

Department of Political Science

Graduate Course Descriptions

Spring 2019

**RPOS 513
9788**

**Field Seminar in Public Policy
TH 05:45_PM-09:25_PM**

**P. Strach
HS 013**

This course introduces students to public policy and the policy process in the United States and in comparative context. In it, we focus on important *theories* of how policymaking works from pressures on legislators to make policy, adapt policy, implement it, and the effect it has on citizens' individual lives. We take a broad overview of the classics as well as look at new directions in contemporary policy research. This course is recommended for students who are interested in American or comparative politics broadly or policy students looking for theoretical background.

**RPOS 515/R
9789, 9790**

**American Political Theory
M 5:45 – 9:25 pm**

**B. Miroff
DR 246**

This seminar in American political theory has three major objectives. First, we will examine the historical development of American political theory from the Revolution to the present. Second, we will concentrate on some of the central themes in this history: the founding debate over the size, character, and institutional structure of the republic, individualism, equality, race, gender, the problems and prospects for democracy in industrial and post-industrial America, and more. Third, we will explore contemporary academic debates over the nature of American political theory, especially the debate between the liberal and republican schools of thought.

**RPOS 517
4003**

**Quantitative Research Methods
T 5:45 – 9:25 pm**

**M. Ingram
HS 004**

Assuming little to no participant familiarity with quantitative methods – and even some trepidation toward statistics (let's face it, few people get really excited about math) – this course provides an introduction to basic statistical methods for the social sciences. Upon successful completion, course participants will be better consumers of statistical methods, have acquired competence and understanding of introductory statistics and be able to apply these methods to real-world problems in the social sciences, including problems of interest to students. The course also prepares participants for taking more advanced and specialized quantitative methods courses, emphasizing applied data analysis. Participants will work with a variety of hands-on experiences to prepare them to conduct their own research projects, from data collection and management to presenting research findings. Topics covered include: Overview of quantitative approaches to empirical social science and causal inference; concept formation and measurement; univariate statistics; sampling; hypothesis testing; bivariate and multiple regression; assumptions underlying the linear regression model; and extensions of linear regression. No prior knowledge in statistics is required or expected.

RPOS 521 **Field Seminar in the American Political System** **TBD**
9918 **W 05:45_PM-09:25_PM** **HS 308**

The Field Seminar in the American Political System overviews central debates, conceptualizations and methodological concerns of scholars in American politics. Part I is roughly concerned with enduring debates within the political system, along with normative questions about how our institutions are supposed to operate, Part II focuses on how things actually have worked as well as on the role of the citizen and the ways in which citizens influence (or fail to influence) government. To broaden our understanding, we will also include comparative perspectives. Students will get a sense of the intellectual and methodological range of the field of American politics as well as exposure to both classic and contemporary readings. In conjunction, it is also a purpose of the course to introduce students to the work and interests of the members of the Political Science department at the University of Albany.

RPOS 533 **WOMEN, POLITICS & POWER** **S. Friedman**
8850 **TTH 2:45-4:05 PM** **BB 368**

Whether it's speculating about the factors impacting a woman's chance of becoming U.S. president, analyzing the work of women who already hold elective office, thinking through women's participation in the political and policy processes or simply watching the progress of a female little leaguer playing baseball on an otherwise all male team, issues relevant to gender arise in more contexts than we might think. Many are controversial, and many raise important questions about the status of women in society and 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? It will be the central purpose of this class to consider and disentangle the multiple and sometimes conflicting perspectives on these often difficult questions. Beginning with some background and historical perspective, we will overview the ways women have been involved in a number of aspects of American political life, examining women's participation as voters, candidates, officeholders and increasingly, as political leaders.

RPOS 540/R **Urban Policy in United States** **T.Weaver**
8651, 9333 **W 5:45 – 9:25 pm** **HS 013**

This research seminar focuses on federal, state, and urban policies toward the contemporary city. We will consider how urban policy and politics has varied over the course of the twentieth century; examine the policy approaches to the problem of urban poverty; and consider case studies of Detroit, Philadelphia, Chicago, and New York.

RPOS 550 **Field Seminar in Comparative Political Systems** **M. Weiss**
7377 **T 5:45 – 9:25 pm** **Milne 104**

The objective of this seminar is to provide a critical survey of the field of comparative politics, exposing the student to different methodological approaches and to substantive areas of research. The first part of the course traces the intellectual history of the field with a focus on the bifurcation between theories that emphasize the "universal" (the homogenizing effects of specific processes or variables) and the "particular" (the persistence of distinctive historical legacies and trajectories). It then examines the recent debates between rational-choice, cultural, and structuralist scholars, and discusses the major methodological issues in comparative politics, considering the trade-offs between varieties of formal, quantitative, and qualitative methods. In the second part of the course, the focus shifts to substantive areas of research in the field of comparative politics, including the complex relations among nationalism, nation-states and societies; the origins, consolidation, and patterns of democratic governance; the dynamics behind revolutions and other forms of "contentious politics"; the political economy of development and the emergence of varieties of capitalism; and the relationship between international/global economy and domestic politics and policies. Overall, the course is designed to introduce important issues and debates that comparativists have regularly engaged in, and to provide a broad intellectual map of an extremely heterogeneous field so that the relationships between different kinds of problematiques and approaches can be better understood

RPOS 554/R
9895, 9896

Political Violence, Insurgency
M 05:45 -09:25 PM

I. Anderson
DR 313B

This course will provide an overview of a wide range of topics and theories dealing with political violence, with a particular focus on terrorism. Students will explore what the various forms of political violence are, apply theories on political violence, understand why terrorism constitutes a distinct form of political violence, and study how nations (particularly the United States) respond to the various terrorist threats today. The course will also integrate interactive exercises and structured discussions which will be used to dig deeper into the theory and practice of political violence.

RPOS 567/R
9924, 9925

Contentious Politics
M 05:45 -09:25 PM OR T 1:15 PM

M. Weiss
HS 217

This course explores approaches to and experiences of contentious politics, or (per Tarrow), “collective activity on the part of claimants—or those who claim to represent them—relying at least in part on noninstitutional forms of interaction with elites, opponents, or the state.” Such collective action by “people who lack regular access to institutions, who act in the name of new or unaccepted claims, and who behave in ways that fundamentally challenge others or authorities” may include “wars, revolutions, rebellions, social movements, industrial conflict, feuds, riots, banditry, shaming ceremonies, and many more forms of collective struggle.” Contentious politics may be episodic or long term, and runs the gamut of participants and organizational forms. So there’s a lot with which to work. The class is structured primarily around major theoretical approaches to the study of contentious politics, in most cases using a single, often canonical work to allow an in-depth discussion of the how of the research. We begin, though, with a quick survey of the theoretical landscape, and shift at the end from theoretical lenses to forms of contention. Most of the works we will read rely on qualitative case studies (either single cases or compilations of them, in the case of edited volumes), allowing you to hone your skills in class discussions at comparative case study analysis. The goal throughout is not just to introduce you to some fascinating examples of political contention, but to leave you with tools you can use in your future scholarship. The assignments for the class are designed accordingly

RPOS 571/R
5652, 5688

International Political Economy
T 5:45 – 9:25 pm

G. Nowell
HS 013

An introduction to competing theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of international political economy. The course will examine the utility of these different theoretical approaches and attend to major current issues in the field. Prerequisite(s): As specified for M.A. or Ph.D. students.

RPOS 599/R
10067, 10068

Select Topics: Fascism, Capitalism, Democracy
TTH 01:15 -02:35 PM

M. Schoolman
BBB 003

"Fascism" is the topic this seminar in political theory will focus on. Our seminar will consider a collection of fundamental questions throughout the semester. Namely, what is the nature of Fascist political regimes? How do these regimes emerge? Are they a distinctively modern political phenomenon? What have we learned about Fascist regimes from studying them? What is the historical relationship between Fascism, Capitalism, and Democracy? Can a modern democratic society become fascist? Finally, how can Fascism be opposed?"

RPOS 599/RPOS 439Z

Selected Topics: Class, Poverty and Politics

V. Eubanks

According to a 2018 report by the UN Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty, 40 million Americans live in poverty, 18.5 million live in extreme poverty, and 5.3 million live in Third World conditions of absolute poverty. Yet, many of us persist in seeing the United States as a “classless” society. This course provides interdisciplinary perspectives on the nature, causes, and consequences of poverty and economic inequality in the United States. Using an intersectional approach that explores the relationship of gender, sexuality, race, and nation to poverty, this intensive reading seminar will examine the following questions: How do we

measure and understand poverty? How do people of all classes experience the realities of economic inequality? How does American politics and public policy engage—or fail to engage—poverty and economic inequality? How do poor and working class people organize to attain their economic human rights?

**RPOS 604
9014**

**Inequality & Public Policy
TH 05:45 -09:25 PM**

**J. Dodge
HS 014**

This course addresses the formulation and implementation of public policies that seek to end diverse inequities. Specifically, this course will explore alternative definitions of equality and their implications for public policy; the role of issue definition and agenda-setting in policy making; the troublesome challenge of measuring equality for purposes of developing or assessing policy; the causes and politics of inequality, and the dynamics of governing institutions that produce, exacerbate or ameliorate inequalities. The course will equip students with a variety of policy analytic tools to help them analyze inequalities and the various public policies used to address them.

**RPOS 605/R
9926/ 9928**

**Migration & Membership
W 05:45 -09:25 PM**

**R. Koslowski
HS 214**

This graduate seminar examines the domestic and international politics of migration and considers the dilemmas faced by local, national and international policymaking bodies addressing population movement. After examining the historical context and theories of international migration, we will consider comparative political analysis of labor migration to advanced industrial states, the question of state control over migratory flows, including increasing human smuggling and trafficking. We will then examine the impact of migration on international politics with particular emphasis on international security, the influence of emigrants on political change in home countries, refugee policies and the potential for international cooperation on migration and refugees. We will then shift from politics of control and security to comparative analysis of political incorporation, naturalization and citizenship rights. At the end of the course, we apply the comparative perspectives gained to an examination of the contemporary politics of U.S. immigration policy.

**RPOS 612
5789**

**Preparing for Professoriate
W 12:35 -02:35 PM**

**S. Doellefeld, B. Franchini, K. Van Orman
HS 012**

New faculty often find themselves struggling as they get started in their career. They may not have understood what the faculty role really required, or they expected their new institution to be like the research school where they received their graduate training (and so were unprepared for a different setting). This doesn't have to happen to you. We'll let you in on secrets about how to be a quick starter in academe--secrets that will not only make you more effective on the job market, but will set you on the path to tenure! In this course you will examine the different kinds of faculty careers open to you, prepare for the academic job market, and put together a plan to hit the ground running as a new assistant professor ready to balance the research, teaching, and service required to start your trajectory toward a satisfying career. This course will be taught in conjunction with the Institute for Teaching, Learning and Academic Leadership. Prerequisites: Admission to a terminal degree program and permission of instructor.

**RPOS 696
8361**

**Research & Writing Seminar II
M 1:15 – 3:15 pm**

**C. Chen
HS 017**

This is the second part of a required year-long course for all third-year doctoral students in political science. All enrolled students are expected to have already taken the first part of this course, POS 695. This

year-long course is designed to help advanced graduate students formulate and execute a major research project that could potentially be developed into a future dissertation or a journal article. Students are encouraged to use this opportunity to produce a working draft of a dissertation proposal by the end of the year. During the spring semester, the course will pick up where we left at the end of the last semester, and students are expected to build on the initial drafts they produced while working closely with their future dissertation advisors. They will start with preliminary data-gathering, followed by theoretical construction, methodological design, and research plan. The resulting prospectus drafts will then go through rounds of revisions. As in POS 695, students will again participate in, and benefit from, peer review processes as they develop the skills of providing informed feedback to, and accepting constructive criticisms from, their colleagues. By the end of the spring semester, each student is expected to have assembled a tentative dissertation committee, and to have produced a solid prospectus draft. The students will then present their works to the department.

RPOS 697	Selected Problems in POS Research Arranged (Permission of Instructor)	All Faculty
RPOS 698	Masters Essay Arranged (Permission of Instructor)	All Faculty
RPOS 798	Readings in Political Science Arranged (Permission of Instructor)	All Faculty
RPOS 897	Independent Research POS Arranged (Permission of Instructor) Load Credit <u>Only</u>	All Faculty
RPOS 899	Doctoral Dissertation Arranged (Permission of Instructor) Load Credit <u>Only</u> , ABD Status <u>Only</u>	All Faculty