

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS**

**Spring 2021**

**Course Descriptions**

*Updated 11/10/2020*

All Politics Department courses are open to all students who meet the prerequisites. For information on requirements for any Politics major or minor, please email Patricia Rodriguez, Chair of the Politics Department, [prodriguez@ithaca.edu](mailto:prodriguez@ithaca.edu).

**POLT 10100-01, 02 U.S. Politics**

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Alexander Moon*

**ENROLLMENT:** 30

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course has three main purposes. In ascending order of importance, it seeks to familiarize students with the role of voters, interest groups, the media, and parties in the American political system. We will examine the dynamics of American political institutions and (some of) the origins of (some of) the current political cleavages in the U.S.; it will examine the gap between the ideals and practices of American politics.

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Lecture/discussion

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**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:** 3 papers.

**POLT 10100-03, 04 U.S. POLITICS**

GE:1 Self & Society, GE h: Historical Perspective, (ICC) - Social Sciences,

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Carlos Figueroa*, Muller 319, <https://faculty.ithaca.edu/cfigueroa/>

**ENROLLMENT:** 30 & 30

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This introductory discussion-based course explores: a) the development of the U.S. political system, b) the values it is rooted in, c) how it works, d) how politics and policy intersect within it, and e) the system's impact upon individuals and groups alike. We focus on the historical and present power struggles and moral/ethical concerns over national identity, civic culture, political affiliation, the role of media, the competing national institutions, and the process of policy development within the context of a representative and Neo-liberal U.S. Democratic capitalist system.

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Discussion-based; group work; guest speakers (ZOOM); films/documentaries

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:** Weekly reflective journal entries; 2 papers; in-class exercises/debates

**POLT 12200-01 Politics and Society LA SS TPJ TQSF**

3 credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Patricia Rodríguez*

**ENROLLMENT:** 30

**PREREQUISITES:** none

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This comparative/global politics introductory course explores the impact of social forces and societal dynamics on the politics of diverse countries, as well as the influence of politics and the state on society. We will examine how and to what extent political institutions, individual and collective political

action, and historical circumstances are capable of shaping political and social developments in different countries and regions of the world. The key questions to be examined in the course are these: Are there different versions of democracy, why? Why/when do democracies emerge but also breakdown? Who has power, and why is state power often wielded in repressive manners in different types of political systems? What role do international actors play in reconstructing governments, and with what consequences internally and globally? Are there resistances to this role of international actors, and why; what impact does citizen activism have in global and national political and economic issues, particularly conflict resolution, democratic rule, migration issues and climate change issues?

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Discussions, Lecture

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:** papers, participation

**POLT 12800-01, 02 INTRODUCTION TO INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SS LA 1b, g;**

**ICC: Social Sciences; Theme: World of Systems; Theme: Power & Justice**

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Chip Gagnon*, Muller 324, Ext. 4-1103

**ENROLLMENT:** 25

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** We examine and discuss issues of security ranging from security of the state to security of individuals. Issues include the future of war, terrorism, the global economy, nationalism, ethnic and religious conflict, and the role of the media in how we think about the international. We also study how different perspectives lead us to see different worlds, looking specifically at realism, liberalism, global humanism, and theories of identity. *This course counts as a Comparative and International Studies course for the purposes of the Politics major, the Concentration in International Studies, and the International Politics minor.*

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Lectures, discussions, films.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:** Attendance and participation in class discussions; readings for each class; three take-home exam essays.

**POLT 14100 01, 02 Power: Race, Sex, and Class (also counts for Women and Gender Studies)**

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Sumru Atuk*

**ENROLLMENT:** 25 per section

**PREREQUISITES:** none

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** What is power? How is it acquired and maintained? Why individuals and groups comply with or resist power? How is it distributed along the lines of race, gender, and class? How do we reproduce relations of power in our daily lives? This course introduces some of the major theoretical perspectives on power, reading some of the foundational texts of political theory with the interdisciplinary works of critical-race, feminist, and socialist scholars. Treating intersectionality as a method of analysis, we explore how racism, patriarchy, and capitalism relate to one another. We problematize their impact on the contemporary practices of citizenship, democracy, violence, and security. We also discuss to what extent these “-isms” dominate our own political imagination, and how we contribute to power relations that we problematize.

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Discussions, occasional lecture

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:** papers, in-class presentations, participation

**POLT 14300-01 UNDERSTANDING CAPITALISM LA SS**

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Naeem Inayatullah*

**ENROLLMENT:** 25

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Exploration of the role of class conflict in the making of contemporary political and social life. Application of theoretical and historical materials to assess capitalism's complex relationship to such ideals as progress, freedom, equality, individuality, and justice. Understanding the personal, regional, national, and global scope of capitalism.

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** willingness to accept alternative teaching methods.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:** Plenty of reading, writing, and discussion

### **POLT 14400-01, 02 Global Political Thought**

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Evgenia Ilieva*, 311 Muller, ext. 4-7092

**ENROLLMENT:** 25

**PREREQUISITES:** none

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course explores the global context within which contemporary sociopolitical relations unfold. It brings together a wide array of texts and thinkers who, in different ways, have all engaged in careful and thoughtful analyses of a range of issues that are integral to the study of political thought: race and the enduring legacies of colonialism; exile, displacement, and the fracturing of identity; the relationship between colonizer and colonized; the meaning of freedom and historical struggles for liberation and human dignity; the importance of collective memory; the role of global violence as a catalyst for political and cultural change, as well as its effects on the lives of ordinary individuals. In exploring these themes, we will pursue three main objectives: (1) to understand the constitutive role that colonialism, racism, and dispossession have played in shaping core ideas about order, government, justice, power, authority, historiography, civilizational difference, individuality, and freedom in western social and political thought; (2) to analyze how these ideas have been discussed, challenged, and reimagined across various national and geographical boundaries; (3) to learn how to critically compare, contrast, and put into productive dialogue different worldviews and perspectives.

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Discussion

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:** Participation, reading, four short papers.

### **POLT 19501-01, 02 FOOD AND WATER: CHALLENGES TO SUSTAINABILITY**

3 CREDITS

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Juan M. Arroyo*, Muller 308, Ext. 4-3969

**ENROLLMENT:** 25 per section

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

At some level, we may think we know what it means to eat and drink sustainably. This course will challenge prevailing conceptions by examining different, and often conflicting, definitions of sustainability. Even if we do decide to eat and drink differently, we face challenges in changing individual behavior and social patterns in more sustainable directions: Political systems privilege certain ideas and also specific interests. Economic structures and patterns limit our choices. Anthropological, cultural, and sociological backgrounds shape our options. Biological and psychological predispositions affect our ability to eat and drink sustainably. Students will consider the “simple” acts of eating and drinking from all of these perspectives. Students will be challenged to understand the potential for changing patterns of food consumption and production, examining their own choices, their communities, and the socio-political system in which we are embedded. ICC THEME: Quest for

Sustainability; Social Science Perspective

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Discussion/lecture; expert presentations

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:** Readings, active participation in class discussions, readings reactions, research and reaction papers; A-F.

**POLT 30300-01 Constitutional Law: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties**

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Alexander Moon*

**ENROLLMENT:** 30

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course introduces students to the study of constitutional law. We discuss the major theories of constitutional interpretation and then survey the history and controversies in the major areas of civil rights and civil liberties jurisprudence, including rights of property, speech, religion, privacy, and equal protection. We will consider some of the following issues: To what extent does any particular justice work within the framework of a single interpretive theory? To what extent are the different areas of civil rights jurisprudence consistent with each other? We will pay special attention to the variety and rationality of materials justices use to construct their opinions: the Constitution, historical materials detailing founders' intentions, evidence of the meaning of constitutional language, premises about the purpose of the Constitution or its specific provisions, precedents, *ad hoc* normative premises, and constitutional tests or standards of review.

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Lecture/discussion

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Lecture/Discussion

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:** Case brief, bench memo, midterm, final.

**POLT 30600-01 U.S. Foreign Policy**

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Don Beachler*

**ENROLLMENT:** 24

**PREREQUISITES:** 3 courses in Social Sciences

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course will investigate several topics in U.S. Foreign Policy. We will explore a variety of conceptions of the role of the United States in the world and examine these theories as applied in selected historical circumstances over the past century. Much of the course will be devoted to a study of a few issues and topics. The subjects to be examined in depth include the sources of the events of September 11, 2001, the Bush Doctrine and the Iraq war, the foreign policies of Barack Obama and Donald Trump, the debate over the implications of the rise of China for US foreign policy, and the response or non-response of American policy makers to instances of genocide. We will also discuss current events as they relate to foreign policy.

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Lecture/Discussion

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:** 3 papers.

**POLT 32000-01 ST: Politics of Health**

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Don Beachler*

**ENROLLMENT:** 24

**PREREQUISITES:** 3 courses in Social Sciences

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** The course will explore the evolution of health care policy in the United States. The sources of the extremely high cost of health care in the U.S. will be a major concern of this section of the course. Special focus will be placed on the most recent attempts to expand health insurance coverage in the Clinton and Obama administrations. We will also investigate the intense adversarial reaction that these efforts have encountered from various political and economic interests in the United States. The American health system will be compared on measures of cost, quality, and access with health care systems other wealthy nations.

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Lecture/Discussion

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:** 3 papers.

**POLT 33000-01 EUROPEAN POLITICS LA SS**

3 CREDITS

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Juan Arroyo*, Muller 308, Ext. 4-3969

**ENROLLMENT:** 25

**PREREQUISITES:** Sophomore standing.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** We start with the question of European identity: do we only mean the EU or something more general? Who is included or excluded, and how is this decided? This will lead to a discussion of “European” values. We will address tensions affecting the creation of a new geo-political entity called Europe out of many separate European countries. We briefly consider the structures and selected policies of the European Union.

The course will introduce further tools for understanding European politics by looking at some of the key European ideological/political groups that are less familiar in the U.S. (Social Democracy, Christian Democracy, the Greens, post-Communism and the far right). Similarly, the course will look at the ideas and practices behind welfare state policies, such as education, welfare, immigration, employment policy, and the environment.

Students will examine the political systems of selected European countries, with their distinct sets of actors and policy priorities. The emphasis will be on institutional and policy variations in how each country responds to the same needs or issues, such as economics, civil rights, regional identity, and nationalism. *This course counts as a Comparative and International Studies course for the purposes of the Politics major, the Concentration in International Studies, and the International Politics minor.*

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Lecture, discussion

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:** Readings, active participation in class, 2 medium papers, 1 final paper

**POLT 33700-01 Politics of Memory SS LA**

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Peyi Soyinka-Airewele*

**ENROLLMENT:** 25

**PREREQUISITES:** Sophomore Standing

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Exploration of the political and social dilemmas surrounding concepts such as collective memory, truth, justice, confession, forgiveness, healing and reconciliation in polarized socio-political spaces. How, for instance, will the political suppression or mobilization of memory vie for space with efforts to address the systematization of unconscionable crimes against humanity and create a just peace? What lessons do the experiences of South Africa, the USA, Chile, Burma, Bosnia, and Rwanda offer other fractured societies? Students engage memory theory and the narratives of victims, witnesses, beneficiaries and perpetrators in examining Czech writer Milan Kundera’s suggestion that “the struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting.” *This course counts as a Comparative and International Studies course for the purposes of the Politics major, the Concentration in International Studies, and the International Politics minor.*

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Lecture, discussion, film analysis and direct engagement.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:** Essays, Presentations and engaged Research

**POLT 34200-01 Liberalism and Marxism**

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Evgenia Ilieva*, 311 Muller, ext. 4-7092

**ENROLLMENT:** 20

**PREREQUISITES:**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is divided into two parts. In the first part we will survey the historical development of liberal thought from John Locke to John Dewey. We will focus on (1) the global context within which the core liberal values of individualism, freedom, and equality of opportunity emerged; (2) we will also explore how liberalism entwines with capitalism and modernity. In the second part of the course we turn our attention to the work of Karl Marx. Our aim is to understand Marx's critique of liberalism and capitalism with an emphasis on its underlying philosophical assumptions and arguments. Over the course of the semester we will try develop a picture of how different strands of Marx's work weave together: how his philosophical anthropology relates to his theory of history, how his theory of value is connected to his theory of exploitation, and how his conception of alienation is related to his theory of freedom. While the main emphasis will be on seeing what Marx's theory was and how he arrived at it, the course will also explore how contemporary scholars have borrowed and adapted key Marxian concepts in order to better comprehend the workings and contradictions of capitalism in our 21st century world.

We will select from the work of Locke, Dewey, Rousseau, Smith, Hegel, Marx, and Jaeggi.

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Discussion

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:** Participation, plenty of reading, 3 take-home papers.

**POLT 35005-01 ST: Writing and Criticism LA SS**

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Naeem Inayatullah*, Muller 325, Ext. 4-3028

**ENROLLMENT:** 28

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Grasping the technical, political, theoretical, and psychodynamic motivations for writing. Understanding the meaning, purpose, and practice of criticism. Students will evaluate their written work via collaborative and individual assessments of others' work. Together, we will seek to write and criticize well as a means to living meaningfully.

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** willingness to accept alternative teaching methods.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:** Plenty of reading, writing, and discussion

**POLT 40102-01 SEMINAR: Nationalism & Ethnic Conflict CP/IR SS LA**

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Chip Gagnon*, Muller 324, Ext. 4-1103

**ENROLLMENT:** 10

**PREREQUISITE:** Junior or Senior standing; and 3 courses in social sciences or equivalent, one of which must be Politics.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** To what extent is violence motivated by cultural or national identity? This seminar will be focused on violent ethnic / nationalist conflict and right wing populist nationalism. We'll look at the political, military, and cultural origins of the nation-state and the role of culturally-defined violence in constituting state, national, and group boundaries. Cases will include Yugoslavia/Bosnia, Rwanda, Australia, Europe, the United States and others.

We'll also look at the roots of territorial nationalism, debates on the meaning of borders and belonging in national terms, and the cultural, political, and economic roots of the wave of populist nationalism that has swept the developed world. *This course counts toward the 400-level course requirement for the Politics major, the*

*Politics major with the International Studies concentration, the Politics minor, and the International Politics minor.*

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Discussion

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:** Attendance and active participation in Seminar; reaction papers for each reading; final research paper.

### **POLT 40103-01 The Holocaust**

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Don Beachler*

**ENROLLMENT:** 10

**PREREQUISITES:** Junior or Senior standing

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This class will examine certain political issues that arise from the Nazi attempt to exterminate the European Jews in the 1940s. We will begin by attempting to place the Holocaust in historical and comparative context. We will ask to what degree other groups have suffered fates similar to that of the Jews in the 1940s we will consider the ideological and political contexts that motivated the perpetrators of the Holocaust and their active and passive collaborators. The personal and ideological motives of perpetrators, both high ranking officials and low level police, will be considered in detail in an effort to assess the validity of claims about the general human capacity to engage in genocidal acts. The final section of the seminar will investigate individual behavior in extreme conditions. From a variety of readings, we will explore attempts to discern ethical implications that can be drawn from the vast literature on the Holocaust. *This course counts as a Comparative and International Studies course for the purposes of the Politics major, the Concentration in International Studies, and the International Politics minor.*

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Discussion

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:** Read several books and write 5 short papers.

### **POLT 40204-00 Seminar: Faith and Race in U.S. Political Life**

(ICC) - Social Sciences,

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Carlos Figueroa*, Muller 319, <https://faculty.ithaca.edu/cfigueroa/>

**ENROLLMENT:** 10

**PREREQUISITES:** Junior/Senior status (or instructor permission).

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This seminar explores the confluence of race and religion in U.S. political and policy development. Through close readings of primary and secondary sources within both an historical context & contemporary perspective, we examine scholarly political discourses and public national policy debates covering several interrelated themes: religion, race and American political culture; constitutional struggles over religious freedom/state power (separation of church/state & establishment clause); religion and slavery/anti-slavery debates; White Supremacy & the Cross; Christianity, Judaism, and Islam in national identity formation & immigration policies; Black American insurgency as political theology; Latino and Asian religious politics; Quakers, race, and U.S. citizenship; the Confederate flag and southern religious practices; religion and the Civil Rights Movement; politics of redemption; the political power of the Nation of Islam; Mennonites and Black Americans; religion and the role of national institutions; megachurches and political power; political parties, voting & religious beliefs, among others.

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Discussion-based; some group work; guest speakers (ZOOM); films/documentaries

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:** Weekly reflective journal entries and 3 papers

**POLT 40206-01 Sem: Gender-Based Violence and the State (also counts for Women and Gender Studies)**

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Sumru Atuk*

**ENROLLMENT:** 15

**PREREQUISITES:**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** What is political about gender-based violence? How is it related to public policy? What roles do states play in curbing or encouraging violence against women and LGBTQ+ individuals? What are the links between institutional practices and violence perpetrated by individuals? Gender-based violence has long been considered an interpersonal or “private” form of violence. This course aims to explore its “political” nature in both the feminist (i.e., broader gendered power relations) and conventional (i.e., state power and institutions) meanings of the term. In examining the complex relationship between the state and gender-based violence, we will take a public policy approach. We will specifically focus on family, welfare, gun control, and violence-related policies, legislations, and their implementation to understand states’ responsibility and accountability in addressing or allowing (hetero) sexist violence.

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Seminar, Discussions

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:** papers, in-class presentations, participation, blog posts

**POLT 40300-01 TUTORIAL: RESEARCH METHODS IN POLITICS, POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, LA SS 1h**

3 Credits

**INSTRUCTOR:** *Peyi Soyinka-Airewele*

**ENROLLMENT:** 5

**PREREQUISITES:** Junior/Senior Standing

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is for students who wish to work in a small group to learn some of the valuable basic methods used by scholars, policymakers and practitioners as they examine or respond to issues such as natural disasters, refugee crises, or public health dilemmas; allocate limited resources; determine trends in religious radicalization; or navigate tensions in popular culture. It is particularly useful for those who wish to learn how to improve their research, writing and "employability" skills as they prepare for graduate studies or law school, or consider jobs with nonprofits, consulting firms, in journalism, business, public relations, or the policy sector.

Some of our goals will include learning how to assess the state of scholarly literature, identify important questions, design strategies for answering them, consider critical ethical issues, acquire the tools with which to conduct the research, collect and analyze the data, and write up the results so they communicate powerfully to the appropriate audience. We will do this through fascinating cases drawn from national and international contexts and application activities involving problem based simulations, empirical sociopolitical inquiry, survey research, intensive interviews, case studies, and participant observation. *This course counts toward the 400-level course requirement for the Politics major, the Politics major with the International Studies concentration, the Politics minor, and the International Politics minor.*

**COURSE FORMAT/STYLE:** Tutorial Discussions, Presentations, Practice Activities, Collaborative and Independent Research.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADING:** Active participation, problem-based and experimental application activities, research and writing assignments.