

# Narratives of Freedom

HONC 356 (4 units)

Spring 2023

MWF 10:30am - 11:35am 01/23/23 - 05/10/23 ED 310

Core D1 Philosophy

In Person

## Instructor Information

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Ronald Sundstrom

rrsundstrom@usfca.edu

### Office Hours

MWF 1:00–2:00 pm

### Additional Information

Office hours may occur in-person or on Zoom. Please make a reservation using my [appointment calendar](#) if you would like a 30-minute slot during my office hour. If you would like to meet in person, please inform me of your preference.

## Course Description

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This course puts in conversation key Enlightenment-era (late 17th-18th Century) texts from political philosophy's Social Contract tradition and key texts from the Black Atlantic and American slave narrative tradition. Learning these two traditions together magnifies the ideas they contain, criticize and defend: domination, natural law, liberty, equality, democracy, political representation, civic fraternity and sorority, individual civil rights, slavery, property, consent, and tolerance. We consider the ways these two traditions present both political treatises and narratives about the emergence of free, equal, and enlightened modern men, the birth of civil society, and the justification of political power. These treatises and narratives lead us to confront a conceptual conflict behind centuries of racial, class, and gender domination, and understand more deeply the struggle for liberty, equality, political revolution and reform.

## Course Learning Outcomes

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By the end of the semester, you will be able to do the following, all of which will be assessed through in-class discussions, group projects, papers, and the final exam. See below for descriptions of the HONC Program Learning Outcomes and the Core Learning Outcomes.

Course Learning Outcome	(Re:) HONC Program Learning Outcomes	(Re:) Core Learning Outcomes	Assignment
1. Identify the themes, ideas, and debates covered in this course.	PLO 1, 2	CLO 1, 2	This will be achieved through the readings, discussions, and assignments.
2. Understand the role of philosophers in the propagation of and response to forms of exclusion (e.g., racism, sexism).	PLO 1, 2, 3	CLO 1, 2	This will be achieved through the readings, discussions, and assignments.
3. Perform a close reading of texts, and identify their explanatory, argumentative, and narrative structures.	PLO 2,3	CLO 2, 3	This will be achieved through the readings, discussions, and assignments.
4. Extract and explain the core ideas in the readings.	PLO 3,	CLO 2, 3, 4	This will be achieved through the assignments and essays.
5. Evaluate the core ideas by developing arguments and objections about those ideas.	PLO 1, 2	CLO 1, 3, 4	This will be achieved through the assignments and essays.

## Open Inquiry

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### Open Inquiry

This class is committed to open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement. Therefore, to create a classroom environment that supports respectful, critical inquiry through the free exchange of ideas, the following principles will guide interactions among students and the professor in this class:

- Treat every member of the class with respect, even if you disagree with their opinion;
- Treat every opinion as open to examination, even if it comes from someone with more experience or expertise than you;
- Reasonable minds can differ on any number of perspectives, opinions, and conclusions;

- Some perspectives, opinions, and conclusions are unreasonable or based on falsehoods and should be identified as such;
- Because constructive disagreement sharpens thinking and deepens understanding, it will factor into the course's assignments;
- All viewpoints are welcome;
- No ideas are immune from scrutiny and debate;
- You will not be graded on whether your professor or peers agree with your opinions;
- You will be graded on the evidence and reasoning that leads to those opinions.

## Attendance Policy

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Attendance at the lectures is required. However, I allow each student to accumulate a week of unexcused absences without penalty; that is, 2 classes when the course meets twice a week and 3 when it meets thrice a week. Each absence after that will reduce your course grade by 2.5% off the base value of 100%. What that means is that each unexcused absence will lower your course grade by a significant amount (e.g., from a "B" to a "B-"), which gets worse as your unexcused absences compound. Additionally, attendance at least 50% of the class meetings is required to receive the minimally passing grade of "D-." An absence rate of more than 50% will result in an "F."

*WARNING!* I use Zoom to record class meetings so students who need to miss class can review their missed sessions. Those recordings serve as an archive of the class meetings. Viewing them, or joining class using the Zoom link, *DOESN'T* replace or count toward attendance. Plus, I usually *DON'T* allow students to join the class meetings remotely. When I do it, it is because of some necessity, such as a genuine medical emergency or natural disaster (e.g., a COVID outbreak).

## Assignments

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There will be four discussion board entries tied to group discussions, two commentary essays, one dialogical interview, and two argumentative essays. Instructions for the dialogical interview and the essays will be posted to our Canvas site. The group discussions will occur during class and lead to and support each of your written assignments. The discussion board entries will all have a collective component, and two of them will have an additional individual component. The discussion board entries will be around a page long, the commentary essays will be 3-5 pages long, the midterm argumentative essay will be 4-6 pages long, and the end-of-term argumentative essay will be 6-10 pages long. *Late assignments will be automatically docked 2.5% for each day late.* There will be no final exam.

## Grading Breakdown and Grading Policies

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The assignment categories are weighted thusly: 5% for the dialogical interview; 15% for the entries; 40% for the commentary essays; and 40% for the argumentative essays. As part of Canvas's submission function, Turinitin.com will check the originality of all the submitted work. The following scale will be used to determine your course grade:

Grade Scale for Course Grade									
94-100	A	87-89	B+	77-79	C+	67-69	D+	< 61	F
93-90	A-	84-86	B	74-76	C	64-66	D		
		80-83	B-	70-73	C-	61-63	D-		

## Texts and Supplies

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### Slave Narratives (LOA #114)

ISBN: 9781931082112

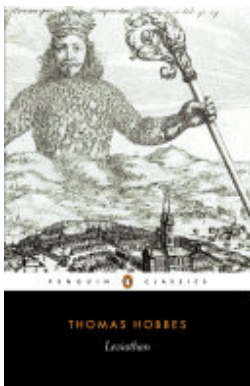
Authors: William L. Andrews, Henry Louis Gates

Publisher: Library of America

Publication Date: 2000-01-15

Notes: This edition is mandatory

Required or recommended?: Required



### Leviathan

ISBN: 9780140431957

Authors: Thomas Hobbes

Publisher: Penguin

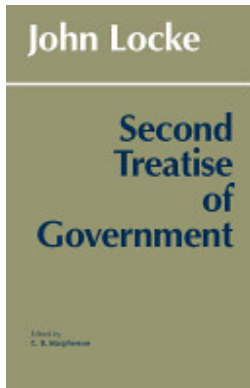
Publication Date: 1968-01-01

Notes: This edition is mandatory

Required or recommended?: Required

### Second Treatise of Government

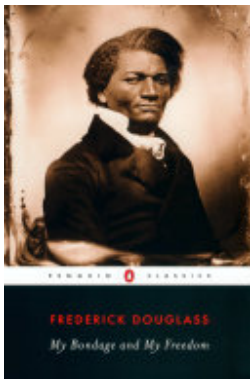
ISBN: 9780915144860



Authors: John Locke  
Publisher: Hackett Publishing  
Publication Date: 1980-01-01  
Notes: This edition is mandatory  
Required or recommended?: Required



**The Basic Writings of John Stuart Mill**  
ISBN: 9780375759185  
Authors: John Stuart Mill  
Publisher: Modern Library  
Publication Date: 2002-05-14  
Notes: This edition is mandatory  
Required or recommended?: Required



**My Bondage and My Freedom**  
ISBN: 9780140439182  
Authors: Frederick Douglass  
Publisher: Penguin  
Publication Date: 2003-02-04  
Required or recommended?: Recommended

In addition to the above, other book chapters and papers will be assigned and posted on Canvas.

## Course Schedule

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M-1/23 Introduction

W-1/25 Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano Or Gustavus*

Vassa, *The African: Written By Himself* (1789; included in *Slave Narratives*), Chapters 1–3  
F–1/27 Equiano, *Interesting Narrative*, Chapters 4–6 **Late registration ends, last day to add a class**

M–1/30 Equiano, *Interesting Narrative*, Chapters 6–8

W–2/1 Equiano, *Interesting Narrative*, Chapters 9–12

F–2/3 Introduction to Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* (1668), Part 1: Chapters 1–6 [**Recommended:**  
Chapters 7 & 8] **1<sup>st</sup> Entry Due**

M–2/6 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1668), Part 1: Chapters 10–16

W–2/8 Hobbes, Part 2: Chapters 17–21, 24, 26–29

F–2/10: Hobbes, Review *Census date* **1<sup>st</sup> Commentary Essay Due on Sunday 2/12**

M–2/13 Nat Turner, *The Confessions of Nat Turner the leader of the late insurrection in Southhampton, VA* (1831; included in *Slave Narratives*)

W–2/15 Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (1689), Chapters 1-4

F–2/17 Locke, Chapter 5

M–2/20 **Presidents' Day Holiday**

W–2/22 Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters 6-9

F–2/24 Locke, continued

M–2/27 Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Query 14 and 18 (1781) **and** Thomas Paine, "African Slavery in America" (Canvas)

[**Recommended:** Jefferson's original draft of the Declaration of Independence; and Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Chapter 10 (1835; Canvas); **and** David Walker, *Walker's Appeal*, Preamble – Article 2, & comment on the Declaration (1829; Canvas). **Go deeper with:** Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*]

W–3/1 Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass An American Slave* (1845), Preface–316

F–3/3 Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, 317-350 **2<sup>nd</sup> Entry Due on 3/3**

M–3/6 Douglass, Chapters 15–18 from *My Bondage and My Freedom* **and** Caleb Bingham, "Dialogue Between A Master and Slave," from *The Colombian Orator* (Canvas)

W–3/8 Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, 350-368

F–3/10 Frederick Douglass, continue **Midterm Argumentative Essay**

[**Recommended:** Frederick Douglass, "Our Composite Nation." **Go deeper with:** Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract* **and** Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Canvas)]

**Spring Break: March 13–17**

M–3/20 Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave is Fourth of July?" (Canvas)

W–3/22 Angela Davis, "Lecture on Liberation," pt. 1 (Canvas)

F–3/24 Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Chapters 2-3

M-3/27 Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861; included in *Slave Narratives*), Preface – Chapter 6 (pg.782)

W-3/29 Jacobs, *Incidents*, Chapters 7-16 (pg. 831)

F-3/31 Jacobs, *Incidents*, Chapters 17-20 (pg. 855) **3<sup>rd</sup> Group Discussion and Preparation for Dialogical Interview**

M-4/3 Jacobs, *Incidents*, Chapters 21–41 Appendix (pg.909)

W-4/5 Jacobs, continued; **and** Shatema Threadcraft, “‘What Could Free Possibly Mean:’ The Intimate Sphere of in Enslaved Women’s Visions of Freedom” (Canvas)

[**Recommended:** Frederick Douglass, Introduction – Chapter 2, from *My Bondage and My Freedom*

F-4/7 **Easter Holiday (No Class)**

M-4/10 Discussion of our **Dialogical Interviews** and **Interview Comments Due Last day to withdraw**

W-4/12 Frederick Douglass, “A Plea For Freedom of Speech in Boston” (Canvas); **and** John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapter 1, from *The Basic Writings of John Stuart Mill*

F-4/14 John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapter 1, from *The Basic Writings of John Stuart Mill* **2<sup>nd</sup> Commentary Essay Due**

M-4/17 Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapter 2

W-4/19 Mill, continued

F-4/21 Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapter 3

M-4/24 Mill, conclusion; **and** Booker T. Washington, excerpts from *Up From Slavery* (Canvas)

W-4/26 Booker T. Washington, excerpts from *Up From Slavery* (Canvas)

F-4/28 Booker T. Washington, selected speeches (Canvas) **4<sup>th</sup> Entry Due**

M-5/1 Ida B. Wells-Barnett, selected writings (Canvas)

W-5/3 Ida B. Wells-Barnett, continued (Canvas)

F-5/5 W.E.B. Du Bois, excerpts from *The Souls of Black Folk*

M-5/8 Du Bois, continued

W- 5/10 **Last Day of Class**

**Final Argumentative Essay Due: Monday, May 15, 12:00 pm**

## Program Learning Outcomes

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The course also reflects the [program learning outcomes](#) of the Honors College (HONS):

1. Ask critical questions relevant to an interdisciplinary liberal arts education, with an emphasis on the role of the global humanities.

2. Apply global and cross-cultural perspectives to scholarly inquiry.
3. Analyze liberal arts content using diverse approaches and methodologies.
4. Utilize a diverse array of theoretical and practical tools to engage with mission-driven issues and work with communities.

## Core D1 - Philosophy

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This course meets the [Core D1 graduation requirement and learning outcomes](#).

1. Understand the value of thinking philosophically by reflecting on the meaning of one's own life, the conceptual foundations of human actions and beliefs, the nature of the self and of human responsibility.
2. Understand and discuss coherently the central philosophical issues, such as the problem of evil, the existence of God, free will, the mind/body relation, human knowledge, and the question of being.
3. Demonstrate an ability to identify and articulate, both orally and in writing, the primary philosophical themes and issues found in the writings of the major philosophers.
4. Demonstrate an ability to evaluate philosophical arguments critically, both orally and in writing, using philosophical methods that have been developed by either historical or contemporary philosophers.

## University Policies

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### **Credit-hour Policy**

One unit of credit in lecture, seminar, and discussion work approximates one hour of direct faculty instruction (or 50 minutes plus a break) and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work per week through one 15-week semester. For further details, see USF's [Credit Hour Policy](#).

### **Students with Disabilities**

The University of San Francisco is committed to the full participation of all students. Student Disability Services (SDS) recognizes disability as a valued aspect of diversity and works to facilitate equal access and an inclusive environment for students with disabilities. The University offers many services to its students with disabilities. [Student Disability Services \(SDS\)](#) arranges these accommodations on an individual basis for each eligible student during the intake/eligibility process. You can initiate the [intake and eligibility](#) process through the office, or email or call SDS



at [sds@usfca.edu](mailto:sds@usfca.edu) or (415) 422-2613. (All communication with SDS is private and confidential.) If you are determined eligible for accommodations, please request that your accommodation letter be sent to me as soon as possible; students are encouraged to contact SDS at the beginning of the semester, as accommodations are not retroactive. Once I have been notified by SDS of your accommodations we can discuss your accommodations and ensure your access to this class or clinical setting. For more information please visit the SDS [website](#).

## **Behavioral Expectations**

All students are expected to behave in accordance with the Student Conduct Code and other University policies (see the USF [Fogcutter](#)). Students whose behavior is disruptive or who fail to comply with the instructor may be dismissed from the class for the remainder of the class period and may need to meet with the instructor or Dean prior to returning to the next class period. If necessary, referrals may also be made to the [Student Conduct process](#) for violations of the [Student Conduct Code](#).

## **Academic Integrity**

As a Jesuit institution committed to *cura personalis*—the care and education of the whole person—USF has an obligation to embody and foster the values of honesty and integrity. All members of the USF academic community are responsible for maintaining the standards of honesty and integrity.

The [honor code](#) applies to all students (undergraduate and graduate) in the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Education, the School of Management, and the School of Nursing and Health Professions. Faculty and students in the School of Law should review their own honor code for policies and procedures. Students enrolled in distance learning (online courses) are subject to these policies as well as supplemental policies set forth by their program.

- Cheating

Cheating is the use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information, and study aids, as well as unauthorized collaboration on examinations and other academic exercises. It is the responsibility of students to consult with their professors concerning what constitutes permissible collaboration. Cheating or helping others cheat is academic fraud.

- Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of presenting, as one's own, the ideas or writings of another; plagiarism, in any of its forms, violates academic integrity. While different academic disciplines have different norms of attribution, all strive to recognize and value individuals' contributions to the larger body of knowledge. It is the responsibility of students to consult with their professors in order to understand the norms of attribution in each discipline and area of study.

- False Citations

False citation is attribution to an incorrect or fabricated source; false citation is academic fraud. False citation seriously undermines the integrity of the academic enterprise.

- Submitting the Same Work for Multiple Assignments

Students may not submit work (in identical or similar form) for multiple assignments without the prior, explicit approval of all faculty to whom the work will be submitted. This includes work first produced at USF or at another institution attended by the student.

- Submitting False Data

False data is information that has been fabricated, altered, or contrived in such a way as to be misleading; the submission of false data is academic fraud.

- Falsifying Academic Documentation

Forging or altering academic documentation (including transcripts, signatures, letters of recommendation, certificates of enrollment or standing, registration forms, and medical certifications) concerning oneself or others is academic fraud.

- Abuse of Library Privileges

Depriving others of equal access to library materials constitutes a violation of academic integrity. This includes sequestering library materials for the use of an individual or group, refusal to respond to recall notices, and the removal or attempt to remove library materials from any university library without authorization.

- Abuse of Shared Electronic Media

Depriving others of equal access to shared electronic media used for academic purposes constitutes a violation of academic integrity. This includes actions that result in the damage or sabotage of campus computer systems.

## **Counseling and Psychological Services**

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is a great source of support for issues of sadness, anxiety, loneliness, college adjustment, relationship struggles, and others not requiring medical intervention. CAPS offers online workshop series open to all students; consultations and referrals; and extensive [website resources](#). In addition, CAPS All Hours line can be contacted by calling (855) 531-0761 or students can use the peer-led Crisis Text line by texting HOME to 741741. CAPS also offers remote individual and group teletherapy to students residing within California. (State regulations prevent provision of therapy across state lines.) The student may choose to talk either by video or telephone and can engage in Single Session Therapy (SST), brief ongoing therapy, or

group therapy. There are no fees for services. Please call (415) 422-6352 to make an appointment. Visit the CAPs [website](#) for more details. Students seeking off campus mental health services can also receive information and support from Case Management (part of the Office of the Dean of Students); visit the Dean of Students' [website](#) for further information.

## **Title IX**

The Title IX Office seeks to stop, remedy, and prevent occurrences of sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence. The University has a [Policy on Nondiscrimination based on Sex and Gender, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct](#). If you have experienced any of these behaviors, we encourage you to report the incident. If you report these behaviors to any staff or faculty member, they must notify the USF Title IX Coordinator.

Students who wish to report any sexual misconduct should use the [online mandatory reporting](#) form, or contact the Title IX Office directly. Other reporting options are available by visiting the Title IX website: <https://myusf.usfca.edu/title-ix/reporting>. The Title IX Office is located in Lone Mountain Room 145.

As an employee at USF, and your Professor, I am a mandatory reporter, meaning I have to share any instances of sexual harassment or sexual violence shared with me or that become known to me. I will have to share this information, including names and any details known, to the Title IX Office to connect you with resources. If you would like more information about the resources available, you can ask me at any time this semester. You do not need to tell me why you are asking to get help for a friend, another student, or yourself.

## **Confidential Resources for Reporting Sexual Misconduct**

- Students may speak to someone confidentially which will not generate a report to the Title IX Office by contacting Counseling and Psychological Services at (415) 422-6352 during M-F 9-4pm, or speaking to a clergy member in University Ministry at (415) 422-4463.
- If you need to speak to a mental health clinician immediately, please **call the CAPS 24/7 All Hours Line at 855-531-0761** (available daily, including weekends and holidays, and accepts international calls), Public Safety (415-422-2911), 911, the Suicide Hotline (dial 988), or go to your nearest emergency room
- For off-campus resources, and local Bay Area organizations: <https://myusf.usfca.edu/title-ix/resources>

## **Learning, Writing, and Speaking Centers**

The University of San Francisco offers academic assistance to all students through The Learning Center, The Writing Center, and The Speaking Center. Services are available at no additional cost to USF students and include subject-specific tutoring, writing assistance, and communications-related

support. The Learning Center also provides opportunities for academic skill development, through one-on-one academic skills coaching, group workshops, and online resources. The Learning, Writing, and Speaking Centers are located on the Lower Level of Gleeson Library. Please contact them at (415) 422-6713 for further assistance or visit the LWSC [website](#) to make an appointment.

## **Communication**

All course communications, like all other USF communications, will be sent to your USF official email address. You are therefore strongly encouraged to monitor that email account.

## **Gleeson Library**

Looking for help with a research paper or project? Set up a consultation with a Librarian or get 24/7 research help [online](#).

## **Covid-19 Proviso**

The ongoing novel coronavirus pandemic may present serious and unforeseen challenges to our class and each of our personal lives, so I retain the right to change the class policies, assigned readings and assignments, and grading scheme to meet any Covid-19-related challenges.

## **Electronic and Other Distractions**

Please be courteous to your classmates and the professor. Do not engage in behavior that distracts or disturbs the class, including using your mobile phone. If you need to read or answer a text message, do so outside of the classroom. You may use a tablet or laptop to access the assigned texts or take notes in class. I reserve the right to ask the class that all *screens* be turned off and put away during class. Arrive on time to lectures and do not leave in the middle of the class period without notifying me before the class begins. Do not read the newspaper or other non-assigned material while the class is in session.

## **Additional USF Resources**

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### **USF Food Pantry**

The USF Food Pantry is an intermediate, short-term solution for any registered USF student to receive food and toiletry resources. Students are invited to stop by the pantry located on the first floor of Gleeson Library in the Atrium, and take the items that they need. Items are available on a first-come, first-serve basis until our supply is depleted. You will be asked to check-in via QR code before entering the pantry. For more information and the current schedule, visit the [USF food pantry website](#). If you have further questions, please contact the Pantry Coordinator at [usfpantry@usfca.edu](mailto:usfpantry@usfca.edu) or 415-422-4099 (during business hours Monday thru Friday from 9:00am -

5:00pm). You can find out about additional food security resources through the [USF food insecurity resource page](#) and the [CalFresh resources site](#).