Course Title:  
The Articulate Citizen  

Course Description:  
Our Founding Fathers considered a well-informed citizenry crucial to the survival of our republic. In this core writing course, we will critically evaluate some of the most important essays, speeches, and other documents from American history and use them as models for our own writing. We will also look at media portrayal of current events and issues in order to understand the relationship between audience and slant, a skill that will be useful to you both as a scholar and as a citizen. Thus you will explore some of the ways that your own predispositions may affect your writing, as well as the impact of bias on the way information is presented to you. In effect, in this course you will have the opportunity to emulate some of the most inspiring American voices to make your own writing more nuanced and persuasive, while discovering your own biases and learning how to detect the bias in other people’s messaging, both in the present and in historical contexts.

Readings/Texts:  
Our reading list centers on foundational primary sources of our democracy, such as the Declaration of Independence, the Seneca Falls Declarations of Sentiments and Resolutions, and speeches and essays by George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Herbert Hoover, Franklin Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., and Lyndon Johnson. Other authors on our whirlwind syllabus include Andrew Carnegie, Walter Lippmann, Edward R. Murrow, Potter Stewart, E.B. White, and George Lakoff. We will also look at media coverage of current events in newspapers including the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal.

Student Requirements:  
As with all Honors courses, consistent attendance and active participation are required. Students are expected to keep a reading journal, which will form the basis for a series of short reaction papers. There will be five brief exercises and three analytical essays, the last of which is a research project that you will expand into your final project.

About the Instructor:  
A fourth-generation Lobo, Richard Obenauf earned his BA from UNM and his MA and PhD from Loyola University Chicago. He studies the relationship between knowledge and society, with a particular interest in the history of censorship and intolerance.