

American Politics Since 2010: Where is the U.S. headed?

This year's course is the final offering in my series of courses on recent decades of American history. 2019 does not quite make a decade, I realize, but this course will be called "American Politics Since 2010: Where is the U.S. Headed?" Those of you who have enrolled in earlier courses, which have covered American political history since 1950, will know that my habit is to give very informal lectures (with lots of opportunity for comment and questions from the floor) on selected problems in our nation's political history. I intersperse my own comments with a liberal sprinkling of YouTube videos that record actual historical events and contemporary political comment. What I expect from students is the willingness to make critically informed comments in response to the ideas we generate as a group. There are no right answers, so please say what you think and ask what you will.

I will suggest some recent historical writing as reading for the course, but there are no formal reading assignments. The events since 2010 will be familiar enough to all of us, and I am sure that all of you have opinions on them. The over-all theme of the emerging crisis in democratic politics is well summarized in a recent book, which I recommend to all students as reading for the course: E. J. Dionne, Jr., Norman J. Ornstein, & Thomas E. Mann: *One Nation After Trump: A Guide for the Perplexed, the Disillusioned, the Desperate and the Not-Yet Deported* (St. Martin's Press, 2017). This book may make you think that a better title for the course would be "How did the United States get from where it was in 2010 to where it is today?" We will not solve the problem, of course, but I hope by next April we will have better-informed questions to ask about the current state of American politics.

Leader: Stanley Katz is a professor in the Woodrow Wilson School of Princeton University

Thursdays: 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., 6 weeks: February 28 through April 4

Location: Monument Hall Main