

**SYLLABUS IS IN DRAFT FORM; READINGS,
SPEAKERS AND ASSIGNMENT DETAILS PENDING
(March 10, 2021)**



**PSCI 398-303: The Future of Conservatism and the GOP:
Radicalization, Renewal or Replacement**

Professor Information:

Dr. Deirdre Martinez (martined@sas.upenn.edu)

Evan McMullin (demcmullin@gmail.com)

Course Time/Day: Fridays at 3:30 pm

Course Description:

In the aftermath of the 2020 elections, it is clear the Republican party is fractured. From Penn alumnus and good friend to Penn in Washington Evan McMullin, in the [New York Times](#): "So what's next for Republicans who reject their party's attempts to incinerate the Constitution in the service of one man's authoritarian power grabs? Where is our home now? The answer is that we must further develop an intellectual and political home, for now, outside of any party. From there, we can continue working with other Americans to defeat Trump's heirs, help offer unifying leadership to the country and, if the GOP continues on its current path, launch a party to challenge it directly."

This course -- the first Penn in Washington course to be delivered on campus -- will give students the opportunity to explore both the roots and the evolution of conservative thought by engaging with readings and in conversation with the prominent leaders on the right. Please note that Evan McMullin and guest speakers will be participating via Zoom. Dr. Martinez and students will be in-person on campus, if that is possible for fall 2021.

Course Requirements, Expectations, and Grading:

While the details of the assignments are not finalized, as is typical of a Penn in Washington course, graded work will be modeled after projects you are likely to be assigned as part of your work in the policy and politics arenas. For example, one product might be a platform for a reformed Republican Party or new party that rises on the right to challenge it. There will also likely be opportunities for structured debate. Students may also construct policy proposals on some of our most pressing problems using the conservative principles they study and develop. In the process, students will explore their own political philosophy and compare and contrast this with the core principles of a principled conservative viewpoint, and may be surprised to find more commonalities than differences. Acquiring cognitive empathy by engaging with thoughtful scholars and practitioners and developing solutions from a perspective that they might not share builds useful muscles, both for practical career purposes and for personal growth.

Students are expected to submit their own work, and presenting the work of others as their own is not acceptable. Please read [Penn's policy on plagiarism](#) and if you are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism, please feel free to ask. Final grades of Incomplete will not be given except under extraordinary circumstances such as medical emergencies. Outside these extraordinary circumstances, if work has not been completed by the end of the course, a final grade will be assigned based on the best information available at the sole discretion of the professor.

Assignment Details: (PENDING)

Course Schedule: (No speakers have been scheduled, but in terms of class structure, the majority of class meetings are likely to include a speaker. Readings are pending, but will include newspaper articles, long form journalism, and book chapters.)

Week	Class Topics and Guest Speakers	Class Prep
1	Course Introduction	
2	How did we get here? Speaker:	
3	Back to basics: The origins, ideas and evolutions of the GOP & Conservatism Speaker:	

4	A challenge from within: The rise of the Tea Party and Donald Trump Speaker:	
5	The Never Trump revolt: Inside the Republican resistance Speaker:	
6	The State of the GOP: Conspiracy, radicalization and division Speaker:	
7	What's Next, Option A: Take Back the GOP? Speaker:	
8	What's Next, Option B: Build A new party? Speaker:	
9	Next steps: Building a new political home Speaker:	
10	Ideas: Imagining a new conservative governing philosophy & platform Speaker:	
11	Strategy: Leveraging political minority power for change Speaker:	
12	Platform & strategy development: Interviews & Working groups Speaker:	
13	Student platform & strategy presentations Speaker:	
14	Looking ahead to 2022, 2024 and beyond Speaker:	