (note: this is our final exam time)