Political Science Department
Graduate Course Descriptions

Fall 2017
PSCI 531-301 Public Opinion and Elections
Prof. M. Levendusky  
Mondays 9:00AM–12:00PM

This course is designed to give advanced undergraduates and graduate students exposure to the literature on political behavior in American politics (the course is part of the department’s 3-course graduate sequence in American politics). The course will cover both the classics of public opinion and political behavior from the Columbia, Michigan, and Rochester schools, as well as more current topics and debates in the literature. Topics include (but are not limited to) the early voting studies, the role of partisanship, the nature and origins of ideology, mass-elite interactions, heuristics and low information rationality, the nature of the survey response, campaign and media effects, framing effects, and the role of institutions in structuring behavior.

Undergraduates are welcome in the class, but they should know that the class assumes familiarity with quantitative approaches to studying politics. Undergraduates who want to enroll in the class should speak to the instructor prior to the first meeting.

PSCI 534-401 Political Culture and American Cities*
Prof. A. Reed  
Thursdays 6:00–9:00PM

This course brings together the vantage points of urban political economy and urban anthropology. Readings and discussions will engage with both literatures, folding in considerations of race, ethnicity and gender in American city life, with a focus on the relation between culture and political economy.

We will reconstruct the history of the different tracks of urban studies in the U.S., beginning with its roots in sociology and anthropology in the Chicago School and in political science in reform-oriented studies of public administration. We will revisit the community power debate of the 1950s-1970s, which shook out largely along disciplinary lines, and will examine the development of the urban political economy perspective in the 1980s and 1990s, as well as developments within U.S. urban anthropology since the 1960s. We will employ some local case study materials, and at every point we will try to understand the intellectual trajectories of the urbanist discourses in relation to dynamics contemporaneously shaping urban politics and policy.

Course requirements are seminar preparation which includes each student’s leading discussion around specified reading assignments -- and a research paper, the topic of which must be approved by week 5. There may also be an optional mid-term assignment, e.g., a book critique.

*Cross-listed with AFRC 533-401
PSCI 545-401 Politics and Education

Prof. S. Ben-Porath  
Wednesdays 4:00–6:00PM

How is education a form of political action? In this course we look at the governance of schools, the trust in them and their relations to socio-economic conditions in society, among other topics, using research in education, political science, and political theory.

*Cross-listed with EDUC 595-401

PSCI 550-401 Borders and Boundaries in International Relations

Prof. B. Simmons  
Tuesdays 6:00–9:00PM

This research seminar is designed for graduate students and advanced undergraduates. It explores the meaning and consequences of borders and boundaries in international relations. How do borders, border regions, and border activities speak to national encounters with neighbors and the rest of the world? How do international borders influence war and peace between states? How do they affect international trade and development? When and how are international borders “securitized,” and how does this affect the flow of goods, people, and illicit activities around and across the border? How do states cooperate across international borders? While this course is designed primarily as a seminar in international relations, we will examine the meaning and function of boundary-making between states from multiple perspectives. Borders, border regions and border crossings have multiple significance as designations of state authority, security buffers, expressions of social meaning and opportunities for economic integration. As a seminar designed primarily to stimulate research ideas, this course will be concerned with historical and current problems relating to international borders around the world. We will concentrate on formulating interesting research questions, bringing data to bear on specific hypotheses, becoming familiar with data sources, and designing our own research. All assignments are related to developing research skills; there are no in-class exams.

*Cross-listed with LAW 989-401

PSCI 588-401 Revolutions and Dictators

Prof. E. Kennedy  
Wednesdays 2:00–5:00PM

American political discourse after the 2016 election revived a ideology thought to have been defeated at the end of World War 2: fascism. On social media, in op-ed columns, on television, its specter is everywhere. But what is, or what was it? Before Mussolini, Italy was a liberal entity, an object of political maneuvers such as Machiavelli describes in The Prince. Italy was but the first European constitution to fail and fall into dictatorship. Now we are talking about such failures again, and openly discussion
whether our constitution can survive. This seminar concentrates on the history and consequences of those constitutions.

This seminar considers what history tells us about the origins and effects of authoritarian regimes, and the decline of civic good as an ideal. The three major dictatorships – Stalin’s Russia, Hitler’s Germany and Mussolini’s Italy – are the focus of our work. While the current debate on fascism gave impetus to the course, we will work through debates about those three regimes as they are present in the work of historians and political scientists.

*Cross-listed with GRMN 582-401

**PSCI 600-301 International Relations Theory**

Prof. A. Weisiger  
*Mondays 2:00–5:00PM*

This course is designed to introduce Ph.D. students to the central concepts and theories of international relations as preparation for the international relations comprehensive exams. After introductory weeks on the history of the international relations discipline and the logic of inference in political science, we spend half a semester on general theoretical perspectives on international politics, focusing on realism, institutionalism, and constructivism. The remainder of the course examines important topics, including the democratic peace, open economy politics, and the causes of war. Students are evaluated on the basis of participation, reading response papers, and take-home midterm and final exams.

**PSCI 614-301 Political Identity and Political Institutions**

Prof. I. Lustick  
*Fridays 10:00AM–1:00PM*

The politics of identity has become a central focus of concern in our discipline. In this seminar efforts will be made to explore the notion that individual and group identities are subjects most effectively studied within the analytic field surrounding questions about the crystallization, operation, consequences, transformation, and collapse of political institutions. Toward this end we will consider work done on identities and/or institutions from a variety of theoretical perspectives, including structural-functionalism, historical institutionalism, rational choice, post-modernism, evolution, and agent-based modeling.
PSCI 635-401 Experimental Design & ISS Causality
Prof. D. Mutz  
*Wednesdays 4:00–6:00PM*

The main goal of this course is to familiarize students with experiments, quasi-experiments, representative experiments and field experiments as they are widely used in the social sciences. Some introductory level statistics background will be assumed, though this is a research design course, not a statistics course. By the end of the course, students will be expected to develop their own original experimental design that makes some original contribution to knowledge. Throughout the course of the semester, we will also consider how to deal with the issue of causality as it occurs in observational studies, and draw parallels to experimental research.

*Cross-listed with COMM 615-401*

PSCI 655-401 Democratization
Prof. T. Falleti  
*Wednesdays 9:00AM–12:00PM*

This graduate class focuses on issues of political regime change and democratization, as studied in the comparative politics literature. The course is structured in three parts. In the first part, we scrutinize conceptualizations and measurements of democracy that are widely used in comparative politics. In the second part, we study political economy and comparative historical theories about the origins of democracy. We will assess the relative strength of theories that focus on economic development, levels of inequality (whether of income, land, or labor), social class actors, insurgencies, and/or strategic interactions. In the final part of the course, we study political regimes at work, particularly as they may entrench authoritarian features, fragment political representation on the bases of class or territory, or seek to engage civil society in politics and policy-making through participatory institutional reforms.

*Cross-listed with LALS 655-401*

PSCI 692-301 Stats for Public Policy
Prof. D. Kronick  
*Tuesdays & Thursdays 9:00–10:30AM; Fridays 9:00-10:00AM*

The objective of this course is to provide Political Science Ph.D. students with statistical tools useful for making inferences about politics. We will cover fundamentals of probability theory, estimation, and hypothesis testing. Throughout, we will emphasize application to research questions in American Politics, positive Political Theory, Comparative Politics, and International Relations. In addition, the Friday lab sessions provide an introduction to data management.
PSCI 711-401 Fascism and Racism: A Love Story
Prof. M. Hanchard
Wednesdays 10:00AM-1:00PM

What is the relationship between fascism and racism in modern politics, and how have black political thinkers and organizations understood this relationship? This graduate level course is designed to familiarize students with the historical and contemporary literature on fascism as a phenomena of modern politics, and the importance of racial politics and ideologies to its constitution. Students will become familiar with the contributions of Black political actors, organizations and thinkers in Europe, Africa, Asia and the New World to fascism’s defeat in the 1920’s and 1930’s, as well as more contemporary efforts to curb more contemporary fascist movements, regimes and aesthetics in late modernity. Antonio Gramsci, Robert Paxton, Michael Mann, C.L.R. James, George Padmore, Aime Cesaire, Suzanne Cesaire and Hannah Arendt are among the thinkers, theorists and activists students will encounter in this course. The overarching aim of his course is to identify fascism in both historical and contemporary contexts as a very specific form of political organization and rule, and its interrelationship with racism, nationalism and xenophobia.

*Cross-listed with AFRC 710-401

PSCI 798-301 Radical Democracy
Prof. A. Norton
Tuesdays 9:00AM-12:00PM

We often take democracy as an undisputed good, yet it is hard indeed to find any praise of democracy in the Western canon. Contemporary political theory and Western political systems both treat democracy as a danger and the people as a problem to be managed. This seminar is intended to question those assumptions. We will read both canonical and less known works from a variety of traditions: Thomas Paine, the Antifederalists, Schmitt, Wolin, Rancière, Swabian peasant rebels, Caribbean pirates, al Farabi, Rousseau. We will also look at diverse sites of democratic practice, from the ancient Near East and the Norse althing to New England Townships. The course will also question the relation of democracy to rights, liberalism, equality and property. Aspects of the course will be drawn from and sympathetic to theorists understood as radicals and from others regarded as politically conservative, especially libertarians and others suspicious of the state.

PSCI 798-302 International Peace Building
Prof. N. Sambanis
Tuesdays 1:30–4:30PM

The prevalence of civil war dropped sharply after the end of the Cold War. A common conjecture is that this drop was due to the growing activism of the United Nations (UN)
and the decline of proxy wars by great powers. The UN transformed its peace-keeping missions into peace-building operations that aimed to create institutions able to create self-enforcing peace. New ideas about the limits of national sovereignty in the face of civilian abuses led to the adoption of the R2P (Responsibility to Protect) norm. For a short period, these changes promised to create a more peaceful international system. But in the past decade several new wars have started and we have witnessed challenges to the liberal world order. Great power relations are returning to the Cold War logic of competitive interventions; there is a rise in foreign-imposed regime change and failed interventions; and these developments have generated a push toward retrenchment in U.S. foreign policy. This course will explore the historical record of international peace-building with an eye toward drawing lessons that would apply to our changing world.

What are the main peace-building challenges facing any intervener after civil war? Which policies can be effective in addressing these challenges in countries such as Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan? Under what conditions is foreign-led state-building likely to be effective? We will address these questions by reviewing both theoretical and empirical/policy studies. Students will acquire familiarity with the latest methods and data used in this literature and will acquire hands-on experience by collecting new data, replicating and extending published studies, evaluating policy alternatives, and making presentations on research design and theory-building. The course is designed for graduate students in international relations and comparative politics, but advanced undergraduates with relevant prior course training may apply for permission to enroll.

PSCI 798-303 Philosophy of History

Prof. L. Goldman

Tuesdays 3:00–6:00PM

Does history have a direction? A meaning? A purpose? Until recently in Western Thought the answer to these questions would have been a resounding yes; the devil was in the details. What happens in a “post-metaphysical” world in which many have answered no, and in which there is a general recognition that humans are historical beings whose judgments reflect their situatedness in time? What are the social and political implications of this perspectival shift? Philosophy of history concerns such questions and many more: Can history be treated scientifically? What motivates human actors? What is the relationship between historical narrative and self-understanding? Indeed, how do we grapple with our historicity as inquirers, citizens and human beings alike? This course critically examines works in the philosophy of history that have attempted to provide some answers, including classical Greek and biblical sources, Augustine, Joachim of Fiore, Vico, Ferguson, Smith, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, Collingwood, Lukács, Adorno & Horkheimer, Blumenberg, Koselleck, Danto and Lyotard.
Scope and Methods is a course designed to help graduate students in all sub-fields craft a compelling research question and complete a dissertation prospectus. The course will feature a mix of tailored methodological readings, professionalization activities, and function as a writing workshop. The course will meet bi-weekly throughout the year, but students will complete a detailed research design and annotated bibliography by the end of the fall. A core element of this course will be presentation of ideas in progress and peer-review. We will also invite professors and recent graduates to discuss the research process, field work, grant applications, and writing strategies. Students past the prospectus are also invited to participate.