I. COURSE GOALS, STRUCTURE AND THEMES:

Since antiquity philosophers have argued that individuals are not completely self-sufficient; they require some sort of communal arrangement to fully realize their humanity. In the well-known expression of Aristotle: "Man is by nature a political animal." Yet, the modern age has privileged individuality rather than the collective. A tension has been created between the way in which we regard ourselves as autonomous human beings and the responsibilities we owe to the political and social communities of which we are members.

This course will explore the role of political and social communities in respect to individuals and their place in society. The course will begin with readings from Alexis de Tocqueville's analysis of American democratic society in Democracy in America. We will next turn our attention to the theories of social capital and associations in the work of the social scientist, Robert Putnam. The final portion of the course will examine some contemporary political thinkers who advocate a variety of communitarian political theories.

As we proceed through the course, we will investigate several concepts that are at the core of political and social philosophy: the best way to arrange political systems, the relation of the citizen to the state, the responsibilities of individuals to other individuals and the collective, republicanism as an effective way to organize political practice, and the importance of associations for civil society.

II. TEXTS

III. EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Attendance: regular attendance is required and expected. If you wish to understand these texts as the foundation for future thinking about how we live as political and social beings, then attendance in class and close attention to the readings is imperative.

B. Participation: the course will be a combination of lectures and discussions. Questions, critical comments, and disagreements are both welcome and an excellent way of engaging with the texts you will be reading.

C. Assignments
(1) Midterm exam (submitted electronically via email)
There will be a take-home midterm exam which will be in the format of a 6-8 page essay chosen from a list of questions that will address some key issues presented in the readings.
(2) Final paper (submitted electronically via email)
A research paper (15-18) pages on a topic of your own choosing. The topic must be approved in advance. While the paper should reflect your particular interests, it should attempt to take into consideration the general subject matter of the course. It may focus on a particular theme that runs across more than one author, or it may examine aspects of a single writer's philosophy. The final paper is due on **Sunday, December 18**.

D. Grading:
Your grade for the course will be computed as follows:
- Participation – 10%
- Midterm exam – 40%
- Final paper – 50%

IV. SCHEDULE OF READINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sept. 1</th>
<th>Introduction to the course</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 8</td>
<td>Alexis de Tocqueville I</td>
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<td>Selections from <em>Democracy in America</em></td>
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<td>Sept. 15</td>
<td>Alexis de Tocqueville II</td>
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<td>Selections from <em>Democracy in America</em></td>
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<td>Sept. 22</td>
<td>Alexis de Tocqueville III</td>
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<td>Selections from <em>Democracy in America</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 29</td>
<td>Alexis de Tocqueville IV</td>
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<td>Selections from <em>Democracy in America</em></td>
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| Oct. 6 | Alexis de Tocqueville V  
Selections from *Democracy in America*  
Midterm exam questions handed out |
| Oct. 13| Robert Putnam I  
*Making Democracy Work*  
Midterm exams due |
| Oct. 20| Robert Putnam II  
*Making Democracy Work* |
| Oct. 27| Robert Putnam III  
*Bowling Alone* |
| Nov. 3 | Robert Putnam IV  
*Bowling Alone* |
| Nov. 10| Contemporary Theories of Community I  
Selections from *The Essential Communitarian Reader* and *The Communitarian Reader: Beyond the Essentials* |
| Nov. 17| Contemporary Theories of Community II  
Selections from *The Essential Communitarian Reader* and *The Communitarian Reader: Beyond the Essentials* |
| Dec. 1 | Contemporary Theories of Community III  
Selections from *The Essential Communitarian Reader* and *The Communitarian Reader: Beyond the Essentials* |

**Sunday, December 18, 2016 – Final Papers Due**
MALS and DLS students are responsible for upholding the Georgetown University Honor System and adhering to the academic standards included in the Honor Code Pledge stated below:

**Honor Code:**
*In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor; and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*

**Disabilities Statement:** If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.