Course Description
This course focuses on power relations at the local level. During the first part of the course we will examine three classical political theory texts to glean insights about power, decision-making, and political leadership. We will use these insights as the theoretical context for our critique of contemporary community politics. During the second part of the course we will examine a landmark study of community power as well as a series of case studies focusing on issues of race, class, ethnicity, and gender at the local level. The course will conclude with a reflection on the relationship between community, individuality, and political empowerment.

Learning Objectives
1. To help students understand power at different levels of society and government.
2. To expose students to different research and methodological strategies to study power relations.
3. To provide students with an opportunity to hone their analytical, research, writing, and oral presentation skills.

Required Readings (in the order in which we will review them. Titles in boldface are available online on Blackboard [BLS])

*Beginning*
Aristotle, *The Politics*
Clarence Stone, “Power and social complexity,” BLS.
Machiavelli, *The Prince*
Clarence Stone, "Political Leadership in Urban Politics," BLS.
Rousseau, *Social Contract*
Robert Waste, “Community power and pluralist theory,” BLS.

*Middle*
Floyd Hunter, *Community Power Structure*
Jennifer Frost, *An Interracial Movement of the Poor*
Katherine Cramer Walsh, *Talking About Race, Community Dialogues and the Politics of Difference*
Arlene Dávila, *Barrio Dreams, Puerto Ricans, Latinos, and the Neoliberal City*
Sylvie Murray, *The Progressive Housewife, Community Activism in Suburban Queens, 1945-1965*
Milton Kotler, Neighborhood Government, The Local Foundations of Political Life
Philip Selznick, The Communitarian Persuasion
Adrian Little, The Politics of Community
Zygmunt Bauman, Community, Seeking Safety in an Insecure World

Course Requirements
Class participation. This includes a presentation of your research at the end of the semester. 20%;
weekly reaction papers, 2-3 pages, typed, double spaced, due in class, 40%; research paper or
literature review, 15-20 pages, not including bibliography, 40%. Students registered in POS
524R do not have to write a research paper. In this case, class participation will be 20% of the
grade and reaction papers will be 80%.

Office Hours
Tuesdays 1-2pm HU B16 and 4:30-5:30pm Milne 219; Thursdays 1-2pm HU B16. Also by
appointment. Contact information: jcruz@albany.edu

Reading and Discussion Schedule
August 20 - September 17: Introduction
Aristotle, The Politics - Book III, ix-xiii; Book VI, I-v; Clarence Stone, “Power and social
complexity;”Machiavelli, The Prince - ix, x, xv-xix, xxi-xxiii, xxv; Clarence Stone, "Political
Leadership in Urban Politics;” Rousseau, Social Contract - Book II, 1-4, 7-10; Book III, 4-7, 9-15;
Robert Waste, “Community power and pluralist theory.”

September 24 - October 22: Floyd Hunter, Community Power Structure; Jennifer Frost, An
Interracial Movement of the Poor; Katherine Cramer Walsh, Talking About Race, Community
Dialogues and the Politics of Difference; Edward S. Shapiro, Crown Heights, Blacks, Jews, and
the 1991 Brooklyn Riot; Arlene Dávila, Barrio Dreams, Puerto Ricans, Latinos, and the
Neoliberal City; Sylvie Murray, The Progressive Housewife, Community Activism in Suburban
Queens, 1945-1965

of Political Life; Philip Selznick, The Communitarian Persuasion; Adrian Little, The Politics of
Community; Zygmunt Bauman, Community, Seeking Safety in an Insecure World; Class
evaluation; Seminar Presentations, early bird submission of papers.

December 17 - Seminar papers due.