PSCI 010-401   War on Drugs: Latin America   D. Kronick
Freshman Seminar
Wednesdays
Cross-listed with LALS 107-401

The United States government has spent tens of billions of dollars on policies aimed at reducing the flow of illicit drugs from Latin America and the Caribbean. In this seminar, we will ask: On what were these billions of dollars spent? How did these policies affect the supply of drugs to the United States? How did these policies affect violence in Latin American countries? How did they shape the revenues and political power of drug trafficking organizations? In what ways have counternarcotics policies changed the functioning of democracy across Latin America? What does the move toward legalization of marijuana mean for counternarcotics policy? Through readings and discussion, we will analyze one of central tenets of the relationship between the United States and Latin America.

PSCI 010-402   Politics of Reproduction   D. Teele
Freshman Seminar
Tuesdays
Cross-listed with GSWS 010-402

The idea that the "personal" is "political" finds no greater example than in the politics of reproduction. From inheritance laws, the rights of the offspring of enslaved peoples, or policies to reduce (or increase) fertility, the modern nation state has had a great deal to say about the use and produce of women's bodies. In this course we will examine how formal and informal institutions have governed reproductive practices over the past 200 years. We will look at how family structures and economic development map onto fertility, and at how technological innovations in fertility control (including birth control and IVF) have influenced women's economic and political participation. We will also examine the "dark side" of reproductive policies -- not only sterilization campaigns but also the treatment of sex workers and IVF -- to understand how state policies have divided women based on race, class, and occupation. Throughout the course we will analyze how formal and informal institutions can and have been subverted through collective action.

PSCI 110-001   Comparative Politics   I. Lustick
Mondays & Wednesdays

This course is designed to introduce students to comparative political analysis. How can the political behavior, circumstances, institutions, and dynamic patterns of change that people experience in very different societies be analyzed using the same set of concepts and theories? That is the question posed in this course. To achieve both breadth and depth the course will use monographic studies of a variety of political systems and include attention to the Middle East, Russia, Latin America, and Africa. Topics will include nationalism, revolution, democratization, authoritarianism, ethnic conflict, and political economy.

PSCI 131-001   American Foreign Policy   M. Horowitz
Mondays & Wednesdays

What is the foreign policy of the United States? What defines the interests of the United States? What sort of strategies lead to success or failure for the United States when it acts abroad? This course will cover those and other questions. In addition to examining key trends in the history of US foreign policy, the course will cover contemporary challenges that face the United States, including: ISIS, the rise of China and the Asia-Pacific, Russia, nuclear proliferation, the civil war in Syria, the war in Afghanistan, globalization and development, the Middle East, and many others.
The rise and fall of Communism dominated the history of the short twentieth century from the Russian revolution of 1917 to the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. As a system of government, Communism is more or less dead, but its utopian ideals of liberation from exploitation and want live on. Communism remains the one political-economic system that presented, for a time, an alternative to global capitalism. In this course, students will gain an introduction to socialist and Communist political thought and explore Communist political and economic regimes – their successes and failures, critics and dissidents, efforts at reform, and causes of collapse. We will learn about the remnants of Communism in China, North Korea, and Cuba and efforts of contemporary theorists to imagine a future for Communism.

This lecture course introduces students to the subfield of international security or strategic studies. In order to grasp the usefulness of the theoretical ideas presented in readings and lectures, abstract concepts are linked with a study of the national security policies states have adopted in the decades since World War II.

Questions that the course explores include the following: What are the requirements for ensuring a nation’s security? What are the fundamental distinctions among the alternative strategies available to states and to their adversaries? What strategies have the U.S. and others adopted? To what extent have these strategic choices reflected a clearly defined national interest, domestic political and economic pressures, international constraints, and the state of military technology? What lessons, if any, does the history of international security relations since the mid-20th century suggest about challenges faced in the 21st century? The course examines some of these challenges by looking at debates about nuclear proliferation, terrorism, military interventions (motivated by an interest in promoting regime change, supporting counterinsurgency efforts, or providing humanitarian assistance), the implications of China’s reemergence as a great power, dangerous “flashpoints” in East Asia, and the effects of the “revolution in military affairs” on the prospects for ballistic missile defenses, unmanned combat vehicles, and cyberwarfare.

This course examines the politics of international economic relations. The course will analyze the interplay between politics and economics in three broad areas: international trade, international finance, and economic development. In each section, we will first discuss economic theories that explain the causes and consequences of international commerce, capital flows, and economic growth. We will then explore how political interests, institutions, and ideas alter these predictions, examining both historical examples and current policy debates.
This course is an undergraduate lecture course, examining the role that international law and institutions play in international relations. The course begins by exploring broad theoretical questions – questions about why states create international law and international institutions; how states design institutions; the impact that institutional design may have on the effectiveness of international institutions; and the conditions under which states are likely to comply with the rules set out by international institutions and the dictates of international law. The remainder of the course is organized topically, looking at how international institutions and law function in various arenas of international affairs. Topics include collective security institutions such as the League of Nations, the United Nations, and NATO; human rights law; the laws of war; international intervention and peacekeeping; international justice and the International Criminal Court; environmental law; international trade law and the World Trade Organization; economic development and the role of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

This course aims to provide a broad survey of some of the most influential political thinkers and ideas from classical antiquity. Among the central figures to be examined are: Homer, Sophocles, Thucydides, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Cicero, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, Seneca, and Augustine. Major themes include: ancient theories of justice (with special attention to the relation between the just state and the just person), the emergence of political philosophy as a distinct pursuit, the Athenian polis, the Roman republic and its demise, and the rise of Christianity.

Courses in American political thought offer a series of readings, usually from great works, and generally presented in chronological order, that serve as a canon for American political identity. This differs from traditional American Political Thought courses in several respects: first, by looking at a wider array of genres; second by refusing to pretend to give a comprehensive survey of American political thought; and third, by looking not only at prose work on (or in) politics but also at poetry and forms of popular expression. These are no less revealing as documents of American thought on politics. We also draw from important figures who are not American, including: Edmund Burke, who shared and empire with Americans and Alexis de Tocqueville, who came to study them. Most importantly, the course is guided by a question: what does it mean to be an American?

International organizations play a powerful role in mitigating conflict at the global level. What role do they play in solving problems related to global politics, economic development, corruption, inequality and civil society in Latin America? How much power, influence and control do they possess in the region? This course examines the role and impact international organizations have had on Latin America since the mid-20th century. After a review of theoretical and methodological perspectives on the significance of IOs in international relations, students will examine the workings, issues and often controversies surrounding IOs in Latin America, including the IMF, World Bank, UN, OAS and ICC as well as regional organizations such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and area trade blocs and agreements of Mercosur, NAFTA and others. Students will also explore the regional impact of transnational civil society organizations, such as human rights organizations and the International Olympic Committee. Students will be invited to participate in the Washington Model OAS from April 10-17.
This class provides an introduction to contemporary African politics. The core questions that motivate the course are:
(i) to what extent are political outcomes in contemporary Africa a consequence of its history, culture, and geography?
(ii.) Why are state structures and institutions weaker in Africa than elsewhere? (iii.) What accounts for Africa’s relatively slow economic growth? (iv.) Why have some African countries been plagued by high levels of political violence while others have not? (v.) What explains the behavior of key African actors: voters, parties and politicians? In the course of the class we will see that there is large variation within Africa in the strength of states, the levels of economic growth and the amount of violence; we will aim to explain that variation. To do so we will study events in particular African countries, but we will also examine broad patterns across countries and use social science concepts and methods to try to explain them. Note that in our exploration we will mostly build on the work of political scientists but also draw on writing from journalists, anthropologists, psychologists, economists and historians.

The course is structured in five parts. In the first part we take a tour of Africa’s recent political history, examining pre-colonial structures, the impact of colonialism and the form of post-colonial states. We then examine the social and political forces that shape African countries’ forms of government and the structure and capacity of their states. In the third part we briefly survey the determinants of Africa’s economic development, focusing specifically on policy choices, legal systems, natural resources and the ambivalent role of foreign aid. The fourth part is devoted to the causes of civil wars and violence, focusing specifically on identity politics and on the dramatic breakdown of (some) African states. In the final part we briefly survey some issues at the forefront of research on contemporary African politics.

This course explains ethnic conflict, focusing on its violent forms, especially civil wars. There have been more than 160 civil wars and many more episodes of lower-intensity armed conflict since 1945. Most of these conflicts have been fought along ethnic lines. What role do prejudice and hatred play in these conflicts? Why do some ethnic conflicts turn violent? And how can we end ethnic civil wars? We will address these questions by reviewing the scholarly literature and applying insights and results from that literature to contemporary cases of civil war, including Bosnia, Iraq, and Syria. The course will develop an inter-disciplinary perspective on ethnic conflict drawing on cutting-edge research in political science, economics, social psychology, and anthropology.

This is an advanced course on the main issues of contemporary Chinese politics with a strong focus on the reform era (post-1978). The course will first cover the political, economic, and legal institutions of the Chinese polity. We will then examine the key challenges facing the current Chinese leadership, focusing on prospects for political reform. Among other topics, we will investigate: elite politics; political participation and representation; public opinion; social movements; ethnicity and religion; and media and internet control. A prior course on contemporary Chinese politics or economy (e.g., PSCI219) is highly recommended.
In 1960, a Democratic candidate won a very narrow Presidential victory with just 100,000 votes; in 2000, the Democratic candidate lost but received 500,000 more votes than his opponent. Still, contemporary scholars and journalists have made a variety of arguments about just how much the American political landscape changed in the intervening 40 years, often calling recent decades a “transformation.” This course explores and critically evaluates those arguments. Key questions include: how, if at all, have Americans’ political attitudes and ideologies changed? How have their connections to politics changed? What has this meant for the fortunes and strategies of the two parties? How have the parties’ base voters and swing voters changed? What changes in American society have advantaged some political messages and parties at the expense of others? Focusing primarily on mass-level politics, we consider a wide range of potential causes, including the changing role of race in American politics, suburbanization, economic transformations, the evolving constellation and structure of interest groups, declining social capital, the changing role of religion, immigration, and the actions of parties and political elites. For three weeks in the semester, we will take a break from considering broader trends to look at specific elections in some depth.

This course introduces students to the theories and practice of the policy-making process. There are four primary learning objectives. First, understanding how the structure of political institutions matter for the policies that they produce. Second, recognizing the constraints that policy makers face when making decisions on behalf of the public. Third, identifying the strategies that can be used to overcome these constraints. Fourth, knowing the toolbox that available to participants in the policy-making process to help get their preferred strategies implemented. While our focus will primarily be on American political institutions, many of the ideas and topics discussed in the class apply broadly to other democratic systems of government.

This course surveys the institutional development of the American presidency from the Constitutional convention to today. It examines the politics of presidential leadership, how the executive branch functions, and the tensions between the presidency, leadership, and democracy.

What exactly should be considered a fundamental “human right”? What is the basis for saying something is a fundamental human right? This course will examine the theoretical, historical and political foundations of contemporary human rights debates. The course will cover not only broad conceptual debates, but also focus on specific issue areas (e.g., civil rights, economic rights, women’s rights, children’s rights), as well as the question of how new rights norms emerge in international relations.
This seminar examines the influences on and patterns of China’s international relations. Topics to be covered include the following: theoretical approaches to analyzing foreign policy; the historical legacy and evolution of China’s foreign policy; contemporary China’s foreign policy on traditional national security concerns as well as economic, environmental, and humanitarian issues; China’s military modernization; China’s foreign policy in Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America; China’s rise and its implications for relations with the United States. The class is a seminar in which student preparation and participation will be essential. Students planning to enroll in the course must have taken PSCI 219 (or, with the instructor’s permission, its equivalent). You are expected to complete all required readings each week and come to seminar meetings prepared to discuss them.

This course examines American constitutional development from the eve of WW I through the second Obama administration. Topics include the growth of the New Deal and a Great Society regulatory and redistributive state, struggles for equal rights for racial and ethnic minorities, women, and GLBT Americans, contests over freedoms of religion and expression, criminal justice issues, the Reagan Revolution and the revival of federalism and property rights, and issues of national security powers after September 11, 2001. Lectures are on videos and class time is devoted to in-depth discussions. Students do not need to have taken PSCI 271 to enroll in this class.

Since the inception of the twenty first century, Latin America has undergone major economic, social, and political transformations. Many of the neoliberal policies of the last quarter of the twentieth century were reversed or revisited, economic inequality decreased significantly across the region, and a number of governments turned to the left of the political spectrum, often instituting major public policy and constitutional reforms. How have those changes affected citizenship and democracy in the region? In particular, have citizens’ channels for representation and participation changed in the recent past? What has happened to local participatory institutions since the return to the right in some countries of the region? The course will explore these and related questions. Students will develop their own research projects throughout the semester. While not a requirement, the ability to read Spanish or Portuguese will significantly enhance students’ learning experience.

Survey research is a small but rich academic discipline, drawing on theory and practice from many diverse fields including political science and communication. This course canvases the science and practice of survey methods, sampling theory, instrument development and operationalization, and the analysis and reporting of survey data. Major areas of focus include measurement and research of survey errors, application to election polling, new frontiers in data collection, overall development of data management, and introductory analytics.
Schools are sites where inequalities in socio-economic status, health and educational achievement can either be reproduced or addressed. This Fox Leadership and academically-based community service class uses course readings, speakers engaged with school-based programs, and students' observations in service learning projects to analyze the causes and impact of school-based inequalities in the United States, as well as the strengths and limitations of efforts to address these inequalities. Service sites will include the Agatston Urban Nutrition Initiative (AUNI) and Playworks, Philadelphia. Academic course work will include weekly readings, class and Canvas participation, several papers, and group presentations. Service work will include a final group presentation, reflective writing during the semester, and a problem-based learning component, focused on developing resources and researching best practices to support the sites’ goals and programs. Typically the first hour of each class will be devoted to service site based small group discussions of questions related to the readings and service sites. This course is affiliated with the Communication With-in the Curriculum (CWiC) program, and students are required to meet twice with speaking advisors in groups prior to giving presentations.

This course examines conceptual, explanatory and normative debates over power-sharing systems. We explore the circumstances in which federations, consociations and other power-sharing institutions and practices are proposed and implemented to regulate deep national, ethnic, religious or linguistic divisions. We evaluate these systems, seeking to explain why they are formed or attempted, and why they may endure or fail, paying special attention to bi- and multi-national, multi-ethnic, multi-religious and multi-lingual environments. Teaching methods include team-debates, and team-organized reading.

This course explores a broad survey of thinkers and traditions of political thought within conservatism broadly understood. This is not a course about Ted Cruz or Rand Paul, nor about the Republican or any other political party. Rather, we will investigate defenses of agrarian, traditionalist, neo-conservative, libertarian, anarcho-capitalist, and other “conservative” schools of thought. What are the critical conflicts and questions which animate these various traditions? In what ways are these approaches allied and how are they in conflict? We will read thinkers, both classic and contemporary, such as Burke, Oakeshott, Kirk, Bloom, Berry, Hayek, Rothbard, Huemer, Schmitt, Kristol, MacIntyre, and Zwolinski. Ultimately, we will consider what visions of the good, of humanity, of technology, of agency, of rationality, of progress and of reality underlie various conservative critiques.

This course offers a thematic approach to the study of authoritarian politics. How do dictatorships work? When do autocracies break down? Do elections affect authoritarian rule? How can the weak “work” a strong political system to their advantage? To answer these questions, we will briefly cover classical theories of authoritarian rule and focus on the current literature on comparative authoritarianism. Throughout the course, we will also build empirical knowledge about the politics of particular authoritarian regimes.
The course explores an alternative approach in comparison to most other courses in history, political science, and international relations to answering three often asked questions: What kinds of power and influence do Americans wield in the Middle East? Why do they (need to) do so? What are the consequences? An alternative approach is necessary because the conventional answers and analysts are mostly wrong. The reasons why they are wrong are basic ones and are familiar from other contexts. For instance, much scholarship adheres too closely to the terms and outlooks of various actors (e.g., the White House, oil company executives, congress, lobbying groups) and remains too closely bound to the present, with that same power that we seek to analyze.

Much of international politics takes place in the shadow of war: leaders seek simultaneously to achieve the best possible outcome in negotiations while limiting the danger of a mutually disastrous war. We will examine how leaders can and do weigh these competing goals in a variety of political settings. Topics covered include crisis diplomacy, the sources and importance of reputation, alliance politics and the balance of power, mediation and peacemaking, and constitutional orders in international politics. The primary assignment is a substantial research paper, which should provide useful experience for students contemplating writing an honors thesis.

Immigrants are an increasing presence in American society and political life. Students in this course will explore themes such as immigration, immigrant political incorporation, and inter-ethnic relations and coalitions through both extensive readings and the analysis of survey data which include questions ranging from political participation and civic engagement to crime and education, to transnationalism and discrimination. Students will be expected to learn the basic use of statistical software (STATA) to conduct preliminary analyses of surveys, and to use these data and other resources to explore their own original research projects. Prior coursework in American politics is recommended; no prior exposure to statistical software is required.

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.
Key questions include: Why has U.S. incarceration rate more than tripled since the mid-1970s? Why does the United States have the highest incarceration rate in the world and the highest level of violence among advanced industrialized democracies? Why are African Americans and some other groups disproportionately incarcerated in the United States and disproportionately subjected to other criminal penalties and state violence? What are the political, social, and economic consequences of mass incarceration and the carceral state for individuals, communities, and the wider society? What reforms and public policies are desirable and possible to reduce incarceration rates, criminal penalties, and state violence? What explains the concentrated levels of violence in communities of concentrated disadvantage? What reforms and public policies are desirable and possible to reduce these levels of violence? What political strategies are necessary to make these reforms and public policies possible?

We will likely be taking fields trips to a jail in Philadelphia and a state prison.
PSCI 452-301    Civil Wars     J. Stanton
Mondays          2-5 p.m.
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 & Grand Strategy    R. Vitalis
Wednesdays          2-5 p.m.
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
Tuesdays                   1:30-4:30 p.m.
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.
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.

This course serves as an introduction to a number of figures and themes in modern Western political thought spanning from the Renaissance to the 20th century. It aims to give students a sense of the scope of the Western tradition along with many of the debates within it. Thinkers treated will include Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Hegel, Marx, and Nietzsche, among others, with a particular emphasis on questions about the relationship between nature and convention as well as the relationship between the individual and society. Other fundamental questions covered include the nature of freedom, equality, justice, property and revolution.
Please note that these courses are only for students in the PIW Program.

PSCI 330-301  PIW Semester Core Seminar: Conducting Public Policy Research in Washington  D. Martinez

This is the first course of the Penn in Washington semester program and serves as an introduction to Washington, with a particular focus on policymaking institutions and the intricate web of organizations and individuals that contribute to the policymaking process. A combination of lectures, tours, and meetings with senior policymakers will prepare students for their internships and also provide sufficient background to create a comprehensive map of the policymaking world. In the second part of this two credit course, students will choose one policy arena to explore deeply. A proposal, final paper, and group presentation will be prepared which draw on the content from the first part of the course to develop a sophisticated understanding of policymaking in a particular policy arena.

PSCI 398-303  Politics and Problems in International Security  E. Simpson

This will be a seminar style course focused on contemporary challenges in international security, with an eye toward policy analysis and response. Students will be exposed to a mix of academic research, empirical analysis, and institutional response. Topics will include: great power rivalries, terrorism and insurgencies, migration and human security, intelligence and forecasting, understanding US military services (including special operations), understanding US diplomatic/development services, tools for conflict analysis, role of NGOs and civil society, role of Congress, and current events (Syria, Iraq, China, Russia, Iran). The course should provide strong context for a wide variety of careers related to international security.

PSCI 398-302  The U.S. Presidency: Limits on Chief Executive Power  M. Rodriguez

What are the limits on presidential power? How much can a President accomplish when faced with an uncooperative Congress, and how has this changed over time? What are the limits on the exercise of presidential power in the foreign policy space, and what exactly can Congress do to curtail the powers of the Commander in Chief? Guest speakers will include representatives from the State Department's Legal Advisor's Office, the NSS, DOD, and the CIA. All Penn in Washington courses are offered through the PIW Semester program.
This course is an introductory course, surveying major issues in international politics. The first section of the course provides an overview of the main theoretical approaches to understanding international politics. The second section of the course addresses issues in international security, looking at the causes of both interstate and civil war; the origins of the World Wars; the nature of conflict during the Cold War; and changes in international conflict following the end of the Cold War. The third section of the course considers issues in international political economy, including international trade; economic growth and development; the role of international institutions such as the WTO, the World Bank, and the IMF; and debates regarding globalization. In the fourth part of the course, focusing on emerging issues in international relations, topics will include the role of international law in international relations; human rights; environmental issues; and nuclear proliferation.

This course provides a survey of some of the key thinkers and concepts in modern political thought and will acquaint students with a range of conflicting views within the Western tradition. We will read and discuss many of the great European political theorists from the Renaissance through the beginning of the 20th century, including Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, and Weber. Close readings of the texts will allow us to discuss enduring questions regarding freedom, equality, legitimacy, property and political economy, liberalism, and pluralism. A key set of questions we will ask is: what is modernity, what is modern about modern political thought, and how might this inform our understanding of politics today?

This course will concentrate on the International Law of Human Rights. Students will be introduced to the historical, philosophical, and political underpinnings of modern human rights laws. Special focus will be on the examination and analysis of the International Bill of Human Rights, including the United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Two Human Rights Covenants, and the various treaties dealing with individual and group rights, such as the genocide and torture conventions. The origins, sources, justification, and enforcement of this body of law will be discussed. While familiarizing students with the current debates on human rights and their significance in today's global society, the course will address the role of the United Nations, governmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations in their promotion of human rights as well as the various human rights regimes in Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Europe. Selected human rights dealing with issues of war and peace will be comparatively addressed. Readings include research papers, reports, statutes, treaties, and cases.
Struggles over gender roles and rights have been prominent in the Middle East and North Africa since the 19th century and continue to mark contemporary political and social discourses. Since the colonial period, gender categories and sexualities have been critiqued and negotiated on behalf of empire, the nation, modernity, and personal freedom; today debates and struggles over global rights, Islamic law, and modernity continue to mark politics. Despite the particularity of ideas and events in the region, a comparative framework helps to overcome exoticization of the region and develop a more acute understanding. The topics of the course include engagement with the discourse of the Exotic Other; the effects of modernity, the role of nationalism and the national state, state-society negotiation, Islamic formulations, and continuously, the question: where does change come from? Issues of the veil and Islamic dress, the expansion of anti-gay laws, the disciplining of bodies in state and social settings – these issues of gender and sexuality extend the realm of the political into intimate spaces. Assignments include a midterm and a short paper that develops research and analytical skills. The course is 200-level. While background in the study of the Middle East or gender is not necessary, an introductory political science or social science course is a required.

Americans sometimes seem to be inundated with public opinion polls. To a casual observer, it can be hard to make sense of what Americans believe and why. In this course, we will carefully examine what “public opinion” means, how it is measured, and the influence it has on election campaigns and policymaking. In doing so, we will have the opportunity to explore a number of questions that are directly relevant to the current state of American democracy. For example: Is it true that Americans are more polarized than they have ever been? Do journalists shape public opinion by reporting on poll results? And, what do Americans really believe when it comes to contentious issues such as gun control or LGBT rights? This course satisfies the College of Arts & Sciences Quantitative Data Analysis (QDA) requirement. The course will include an introduction to the key principles of probability and statistics as they relate to the measurement of public opinion. In addition, we will spend a significant amount of time analyzing public opinion data from recent national election studies both in class and in individual assignments. As a result, students will leave the course with a strong understanding of the tools political scientists, campaign professionals, and journalists use to understand public opinion.

Global human rights discussions are based on the premise that human rights are not simply universal, but that they are also inalienable, indivisible and interdependent. This course is an introduction to the study of global human rights through the lens of political science. The course will examine the theoretical, historical and political foundations of contemporary human rights debates. The course will cover not only broad conceptual debates, but also focus on specific issue areas (e.g., civil rights, economic rights, women’s rights, human trafficking). It will also deal with the tricky questions of how new rights norms emerge and diffuse in international relations, what to do when there is disagreement about what rights are at stake in a given issue area, and how to respond to human rights crises in situations of limited resources or state capacity.