

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK
Department of Political Science
UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS: FALL 2009

INTRODUCTORY COURSES

POS 101 **INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN POLITICS** **B. MIROFF**
(31248) **TTH 10:15 – 11:35**
STUDENTS REGISTERING FOR THIS SECTION MUST FIRST REGISTER FOR ONE DISCUSSION SECTION

This course will undertake a broad and critical survey of American political thought, practice and experience. Emphasis will be placed less on the memorization of facts than on the understanding of fundamental concepts, themes and issues in American politics. Subjects to be explored include American political theory, political economy, parties and elections, national institutions, civil liberties and democratic citizenship. Course requirements will be three exams and 3 debate reports. Attendance at discussion sections is required and will be a component of the grading scheme for the course.
Gen Ed: US History, Social Science.

POS 102 **INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE & INTERNATIONAL POLITICS** **M. WEISS**
(22828) **TTH 11:45 – 1:05**
STUDENTS REGISTERING FOR THIS SECTION MUST FIRST REGISTER FOR ONE DISCUSSION SECTION

Political Science 102 is the introductory course to comparative politics and international relations. This course provides a broad survey of the theoretical concepts essential to a sound understanding of global politics. These concepts include power, the state, sovereignty, nationalism, democratization, international cooperation and conflict, globalization, international economics, and global environmentalism. There are three broad objectives for this course. The first is to prepare students to make better sense of contemporary events in global politics. The second is to prepare students for upper-level courses in global politics. The third objective is to fulfill the University General Education requirement for methods in social science. We will therefore also explore various methodologies ranging from evaluations of conflicting historical interpretations to concept formation, data collection, and hypothesis testing.
Gen. Ed: Global and Cross Cultural Studies, Social Sciences.

POS 103 **INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY** **P. BREINER**
(27794) **MWF 10:25 - 11:20**
STUDENTS REGISTERING FOR THIS SECTION MUST FIRST REGISTER FOR ONE DISCUSSION SECTION

An introduction to the history of Western political theory. The course, consisting of lectures and discussion sections, will introduce students to some of the major thinkers and political concepts of political theory. Though the course will read some of the classic political thinkers, it will be organized around a number of political concepts that we use all the time. In particular it will address political concepts such as justice, equality, freedom, democracy, power and political morality. It will be an aim of the course to help students refine their capacity for political argument as well as learn that seemingly abstract ideas have a lot of bearing on practical politics.
Gen. Ed: Humanities, Europe.

TOPICS COURSES

You may register for more than one of these, they are repeatable.

POS 204 **TOPICS IN AMERICAN POLITICS: AMERICAN POLITICS IN FILM** **J. CRUZ**
(28716) **TH 2:45 – 5:35**

This course examines representations of American politics in film. We will use these representations as primary texts and will compare and contrast the facts, ideas, and symbols they provide with written accounts and analyses of the phenomena, processes, and events represented. Although this will not be the primary focus of the course, we will also explore a number of questions concerning the impact of visual representations of politics on political attitudes and behavior.

**POS 204
(27908)**

**TOPICS IN AMERICAN POLITICS: TIME FOR SOME
CHANGE? REFORMING ELECTIONS**
MWF 10:25-11:20

A. HILDRETH

The 2008 presidential and congressional campaigns form a backdrop for this look at the merits of a variety of reform proposals and how they might influence American elections and our politics more generally. The rules that structure elections influence the decisions and behavior of all the participants and have significant implications for the quality of public participation and representation in our democracy. In this course we will examine proposed changes in ballot access rules for candidates, voter registration, the redistricting process, campaign finance, election administration, and common plurality voting rules. The course uses a team based learning model - students work collaboratively in an assigned team all semester analyzing reform problems and solutions.

**POS 204
(32417)**

**TOPICS IN AMERICAN POLITICS: URBAN POLICY IN THE
UNITED STATES**
MW 4:15 – 5:35

M. ARMATO

Urban Policy in the United States Who manufactures urban policy in the United States? How do scholars and practitioners look at urban policy? What are the major issues that have been at the forefront of urban policy? This course will seek to answer these questions. The first part of the course will explore historical, theoretical and political contexts of how scholars study urban policy. The second part will explore ways each level of government has dealt with urban policy with a particular emphasis on the tools each has used to address major issues. The last part will explore some key urban policy areas including urban renewal and gentrification, housing, poverty, and economic development.

COURSES IN POLITICAL THEORY

**POS 301
(22846)**

HISTORY OF POLITICAL THEORY I
TTH 1:15 – 2:35

T. SHANKS

This course will closely examine some of the pivotal texts in political theory from the Greeks until Machiavelli. These texts will include Plato, *The Republic*; Aristotle *The Politics*, and Machiavelli, *The Prince*, and *The Discourses*. Questions to be discussed will be the meaning of political justice; the significance of active citizenship for the enjoyment of freedom and the achievement of moral excellence; the role of conflict and power in the creation of political order, and the relation of power to justice; the role of fortune in political affairs; and the tense relation between practical political knowledge and philosophy.

**POS 306
(32124)**

CONTEMPORARY DEMOCRATIC THEORY
MWF 2:45 – 4:05

P. BREINER

This course will deal with recent theories of democracy and their origins. We will read two of the classical political theorists of democracy: Rousseau and of Madison. We will then examine a variety of different contemporary models of democracy ranging from competitive elitist models, pluralist models to participatory models and deliberative models. Finally, we will examine a number of problem areas in democratic theory including the relation between democracy and the market, the meaning of democratization, the problem of accountability in the American constitution, and the effect of the internet on democratic participation. In all of this we will debate some of the following questions: Is the role of democracy merely to protect the pursuit of individual interests or must it engage citizens in the process of decision-making? How much democratic participation is necessary to realize political equality and self-government? Should we extend participation to the workplace or to local communities? How democratic is the American constitution? Does the market hinder or preserve democracy? What is the relation of political equality to property rights?

**POS 307
(28856)**

AMERICAN POLITICAL THEORY
MWF 1:40 – 2:35

W. NISHIYAMA

What ideas do Americans hold? How has these ideas changed or remained the same since the founding? Can we call America liberal or perhaps conservative? Essentially, what is America all about? This survey course will examine these questions. Throughout the semester we will consider the political thoughts of historical periods including: The Colonial

Period (Winthrop, Mather, Franklin, etc.), The Founding (Paine, Federalists, Anti-federalists, Adams, Jefferson, etc.), Jacksonian Period (Jackson, de Tocqueville, etc), Antebellum America (Douglass, Lincoln, Calhoun, The American Transcendentalist, etc.), Populism and Progressivism (Bryan, Sumner, Debts, Du Bois, Gompers, Bellamy, Sinclair, Garvey, B. T. Washington, etc.), Liberal Transformation (Dewey, Croly, Lippmann, Wilson, FDR, Goldman, etc.), and Post WW II (Mills, King, Malcolm X, Friedan, SDS, Harrington, etc.).

POS 308
(32296)

THEORISTS AND THEORIZING
TTH 8:45 – 10:05

D. ERICSON

This course will involve a close reading of several of Plato's major works, including *Gorgias*, *Meno*, *Parmenides*, *Phaedrus*, *Phaedo*, *Protagoras*, and *The Republic*. We will also place Plato's ideas in history by reading short excerpts from what other philosophers, such as John Stuart Mill, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Jacques Derrida, have written about Plato. The central theme of the course will be to re-consider Plato's philosophic idealism and its relation to his politics. The course will be conducted in a discussion format. Beside discussion, class requirements will include several short writing assignments, one longer paper, and a final essay exam.

POS 314
(30322)

PROBLEMS OF POLITICAL INQUIRY
TTH 10:15 – 11:35

D. ERICSON

This course will be devoted to studying the methods of interpretation which political theorists use to pursue their craft. We will study such contemporary theorists as Hans Georg Gadamer, Mary Hawkesworth, Quentin Skinner, and Leo Strauss to explore what it is exactly that political theorists do. The class requirements will include class participation, midterm, final, and a term paper that applies one of the methods of interpretation to a particular text in political theory.

COURSES IN AMERICAN POLITICS

POS 319
(32125)

AMERICAN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT
TTH 12:15 – 2:35

B. MIROFF

This course will examine the historical approach to American Politics. It will focus on how varying elements of American politics have developed over time, both separately and in relationship to one another. Among the areas of politics to be examined are: political culture, democracy, race, institutions, and public policies.

POS 321
(22848)

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
MWF 9:20 – 10:15

J. ZIMMERMAN

An analysis of factors pertaining to the viability of state and local governments as political systems through an examination of intergovernmental relations; the interdependent roles of governors, legislatures and courts in policy-making and implementation; the organization, functions and jurisdiction of local governments; the interaction of political parties and interest groups with formal institutions and processes, and problems in selected functional areas. Emphasis is placed upon socio-economic and political trends leading to change in state and local governments, consequent issues raised and proposals made in response to such issues. Three equally weighted examinations and periodic quizzes will be administered. Each student must write a research paper on his/her home local government. (**Crossed with PUB 321**)

POS 325
(22850)

GOVERNMENT & POLITICS OF NEW YORK STATE
TH 5:45 – 8:35

F. MAURO

Introduction to the major political and governmental institutions of New York State. Examines the historical, constitutional, and economic setting of government and politics in New York State; the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government with an emphasis on separation of powers and checks and balances among the branches; state-local relations and federal-state relations; and the nature of party competition and elections in New York's unusual multi-party system. (**Crossed with PUB 325**)

**POS 329
(27730)**

**BUREAUCRATIC POLITICS
TTH 12:35 – 1:30**

A. JONES

Examinations of political behavior within and among administrative agencies, focusing on the sources of power in the bureaucracy, and the ways in which agencies use their political resources to shape public policy. Considers the tension that arises between hierarchical, expertise driven public bureaucracies and pressures for democratic participation and representation. Only one of RPAD 329 & RPOS329 may be taken for credit. Prerequisite(s): RPOS 101 or 101z and 102, or junior or senior class

**POS 331
(22852)**

**AMERICAN LEGISLATURES
TTH 1:15 – 2:35**

M. MALBIN

This course on the U.S. Congress will cover how the institution works and why anyone -- in this age of presidential dominance and cynicism about institutions -- should care how it works. Why does it matter if legislators make careers out of politics, or whether committee chairs are forced out through term limits? How do congressional elections work in the age of campaign reform, issue ads and the Internet? What role do parties play? And how do all of these developments mesh with our views about representation?

**POS 334
(31316)**

**AMERICAN POLITICAL PARTIES AND GROUPS
MWF 12:35 – 1:30**

A. HILDRETH

This course provides an in depth examination of American political parties in the post-New Deal era. How and why have American parties changed in recent decades? What are consequences of the presence and power of other actors in the electoral process, especially interest groups and the media? How does the current configuration of these actors in American politics affect policy-making? What can we expect from political parties in the future? First we will examine the historical development of the American party system, its current nature, and the status of parties in shaping political competition and electoral participation. Next, we will examine who the parties are today, the ideas they represent and their current relationship with interest groups and candidates. In the final portion of the course we will look at the status of current parties in government in light of the 2008 elections.

**POS 365
(32418)**

**GOVERNMENT AND MASS MEDIA
MW 2:45 – 4:05**

C. FERRADINO

Over time, the U.S. government and the mass media have had an interesting and oftentimes tenuous relationship. But, what exactly has contributed to such a complex association? In an effort to answer this question, this course will look at institutional and policy effects media have on government, as well as the government's influence on this industry. Students also will be introduced to relevant topics such as the history of media and government, the regulatory process and policies, media ownership, and the dual role of the news industry as both governmental watchdog and a for-profit business. Additionally, we will into other areas of the mass media such as political cartoons, magazines, television, movies, and the Internet, and examine the effects on the general public, politicians and the political process in general.

**POS 399
(32129)**

**RACE AND ETHNICITY IN AMERICAN POLITICS
TTH 11:45 – 1:05**

J. CRUZ

This course will explore the character and role of racial and ethnic relations in the political process. We will focus on the experience of African-Americans, Latinos, and Asians. We will explore the reasons that make race and ethnicity an enduring source of conflict but we will also examine their affirmative qualities--as a source of meaning, identity, self-worth, and power.

POS 433Z

WOMEN, POLITICS AND POWER

S. FRIEDMAN

(32156) TTH 2:45 – 4:05

Recent electoral events as well as contemporary policy debates raise important considerations as to the role of women in politics. What factors enhance the chances for women's political participation? Do women bring different perspectives to politics and leadership? Do they behave differently while in office? Are their "interests" being adequately represented? Beginning with debates about the roles of women in the larger society and then considering women's activities in a variety of political settings (electoral participation, institutions and the policymaking process), it will be the purpose of this class to consider and disentangle the multiple and sometimes conflicting perspectives on the above often difficult (and yet interesting) questions. Requirements include midterm and final exams as well as two approximately 6-page and one approximately 12-page papers (to meeting the writing requirements of a 400 level class).

POS 439Z TOPICS IN AMERICAN POLITICS – POLICY IMPLEMENTATION R. NAKAMURA
(31314) MWF 12:35 – 1:30

This is a course in the implementation of public policy. Implementation is what is supposed to happen after a policy is made. It is often the most interesting part of the policy process because it is the point at which ideas are supposed to be translated into the actions that improve outcomes. While most attention is paid to the making of decisions, the carrying out of those decisions has proven to be the most problematic feature of the policy process. Implementation research started out with detailing why it is so hard to get things done, then moved to a study of the different instruments used to achieve goals, and to studying the things that make public managers more effective. In this course we will examine the general problems encountered in implementation including the complexity of joint action and the various implementation "games" played by participants. We will look at various solutions including the prescriptions of the "new public management", the use of better or more robust policy tools or implements, and the increased reliance on either quasi-market mechanisms or greater participation opportunities to correct shortcomings in the implementation process. To do this, we will look at the implementation of a variety of policies including efforts in hazardous waste remediation, welfare reform, and assisting the development of democratic legislatures.

COURSES IN PUBLIC LAW

POS 328 LAW AND POLICY S. BARCLAY
(32247) MWF 9:20 – 10:15

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, criminalization of social problems, the individualization of social problems through civil legal actions, 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 consider examples of policymaking in traditional and non-traditional situations. In addition, we will apply our understanding of the nature of policymaking to consider a likely future Supreme Court case.

POS 330 LAW, COURTS AND POLITICS K. FLETCHER
(32537) TTH 8:45 – 10:05

The fundamental purpose of this class is to provide a working knowledge of the major structures and processes that underlie the American judiciary. While it is important to understand the legal system, it is also important to keep in mind that the law is not self-executing. While courts are passive and reactive, they do not exist in a vacuum. As such, this class will examine the law in action--the dynamics of the judicial process. This will include analyzing the decision-making process, judicial policy making and the checks upon judicial power.

POS 333 WOMEN AND THE LAW N. KAPUR
(32421) MWF 9:20 – 10:15

The course will look at the relationship between women and the law. **The purpose** is to gain a better understanding of the legal system and its impact on the lives of women individually and collectively. We will examine some of the principal areas of this impact, touching on women in their varying roles in society, first, the treatment of women under law; secondly, women in the market economy (education, employment, equal protection of the laws; thirdly, women in the family (divorce, parental rights, imprisoned women); fourthly, women seeking control over their own bodies (reproductive freedom, sexual orientation); and finally women as recipients of violence (rape, pornography, international human rights).

POS 335 THE AMERICAN SUPREME COURT E. SOMMER

(31394) TTH 11:45 – 1:05

This course will examine the U.S. Supreme Court through both text and cases. The topics include – the evolution of the judiciary and its effects on the other branches of government, the influence of the Court on the incorporation of civil liberties, internal institutions of the Court and models of judicial decision-making, and issues around judicial appointments. The course goals are to improve students understanding of how the Court functions, and to develop critical analytical skills concerning prevalent claims about the Supreme Court.

POS 336 CIVIL LIBERTIES E. SOMMER
(31436) TTH 1:15 – 2:35

Madisonian democracy creates a government of majority rule with minority rights. In this system of government it is up to the Supreme Court to determine where democratic control ends and minority rights begin. The purpose of this course is to examine the role of the Supreme Court in setting the boundary between the two.

POS 426Z AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW J. NOVKOV
(22858) TTH 1:15 – 2:35 ES 108

Examination of basic cases in their historical settings and analysis in terms of legal or constitutional issues and judicial doctrines, including judicial review, separation of powers, division of power, interstate relations, the power to tax and spend, war powers and treaty powers .

COURSES IN GLOBAL POLITICS

POS 350 COMPARATIVE PUBLIC POLICY M. BASKIN
(31554) MW 4:15 – 5:35

This course focuses on how policies are made by governments in different countries on a range of important issues, e.g., national security policy, fiscal management, social welfare, education, the environment. It will explore answers to different types of outcomes in policymaking by reference to culture, state institutions and societal organizations. It will compare advanced industrial nations, former socialist nations, rising powers and developing countries.

POS 355 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA C. LONG
(32538) MWF 9:20 – 10:15

POS 357 LATIN AMERICAN POLITICS GONZALEZ-MURPHY
(32693) MW 2:45 – 4:05

The domestic political institutions, the forces which shape the quest for power, and the processes by which public policies are determined in Latin America. Only one of R Pos 357 & A Lcs 357 may be taken for credit.

POS 364 BUILDING DEMOCRACY E. HOFFMAN
(30326) T 2:45 – 5:35

This is a historically grounded and geographically diverse course on democracy and democratization, with emphasis on the relationships between democracy and capitalism and democratization and marketization. We will examine the emergence of democratic institutions and cultures; try to explain why some democratic experiments have flourished while others have foundered or failed; and assess the prospects for democratization and "de-democratization" in the current global recession or depression. Many documentary films will be presented and discussed, in addition to extensive readings and occasional lectures. Course requirements include a 20-page analytical paper based on the class readings, discussions, lectures, and films.

POS 373 GOVERNMENT & POLITICS IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC C. CHEN

(26538) OF CHINA
MWF 10:25 - 11:20

This course introduces students to the government and politics of the People's Republic of China, emphasizing events in the period since 1949. It begins with a brief overview of China's political history before 1949 in order to establish the necessary foundation for understanding the significance of subsequent events. The second part of the course analyzes the ways in which the Communist Party set out to reorganize China after the revolution, the consequences of these efforts, and the debates provoked within the elite and among the population. Next, the course focuses on the reform era in China. Specifically, we study how China has defined and confronted the challenge of economic development, nation-building, social transformation, and international relations. Finally, we assess the prospect of the political regime in China. The objective of this course is to provide students with a broad survey of Chinese politics grounded in specific historical contexts. No previous knowledge of China's history, culture, or language is required nor will such knowledge be assumed. This course fulfills the Gen Ed requirement of "Regions Beyond Europe."

POS 375 INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION B. EARLY
(32127) MWF 11:30 – 12:25

The structure and processes of the United Nations evaluated in terms of its historical antecedents and the challenges that face it. The operational foundations of the specialized agencies and such other governmental organizations as are universal in character. Close attention to the forces and interest groups of international scope to which the United Nations and related organizations respond.

POS 383 AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY R. TYNES
(30328) TTH 11:45 – 1:05

A study of American Foreign Policy from the turn of the 20th century through the end of the Cold War and into today's post-9/11 global arena. This includes both economic and security issues. The course analyzes the U.S. position on various topics such as nuclear proliferation, international trade, the Middle East and terrorism.

POS 395 INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY G. NOWELL
(32128) TTH 2:45 – 4:05

Topics to be covered may include sectoral studies of oil and finance; capitalist development including classic works on imperialism; Keynesianism; economic crises; mysteries of the stock market; leverage; international trade and protectionism; monopoly, oligopoly, and the regulation of same.

POS 474Z POLITICS OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION R. KOSLOWSKI
() MWF 1:40 – 2:35

Surveys the domestic and international politics of migration. Examines labor migration to advanced industrial states, border control, immigrant incorporation, refugee policies, emigrant participation in home country politics and the effect of migration on international development, democratization, and security.

HONORS & ARRANGED COURSES

TPOS 260 POLITICAL VIOLENCE V. ASAL
(32536) TTH 8:45 – 10:05

This course is designed to introduce students to the study of violent political conflict. We will examine the how, why and when of violent political conflict both domestic and international. What are the key empirical and normative questions raised by violent political conflict and what answers to these questions does the literature offer? In this course, in addition to studying the theories that have been developed to explain the politics and history of violent political conflict, students will have an opportunity to participate in simulation exercises designed to sharpen their analytic skills in the subject area. Students will participate in a research data collection project as well.

POS 300 HONORS TUTORIAL IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Students in the Political Science Honors Program take this one-credit tutorial in conjunction with any 300-level course they take that they wish to count toward the requirements of the honors program. Specific sections are grade A-E others S/U

POS 338 **POLITICAL INTERNSHIP** **STAFF**
(22854) **ARRANGED**

Internship work in a governmental agency (legislative, executive, or judicial) or in a politically or legally oriented non-governmental organization. The department will provide assistance to students in obtaining internships in positions that are relevant to their interests. Includes both internship work and an academic component that involves class sessions, readings, and written assignments. Interested students should contact the coordinator of undergraduate studies in political science and submit an application indicating their interests. We will try to match student interests with agency needs. Internships are only open to qualified juniors and seniors who have an overall grade point average of at least 2.50. This course may be taken only once for credit toward the political science major or minor.

POS 400 **HONORS TUTORIAL IN POLITICAL SCIENCE**

Students in the Political Science Honors Program take this one-credit tutorial in conjunction with any 400-level course they take that they wish to count toward the requirements of the honors program. Specific sections are grade A-E others S/U

POS 496Z **GREAT IDEAS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE** **V. ASAL**
(31332) **TTH 10:15 – 11:35**

Great Ideas in Political Science is intended for students enrolled in the honors program in political science. The seminar will discuss major works that have influenced the discipline and will also focus on learning about the process of writing a research thesis. A wide range of works are under consideration for inclusion in the course, covering topics such as the sources of democracy and dictatorship, human rights, and the causes of war.

POS 498 **INDEPENDENT STUDY (A-E)** **(PERM. OF INST.)**
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POS 498 **INDEPENDENT STUDY (S/U)** **(PERM. OF INST.)**
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POS 498Z **INDEPENDENT STUDY** **(PERM. OF INST.)**
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POS 499Z **HONORS THESIS** **V. ASAL**
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Restricted to students in the Political Science Honors Program. Reading, research, and the writing of an honors thesis under the direction of an individual faculty member, is part of the Honors Student Program. Overseen by the chair of the department.