

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE  
2011-12  
SENIOR SEMINAR DESCRIPTIONS

FALL 2011

**POLI 196**

Professor Dennis Gordon

This seminar explores the formation and conduct of U.S. overseas policy in an interdependent world. We will discuss foundational principles such as The Monroe Doctrine, Manifest Destiny, American Exceptionalism, Kisingerism, and the Obama administration's neo-conservative/neo-liberal idealism. Case studies will consider cases from Latin America, Africa, and the Middle East. Topics include security, political economy, and global environmental challenges.

**POLI 193, Senior Seminar in Political Philosophy**

Professor Peter Minowitz

After examining two reader-friendly essays by Leo Strauss (1899-1973), we will conduct a careful study of his controversial 200-page book, *On Tyranny*. By the 1960s, Strauss was well-known for exploring the clash between Jerusalem and Athens, reviving classical political philosophy, criticizing "behavioristic" social science, and reconstructing hidden teachings in authors such as Thucydides, Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, Alfarabi, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. Since his death, Strauss has increasingly been blamed for inspiring an array of conservative endeavors, from Newt Gingrich's 1994 *Contract with America* to the "unitary executive" and the Iraq War. Will we find fire amidst the smoke?

**POLI 195P Senior Seminar in U.S. Politics**

Professor Elsa Chen

This seminar will discuss policy approaches and issues at the various stages in the criminal justice system, including participation in illegitimate activities, policing, the courtroom, sentencing and corrections, parole, and inmate re-entry to society. Topics will include gangs, drug policy, guns, special inmate populations including juveniles, mentally ill and mentally disabled inmates, and inmates with addictions, along with the "collateral damage" of crime policies on inmates' families and communities and racial and ethnic disparities in the criminal justice system. The class will embark on a few "field trips," including visits to the police department, county jail, and drug court.

WINTER 2012

**POLI 193 Senior Seminar in Political Philosophy**

Professor Timothy Lukes

Artists and art historians, most of whom have little background in political science, have for a long time been making assertions about the "political" nature of this or that work, or period, of art. This is especially true of the present "postmodern" period, where it often seems that the work of art itself is eclipsed by its analysis by scholars and critics. This seminar will take a look at the easy connections that

the artists make between art and politics; it will examine those works which are purported to be "political" art, with the intention of determining just how political (much less artistic) such works really are.

This seminar will discuss such seemingly overpowering questions as "what is art," "what is politics," and the like, in order to arrive at some semblance of an accurate picture of the relationship. The search may become historical, even empirical, in an effort to link (or divide) art and politics. Students can expect extremely lively, sometimes heated, discussions.

### **POLI 196 Senior Seminar in International Relations**

Professor Bill Stover

The use of information technology, mass media, and simulations in the understanding of international politics, decision making, and strategic studies with a focus on empathy in the practice of international relations.

## **SPRING 2012**

### **POLI 192R Senior Seminar in Comparative Politics: Religion and Politics in the International System**

Professor Eric Hanson

This seminar treats the role of contemporary religious thought and organization in local, national, regional, and international politics.

### **POLI 195 Senior Seminar in U.S. Racial and Ethnic Politics**

Professor James Lai

This seminar course will cover the historical and contemporary political movements for the following four racial groups in the United States: African Americans, Chicanos/Latinos, Asian Americans, and American Indians. Beginning from the 1960s, we will examine the origins, the theoretical foundations, and the political strategies of each group in their quest for greater political power and political incorporation in cities throughout the United States. The class readings and films will be discussed and analyzed within the following theoretical frameworks: racial formation theory, the ethnic-based paradigm, and political incorporation theory. Toward the latter part of the course, the issue of racial identity politics and interracial coalition building will be the focus. Contemporary trends in racial and ethnic politics concerning U.S. Presidential politics and California state politics will also be discussed. Such recent developments may determine the fate and the future direction of racial and ethnic politics.

### **POLI 192 Senior Seminar in Comparative Politics**

Professor Jane Curry

This seminar deals with the negotiation and mediation processes and their success or failure in key international conflicts. Three country/regional conflicts will be examined to understand the history and nature of the various conflicts and the successful or failed attempts to negotiate or mediate a peaceful solution.