

Professors Sound Off

Do you believe that the Don't Ask Don't Tell policy should be repealed? Why or Why not?

I do believe that the "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy should be repealed. The struggle for the attainment of true equality in this country has been marked by the steady evolution of both our cultural and legal systems towards that end. This is a necessary and perhaps long overdue step that simply catches the legal system up to what has become a long standing cultural reality.

–Prof. Watson

I do think “don’t ask don’t tell” should be repealed, and that men and women should be allowed to serve in the military no matter their sexuality, and without having to hide it. I realize some have concerns about the cohesiveness of military units, but the research I did this summer revealed the extent to which military institutions worldwide are breeding grounds for misogyny and homophobia – and that these dispositions therefore “seep” back into civilian society. I don’t think that it is acceptable to enable discriminatory and hateful views in the 21st century with policies such as “don’t ask don’t tell.”

–Prof. Angrist

With only a few exceptions, all European (including East European) militaries allow gay and lesbian soldiers to serve openly. Why is it “okay” for their gay soldiers to participate in our foreign policy adventures, but not our own openly gay military personnel? Here is a sampling of militaries around the world that allow gays and lesbians to serve: Israel, Russia, Australia, Colombia, the Philippines, and South Africa.

Here is a sampling of militaries around the world that do not allow gays and lesbians to serve: Saudi Arabia, North Korea, China, Syria, and Iran. "Does America really want to belong to the latter group?"

–Prof. Hislope

Yes, absolutely. The Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy must be repealed. First, it's clearly matter of discrimination. Second, the arguments in favor of retaining it (inter alia that gay servicepeople would disrupt the professional environment) lack factual evidence. Third, I would argue that attitudes towards, and the culture surrounding, homosexuality in the military must change, and retaining DADT is not the way to accomplish these necessary goals.

–Prof. Xydias

Yes, Don't Ask Don't Tell should be repealed. It is discriminatory. Also, in many ways, it was never a workable policy, and has not always been implemented as intended. More importantly, though, the policy has resulted in some very talented, trained, and needed members of the military being discharged, at a time when most branches of the service are struggling to meet their quotas.

–Prof. Oxley

What do you believe should be the Obama Administration's biggest concern in the next two years? Why?

President Obama's biggest concern over the next two years will be his ability to pursue policy objectives in a Congress that will be more Republican. He has recently been working to reenergize the Democratic base with only modest success and it appears that the Democrats will become the minority party in the House and possibly the Senate. President Obama's challenge will be to

protect health care reform and other programs the Democrats have adopted. In a similar situation in 1995 President Clinton had a showdown with the Speaker of the House, Newt Gingrich, over the budget and the federal government was shut down for a short period. Public opinion sided with Clinton. President Obama will likely face similar challenges in 2011 over budgetary and a range of domestic policy issues. He will have to compromise with congressional conservatives on occasion and develop messages that encourage the public to side with him in what will likely be numerous disagreements with Congress.

-Prof. Nicholas

Congratulations!

Zeta Upsilon, Union's chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha, recently received a **Best Chapter Award** for colleges with enrollments under 6000 students. Each year, only three chapters in this size category win this award, out of all chapters across the nation.

Letter from the Department Chair

We are happy to bring you the first edition of the Political Science newsletter for the 2010-11 academic year. We hope you have visited the department in its new location: the first floor of Lamont House. If not, please stop by and see us! We have a number of exciting events planned for this term. In addition to the ones listed in this newsletter, Ralph Nader will be speaking on campus on Oct. 20 at 7:30 pm. His visit is sponsored, in part, by Union's Pi Sigma Alpha chapter. The newsletter also includes updates from political science faculty and important details about Winter Term courses. Enjoy!

-Prof. Oxley

Pizza & Politics

Wednesday, October 27th
12:50PM-1:45PM, SSCI 104

Bob Sharlet

*"In Search of My Brother: War & Anti-war
in the Vietnam Era"*

Faculty Updates

Prof. Zoe Oxley

This summer, I completed a book manuscript. The book (*Conducting Empirical Analysis: Public Opinion in Action*) was co-authored by Rosie Clawson of Purdue University and will be published by CQ Press this December. It is a workbook that will introduce students to key concepts and trends in American public opinion as well as data analysis and interpretation. I am very much looking forward to using the book in my winter term course, Public Opinion (PSC 261).
(oxleyz@union.edu)

Prof. Lori Marso

Prof. Marso was featured as the guest editor of "A Symposium on the Political Thought of H. Mark Roelofs" in the September issue of *New Political Science: A Journal of Politics and Culture*. In the same issue, she also contributed an essay titled "H. Mark Roelofs: Prophecy, Existentialism and Transformation." In addition, early this term Marso presented a paper titled "Risky Judgments in Dark Times: The Eichmann and Brasillach Trials" at the University at Albany Political Theory workshop. She also delivered the paper at the American Political Science Association meetings in Washington, D.C. at the end of the summer.

This paper is part of a book manuscript she is preparing called "Simone de Beauvoir: Politics in Situation." Students in her Political Theory Seminar this term on Political Judgment are helping her think about this article and the book. Thank you! (marsol@union.edu)

Prof. Michele Angrist

Professor Angrist has a new edited book on Middle East politics, entitled *Politics and Society in the Contemporary Middle East*, which was just published by Lynne Rienner Press and is designed for use in upper level undergraduate courses. She is on sabbatical this year, spending part of her time developing a new course on African Politics – to be offered in the 2011-2012 academic year.

(angristm@union.edu)

Prof. Robert Hislope

On Oct. 15th I will present a paper on the diplomatic conflict between Macedonia and Greece at Columbia University. The paper is titled "Neighborhood Bully: Greek Obstructionism and Macedonian Identity." This is part of a conference on Macedonia that will include major political figures from that country, including Ljubomir Frckovski, the writer of the post-communist constitution and former Interior Minister, and Denko Maleski, the first foreign minister of independent Macedonia. I was just recently invited to contribute a chapter on the development of the Macedonian political party system to the third edition of a volume entitled "Handbook of Political Change in Eastern Europe," published by Edward Elgar. At the end of November, I will be back in Macedonia to participate in the 2nd meeting of the Council of Foreign Relations, which is an advisory post in the cabinet of President Gjorge Ivanov.

(hisloper@union.edu)

Prof. Christina Xydias

I have two ongoing projects. First, I am in the process of broadening a data-set that I

gathered for my dissertation: this is a data-set of analyses of speeches delivered in plenary sessions of the Bundestag (the German legislature). This expansion of my data-set is to support my examination of "cohort effects" among German legislators (variation among legislators based upon their experiences with different regimes of women's rights in German history). Second, I'm preparing to teach the winter term "Social Data Analysis" (PSC220) course.

(xydiasc@union.edu)

Prof. Mark Dallas

I'm a new faculty member in the Political Science Department at Union. My area of expertise is in the economic and political development of China, particularly over the reform era. I wanted to let students know about the courses that I will be teaching this year. In the winter term, I will be teaching the Introduction to Global Politics course, which will cover a range of classic issues in International Relations and Comparative Politics, including security and war, state-building and state capacity, political development, democracy and authoritarianism. Then, in the spring term, I will teach two upper division courses. One of these is on Chinese politics, which will focus on a range of contemporary issues from the post-Mao era, although we will still need an historical perspective on China to understand its present! I will shed light on how China's opaque party and government system works and makes policy, and its internal fragmentation, why China's economic reforms appear to be more successful compared to other post-socialist countries like Russia and what the rise of China means for other countries, like India or the United States. We will examine a range of topical issues, such as agriculture and industry, village elections, the rule of law, contentious politics, WTO accession, the environmental crisis, and time permitting, perhaps even China's militarization and security in the East Asian region. Finally, I will offer a course called

Wealth and Power among Nations, which will focus on the political economy of developing countries. But don't let that fool you: there is no need to know anything about economics to take this course! You will be exposed to the genealogy of thinking on the issues of development, including Smith, Marx, the Marginalists, Keynes, Modernization Theory and Development Economics as a way to understand the enduring debates within the field. Secondly, we will examine historical changes in the international economy, such as trade and global finance (including past and the current financial crises), and examine the ways in which structures and opportunities for developing countries transform. Finally, although there is no focus on any single region of the world, we will touch upon the oil boom in the Middle East in the 1970s, the debt crises in Latin America and Africa in the 1980s, the rise of Japan and the East Asia tigers after the war, and the new giants, China and India. I hope you find something of interest in these courses and I look forward to meeting you!
(dallasm@union.edu)

PSC Major Foreign Experience Requirement

All PSC majors, including ID-PSC majors, need to fulfill a foreign experience requirement. There are two ways to fulfill this requirement:

1. Complete a three course language sequence (only two courses are required if the sequence is begun beyond the first introductory course in the language)
2. Participate on a full-length term abroad (mini terms do not qualify)

Please plan carefully to fulfill this requirement.

For many languages, the introductory course is only offered in the Fall Term, so you cannot necessarily begin your language study any time in the year.

Petitions are being accepted for the 2011 Model UN Course (PSC256)

Applications can be found on the door of Wold 107 or obtained by emailing Prof. Darius Watson (watsond@union.edu).

Further information can be found at the Union College Model UN page on the Political Science Department link or from the National Model UN website (www.nmun.org).

UPPER-LEVEL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR WINTER TERM

235: African American Political Thought-Marso

This course will introduce students to the critical and constructive dimensions of African American political thought. We will assess the claims that Black Americans have made on the polity, how they define themselves, and how they have sought to redefine the basic terms of American public life.

240: Comparative Ethnic and Racial Politics-Hislope

An introduction to the trends and patterns of ethnic conflicts in the contemporary world. Issues pertaining to the rise of nations; theories of ethnic mobilization; the attempt to build general, cross-national explanations; and current efforts to solve ethnic conflict.

254: Politics of the Arab-Israeli Conflict-Lobe

In this class students will develop an understanding of the origins, development, and essence of the Arab-Israeli conflict as well as the challenges involved in resolving the conflict. The conflict will be examined in its historical, political, and human dimensions.

256: Model United Nations-Watson

This course prepares students to participate in the National Model United Nations (NMUN), the largest UN simulation in the world. The NMUN program provides students a better understanding of the inner working of the United Nations. Its goals are to develop diplomatic skills amongst college students while at the same time helping to increase the levels of interaction and interdependence that exist between the academic communities around the world. At the simulation, students and faculty from five continents work feverishly to propose resolutions addressing regional conflicts, peacekeeping, human rights, woman and children, economic and social development, and the environment. Students are permitted to take PSC 256 multiple times, but this course can only count once toward a PSC major, ID major or minor.

261: Public Opinion-Oxley

This course examines public opinion in the context of American political culture and

values. We examine what the public thinks about a wide variety of issues in American domestic and foreign policy. We also explore contemporary issues with a concentration on the historical legacy of cultural values and beliefs that inform citizens' attitudes and opinions.

272: The Environment, Energy, and U.S. Politics-Nicolas

Examination of how politics and policymaking affect the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the land we live on. This course will explore key U.S. environmental issues and their scientific underpinnings as well as the connections between these issues and our collective use of natural resources. The relevance of environmental policy to community life will be explored via local field trips to wastewater and drinking water facilities, waste management and energy facilities, government agencies and the State Capitol.

277: Local Political Internships-Hislope

Places students in internships in local political organizations and in offices in local and state government. Students draw on their internship experience and related academic work to reach a better understanding of the complexities and dynamics of politics and the state or local level. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

366: Presidential Politics-Brown

The development of the modern presidency, with a special emphasis on the institution of the presidency. The presidencies of Franklin Roosevelt through the current president will be examined.

330: Enlightenment and Its Discontents-Brown

Is there a politics to the "age of reason?" This course focuses on enlightenment

thought and its critics, in the modern as well as the contemporary era. We will inquire about the role of reason in setting the terms of citizenship, including how the citizen should behave. Is reason a male attribute? Does passion and/or religion play a role in reasonable thinking? The historical span of this course will generally cover the 17th to the 19th centuries and show how we have come to think about politics the way we do today.

PSC 359: Terrorism and Torture-Angrist

In this reading, writing, and participation-intensive course, we will explore two related topics. The first is terrorism. We will consider the definition(s) and history of terrorism, as well as its causes and manifestations in the contemporary era. Next, strategies for combating terrorism will be explored - with a major focus on the so-called "war on terror" the U.S. has been engaged in since 2001. A particularly controversial aspect of U.S. actions in the past decade has been the use of torture against detainees at Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib, and other locations. The course will therefore consider a broad-ranging literature on torture -- from its history, to the conditions under which it is used in the contemporary era, to questions regarding whether or not torture is effective (and for what purpose). In addition to daily preparation for class, students will be responsible for preparing a major independent research paper over the course of the term.

346: Democracy and Democratization-Xydias

Worldwide survey of the global diffusion of democracy. Focus on the patterns, challenges, and difficulties involved in democratic transitions and consolidations. Consideration of democratic subtypes (electoral, liberal, participatory) and their normative trade-offs.

PSC Major Research Requirement

All PSC majors are required to take two research-focused courses:

- An R course (the R indicates that the course is research-intensive)
- Either a 2nd R course, a seminar or a research methods course (PSC 220, 222 or 223)

PSC Interdepartmental (ID) majors must take one R course to fulfill the research requirement.

Finally, students are strongly recommended to complete this requirement before the end of the junior year, as preparation for the senior thesis.

Winter 2011 Offerings:

PSC 220 Social Data Analysis

PSC 240R Comparative Ethnic and Racial Politics

PSC 254R Arab-Israel Conflict

PSC 359 IR Seminar (Terrorism and Torture; Prof. Angrist)

Spring 2011 Offerings:

PSC 251R American Foreign Policy

PSC 369 US Politics Seminar (Topic TBD; Prof. Brown)

POLITICAL SCIENCE COURSES: WINTER 2010

PSC 111-01-Introduction to US Politics
(Nicholas) MWF 11:45AM-12:50PM

PSC 112-01-Introduction Global Politics
(Dallas) TTH 10:55AM-12:40PM

PSC 112-02-Introduction Global Politics
(Watson) MWF 10:30AM-11:35AM

PSC 113- Introduction to Political Thought
(Scherer) TTH 9:00AM-10:45AM

Research Methods

PSC 220-Social Data Analysis
(Xydias) MWF 1:50PM-2:55PM

Political Theory

PSC 235-African American Political
Thought
(Marso) MWF 1:50PM-2:55PM

PSC 330-Enlightenment and Its Discontents
(Brown) MW 3:05PM-4:45PM

Comparative Politics

PSC 240R-Ethnic and Racial Politics
(Hislope) MWF 8:00AM-9:05AM

PSC 346-Democracy and Democratization
(Xydias) MWF 11:45AM-12:50PM

International Relations

PSC 254R-Politics of the Arab-Israel
Conflict
(Lobe) TTH 10:55AM-12:40PM

PSC 256-Model United Nations
(Watson) T 5:30PM-8:45PM

PSC 359-Seminar: International Politics
(Angrist) TTH 1:55PM-3:40PM

US Politics

PSC 261-Public Opinion
(Oxley) MWF 9:15AM-10:20AM

PSC 272-The Environment, Energy, and
U.S. Politics
(Nicholas) MWF 3:05PM-4:10PM

PSC 277- Local and Political Internships
(Hislope) TBD

PSC 366-Presidential Politics
(Brown) MW 7:00PM-8:45PM, and M
8:45PM-10:45 PM