Political Science Department
Graduate Course Descriptions
Spring 2017
PSCI 412-401 Comparative Racial Politics*
M. Hanchard

This course combines scholarship on race and racism in plural societies with qualitative approaches to the study of political institutions, phenomena and actors. Germany, Brazil, France and Cuba will be examined as individual country cases and in comparative perspective. Conceptual and theoretical readings on race, racism and politics provide students with the analytic tools to draw more abstract lessons and generalizable conclusions about how racial and ethno-national hierarchy involves the role of the state and political economy, culture, norms and institutions. Students will also examine the impact of civil rights movements for political equality in response to legacies of racial and ethno-national hierarchy and inequality. Finally, students will become familiar with scholarship on nationalism and social movements as they relate to racial politics.

*Cross-listed with AFRC 417

PSCI 452-301 Civil Wars
J Stanton

This course examines the causes, dynamics, and resolution of civil wars. The first section of the course will examine competing theoretical arguments regarding the causes of civil war, looking at how economic and political grievances may motivate groups to rebel against the government; why political leaders may sometimes encourage violence; and what role ethnicity, national identity, and a sense of insecurity play in the initiation of internal conflict. The second section of the course will look at how civil wars are fought, with discussions of guerilla warfare, counterinsurgency strategies, terrorism and the role of humanitarian aid in conflict settings. In the third part of the course, focusing on the resolution of internal conflicts, topics will include international intervention and peacekeeping; negotiated political settlements such as power-sharing and partition; and post-conflict justice strategies such as domestic and international trials and truth commissions. Throughout the course, we will consider specific cases of civil war – for example, wars in Colombia, El Salvador, Indonesia, Mozambique, Russia, Sudan, Uganda, and the former Yugoslavia.

PSCI 498-301 Oil and Grand Strategy
R Vitalis

The seminar is dedicated to developing your critical reading and writing skills in the areas of international relations and contemporary (comparative) history. The topic this semester relates to my own work-in-progress on conventional understandings of the role of oil in US grand strategy—the argument in a nutshell is that the conventional wisdom is wrong. You have to help me to demonstrate this error and develop an alternative account.
This seminar requires a great deal from participants. You are expected to take charge of your learning, engaging with each other and the instructor in a process of knowledge creation through practice, inquiry, deliberation, criticism, and problem solving. You will produce two pieces of analytical writing: a brief 3-4 page book review and a 20-25 page paper drafted in stages. These are complementary and cumulative assignments that, combined, will enhance your understanding of some blinders and prejudices that infect current scholarly and non-scholarly writing about international politics today.

**PSCI 498-302 The Politics of Empire**

D McCormack

Tuesday 1:30-4:30 PM

This is a weekly seminar course that explores the political logic of hierarchical international organization. The course will have three primary goals. First, we will establish the logical underpinnings of political order in general, and ask why states establish formal empire rather than informal patterns of control. Second, we will use these insights to illuminate a number of historical cases to examine how empires are formed, how they are maintained, and when and why they end. Finally, we will also spend some time exploring whether the United States is (or was) an empire and what implications this has for U.S. foreign policy in the future. There are no prerequisites for this course, but students should expect a heavy reading and writing load.

**PSCI 587-401 Black American Political Thought**

A Reed

Tuesday 6:00-9:00 PM

This course has two objectives. On the one hand, we will explore the character and evolution of the strategic political discourse of black Americans. We will examine central debates among black American intellectuals and activists with focus on: 1) identifying issues considered and positions taken; 2) locating those debates in relation to American political and intellectual history and the changing situation of the black population; 3) analyzing characteristic principles that have undergirded political discourse among civically attentive black Americans; 4) examining the connections of social theory and political behavior among black Americans and, perhaps most important, 5) trying to establish links between debates in the past and the present political and ideological configuration in ways that can inform strategic thinking.

On the other hand, we will pursue a more formalistic objective as well. The study of black American thought as an academic field by and large has avoided concerns about the practice of interpretation in the history of political thought or the history of ideologies. (The fact that this subfield has retained its interpretive naiveté is itself an intellectually and ideologically significant circumstance, as we shall see.) Our second objective, therefore, will be to work toward establishing a foundation for a more historically careful scholarly discourse about Afro-American thought. Toward that end, we shall give
substantial consideration to interpretive issues -- keeping the integrity of historical contextualization uppermost -- in the early weeks, when we discuss methodological questions directly. Those early discussions should set the stage for, and structure engagement with, subsequent assignments.

The course is organized chronologically. Although systematic expression of political ideas by civically attentive black individuals and within discourse communities is evident at least as early as the Second Party System, the discursive and ideological origins of what we might call modern black thought took shape in the late 19th and early 20th century period defined most consequentially by disfranchisement, the consolidation of the segregationist regime in the South, and the emergence of an elite stratum within the black population who were inclined to articulate programs and agendas for the race. We will begin with examining that fin-de-siècle context and reconstruct the trajectory of black political debate to the present.

*Cross-listed with AFRC 586

PSCI 598-301 Global Leadership and Problem-Solving: The Eldercare Crisis in America and China – By Permit Only

J DiIulio

Wednesday 2:00-5:00 PM

Integrating diverse fields of knowledge (leadership theory, demography, public finance, administrative law, geriatric nursing, and others), this no-prerequisites but permit-required seminar explores one of the most consequential issues now facing many nations all across the world: how to care for large and growing populations of elderly people, including older citizens who are disabled or dying and have little or no familial, communal, or financial support. With a multi-disciplinary teaching team and visits by present or former government officials and other leaders, this seminar compares and contrasts the eldercare crisis in America and China. Students engage in both individual and group research projects; do supervised field visits to U.S. eldercare facilities; and draft final reports particular eldercare policies or programs including ones that each nation might borrow or adapt from the other.

Students who wish to apply for a permit should send an email (in English or Mandarin) to Associate Director Euria Chung at echung@upenn.edu

Be sure to put “PSCI 598 Permit Request” in the Subject line. You will then receive instructions regarding the permit application process. Deadline: December 1, 2016. Notifications of enrollment: December 8, 2015.
PSCI 598-302 German Political Thought

L. Goldman

Monday 3:30-6:30 PM

This course examines foundational works of German political thought, a rich tradition with a significant influence on contemporary debates in the field. We traverse the "long" 19th century, beginning with Kant and encountering a variety of characters on the way to Nietzsche: Herder, Fichte, Feuerbach, Hegel, Stürner, Marx & Engels, and Kierkegaard (our one non-German). The topics they address will drive class discussion, and include autonomy, obligation, freedom, property, the self, religion and ideology, idealism and realism, war and peace, and the relationship between individual, society, and the state, not to mention questions of method and the nature of political philosophy itself. Although a comprehensive overview of the subject matter is impossible in one semester, we read a number of this tradition's most interesting and consequential writings: Kant's work on history, Hegel's Philosophy of Right, Feuerbach's The Essence of Christianity, Stirner's The Ego and Its Own, Marx's Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, and Nietzsche's Thus Spoke Zarathustra, among others. Previous acquaintance with philosophy, political theory or history is strongly recommended but not required.

PSCI 598-303 Money & Markets

E. Kennedy

Tuesdays 3:00-6:00 PM

What we call “economics” was originally part of a larger science, the queen of the sciences: the study of politics. Constitutions, laws, governments, citizenship, war, peace, prosperity and poverty – all these were dimensions of an inquiry into what is necessary and useful to the good life of mankind. Indeed the English phase “political economy” translates two Greek words oikos or “house” and nomos “law”. In this course we will be concerned with texts in political economy from the 18th century to the recent past. Our purpose is the interrogation of those along three dimensions: the constitutive intellectual parts of a science of profit and loss; the relation of such a science to moral questions; and finally the effects of “economics” as an ideology on the political constitutions of our time.

Originally optimistic, its foundations were challenged in the 19th century by reactionary pessimism and radical critique but in the last decade of the 20th century, the collapse of soviet communism seemed to confirm what neo-liberals had long proclaimed: the supremacy of market economies and the universal denominator of money, or exchange, value. The benefits of global markets were expected by some to dispel the very sources of conflict among peoples and states, and enthusiasts even proclaimed “the end of history”. That brief period is now behind us and we confront a new pluralism of beliefs and opinion about what is “valuable” that challenges the central tenets of western political discourse.
PSCI 605-301 Great Books in Comparative Politics

I Lustick

This seminar has two central purposes. One is to learn from books that have shaped fundamental conversations in the field of comparative politics about the domains, concepts, and theories analyzed and presented in the texts. The other is to gain a deep and detailed appreciation of authorial strategies by examining the relationship between the organization and presentation of arguments and the motivation and claims of the authors. The fact that a book is assigned in this course does not make it “Great” in every respect. Nor does its inclusion reflect a judgment by the instructor that it represents the truth, or even a treatment of its topic that is more effective than anything else available. It does represent a judgment that it is a text whose study can help provide, refine, and/or greatly improve the cognitive maps that graduate students specializing in comparative politics are each trying to construct. The books we read will be studied under three categories: How we got here? How Things Work? and How Do We Know Things?

PSCI 615-301 Political Economy of Development

G Grossman

This seminar provides an introduction to contemporary research on the political economy of developing countries. The major questions to be addressed during the seminar are: How central is politics to economic development? How do political institutions determine policy choices? Why do voters have a hard time holding governments to account? Does the widespread penetration of mobile technologies change citizen-constituency relations? How do windfalls (e.g., natural resources and international aid) affect development outcomes and the health of a country’s political institutions? One of the aims of the discussion in the class will be to test abstract theories of economic and political development using in-depth knowledge of cases, and to further our understanding of cases by applying lessons from theoretical and statistical work. Special attention would be given to replicating results of seminal studies, and to identifying gaps in existing literatures.

PSCI 637-301 Survey American Institutions

J Lapinski

This course introduces students to a range of topics under the loose rubric of “American political institutions.” Obviously, this is a vast topic, one that encompasses Congress, the president, the courts, and the bureaucracy at the national level, and the corresponding institutions at the state level. Here are some of the features of the approach we’ll take:

Our emphasis will be on national-level political institutions. In some cases, however, we will read studies of state-level institutions in order to gain additional purchase on
research questions and to understand the advantages or disadvantages of studying these institutions. Similarly, we will read some comparative studies in order to provide perspective. Some of the studies we will read focus specific institutions, with a noticeable tilt toward Congress. But many of them examine the relationships among institutions, which reflects both my own interests and where I think the study of institutions is headed. The readings will be weighted toward empirical studies of theoretical models. By and large, then, we will focus on empirical studies that use actual data about actual institutions. At the same time, it is important to note that these empirical studies are almost always informed by theory, either a theory developed in the paper or one developed elsewhere. We will focus on relatively current work (i.e., from the past two decades, and more recent than that after the first week) rather than reaching farther back in time.

PSCI 638-401 Race and Criminal Justice*

M Gottschalk

Tuesday 1:30-4:30 PM

Why are African Americans and some other minority groups disproportionately incarcerated and subjected to penal sanctions? What are the political, social, and economic consequences for individuals, communities, and the wider society of mass incarceration in the United States? What types of reforms of the criminal justice system are desirable and possible?

This advanced seminar analyzes the connection between race, crime, punishment, and politics in the United States. The primary focus is on the role of race in explaining why the country’s prison population increased six-fold since the early 1970s and why the United States today has the highest incarceration rate in the world.

Topics to be covered include: the early history of race in the development of the criminal justice system, including an examination of lynchings and the convict-leasing system; the relationship between the crime rate, patterns of offending and arrests, and the incarceration rate; public opinion and law-and-order politics; U.S. penal policies compared with other industrialized countries; the intersection of race and gender in penal policy; capital punishment; the growth of the prison-industrial complex; the war on drugs; the courts, prisoners’ rights, and political prisoners; felon disenfranchisement, elections, and democracy; and the future of penal reform.

The class will likely take field trips to a maximum-security jail in Philadelphia and to a state prison in the Philadelphia suburbs.

This seminar is designed for advanced undergraduates and graduate students. The readings and assignments will be adjusted accordingly for graduate students. The 600-level is open to graduate students only.

*Cross-listed with PSCI 437
Understanding and interpreting quantitative data is increasingly central in the social sciences, and in many governmental and private-sector settings as well. This second-semester Ph.D. statistics course aims to provide its students with a thorough, rigorous tour of some of the quantitative methods most commonly employed in political science. This course emphasizes two areas. First, **causal inference**: what can quantitative data tell us about the causal relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable? It also focuses on **maximum likelihood** as a theory of inference that underpins a wide variety of statistical models.

This course provides the opportunity for students to investigate the relationship between the emergence of African peoples as historical subjects and their location within specific geopolitical and economic circumstances. SPRING 2017: This jointly taught course is designed to introduce students to scholarship on the politics of Africa and the African diaspora in the period after World War II. The major themes of the 19th and 20th century congeal during this period: colonialism and anti-colonial movements toward national liberation, anti-apartheid and civil rights movements ranging from black movements in Brazil, Jamaica and the United States to South Africa, Britain and France. Readings and lectures will cover the politics of several African nation-states and diaspora populations, with an emphasis on the continuities and tensions between territorial nationalist movements with internal ethno-national tensions (African politics), to civil rights movements within plural societies where black populations have been characterized as minority populations. Students will read across several disciplines: history, sociology, political science, comparative literature, cultural studies, as well as Africana Studies, in the exploration of concepts and phenomena of sovereignty and citizenship, identity and identification, networks across nation-state and regional boundaries linking diverse African-descended populations, all within the context of the nation-state system.

*Cross-listed with AFRC 710*

This seminar covers both recent and "canonical" authors central to core debates in political theory—debates relating to liberty, democracy, normativity, the nature of political theory, and methodological approaches to the history of political thought. Readings will come from Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, Machiavelli, Luther, Hobbes,
Montesquieu, Rousseau, Kant, Paine, Constant, Mill, Tocqueville, Marx, Nietzsche, Weber, Strauss, Dahl, Rawls, Skinner, and others. The course is designed for graduate students interested in political theory.