FALL 2010 POLITICAL SCIENCE SEMINARS

POLS 450/550: Russian Political Culture (17404/ grad: 17405)
Dr. Ellen Carnaghan, Monday 4:20-6:50
“Political culture” refers to fundamental political beliefs and attitudes widely shared across a population. This course examines the beliefs and attitudes of Russians, looking at ideas that supported the government as well as the ways people resisted authoritarian rulers, traditional collectivist orientations as well as emerging democratic values. One focus of the class is how we can study the beliefs and values of a culture other than our own, especially one where people were not always free to express their real opinions. To answer that question, the class examines a variety of kinds of sources: works of fiction, political philosophies, academic debates, historical analysis, first-hand accounts, ethnographies, jokes, and quantitative studies of public opinion. Final papers may examine an aspect of the political culture of people other than Russians.

POLS 485/585: Politics of the Future (17406/ grad: 17407)
Dr. Timothy Lomperis, Wednesday 4:20-6:50
This course seeks to integrate a social science grounding with a humanities creativity to develop a teleological (purposive) approach to the study of the future. Students will first assess fundamental historical trends before identifying core values with which to propose their better, yet politically plausible, future in a Paradigm Essay that answers Aristotle's timeless question of politics: "In what does the good life consist?"

POLS 493/593 01: Seminar in American Political Institutions (17408/ grad: 17409)
Dr. Christopher Witko, Monday 7:00-9:30
This course will examine the design and contemporary function of America's political institutions, broadly defined to include the three constitutionally defined branches of government, parties and interest groups. Some historical, but mostly contemporary readings on American politics will be used in the course to consider topics such as: the organization of Congress and the Executive Branch; how societal interests become mobilized for political action; how these institutions advance or hinder representation and responsiveness; whether they produce “good” policy, etc.

POLS 493/593 02: Civil Rights: A Moot Court Seminar (15346/ grad: 15027)
Dr. Matthew Hall, Tuesday 4:20-6:50
This course will explore the development of civil rights law over the last half of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century through a series of moot court exercises. Students will play the role of lawyers and justices and retry famous Supreme Court cases from American history on six topics: school desegregation, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Affirmative Action, school busing, sex discrimination, and discrimination based on sexual orientation. Student evaluation will be based on oral presentations and written briefs and opinions. Permission of the instructor required for enrollment.

POLS 593 03: State and Society (grad only: 16386)
Dr. J. D. Bowen, Wednesday 7:00-9:30
The relationship between states and the societies that constitute them is at the core of the study of comparative politics. This course examines state-society interactions and how states and societies influence one another. We will study state-building, state strength and weakness, clientelism and corruption, civil society and social movements, the role of ethnic and religious minorities, and the influence of transnational actors. We will approach these issues from a variety of theoretical and methodological angles. In addition to readings and class discussions, students will be expected to produce an original research paper or research design. It is highly recommended that all Political Science graduate students take this class. It will count as a core class in the International Affairs concentration of the MA.

POLS 593 04 / WSTD 501 Feminist Theory (grad only: 18003)
Dr. Penny Weiss, Tuesday 3:00-5:30
Feminist theory will begin with the history of feminist scholarship from the pre-modern and 19th century and move on to examine liberal feminism, socialist/Marxist feminism, radical feminism, postmodern feminism, and global feminism. Critical reviews of each theory will include issues of race/ethnicity, class, sexuality, and spirituality.