

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
Department of Political Science

GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS: FALL 2008

**POS 500/R
(5792/5793)**

**POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY
M 2:45 – 5:35**

**M. SCHOOLMAN
DR 217**

This course will focus on the writings of Emerson, Whitman, and Thoreau in the context of critiques of American democratic life during and after the times in which they wrote. Among the questions this course is interested in: Do their writings implicitly respond to these critiques? Has American politics met their expectations in part? Are they rather idealists whose vision of America could only have been born when its fledgling democracy was still young and unformed? Is their idealism and vision invalidated by what America has become?

**POS 501
(4362)**

**FIELD SEMINAR IN POLITICAL THEORY
M 5:45 – 8:35**

**P. BREINER
DR 313B**

This seminar provides an overview of some of the fundamental issues in political theory, both past and present. It also addresses some of the major debates about how political theory should be studied, including problems of methodology in interpreting political theory. I have structured the course so that it will alternate between three dimensions of political theory: in-depth textual examination of certain key political thinkers; textual commentary on the works we will read; and contemporary work that uses these thinkers as a point of departure but presses the problems they raise in new directions. At the end of the course, we will discuss a number of ways of practicing political theory including historical approaches, analytic conceptual analysis, and treating political theory as ideology, and reading theory as discourse.

**POS 506/R
(8797/8798)**

**IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT
M 5:45 – 8:35**

**R. NAKAMURA
DR 341**

This is a course about policy implementation. The study of policy implementation is the examination of what happens after policy has been made. Implementation research has dealt with a variety of topics including the development of conceptual frameworks for understanding the process, case studies of specific implementation activities, and the exploration of approaches intended to improve the fit between what policy makers intend and what happens. (**Crossed with PUB 506**)

**POS 513
(7625)**

**FIELD SEMINAR IN PUBLIC POLICY
T 5:45 – 8:50**

**R. Nakamura
DR 105**

The purpose of this course is to introduce graduate students to the field of public policy. As a field, the study of policy has been shaped by analytic frameworks from political science, economics and other disciplines. In addition, public policy has an applied dimension and is therefore of interest to professional schools in substantive areas like education, social welfare, and public administration.

This course will begin with an analysis from economics about how public policy in the form of purposive government action relying on coercion is justified in an economy and political system that emphasizes individual freedom of choice. Such arguments see government action as necessary when the market fails to provide important public goods. Many of these failures happen when there is a conflict between what individuals want for themselves and what they want as members of a society. Left on their own, people may endanger others for their own convenience, indulge prejudices by discriminating, pollute for profit. One solution is to replace destructive individual choices with collective choices through government intervention. Theories of market failure are offset by the problems of government failure. These include potential losses in efficiency and freedom. Thus the issue of just how government should intervene to correct market failures is a hotly contested one.

Our discussion of means will be organized as an examination of policy tools. Government starts with rather crude resources at its disposal: it has the power to legitimately use coercion and the related capacity to tax and spend. The market failures government has chosen to deal with leads to adopting goals that are difficult to achieve: a country safe from terrorist threats, a more just society, better educated students, a healthier population, greater productivity or whatever. Often what government wants to achieve lays quite a distance from the raw resources it has available.

Policy tools are used to bridge that gap. A policy tool, according to Lester Salamon, is an identifiable method through which collective action is structured to address a public problem. Each policy tool has "its own operating procedures, skill requirements, and delivery mechanisms, indeed its own 'political economy'." In addition, each tool generates its own distinctive politics. The choice of policies shapes both politics and administration. "Policies cause politics," in Lowi's phrase, because they define who wins, who loses, and the scope of what is at stake. These features, in turn, mobilize and channel political action and shape implementation problems.

POS 514 **INTRO TO DISCIPLINE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE** **J. NOVKOV**
(8199) **T** **5:45 – 8:35** **DR 217**

This course is designed as an introduction to study design, strategies, data collection and measurement in empirical political science. This course will introduce students to a wide range of methods of inquiry, including qualitative case studies, large-N statistical survey research, formal models, laboratory experiments, computer simulations, content analysis, and interviews. This course will examine the strengths and weaknesses of individual approaches, as well as the benefits of multi-methods designs. Finally, the course will explore ethical considerations in research.

POS 516 **INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL INQUIRY** **S. FRIEDMAN**
(4363) **TH** **4:15 – 7:05** **MI 200**

This course is designed as an introduction to study design, strategies, data collection and measurement in empirical political science. This course will introduce students to a wide range of methods of inquiry, including qualitative case studies, large-N statistical analysis, survey research, formal models, laboratory experiments, computer simulations, content analysis, and interviews. This course will examine the strengths and weaknesses of individual approaches, as well as the benefits of multi-method designs. Finally, the course will explore ethical considerations in research.

POS 520/R **AMERICAN FEDERALISM / INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS** **J. Zimmerman**
(8800/8801) **M** **2:45 – 5:35** **RI 288**

The seminar examines the constitutional, political, and theoretical dimensions of American federalism, including the tensions between the planes of government, interstate relations, state-local relations, and the problem-solving capabilities of the federal system. Particular emphasis is placed upon the formal powers of each plane of government, the politics of employing these powers, and the limitations upon these powers. The major focus of the seminar is the political significance of the use of preemption powers by Congress to restructure national-state-local relations.

POS 525Q **FEMINIST THOUGHT & PUBLIC POLICY** **V. EUBANKS**
(6109) **T** **4:15 – 7:05** **ED 121**

Examination of the implications of public policy research and implementation from a feminist perspective; the coherence or lack of it amongst different models of public policy formation, different perspectives on specific public policy issues, and different orientations within the women's movement. (Actual location: LEOG 03)

POS 529 **LAW & PUBLIC POLICY** **D. LIEBSCHUTZ**
(8046) **W** **5:45 – 8:35** **DR 217**

The course is designed to familiarize students with the courts as policymakers and the law as policy. The first half of the course will examine the courts as policymakers; who creates and controls policy; the impact of court decisions; influencing policy through and within the courts; and, the relationship of social movements. The second half will reintroduce formal law into the discussion and consider recent examples of judicial involvement in state and national policymaking. In

addition, we will apply our understanding of the nature of policy making to consider a likely future Supreme Court case. **(Cross with PUB 529)**

POS 539/R **SEMINAR ON CAMPAIGN AND ELECTRONIC** **M. MALBIN**
(8802/8803) **W** **5:45 – 8:35** **DR 105**

Some of the regular topics covered in this course include candidate emergence, incumbency, the electoral roles of parties and interest groups and communications strategies/media. In addition, the seminar in 2008 will concentrate on the interplay between rules or laws, contexts and outcomes. Topics will include be a range of proposals to change the system, including national and state campaign finance laws and presidential selection.

POS 540 **URBAN POLICY IN THE UNITED STATES** **C. SCALLY**
(9026) **T** **7:15 – 10:05** **AS 121**

This course will examine urban problems as a distinct field of public policy. We will look at a select number of issues that affect urban dwellers and at the structure and interaction of social, economic, and political forces that shape state responses to those issues. **(Crossed with APLN 540)**

POS 544 **AMERICAN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT** **B. MIROFF**
(8804) **TH** **5:45 – 8:35** **MI 215**

A study of the historical shaping of American politics. Encompassing institutions, public policies, political culture, and political economy, American Political Development uncovers patterns of political stability and change. It explores critical episodes in American political history in a theoretically-informed fashion. The issues at the center of scholarship in American Political Development are important not only to students of American Politics but also to students of Comparative Politics and Political Theory.

Pos 551/R **DEMOCRATIZATION** **E. HOFFMANN**
(8805/8806) **T** **2:45 – 5:35** **MI 118**

The causes and effects of democratization are central to political science and recently have taken on added empirical importance. This course will explore theoretically and empirically these causes and effects drawing from the various democratization literatures including political economy, contentious politics, post communism, gender, ethnicity and area studies.

POS 552/R **COMMUNISTS & POST-COMMON SYSTEMS** **C. CHEN**
(8807/8808) **M** **5:45 - 8:35** **ARR**

This course provides a survey of the politics of post-Leninist transition in Russia, Eastern Europe, and China. It begins with an overview of the origin and development of Leninism in the Soviet Union, China, and Eastern Europe. The second part of the course examines and analyzes the profound political, economic, and social changes in former Leninist societies during the post-Leninist transition. Specifically, we will cover regime transition; institution-building; economic reforms; social transformation; as well as nationalism and ethnic conflicts. The course will conclude with a broad discussion of the comparative prospects of liberal capitalist democracy taking root in former Leninist countries. The primary aims of the course are to familiarize students with the major challenges confronting former Leninist countries as they move away from socialism, and to provide students with not only the theoretical tools necessary for understanding the collapse of Leninism, but also the perspectives crucial to making well-grounded evaluations of the emerging political and socio-economic trajectories in these countries.

POS 554/R **POLITICAL VIOLENCE: INSURGENCY & TERRORISM** **V. Asal**
(6972/6974) **T** **5:45 – 8:35** **DR 313 B**

Insurgency and terrorism have become the key violent conflict problem of the post cold war period, outpacing since the late 1980s international conflict as the key international problem and for more and more countries it has become a key domestic problem. This course will explore key theories and methods in the study of insurgency and terrorism. We will focus on the key why's how's and what's in the study of terrorism and insurgency. The focus in the class is less on a specific geographic or substantive area then on learning to think conceptually and theoretically and how to produce analytical research. Each week we will read foundational works in the field and also discuss not only the findings but how they were found. This will be then applied to the ongoing research efforts students will be making in the class.

POS 567

CONTENTIOUS POLITICS

M. WEISS

This course will focus on key approaches to the study of contentious politics. We will explore these both through key methodological and theoretical works, and through close examination of canonical texts, primarily exemplary comparative case studies. While we will cover specific geographical or substantive cases, the analytical emphasis of the class is more on the "how" than the "what." Written assignments will include an annotated bibliography and a substantial final paper.

POS 570
(4365)

FIELD SEMINAR IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL SYSTEMS
M 5:45 – 8:35

D. ROUSSEAU
DR 313A

This purpose of this course is two-fold. First, the survey course is designed to introduce graduate students to a wide range of theories of international politics. During the course of the semester we will examine a wide variety of theories, including among others neo-realism, power transition theory, hegemonic stability theory, neo-liberalism, interdependence, the democratic peace, bureaucratic politics, organizational theory, constructivism, and decision making theory. Second, the course will sharpen students' research design skills. The written assignments require students to take the often abstract theories presented in the readings and develop practical research designs for testing hypotheses derived from the theories. The papers will not include data collection or the execution of actual tests. Rather, they will focus on the conceptual problems of designing tests which eliminate competing hypotheses, operationalizing variables, and identifying potential sources of data. Student's grades will be based on five short research designs and discussion leadership.

POS 571/R
(8810/8811)

INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY
TH 5:45 – 8:35

G. Nowell
DR 313A

This course covers a wide range of international political economic theory, focusing on different conceptions of the state's role in the national and international economies. The assigned reading covers a wide body of material, starting with Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* as the paradigm of liberal thought, and also covering the mercantilist reaction (Alexander Hamilton, Friedrich List, etc.). Marx's reinterpretation of the state is used to prepare the groundwork for mid-to-late twentieth century "world-system" approaches to the state. Late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century "saviors" of capitalism include Hobson and Keynes. The course also covers later twentieth-century thinking on multinational corporations and regimes, including a selection from such authors as Gilpin, Krasner, Vernon, Keohane, etc. Some exploration of fascist and/or former communist regimes may be included. Additional attention will be paid to neo-mercantilist and/or "Atari democrat" approaches to revitalizing the U.S. economy, including Magaziner, Reich, etc.

This is a fast-paced course that requires student commitment to engaging first-rate authors on a weekly basis, and to be prepared to discuss their thoughts in what has tended to be a small but intensely committed seminar format. A large number of books will be on order in the bookstore. Students will not need to buy all of them, as course organization will divide the class into subgroups to reduce the per-student reading load. Students who have taken my undergraduate international political economy course are encouraged to take this course as it offers a much broader perspective. Other qualified undergraduates may inquire about taking the course. Work requirements include the preparation of two-page summaries of readings and about twenty-five pages of writing, usually handled as one ten-page and one fifteen-page paper, or one twenty-five page paper. Past student response to this course has been enthusiastic.

POS 606
(8812)

SOCIAL CAPITAL & PUBLIC POLICY
W 5:45 – 8:50

K. ANDRADE
DR 346

This course examines how social capital -- the structure of social ties, norms and networks within social groups -- affect the development and effectiveness of public policy. The course addresses the role of networks in structuring opportunity and inequality; efforts to transform social capital into political action; and the ability of policy to effectively tap into the beneficial aspects of social networks as well as curb negative effects like discrimination. Particular attention is paid to issues of racial and economic inequality. **(Crossed with PAD/PUB 606)**

POS 663/R
(6131)

COMPARATIVE POLICY SYSTEMS
W 5:45 – 8:50

H. Sims
MI 118

This seminar investigates why some industrial societies have addressed challenges such as economic management and health care more effectively than others. It compares both policies and institutional structures charged with implementation in European powers, the U.S. and Japan. **Crossed with PAD/PUB 663**

POS 666/R
(6133/6134)

INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT POLICY
M 5:45 – 8:50

H. Sims
DR 115

After considering how 'the environment' emerged as a salient issue in the United States, the course surveys its evolution and policy strategies in other prosperous nations and in China. Alternative perspectives on environmental policy are explored.

POS 695 (8826)	RESEARCH & WRITING SEMINAR I MW 4:15 – 5:35	A. JONES DR 341
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The course, which is taken in the fall of the second year of the PhD program, is designed to actively guide students toward the completion of major research paper, fit for submission to an academic conference or journal. During the semester, students will examine the elements of a persuasive argument, identify an important research question, conduct an extensive literature review, and develop a research design. This research design will be executed the following spring in RPOS 696

POS 697	SELECTED PROBLEMS - POS RESEARCH ARRANGED (PERM. OF INST.)	AII FACULTY
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POS 698	MASTERS ESSAY ARRANGED (PERM. OF INST.)	AII FACULTY
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POS 729 (9091)	SEMINAR IN PUBLIC LAW TOPIC: LAW AND AMERICAN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT W 5:45 - 8:35	E.SOMMER DR 21B
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This seminar examines the various substantive areas of judicial politics and the methodologies used in this field. Topics to be examined include: appellate courts and judicial decision making, models of judicial decision making, the Attitudinal Model, the Legal Model, the Separation of Powers model, the relationship of law and courts to public policy, agenda setting on the US Supreme Court, effects of public opinion, the collegial game. The goals of the course are to help students identify the major questions in judicial politics and provide them with hands-on research experience. Course requirements include class presentations, short papers, a take-home final examination and a research project.

POS 798	READINGS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE ARRANGED (PERM OF INST.)	AII FACULTY
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POS 897	INDEPENDENT RESEARCH POS ARRANGED (PERM. OF INST. - LOAD CREDIT <u>ONLY</u>)	AII FACULTY
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POS 899	DOCTORAL DISSERTATION ARRANGED (PERM. OF INST. - LOAD CREDIT <u>ONLY</u>) ABD STATUS ONLY (1 Credit Registration constitutes full-time study)	AII FACULTY
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