

Department of Political Science
University at Albany, SUNY
Graduate Course Descriptions
Fall 2012

POS 513 **Field Seminar in Public Policy** **P. Strach**
(6827) **W 5:45 – 8:35** **HS-12**

This course introduces students to public policy and the policy process in the United States. In it, we focus on important theories of how policymaking works in the United States 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 politics broadly or policy students looking for theoretical background.

POS 514 **Intro to Discipline of Political Science** **J. Novkov**
(6339) **M 2:45-4:35** **HS-13**

This course introduces the discipline of political science. It covers the history of the discipline and provides exposure to the individual fields. It also incorporates weekly discussion of professional issues in the discipline and in the academy more generally.

POS 516 **Introduction to Political Inquiry** **S. Friedman**
(3866) **T 2:45 – 5:35** **HS-14**

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 522/R **State Government** **J. Zimmerman**
(9263/9264) **M 2:45 – 5:35** **RI-288**

The values and trends conditioning the constitutional framework and intergovernmental relations of state government with national, local, and other state governments as they have evolved into the patterns prevalent today. The organization and functions of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches are examined with emphasis on the significant changes in their respective roles in policy formation and implementation, together with the interaction between the formal and the informal political institutions of state government. Selected problems of function, structure, and area are considered, as found in such topics as finance, education, health and welfare, regulation of economic enterprise, and planning.

POS 523 **Urban Community Development** **C. Scally**
(8895) **Th 7:15 – 10:05** **AS-121**

Examination of policies and programs designed to reduce social and economic distress in U.S. communities. Focuses on local and neighborhood-based efforts to address problems of inadequate housing, unemployment, lack of community services and facilities, crime, etc. Considers role of government, private sector, and nonprofit organizations in community revitalization.

POS 529 **Law and Policy** **D. Liebschutz**
(9535) **W 5:45 – 8:45** **DR-313B**

Examination of the role of the courts in the public policy process and in substantive policy fields; integrates the literature of law and policy and applies it to such areas as mental health care, corrections, human resources, education, and housing policy.

POS 539/R **Seminar on Campaigns & Elections** **M. Malbin**
(9267/9268) **T 5:45 – 8:35** **DR-313A**

In 2012 this seminar will focus on the interplay between rules or laws, contexts and outcomes. Among others, the topics will include: US elections in a comparative (cross-national) context, presidential electoral college strategies, congressional election case studies; political party polarization; the impact of recent US Supreme Court decisions on interest groups and candidates; state and federal campaign finance reform.

POS 552/R **Communist & Post-Communist Systems** **C. Chen**
(9265/9266) **W 12:00 – 2:50** **HS-12**

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** **B. Early**
(8102/8103) **Th 5:45 – 8:35** **HS-13**

This course will offer broad overviews of the debates surrounding the causes, effectiveness, and consequences of political violence, the groups that engage in it, and the challenges to national and international security it poses. The course will mainly focus on terrorism, but will also examine insurgencies, civil wars, and revolutions. While the course emphasizes the academic study of political violence, it will also explore the policy implications of the theories and analytical frameworks studied within the class. Significant attention will be given to the conceptual, methodological, and empirical challenges involved in studying political violence. Students will be expected to produce an original piece of scholarship related to terrorism or a white paper on a terrorism-related policy issue.

POS 557/R **Politics of Southeast Asia** **M. Weiss**
(9849/9850) **M 5:45 – 8:35** **HS-13**

This class will explore the politics and societies of Southeast Asia through the lens of significant texts on the region. We will begin with a brief overview of the region as a whole, prevailing theoretical lenses, and (especially qualitative) research methods, then move on to a series of classic works covering a range of themes central both to the study of comparative politics as a whole and of Southeast Asia specifically. These themes include, for instance, state formation, regime dynamics, economic development, social mobilization, and ethnic and religious politics. Each student should be prepared to read and discuss one book per week (to be read in full) and to write a substantial, comparative paper on one dimension of Southeast Asian politics. The course is designed for those interested in comparative politics broadly. Prior knowledge of Southeast Asia is helpful, but not required.

POS 570 **Field Seminar in International** **G. Nowell**
(3867) **Political Systems** **DR-313A**
W 5:45 – 8:35

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 assess them as approaches to international relations and potential research designs.

POS 599 **Latinas/os and the New Political Economy** **P. Caban**
(8821) **TH 5:45 – 8:35** **LC-3A**

This course is about the political engagement of Latinas and Latinos and the political and economic forces that historically have impeded their full incorporation in U.S. society.

POS 618 **Qualitative Methods** **P. Strach**
(8311) **TH 2:45 – 5:35** **HS-12**

This seminar covers the research process from its design to final analysis, focusing on qualitative and mixed-methods research. We look at how to collect, analyze, and interpret data outside of or in addition to statistical techniques. Throughout the course, we will look at questions of methodology to understand the important differences *within* qualitative research and between qualitative and quantitative frameworks. Students should come away from the course with an understanding of: 1) what qualitative research is and how it fits in the broader discipline of political science; 2) the logic of qualitative and mixed methods research design; 3) the nuts and bolts of conducting qualitative research; and 4) how to analyze the results. Though no course can be the definitive answer to "how do I write my dissertation," this seminar is designed to be an important step in the logic and practice of qualitative and mixed methods research. *Prerequisites: POS 516 and POS 517 or the equivalent.*

POS 695 **Research & Writing Seminar I** **M. Schoolman**
(6631) **T 3:30 – 5:30** **HS-13**

This required course, taken in the fall of the second year PhD program, guides students toward the completion of a major research paper, fit for submission to an academic conference or journal. Students examine strategies of effective research questions, literature review, research design, and persuasive argument while they develop a research proposal and a journal article. Students workshop drafts of their work throughout the semester.

POS 697 **Selected Problems - POS Research** **All Faculty**
 Arranged (Permission of Instructor)

POS 698 **Masters Essay** **All Faculty**
 Arranged (Permission of Instructor)

POS 789/R **SEMINAR IN INT'L POLITICS** **M. Weiss**
(9757/9786) **M 5:45 – 8:35** **HS-13**

This class will explore the politics and societies of Southeast Asia through a focus on significant texts on the region. We will begin with a brief overview of the region as a whole and prevailing theoretical lenses, then move on to a series of classic works covering a range of themes. Each student will write a substantial, comparative paper on one dimension of Southeast Asian politics. The course is designed for Southeast Asianists as well as those interested in comparative politics broadly or other economically and politically developing regions. Prior knowledge of Southeast Asia is helpful, but not required.

POS 798 **Readings In Political Science** **All Faculty**
 Arranged (Permission of Instructor)

POS 897 **Independent Research POS** **All Faculty**
 Arranged (Permission of Instructor)
 Load Credit Only

POS 899 **Doctoral Dissertation** **All Faculty**
 Arranged (Permission of Instructor)
 Load Credit Only, ABD Status Only