American Politics

19674 60036 Immigration and Ethnicity Luis Fraga W 3:30-6:15p
Ricardo Ramirez

The newest wave of immigration has not only transformed the demographic composition of the United States, but has also reshaped the nature of politics and policy. This course explores key questions and themes in the politics of immigration and ethnicity. Drawing on a variety of perspectives and readings in American and Comparative Politics, we will focus on immigration politics and policy, but also on the political behavior of immigrants and ethnic minorities.

International Relations

20704 60217 Theories of International Relations Amitava Dutt TR 2:00-3:15p

This graduate seminar provides an overview of some of the major theories of international relations. The first half of the course is devoted to exploring three major approaches to the study of international politics (realism, liberalism, and constructivism) with a particular emphasis on identifying and criticizing their central assumptions and causal logics. The focus in the second half of the course is on using these theories to understand the contemporary international system.

Comparative Politics

19676 60446 The Rise and Fall of Democracies and Dictatorships Scott Mainwaring R 3:30-6:15p

This course will focus on some basic questions about political regimes. What explains why democracies and dictatorships survive or fall? The major purpose is to acquaint you with some of the most important theoretical and comparative literature on one of the major themes in political science. I am more interested in raising comparative and theoretical issues than in how much you learn about specific countries. Course readings will include Juan Linz, The Breakdown of Democratic Regimes; Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies; Carles Boix, Democracy and Redistribution; Adam Przeworski et al., Democracy and Development; Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel, Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy. We will read some work on international factors in regime change and stability; and other work on the effects of formal political institutions such as presidential and parliamentary systems on democratic stability.

19677 60453 Comparative Field Seminar Michael Coppedge M 6:30-9:15p

This class gives you the tools to explore political data and create effective presentations. The emphasis is on visualization: many kinds of graphs, maps, and animations. The class will use examples drawn from comparative politics (democratization, political economy), American politics (public opinion), and international relations (conflict), but you will also explore data on a topic that interests you and make a series of oral-visual presentations to the class.
This course covers the multiple ways in which politics and coercion intersect. It examines a variety of coercive entities including state militaries, police, militias, insurgents, mercenaries, gangs, and cartels. It further explores a variety of political entities including governments, parties, civil society, and social movements. It traces how these coercive and political entities interact, merge, cooperate and fight. Topics include authoritarian politics, state-building, organized crime, corruption, security and policy reform, party politics, violence and protection rackets. We’ll conclude by looking at several empirical cases of the intersection of coercion and politics.

Comparative Law

This seminar offers an introduction to comparative legal traditions including chthonic law, civil law, common law, and Islamic law. The course begins with a general discussion of what law is, how it develops, and where it comes from. Later sections concentrate on the history of each legal tradition, main characteristics, sources of law, venues of dispute resolution, methods of law creation, and design of contracts and codifications. In the context of each legal system, we will discuss the meaning of justice and the notions of right and wrong. In aiming to foster comparative critical thinking, this seminar embraces an interdisciplinary approach to comparative law and draws on political science as well as legal perspectives. In the spirit of comparative method, we will analyze and evaluate legal texts, such as constitutions, codifications, and judicial decisions.

*Also counts toward Comparative and IR.

Plato's Republic and Statesman

The course will deal with two of Plato's three main works on political philosophy, which we will read thoroughly and in detail. Aim of the course is to render the students familiar with the main theses and arguments of the dialogues and introduce them to some of the major questions every Plato interpreter faces: Why did Plato write dialogues? How does he himself relate to the main interlocutors in his dialogue? Is it true that he deliberately holds something back? Why are metaphysical, ethical, and political ideas intertwined in a way almost absent from modern political philosophy? What is the function of myths? How did Plato evaluate the political relity of his time? Is it true that he influenced modern totalitarianism? Can we learn something from his radical criticism of modern democracy?
20256  60668  Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault: The Critique of Impure Reason
   Dana Villa          M          3:30-6:15p
The seminar will focus on key texts in the continental tradition that have stressed the entanglement of truth and power, reason and domination in the history of the West. The idea that power and domination constitute an irreducible dimension, if not the actual core, of logos and Western ratio runs sharply counter to the Classical, Christian, and Enlightenment traditions. Texts include Nietzsche’s 'Genealogy of Morals' and 'Beyond Good and Evil'; Heidegger’s 'Introduction to Metaphysics' and 'The Question Concerning Technology'; Horkheimer and Adorno’s. 'Dialectic of Enlightenment'; and Foucault’s 'Discipline and Punish' and the lectures in 'Society Must be Preserved.'

Methods

19947  60820  Advance Quantitative Methods          TBD          MW          12:30-1:45p
Quantitative methods are often used to understand the behavior and interactions of individuals, governments, and nations. This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of the quantitative tools that are useful for doing quantitative political research. We will begin by reviewing the basics of statistical inference and the linear regression model, with a thorough discussion of the problems that arise in regression analysis and the solutions to those problems. The bulk of the course will be devoted to the following topics: Extensions to the basic regression model: simultaneous equations and time-series/cross-sectional models; maximum-likelihood techniques for modeling categorical dependent variables: logit/probit, ordered logit/probit, multinomial logit/probit, and count models; models for dealing with sample selection bias: tobit and Heckman models; techniques for modeling time-series data. Throughout, we will focus on understanding the theoretical underpinnings of the model and developing and evaluating applications of the models to substantive problems in political science. Students will be asked to do data-analysis exercises, to evaluate published research relying on quantitative techniques, and to do a research project on a topic of their own choosing.

14066  60833  Math for Political Scientists          Gary Hollibaugh   TR          11:00a-12:15p
In order to understand quantitative and game theoretic work in political science, it is necessary to have a basic understanding of a few mathematical concepts. Topics covered in this course include probability, set theory, logic, matrix algebra, logarithms, exponents, calculus, and frequently used distributions. Learning math is like learning a language, so this course emphasizes short problem sets for each class as well as larger projects designed to pull together disparate skill sets.
This course will cover research methods and research design in political science. We will focus on concrete issues of conducting research: picking a topic, generating hypotheses, case selection, measurement issues, combining quantitative and qualitative methods, designing and conducting experiments, working with data sets, and archival research, etc. The course is designed primarily for PhD students in political science working on dissertation proposals or in early stages of dissertation research. As such, there will be a significant workshop component to the class, where students are expected to present their own and comment on their colleagues’ work in progress.

This is a required course for all first-year graduate students in the Department of Political Science. It is what is commonly called a "scope and methods" course; that is, a course designed to survey the great variety of themes and approaches in political science and to guide you through the fundamental debates about what political science is or should be. This course is also about democracy because the best way to teach about methods is to apply them to an interesting topic, and democracy is a topic of central interest to almost all of us these days. There is abundant literature that demonstrates the relevance of our course themes to democracy. Therefore, in the process of learning about the scope and methods of political science, this course will also familiarize you with some key ideas about what democracy is, what it could be, how it is changing, what causes it, and how we measure it.

A workshop for dissertation writers. Each participant shares some of his or her writing with the group and critiques the writing of others.

Focuses specifically on the relationship between law and religion, under the United States Constitution and beyond. Thus, our focus will be on the law of the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses of the First Amendment, although we will also have occasion to discuss broader philosophical questions concerning the relationship between religion and politics, the intermediary role of religious institutions, and other issues.