

---

**MIAMI UNIVERSITY**  
**Department of Justice and Community Studies**

Course Syllabus

Fall 2016

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 7:30-8:30 am and 2:30-4:00 pm or by appt.

103F Phelps Hall

Dr. John P. Forren

Phone: 785-3276 (O)

668-8304 (C)

forrenjp@miamioh.edu

**CJS/CRD 270: EXPLORING CITIZENSHIP AND DEMOCRACY**

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This one-credit-hour sprint course provides an intensive examination of selected issues of democratic citizenship. Through the use of readings, discussions and experiential learning opportunities, students will explore the multiple meanings of "democracy" and "citizenship" in the United States and will reflect on their own roles as participants in a democratic community. No previous knowledge of democratic theory or American politics/government is required.

**II. CLASS SCHEDULE**

**A. FORMAL CLASS MEETINGS**

Tuesday, September 6 (2:30-4:00 pm):

Workshop # 1: Social Justice Theatre

Focus Topic: What is Democracy? What is Good Citizenship?

Reflection Essay # 1 – completed in class

Reading: Barber, *Strong Democracy* (excerpt)

Longo, *Why Community Matters* (excerpt)

Wednesday, September 7 (2:30-4:00 pm):

Workshop # 2: Social Justice Theatre

Focus Topic: The State of Ohio's Civic Health

Reflection Essay # 2 – completed in class

Reading: Forren and Conover, *2016 Ohio Civic Health Index Report*

Thursday, September 8 (2:30-4:00 pm):

Workshop # 3: Social Justice Theatre

Focus Topic: Does Good Citizenship Require Participation in Politics?

Reflection Essay # 3 – completed in class

Reading: Gutting, "Should Everybody Vote?"

Downs, "An Economic Theory of Political Action in a Democracy"

Monday, September 12 (2:30-4:00 pm):

Workshop # 4: Social Justice Theatre

Focus Topic: Does Good Citizenship Require Community Engagement?

Reflection Essay # 4 – completed in class

Reading: Lou, "The Downside of School Volunteer Requirements"

Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government* (excerpt)

Tuesday, September 13 (2:30-4:00 pm):

Workshop # 5: Social Justice Theatre

Focus Topic: What Should a Citizen Know?

Reflection Essay # 5 – completed in class

Reading: USCIS, “Civics (History and Government) Questions for the Naturalization Test”

- Wednesday, September 14 (3:00-5:30 pm): Public Performance: Social Justice Theatre
- Tuesday, September 20 (2:30-4:00 pm): Wrap-Up Discussion of Citizenship and Democracy Week  
Reflection Essay # 6 – completed in class

## **B. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES**

In addition to the class meetings listed above, students are required to attend any five of the following Citizenship and Democracy Week events:

- \*Monday, September 12:
- Civic Volunteer Fair  
11:00 am, Wilks Conference Center, Miami Hamilton
  - Citizenship and Democracy Week Keynote Address  
Dr. Nicholas Longo, “Thinking Outside the (Ballot) Box: Building Citizen Leadership for Democracy”  
7:00 pm, Wilks Conference Center, Miami Hamilton
- \*Tuesday, September 13:
- On-Campus Public Session: Ohio Court of Appeals for the 12<sup>th</sup> District  
10:00 am, Wilks Conference Center, Miami Hamilton
  - Community Deliberative Dialogue: How Do We Get American Politics Back on Track?  
6:00 pm, Miami Hamilton Downtown Center
- \*Wednesday, September 14:
- Faculty-Led Discussion: Free Speech and Democracy  
12:30-1:30 pm, Mosler Hall patio, Miami Hamilton
  - On-Campus Session: Hamilton City Council  
6:00 pm, 200 Mosler Hall, Miami Hamilton
- \*Thursday, September 15:
- U.S. District Court Naturalization Ceremony  
10:00 am, Main Quad, Miami Hamilton
  - Panel Discussion: Watching Debates Critically  
1:00 pm, 100 Levey Hall, Miami Middletown
  - Freedom Summer App Event  
5:00 pm, Western Campus, Miami Oxford
  - Public Forum: Know Your Rights  
6:00 pm, Hawk Haven, Miami Middletown
  - Public Discussion: Chris Smitherman (Cincinnati City Council), “Lessons in Leadership”  
6:00 pm, Kreger Hall, Miami Oxford

\*Friday, September 16:

Film Screening: “Citizen U.S.A.: A 50-State Road Trip”  
5:00 pm, Macmillan Hall Great Room, Miami Oxford

---

### **COURSE POLICIES**

**Grades:** The course grade will be determined on a cumulative 100-point system. Each student’s point total will be determined as follows:

35 points (35%):	Participation in class workshops/meetings/discussions (7 @ 5 points each)
30 points (30%):	Reflection Essays (6 @ 5 points each)
35 points (35%):	Participation in experiential learning opportunities (5 @ 7 points each)
100 points (100%)	

Final grades will be assigned on a scale as follows:

94-100 points: A	80-83 points: B-	67-69 points: D+
90-93 points: A-	77-79 points: C+	64-66 points: D
87-89 points: B+	74-76 points: C	60-63 points: D-
84-86 points: B	70-73 points: C-	59-0 points: F

**Class Attendance and Participation:** As this course will be conducted in a workshop/discussion format, regular class attendance and participation is essential. Meaningful participation includes careful reading of the assigned material prior to class as well as active engagement in classroom/workshop/experiential learning activities.

Of course, students with conflicting religious obligations will be excused from class attendance. On this issue, please see Chapter 9 (“Class Attendance”) of the Student Handbook, which reads in relevant part:

There are no University-recognized excused absences except for religious observances that require absence from a class session and other required class activities. Students must give written notification to their instructor within the first two weeks of class of the religious event that prohibits class attendance and the date that will be missed, if officially known. Instructors will, without prejudice, provide such students with reasonable accommodations for completing missed work. However, students are ultimately responsible for material covered in class, regardless of whether the student is absent or present.

**Reflection Essays:** As part of course requirements, each student must will complete six reflection essays, each worth five points (5% of the final course grade). Each of these essays will be completed during class time and will be written in a journal provided by the instructor at the first class session on September 6<sup>th</sup>.