Political Science Fall 2017 Courses

(M)- Methodology

(*)- Advanced Seminar

PS 002: First Year Tutorial in Comparative Politics: Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Conflict in Eurasia

Professor: Oxana Shevel

In this course, we will examine one of the most important topics in the world today - nationalism –by focusing on the states of Eurasia (the former Soviet Union) which have grappled with problems of (re)defining national identity and of managing inter-ethnic strife and competing claims to territory and sovereignty. The course begins with an overview of the literature on nationalism, including topics such as definitions of nation and nationalism, different types of national identity and nationalism, and the reasons for nationalism’s development as a leading political principle. We then examine the Soviet "nationalities problem" in historical perspective, from the imperial legacies of tsarist Russia, through Leninist and Stalinist nationalities policies, and finally through the breakup of the USSR along national lines. In the second half of the course, we explore various dimensions of ethno-national conflict and identity (re)formation in the post-Soviet successor states, examining struggles over citizenship, language, history, religion, territory and sovereignty.

PS003: First Year Tutorial on American Government: Nonprofits and Civil Society

Professor: Jeffrey Berry

This seminar examines the growing role of nonprofits in the United States, especially in the administration of social services. We’ll also look at the role of nonprofits in advocacy, policymaking, philanthropy, and social entrepreneurship. All students will be assigned to three-person teams, each of which will develop a business plan for a new nonprofit.

PS 011: Introduction to American Politics

Professor: James Glaser

A study of governmental politics, functions, and programs. Emphasis given to political behavior, both at the mass level and in institutions. Survey of public opinion and political culture, parties, and elections. Congress, the presidency, the bureaucracy, the federal courts, and interest groups.

PS 015: Sophomore Seminar: Politics in the City (M)

Professor: Jeffrey Berry

Three major problems in urban politics: the political economy of cities, especially issues involving community economic development; race and the city, emphasizing the problems facing the poorest residents of the inner city; and political empowerment, including analysis of neighborhood government.

PS 021: Introduction to Comparative Politics

Professor: David Art

Theories and evidence in comparative politics, preparing students for upper-level courses that focus on specific regions, countries, and themes. Examination and evaluation of competing
theoretical approaches to important phenomena in world politics, including democracy and democratization; revolutions; economic development; and ethnicity and ethnic conflict. Discussion of illustrative examples from different regions such as Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Russia, East Asia, South Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America.

**PS 041: Western Political Thought I**

**Professor: Ioannis Evrigenis**

Central concepts of ancient, medieval, and early modern political thought. Ideas of Thucydides, Aristophanes, Plato, and Aristotle during the rise and fall of Athens. Subsequent transformations of political philosophy related to the decline of the Roman Empire and the origins and development of Christian political doctrine, and the new political outlook of those who challenged the hegemony of Christianity. Analysis of how pre-modern political thought helped structure future political debate.

**PS 061: Introduction to International Relations**

**Professor: Richard Eichenberg**

Examination of several conceptual designs intended to make order out of the essential anarchy in international relations, from a theoretical assessment of the nation-state and the nature of national power to an exploration of behavior among nation-states, including the ultimate problem of war and peace and an appraisal of the factors that give an age its particular characteristics.

**PS 099: Fieldwork in Politics: Fieldwork in Local Government**

**Professor: Shin Fujihira**

Internship placements with such employers as legislators, campaigns, news media, lobbies, law firms, and administrative agencies. Twelve to fifteen hours of work per week. Written assignments, with supporting readings, on organizational structure, goals and strategies, and occupational socialization.

**PS 103: Political Science Research Methods (M)**

**Professor: Deborah Schildkraut**

The study of quantitative methods for investigating political issues and policy controversies. Focuses on collecting, analyzing, and presenting data. Emphasizes hands-on training that provides useful skills for academic and professional settings. Topics covered include: measurement, hypothesis development, survey design, experiments, content analysis, significance tests, correlation, and regression. No prior statistics background necessary. Pre-requisite: PS 11, 21, 41, 42, or 61 or first year tutorial.

**PS 118-01: Topics in American Politics: U.S. Elections: Rules, Strategies and Outcomes**

**Professor: Eitan Hersh**

This is a survey course of U.S. elections that connects the dots from laws (the Constitution, case law, state and federal statutes) to strategies (by political parties, candidates, interest groups, and donors), and from strategies to outcomes (voting, public opinion, activism). No pre-requisites. All are welcome.

**PS 118-02: Topics in American Politics: Information, Technology, and Political Power**
Professor: Eitan Hersh

A wide-ranging course in how politics affects information technologies and in how information affects politics and governance. Topics include oversight, government leaks, free speech, surveillance, collective action, voter decision-making, campaign targeting, Uber, Amazon and antitrust laws, and more.

PS 118-03: Topics in American Politics: Massachusetts State Government

Professor: Stan Rosenberg

Learn from Massachusetts Senate President, Stan Rosenberg, about the process, roles of key players and strategic thinking involved in creating public policy addressing today’s most pressing issues. This class will operate as the legislature itself by identifying a chosen problem, creating and debating possible solutions from the perspective of key stakeholders and interest groups, and drafting and passing comprehensive legislation. Course methods include focus on experiential learning in addition to discussion and debate, research and policy writing. Class time will be enhanced by guest speakers and visits to the Massachusetts State House.

PS 121: Seminar: Political Culture in Comparative Perspective (*)

Professor: Consuelo Cruz

How cultural meanings and practices shape political struggles and institutions. Survey of culturalist theories of political dynamics and structures, and assessment of theories against a range of empirical case studies from Asia, the Middle East, Western Europe, Latin America, and the United States.

PS 122: Soviet, Russian, and Post-Soviet Politics

Professor: Oxana Shevel

Analysis of domestic political, economic, and social development of the Soviet Union and its successor states. Approximately one third of the course is devoted to an overview of political, economic, and social structures that defined Soviet Communism. The remaining two-thirds of the course considers the divergent paths taken by the fifteen successor states of the Soviet Union after 1991. The course applies social scientific theories while examining developments such as state collapse and state formation, political and institutional changes, the politics of economic reform, the challenges of nationalism within the multinational state, electoral revolutions, and other topics.

PS 127: Latin American Politics

Professor: Consuelo Cruz

This course is intended to deepen our understanding of Latin America and of politics. To that end, we will be concerned with both the political dynamics of Latin America and with significant debates in political science. This course will familiarize students with the rich histories of several Latin American countries and engage social scientific theorizing of such processes as imperialism, colonialism, revolution, regime change, identity politics, and issues in political economy.

PS 129: African Politics

Professor: Pearl Robinson

Analysis of political developments in contemporary Africa, with emphasis on the interaction
between politics and culture. Relates Africa's historical, economic, social, and gender dynamics to general theories of politics and governance. Prerequisite: Sophomore Standing.

**PS 138-01: Topics in Comparative Politics: Politics of Oil and Energy**

**Professor: Nimah Mazaheri**

This course examines how oil, energy, and other natural resources have shaped economic and political outcomes in countries around the world. It begins by exploring research on how oil and natural resources affect political regimes and the risk of civil war and international conflict. The economic effects of oil and natural resources are then considered through an analysis of the "resource curse" hypothesis. We will evaluate this hypothesis by investigating the experiences of countries in the Middle East, Latin America, Africa, and North America. The final part of the class takes a public policy focus by looking at how governments design and implement policy related to oil and energy, how oil and energy industries respond to this policy, and how this affects consumers and the public as a whole. We examine topics such as the role of OPEC, regulation, and energy policy in the United States.

**PS 138-02: Topics in Comparative Politics: International Political Economy**

**Professor: Nimah Mazaheri**

The course provides an introduction to the study of International Political Economy, which broadly examines how domestic and international politics shapes global economic systems and the economic relations between countries. Students will gain from this course a better understanding of how governments and institutions influence global trends and practices in the areas of international trade, foreign investment, monetary policy, foreign aid, and more.

**PS 147: Seminar: Political Philosophy of Nietzsche (*)**

**Professor: Robert Devigne**

Nietzsche's views of philosophy, nature, morality, religion, art, science, and politics. Analysis of view that "God is dead" and that we are no longer capable of distinguishing whether one value is better than another. Assessment of the qualities that must exist--in both the individual and society--for human creativity to regenerate. Exploration of whether Nietzsche successfully broke from Western political philosophy. Please see departmental website for specific details. Recommendations: Sophomore standing or permission of instructor and completion of PS 41 or 42.

**PS 149: Contemporary Political Theory**

**Professor: Dennis Rasmussen**

Is the welfare state defensible? How should we balance individual rights and communal responsibilities? Is it possible or desirable to accommodate illiberal cultural and religious groups in a liberal society? We will examine these and other pressing political questions through a survey of contemporary political theory, from the mid-20th century to the present. The main focus of the course will be on contemporary liberalism – the various forms it takes and challenges it faces. Authors range from Isaiah Berlin and Michael Oakeshott to John Rawls and his critics.

**PS 157: Markets, Morals, and Religion: The Political Theory of David Hume and Adam Smith (*)**

**Professor: Dennis Rasmussen**
Examination of two leading figures of the Scottish Enlightenment who happened to be best friends: David Hume, who is widely considered the greatest philosopher ever to write in the English language, and Adam Smith, who is almost certainly history's most famous theorist of commercial society. Analysis and comparison of their views of reason, morality, politics, commerce, religion, and the good life. Readings focus on Hume's Enquiries and Essays and Smith's Theory of Moral Sentiments and Wealth of Nations.

PS 158-01: Topics in Political Thought: Rise and Decay of the West

Professor: Robert Devigne

Literature that examines whether the modern West will avoid the fate of all previous civilizations of world historical significance: decay and/or fall. Among the topics explored: the charge that the arts and sciences erode social cohesion; the argument that the Western technological mind promotes "enfeeblement of the spirit;" the idea that modernity marks the peak or "end of history;" the position that modern Western values necessarily lead to a nihilistic crisis of beliefs. Throughout the course, there will be comparisons between the modern West and Persia, Greece, Rome, and Christendom and analysis of corruption as a source of individualism, cultural development, and philosophy. Readings include Rousseau, Hegel, Nietzsche, Tocqueville, Heidegger, Strauss, Schmitt.

PS 188-01: Topics in International Relations: Human Rights and American Foreign Policy

Professor: Katrina Swett

Fundamental notions of universal human rights are deeply embedded in American history and its sense of national identity. Much of the early writing and debate about the moral foundations of the nation suggest that Americans viewed themselves as a righteous template after which the rest of the world should pattern itself. However, America's self-image and its implications for US foreign policy became more relevant in the 20th century when America emerged as a major player on the world stage. Particularly in the post-World War II period, the US played a pivotal role in establishing universal human rights as a key organizing principle for the new world order. This course will examine the role that human rights have played in American foreign policy and the cross currents, contradictions and inconsistencies that have emerged. We will look at these issues both historically and in the current context, examining topics ranging from enhanced interrogation techniques (torture) employed by the Bush administration to the challenges posed by violent extremist groups such as ISIS to the international architecture of human rights.

PS 188-02: Topics in International Relations: Chinese Foreign Policy

Professor: Michael Beckley

China has the world's largest military and the second largest economy. Despite its impressive size and economic vitality, however, China remains a vulnerable nation surrounded by powerful rivals. This course examines the geo-strategic challenges facing China on four fronts: at home, with its immediate neighbors, in surrounding regional systems, and in the world beyond Asia.

PS 188-04: Topics in International Relations: Race, Ethnicity, and US-African Foreign Policy

Professor: Pearl Robinson
Scholars debate whether foreign attachments of US ethnic lobbies foster policy advocacy that runs counter to the national interest. This course traces the shift in emphasis of African-American internationalists from the defense of Black nationality to broader human rights advocacy around norms of racial equality, the rule of law, and economic justice. Case studies address the role of race, ethnicity and religion in the making of US Africa policy from 1850 to the present.

**PS 188-05: Topics in International Relations: Peace Through Entrepreneurship**

**Professor: Steven Koltai**

International political instability, unrest and violence most often stem from massive rates of mostly youth unemployment, and the most effective way to address this is by spurring entrepreneurship—the greatest single, private sector job-creator. This course is based on this central theory, covering a range of related topics including theories of international economic development, impact investing, microfinance, and practical operations of the international development space. A veteran of the Council on Foreign Relations, the Brookings Institute, Warner Bros. Inc., McKinsey & Co., and the Department of State, Prof. Koltai pulls from his professional background to create a unique classroom experience for both undergraduates and Fletcher students. This course will particularly appeal to those interested in working in the international economic development sphere, and will rely heavily on Prof. Koltai’s recent book, “Peace through Entrepreneurship: Investing in a Startup Culture for Security and Development.” Open to Junior and Senior undergraduates and Fletcher students.

**PS 188-06: Topics in International Relations: Gender and Conflict in IR**

**Professor: Phoebe Grace Donnelly**

This course explores gender dynamics in modern conflicts from the perspective of civilian societies, state militaries and non-state armed groups. The course will look at gender roles, relations, and symbols, throughout different phases of conflict including the precursors to conflict, during a conflict, and finally in the aftermath of active conflict. Gender, in this course, will be used as a lens to understand different identities in conflict and will look at expectations for women, men, boys, and girls, as well as examine femininities and masculinities. The course will use literature from scholars in the field of gender and conflict, but will also include literature on conflict that does not have a gender perspective, with the aim to encourage students to add their own gendered analysis or questioning of current theories of conflict in international relations.

**PS 189-01: Seminar in IR: International Relations of East Asia (*)**

**Professor: Shinju Fujihira**

This seminar examines the contemporary controversies in the field of international relations, in light of the empirical evidence drawn from the Asia-Pacific region. Topics include power and deterrence, alliance politics, economic regionalism and rivalry, domestic politics and nationalism, multilateral institutions, nuclear proliferation, terrorism and Islamist militancy, territorial and maritime disputes, and energy and environment.

**PS 189-03: American Primacy (*)**

**Professor: Michael Beckley**
The United States is the world's only superpower. Will this period of American primacy last? This course reviews the major threats to American power and evaluates how the United States can overcome them.

**PS 198: Senior Honors Thesis**

**Professor: Richard Eichenberg**

This course explores the theoretical, empirical, normative, and methodological problems involved in conducting political science research. It will also provide a forum for discussing students’ draft thesis chapters.