Description of the Course:

This course is an exploration of politics and literature, and their interconnection. Class members will thoroughly examine these ten novels during the course of the semester focusing on both specific political themes that have been extracted from the novels, as well as discussing the political insights found in these novels.

Objective #1:

We will focus on the main question that should be asked of each novel we read, namely, “How can literature aid our understanding of politics?”

- this will be measured by assigning every student an oral presentation and a 10-12 page paper based on one of the assigned novels focusing on one of the listed research topics.

For example, if a student selected Adams’ *Democracy: An American Novel*, there are several research topics from which to choose, viz.,

1. Corruption tolerance in a democratic society;
2. The position of the president in the political system;
3. Can democracy survive the Ratcliffes, the Carringtons, and the Mrs. Lees?
4. Can the presidency survive the Hoosier Quarryman in office rather than a George Washington?
5. Change of presidential administrations: Democracy’s “soft spot.”
6. For democracy to survive, need we agree with Mrs. Lee that “Underneath the scum floating on the surface of politics there is a healthy ocean current of honest purpose which sweeps the scum before it and keeps the mass pure.”

7. Is democracy the same as most other governments or it is a distinct form of government?

Students will develop one of these topics and then determine how the novel aids our understanding of this topic.

**Objective #2:**

Each of you should become familiar with the political consequences of all 6 of these novels

-This will be measured through your taking of one midterm and a comprehensive final that will assess your overall understanding of what we have read and discussed.

**Objective #3:**

Given these 6 novels and the multiple research topics generated from each of them, you will become conversant with the subject matter in your discourse with others outside the classroom.

We will have scheduled general discussions on the novel pointing to aspects of the novel that have gone unmentioned during each student’s oral report in class. This will also allow more comprehensive answers to the essay questions asked on the tests.

**II. Requirements for the Course:**

A) **20% of your grade** will be based on: a midterm examination based on the first three novels assigned that will be administered on May 29.

B) **30% of your grade** will be based on:
a comprehensive final examination that will assess your integrative knowledge of all of the novels and political concepts we have talked about in the class. It will be administered on June 19, 9:00-10:50 AM. Please do not plan other activities for this time. Everyone will take the exam at the scheduled hour, unless you have an emergency situation come up. You must agree to this if you want to stay in the course.

C) 20% of your grade will be based on: a 15-20 minute oral presentation developing one of the themes you will choose from the novels we will read.¹

The presentation should say something about the author and his/her background for writing about the political topic on which you will focus. Approximately 5 or 6 minutes of your presentation should be taken in laying a groundwork and a foundation for the assigned theme, telling us about the political phenomena, concepts, institutions and policies that might be involved in the theme. The remaining time should look at the particular novel’s contributions to our understanding of the theme. Specific examples from the novel should be noted where the writer either helps us or hinders us in our understanding of the political concepts in question. The presenter should remember the primary course question in developing the theme for the presentation, namely, how does this novel aid our understanding of the political theme you are developing.

We want to have at least one oral presentation on each of the novels—even the first one—in a week—covering as many of the themes as possible. For the person doing the first novel, the instructor will show the greatest “mercy” in grading the presentation since it is scheduled for the 13th of January.

Your oral presentation SHOULD NOT BE READ from a paper or from your power point or from another text. The presentation is to engage the entire class; feel free to use any visual aids, handouts, overheads, or power points in your presentation that would assist you. Except for the presentation on the first novel, the first day we consider the particular novel will always be devoted to the presentation, with the remaining days focused on the political insights of the novel in general. If there are two or more presentations on the same novel--focused on different themes--there will be two or more presentations on the first day. Where possible we will keep the second day available for a discussion in general of the novels. If you choose a power point presentation, I may ask you to give me a copy of it for future classes, so please put your name/names on one of the slides. Send it to me with your name first and the novel name second as an attachment.

D) 30% of your grade will be based on: a 10-12 page research paper (double spaced) that is to

¹ The time may vary according to the size of the class and importance of the topic. If there is more than one presentation, the time may be slightly shortened to work both presentations in within the class time frame. More than one of you will be assigned to the same novel but on a different theme.
be based on your oral presentation, but you will not work with a team member on the paper. You will work individually on the paper. The paper is to be written and researched as any term paper is, with proper citations, bibliography and endnotes. As in the oral presentation, at least 3-4 pages (of a 12 page paper) should be directed to establishing a background on the theme in question, with the remaining portion of the paper directed to examining the novel's particular contributions to the theme. The last two pages can respond to the question whether fiction is an enlightening way of learning about political concepts. All papers, except for the person assigned the last novel in the term, will be handed in not later than ______ in order that all will be read before grades are due. The persons assigned the last two novels will hand their papers in on or about ______ in order to take account of any class and instructor input. While late papers will be accepted, 5% will be deducted from the grade you would have received, had the paper been turned in on time, for each 24 hour period beyond the deadline (except for Sundays). Please paginate your paper; staple it; and please remember that no roman numerals are to be used for endnotes.

III. Grading Policy:

I repeat here the section on what grades mean from the BYU Bulletin: Undergraduate Catalog: (p.25):

The grade given in a course is the teacher’s evaluation of the student’s performance, achievement, and understanding in that subject as covered in the class. The following indicates the meaning of the letter grade:

A  Excellent
B  Good
C  Satisfactory
D  Minimum passing
E  Unacceptable

Hence, the grade A means that the student’s performance, achievement, and understanding were excellent in the portion of the subject covered in the class.

There are prerequisites that qualify students to be admitted to the more advanced classes offered by a department. A senior has added experience, understanding, and preparation and, consequently, progresses in courses that would have been impossible when the student was a freshman. The level of performance, achievement, and understanding required to qualify for each grade that carries credit... is higher in a more advanced class than in those classes that precede it, and the student is prepared to work at this higher level.
IV. STATEMENT REGARDING PLAGIARISM:

While all students sign the honor code, there are still specific skills most students need to master over time in order to correctly cite sources, especially in this new age of the internet; as well as deal with the stress and strain of college life without resorting to cheating. Please know that as your professor I will notice instances of cheating on exams or plagiarizing on papers. General information about the honor code can be found at honorcode.byu.edu. Details about Academic Honesty are found at http://honorcode.byu.edu/content/academic-honesty-details.

Writing submitted for credit at BYU must consist of the student's own ideas presented in sentences and paragraphs of his or her own construction. The work of other writers or speakers may be included when appropriate (as in a research paper or book review), but such material must support the student's own work (not substitute for it) and must be clearly identified by appropriate introduction and punctuation and by footnoting or other standard referencing.

The substitution of another person's work for the student's own or the inclusion of another person's work without adequate acknowledgment (whether done intentionally or not) is known as plagiarism. It is a violation of academic, ethical, and legal standards and can result in a failing grade not only for the paper but also for the course in which the paper is written. In extreme cases, it can justify expulsion from the University. Because of the seriousness of the possible consequences, students who wonder if their papers are within these guidelines should visit the Writing Lab or consult a faculty member who specializes in the teaching of writing or who specializes in the subject discussed in the paper. Useful books to consult on the topic include the current Harbrace College Handbook, the MLA Handbook, and James D. Lester's Writing Research Papers.

Academic Honesty Details--- from the Honor Code Office:

- **Direct Plagiarism:** The verbatim copying of an original source without acknowledging the source.

- **Paraphrased Plagiarism:** The paraphrasing, without acknowledgment, of ideas from another that the reader might mistake for your own.

- **Plagiarism Mosaic:** The borrowing of words, ideas, or data from an original source and blending this original material with one's own without acknowledging the source.

- **Insufficient Acknowledgment:** The partial or incomplete attribution of words, ideas, or data from an original source.

Plagiarism may occur with respect to unpublished as well as published material. Acts of copying another student's work and submitting it as one's own individual work without proper attribution is a serious form of plagiarism.
Other Academic Misconduct— from the Honor Code Office

Academic misconduct includes other academically dishonest, deceitful, or inappropriate acts that are intentionally committed. Examples of such acts include but are not limited to:

- Inappropriately providing or receiving information or academic work so as to gain unfair advantage over others.
- Planning with another to commit any act of academic dishonesty.
- Attempting to gain an unfair academic advantage for oneself or another by bribery or by any act of offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting anything of value to another for such purpose.
- Changing or altering grades or other official educational records.
- Obtaining or providing to another an unadministered test or answers to an unadministered test.
- Breaking and entering into a building or office for the purpose of obtaining an unauthorized test.
- Continuing work on an examination or assignment after the allocated time has elapsed.
- Submitting the same work for more than one class without disclosure and approval.

V. STATEMENT REGARDING SEX DISCRIMINATION:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU’s policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

VI. STATEMENT REGARDING DISABILITIES:

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere which reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are
reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB.

VII. Required Books for Purchase.²

. Warren, R., All the King’s Men
. Steinbeck, J., Grapes of Wrath
. Okada, J., No No Boy
. Twain, M., Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court
. Orwell, G., 1984

VIII. Schedule for Course:

May 1 ......... Introduction
May 6, 8 ................. Democracy
May 13, 15 .............. Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court
May 20, 22 ............... Grapes of Wrath
May 29 ...................... Midterm
June 3, 5 ............... All the King’s Men
June 5, 10 ............... No No Boy
June 12, 17 .............. 1984
June 19 ..................... Final: 9”00-10:50 AM

NOTE: The above schedule with its dates and topics is subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

² Editions other than the ones sold in the bookstore may, of course, be read. Pages, of course, do not always coincide. Many of these novels are also in the Library. However, there are many advantages in having your own copy of the book rather than a library edition since I will be calling your attention to particular passages that you may want to mark.
IX. Course Outline:

A. Introduction: What is a Political Novel? (May 1)

Required Readings:


B. Democracy—one version (May 6, 8)

Required reading:

Adams, *Democracy: an American Novel*

Research topics:

- Corruption tolerance in a democratic society
- The position of the president in the political system
- Can democracy survive the Ratcliffes, the Carringtons, and the Mrs. Lees
- Can the presidency survive the Hoosier Quarryman in office rather than a George Washington
- Change of presidential administrations: Democracy’s “soft spot”
- For democracy to survive, need we agree with Mrs. Lee that: “underneath the scum floating on the surface of politics there is a healthy ocean current of honest purpose which sweeps the scum before it and keeps the mass pure.”
- Is democracy the same as most other governments or is it a distinct form of government

3 Please glance over one of these reference, so that we can discuss what a political novel is and the connection between literature and politics. All of them are on Reserve in HBLL.
C. **Democracy—another version:** (May 13, 15)

**Required Reading:**

Twain, *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court*

**Research topics:**

- A Republic—if you can keep it

- Imposing [forcing] democracy on ill-prepared countries, or “Forceocracy”: The Instant Establishment of Democracy. Is there a danger in trying to do this? Has the U.S. been successful in doing this?

- Michel’s iron law of oligarchy: suggests that regardless of what sort of government you begin with you end with an oligarchy— the boss in the end can find few to support him. Does Michel’s law fit the Boss’ law?

- Despotism of heaven: the perfect government—Earthly despotism: the worst form of government

- The “New Deal:” in King Arthur’s time and in the 1930s

- Blunting effects of slavery and aristocracy

- Essentials in establishing a Republic
  - destroy the throne;
  - universal suffrage;
  - written/unwritten Constitution;
  - stocks abolished
  - free press
  - school system established

- The End: Ye were conquerors; ye are conquered
D. **Depression Era Migration Politics** (May 20, 22)

Required reading:

*Steinbeck, *Grapes of Wrath*

Research topics:

. Depression era politics

. Permanent scars inflicted by the Depression on American democracy

. Building a political community:
  
  Families–leaders–laws–codes
  Privacy and other rights (civility)
  Established governments

. Impact of converting farm people to migrant workers

. Democracy and regional hatred: the “Okies”

. The politics of inequality

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G. **MIDTERM EXAM** (May 29)

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E. Southern Comfort—[not the drink!] (June 3, 5)

Required reading:

_Warren, All the King’s Men_

Research topics:

. Personality as an important concept to understanding American politics

. Southern demagogues like Willie Stark: their influence on democracy

. Power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely: the rise and fall of Willie Stark

. Approaches used by the boss: “either buy ‘em or bust ‘em” as Willie suggested

. Politics: a matter of choices...there is always a price associated with choice

. The Boss’ philosophy: sure there is some graft, but “just enough to make the wheels turn without squeaking.”

. Corruption in Government and Politics in Democratic government

F. Racial Bias or Governmental protection? (June 5, 10)

Required reading:

_Okada, No No Boy_4

Research topics:

. Japanese-American politics in a democratic system

. Racial-profiling in times of crisis

. The plight of the hyphenated American---could you be Japanese and American? Would the two mix?

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4 We will end our look at _All the King’s Men_ and begin our look at _No No Boy_ on 5 June.
Research topics: (cont.)

. Prejudice in times of war: Japanese Americans in World War II

. The meaning of citizenship in times of crisis.

. Preserving civil liberties of citizens in times of crisis

. Who was to blame for the Japanese American situation? The president? The military? The Court? The public?

. What can we learn about our democratic system in crisis from Japanese American Internment?

. Could Internment happen again against other minorities in times of crisis. Should this happen, what would this say about our Constitution and political system in times of crisis?

G. Is this our Future? (June 12, 17)

Required reading:

Orwell, 1984

Research topics:

. 1984: a warning for 21st century democracies

. The Power of political language in controlling human nature and narrowing options.

. Privacy: The most difficult right to protect

The essential act of war is destruction of the products of human labor

. Political relationships between the Rulers and the Ruled

H. FINAL: (19 June 2013-- 9:00-10:50)