



# Constitution Day Lecture by Michael Zuckert “Completing the Constitution”

September 17, 2014

3:30- 5:00 PM

Tate Hall, Room 215

Professor Michael Zuckert will explore historical and theoretical issues surrounding the ratification of the Fourteenth Amendment in 1868.

***Abstract:** The Fourteenth Amendment defines national citizenship and guarantees minimum levels of legal due process and equal protection to everyone within the jurisdiction of the United States. Some scholars argue that the purpose of the Amendment was to revolutionize the Constitution by replacing the traditional federal system with a national system of government. The truth, Zuckert argues, is the drafters of the Fourteenth Amendment set out to “complete the Constitution,” neither to reform it radically nor to reaffirm it simply. In doing so, they unwittingly followed in the tracks of the original “father of the Constitution,” James Madison, who believed the original Constitution was defective in important ways.*

An expert on political philosophy and American political thought, Zuckert is the Nancy Reeves Dreux Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame. His books include *Natural Rights and the New Republicanism* (1994), *The Natural Rights Republic* (1997), *Launching Liberalism: John Locke and the American Political Tradition* (2002), and *The Truth About Leo Strauss: Political Philosophy and American Democracy* (2006).



**The lecture is free and open to the public.**  
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