



National Review Institute offers two six-week virtual Burke to Buckley courses so that our friends anywhere can experience firsthand the program's informative and engaging sessions led by world-class scholars and public intellectuals.

Participants will meet via Zoom for a series of six weeknight seminars and should plan to attend all six sessions to amplify the experience and get to know the other participants. Participants complete a reading assignment for each session, which they will discuss with a leading conservative thinker. Sessions involve spirited conversations around each topic. Discussion leaders are all experts in their fields and consist of popular writers/speakers at *National Review*, faculty at universities, and leading thinkers at policy groups.

Both syllabi were developed by Daniel Mahoney, NRI trustee and professor emeritus at Assumption University.

The fee for the course is \$200. For an additional \$50 contribution (which you can add at checkout), you will receive the benefits of our \$250 general membership, including invitations to our book club and other exclusive virtual and in-person events. 1955 Society Members at our Sustainer level or higher (\$5,000+) receive complimentary invitations. Please contact Margaret Farris at margaret.farris@nrinstitute.org with any questions.

Burke to Buckley 201 was developed as a dynamic, second-level program for those who have completed Burke to Buckley 101 either virtually or in person.

SESSION 1: **The Constitution & the Moral Imagination**

This first session explores the American constitution in relation to the broader tradition of Western constitutionalism. It aims to clarify the specific characteristics of the liberal republic that is the United States and the kind of citizenship (and the understanding of self-government) appropriate to such a political order.

Readings: The US Constitution and The Bill of Rights, Selections from *The Federalist Papers*, a selection from *Democracy and the Constitution* by Walter Berns, and two articles by Dr. William B. Allen.

[View remaining sessions on next page. ▶](#)

SESSION 2:

Abraham Lincoln & Frederick Douglass

Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass are among the greatest of Americans. They combined a deep and abiding commitment to human freedom and equality with nobility of character, rare rhetorical gifts, a loathing of slavery, and a principled commitment to the promise of America. Once the greatest of our heroes, they are in danger of being “cancelled” by ideologues who wish to repudiate our American civic and moral inheritance. This session aims to draw on their wisdom and example to highlight the moral foundations of American democracy and the ultimate incompatibility of American principles with slavery and racism.

Readings: Selections from the writings of Abraham Lincoln and from the writings of Frederick Douglass.

SESSION 3:

The Morality of the Market

This session will analyze the nature of a truly humane economy, the connections between economic and political freedom, and the rise of Woke Capitalism. It will explore the moral case for the market order as well as the understanding of the human person, his or her virtues and vices, that supports and upholds the exercise of economic and political freedom. And it will examine the development of Woke capitalism, a coercive form of activism that puts the economic resources of corporations (and other economic actors) behind a highly ideological and utopian view of “social change.”

Readings: Selections from Daniel J. Hugger’s *The Humane Economist: A Wilhelm Röpke Reader*, Milton Friedman’s *Capitalism and Freedom* and Stephen R. Soukup’s *The Dictatorship of Woke Capital*.

SESSION 4:

Communism in Theory & Practice

Today, Communism is in vogue among the young and in many elite circles, and its war on human and human dignity is less and less understood or appreciated for what is and was. At best, many people think that Communism is good “in theory” but doesn’t work “in practice.” This session aims to highlight the intimate and inseparable relationship between Communist theory and practice: It is a false and mendacious ideology that inevitably leads to totalitarianism and a systematic war on human nature.

Readings: Selections from *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx, *The Gulag Archipelago, Volume II* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, and *The Other Solzhenitsyn* by Daniel J. Mahoney.

SESSION 5:

The Abolition of Character: Identity Politics and Guilt by Race

America is in the grip of a “moral panic” where radicalized elites denounce our civic inheritance as hopelessly marred by “systemic racism” and unprecedented forms of exploitation and injustice. These claims hardly hold up when subjected to critical analysis. But a new ideology, identity politics, is in the process of colonizing civil society and is now being promoted and enforced by the new administration in Washington. This session examines the perverse “theological” assumptions that informs this highly moralistic (even fanatical) secular religion. It suggests another more measured and humane way of approaching race relations and reaffirming our commitment to racial justice.

Readings: Selection from Joshua Mitchell’s *American Awakening: Identity Politics and Other Afflictions of Our Time*.

SESSION 6:

Religious Liberty

Today most intellectuals and academics associate democracy with secularism and the absolute relegation of religion to the private sphere of human life. But even this “privatization” of religion cannot protect it from activist demands that society as a whole be liberated or emancipated from traditional or customary morality and any trace of the older Judeo-Christian heritage that once animated and informed American society. As a result, appeals to religious liberty are seen by many as the best way of defending weakened and embattled forms of traditional religion against coercive secularism. In light of these controversies and developments, this session will explore the relationship between “the spirit of religion” and “the spirit of liberty” (Tocqueville), the Founders’ view of religious liberty, and the various ways Americans have traditionally accommodated religion within a political order friendly to religious affirmation but not to direct government support for an established religion or religions.

Readings: Selections from *Democracy in America* by Alexis de Tocqueville, “The Founders’ Religious Liberty, Beyond Rakove” by V. Phillip Muñoz, and *Religious Liberty in Crisis* by Ken Starr.