

FROM DEPARTMENT CHAIR MICHELE ANGRIST

Dear Political Science Majors, ID Majors, and Minors,

To all who are reading, I hope this newsletter finds you back in the rhythm of fall courses, having had a restful and enjoyable summer. You might be wondering, what do Political Science faculty do over the summer? Of course, as is the case for you, it is a time for us to rest, unwind, and travel for leisure. But we also work very hard on the substantial part of our job responsibilities that lie outside the classroom. As many of you may know, Union faculty are expected not only to be excellent teachers, but also to research and publish in their respective disciplines. To that end, Political Science faculty make use of the summer months to travel to do research and fieldwork, to write article and book manuscripts, and to attend professional conferences where they present and receive feedback on their work. Often they work with Union student research assistants in their endeavors. These are tasks that are harder to tend to during the hectic rhythm of the academic terms, so summer tends to be prime research time for us.

While last year the Political Science department was enriched by a number of visiting faculty members, I am pleased to report that the many faculty who were away last year -- Professors Hays, Seri, Oxley, and Dallas -- have returned, and that the department is operating at full strength. The exception to this is that Professor Brown will take a well-deserved sabbatical leave in the winter and spring terms this year. I also want to welcome back Professor Terry Weiner, currently teaching Introduction to American Politics and Issues in American Education. Professor Weiner, far from being new or a "visitor" to us, was chair of Political Science when I was hired, and had a

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long and distinguished career at Union. We are lucky to have him back, helping us out with these two courses.

Please take a moment to read through this newsletter. It contains key information regarding the requirements of the major in Political Science, as well as details about the courses that we are offering in the winter term. Don't be a stranger -- my office is Lippman Hall 120. Stop by if I can ever be of assistance to you and good luck with the remainder of the fall term.

ATTENTION SENIORS

Requirements for Graduating with Honors in Political Science

--GPA of 3.30 or better in PS as well as cumulatively

--Completion of a PS seminar with an A- or better [if you do not attain an A- in the seminar, you may still be eligible for honors if your PS GPA is 3.50 or higher]

--At least three PS course grades of A- or better [not including thesis courses]

--A grade of A- or higher on the senior project

--Delivery of an oral (not poster) presentation on your senior project at the Steinmetz symposium

****ID majors must meet the requirements for honors in both departments****

PROFESSORS SOUND OFF

1. What, if anything, should the U.S. be doing about ISIS? Will air strikes advance US national security?

Prof. Angrist:

The ISIS issue is truly a quandary. On the one hand, the organization is appalling in many of its actions. On the other hand, its existence, and the fact that it controls territory in Iraq and Syria, owe much to the consequences of the United States' ill-considered invasion of Iraq and botched attempt to nation build in the 2000's. The chickens continue to come home to roost. We tore apart Saddam Hussein's regime and state in Iraq, and the governments that followed in Iraq lost the ability to govern significant portions of territory due to corruption, neglect, and sectarian retribution. Syria's Arab Spring weakened that regime's grip on the parts of northeast Syria that ISIS now controls. ISIS is creating order in places where there was none, and is attempting to build a new state in the vacuums that the US invasion and the Arab Spring have left behind. It is hard to see how airstrikes can neatly and cleanly solve the problem. They may degrade ISIS's revenue sources and capabilities, but inevitably they will also create new anti-US grievances. Moreover, airstrikes destroy. They don't build. They don't offer the peoples of that territory the prospect of better, more constructive, more responsible, less extreme government. This is what they deserve, and would serve US interests best. It's impossible to see the US or Iraq or Syria supplying this in the near- to medium- term. And so for all of the pressure on President Obama to act, there is no easy or quick fix for the problem that is ISIS.

Prof. Hislope:

It's really hard to imagine what the US could do in military terms that would not make things

worse. Already our bombing campaign has demonstrated its limitations to stop ISIS, and has also incentivized a whole new round of recruits. ISIS is indeed a frightening, horrific militarized terrorist group/army. But it is not an immediate, direct threat to the US.

There are other, more tangible, more dire threats that bear down upon us – climate change, crumbling infrastructure, failing schools, rising racism, a gun violence epidemic, police militarization and brutality, stagnant wages, the decline of social mobility, the corporate high jacking of democracy, an out-of-control and racist incarceration system, etc. etc.

Americans must realize that ISIS is only the latest consequence of the illegal and immoral invasion and occupation of Iraq; fighting ISIS is not a new war but rather the continuation and expansion of the violent chaos that the US unleashed on the region in 2003. Already we've sunk several billion into this war and the reconstruction of Iraq. How many more billions are required and at what price? Scholars who study issues like "empire" and "global hegemony" tend to agree that military overextension is a surefire path to great power collapse. How long can America continue its current path of external war and internal decline?

2. What are your predictions for the fall election and what the outcome will mean for President Obama's last years in office?

Prof. Oxley:

Is it possible that next year's Congress could be even less productive than the current, least productive in the history of the United States, Congress? You bet! After next month's elections, Republicans will remain in control of the House of Representatives. Control of the Senate is less certain. If the Democrats stay in the majority, they will almost certainly have fewer seats than their current number. This will, of course, make agreement between Democrats and Republicans less likely than it is today, in a chamber where some level of partisan agreement is necessary to

move most issues forward. If the Republicans hold the majority of U.S. Senate seats after the election, Republicans in the Senate and in the House can pursue a common party agenda, perhaps smoothing the way for legislation to pass both chambers. Yet, Democratic Senators will likely use the tools they have to block, or at least slow down, Republican-preferred legislation from passing the Senate. When these Democrats fail, any bills that do pass the House and the Senate but do not meet the approval of President Obama can be vetoed. In short, Democratic options to stop Republican legislation will be fewer if the Republicans control the Senate, but they will not be non-existent. Gridlock should persist.

An Update from Professor Dallas

Last year, I was the An Wang Postdoctoral Fellow at Harvard University's Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies. The Fairbank Center is a leading center for the study of historical and contemporary China, and has dozens of affiliated faculty, and even more graduate and undergraduate students pursuing PhDs, MAs and BAs in all fields related to China. Since "China" is not a department, centers like this are critical for scholars to collaborate and to bring in outside speakers. Each week, there were usually five or six talks on China somewhere on campus.

Apart from attending the many talks on campus, I also gave two talks on my own research at the Fairbank Center, as well as two additional talks at a conference on Asian business at Harvard Business School and at the Center for Geographic Analysis. Outside of the center, I audited two courses: one on Chinese labor unions and strikes and Chinese demography, and another on Chinese business, which brought many well-known entrepreneurs from China (business, non-profit and educational) to discuss issues surrounding government policy and operating an organization in China. In addition, I attended a

WINTER POLITICAL SCIENCE COURSES

Introductory

- PSC 111: Introduction to U.S. Politics (Dell'Aera) MWF 1:50PM-2:55PM
- PSC 112-01: Introduction to Global Politics (Hislope) MWF 10:30AM-11:35AM
- PSC 112-02: Introduction to Global Politics (Hislope) MWF 11:45AM-12:50PM
- PSC 113: (Seri) Introduction to Political Thought MWF 8:00AM-9:05AM

Political Theory

- PSC 232: Violence and Politics (Cidam) MW 3:05PM-4:45PM
- PSC 339: Seminar in Political Thought: Feminist Film (Marso) Tues 1:55PM-4:45PM

Comparative Politics

- PSC 219: Center for Geographic Analysis to learn techniques for Geographic Information Systems, which is digital mapping technology. It was developed by my own research group. Harvard's different libraries.
- PSC 247: Heras (Seri) MWF 10:30AM-11:35AM

International Politics

- PSC 256: Model United Nations (Angrist) Wed 1:50PM-4:40PM
- PSC 358R: Wealth & Power Among Nations (Dallas) TTH 1:55PM-3:40PM

U.S. Politics

- PSC 272: The Environment, Energy, & US Politics (Dell'Aera) MWF 11:45AM-12:50PM
- PSC 288R: American Constitutional Theory (Hays) TTH 10:55AM-12:40PM
- PSC 362: CIA and the Art of Intelligence (Lobe) TTH 9:00AM-10:45AM and 7:00PM - 8:45PM WED ONLY

Internships

- PSC 277: Local Political Internships (Hislope) N/A

**UPPER-LEVEL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR
WINTER TERM**

**PSC 213 Contemporary Chinese Politics,
Economy and Society.**

A survey course on the politics of the People's Republic of China, with an emphasis on state-society relations. After briefly introducing the Republican and state socialist eras, the heart of the course provides an historical and topical overview of the contemporary political and economic reforms in China. It explores topics in Chinese domestic politics, such as policy-making, center-local relations, inequality, rural transformation, industrialization, village elections, the rule of law and contentious politics, in addition to China's relationship with the outside world, including its integration into the international economy, the environment, energy and foreign policy.

PSC 220. Social Data Analysis. (Same as SOC-201)

Introduction to the research process in political science with an emphasis on the analysis of social science data. Focus on the utility of quantitative data and statistical techniques to answer research questions about the political world. Prerequisite: Any introductory social science course; a background in math is not necessary.

**PSC 232 Violence and Politics: Law,
Revolution, and Resistance**

PSC 220 Social Data Analysis
now carries *QMR* credit
for your General Education requirements and
can help you complete your research
requirement in Political Science
violence / What is the role of violence in
resisting different forms oppression? Can the use

of violence ever be morally justifiable? This course aims to inquire into these challenging questions by studying the theoretical debates on the relationship between violence and politics with a special emphasis on questions related to the relationship between legal order, constitution of the state, and the use of violence both in support of, and in opposition to, the existing order. We will focus on debates surrounding the use of violence in revolutionary politics, look at examples of political struggles (e.g. civil rights movement, student protests of late 60s, anti-colonial struggles), assess different arguments made in defense of nonviolent and violent methods of resistance (e.g. Gandhi, Malcolm X, Fanon), analyze different conceptions of civil disobedience (e.g. Martin Luther King, Arendt), and grapple with the question of how representations of violence affect our judgments about its legitimacy (e.g. movies such as *Do the Right Thing*, *Battle of Algiers* and *Paradise Now*).

**PSC 247 Human (in)Security in Comparative
Perspective**

With a focus on "the daily lives of ordinary people," the recent tradition of Human Security redefines safety as "freedom from fear and freedom from want." At the interface of security, development, and Human Rights grounding democratization, Human Security adopts the perspective of the common citizen, Human Security to call for collaboration between states and international and grassroots organizations to prevent and eliminate obstacles undermining people's autonomy, rights, and development. This course aims, first, to provide students with a solid conceptual and applied knowledge of Human Security. Second, by learning about the deep-seated conditions that hinder people's safety from fear and from want, students will gain a thicker perspective on the structural challenges for peace and democracy around the world through the eyes of the people on the ground.

PSC 256. Model United Nations.

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. Course

goals are to develop research, writing, public speaking, and diplomatic skills amongst students as they confront a myriad of global public policy challenges. At the simulation, students and faculty from five continents work feverishly to propose resolutions addressing regional conflicts, peacekeeping, human rights, women and children, economic and social development, and the environment. Students are permitted to take PSC 256 multiple times for credit, but this course can only count once toward a PSC major, ID major or minor. PSC 256 cannot be taken pass/fail.

PSC 273. The Supreme Court and Judicial Politics. An investigation of the judicial branch of government in the U.S. that focuses on the role of judges, the functioning of courts, and leading contemporary controversies in the judicial system. Among the primary concerns of this course are: the structure of the American Judiciary, judicial selection processes, how cases originate and move through the judicial system, how judges think about and reach decisions in the cases, and the role law plays in society. In exploring these topics many actual Supreme Court cases are dissected, focusing on such issues as: gay rights, pornography, rights of disabled citizens, the rights of those accused of crimes, and free speech over the Internet, to name only a few areas.

PSC 277: Local Political Internships - Hislope
This class enables students to become politically active and/or gain political experience by working for elected officials, government agencies, election campaigns, interest groups, non-profit organizations, lobbying firms, etc.

Students draw on their own internship experience and related academic work to reach a better understanding of the complexities and dynamics of politics at the state or local level. Students are

is a very broad topic, inclusive of the nature of constitutions, interpretive methodologies, institutional design, institutional function, and political development. While this course will touch upon each of these, the central animating question is: Who shall interpret the Constitution? Twenty-first century constitutionalism has been marked by interpretive pluralism and the interpretations offered by different departments of government bear their distinct imprimatur. As such, understanding which institution does and ought to interpret the Constitution is among the most important political questions of our time.

PSC 339 Seminar in Political Thought –Topic: Feminist Film

In this seminar, we will read, discuss, and understand the entirety of the 2011 translation of the 1949 classic and pioneering feminist text, *The Second Sex* by Simone de Beauvoir and use it as our guide to politically interpret several films. Learning from *The Second Sex*, we will examine selected films along several bases: the role of women in society, the diversity of women's lives, the ways bodies are represented, the impact of gender roles, models of sexuality and desire, alternative ways of living/loving/doing politics, and the links between race, culture, class, age, religion, and gender. We will also try to discern if there are "feminist" films, asking along the way what "feminism" means.

PSC 358. Wealth and Power among Nations.

An examination of the tensions between developed and developing countries in the global political economy. First, the course traces the genealogy of thinkers on the issues of development such as Smith, Marx, Keynes,

although there is no focus on any single region of the world, the course touches 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, the fall of the Soviet Union and Eastern bloc countries in the 1990s, the new giants of China and India, new forms of post-Fordist production, and the relationship between production and identity.

PSC 362. CIA and the Art of Intelligence.

Provides an historical background to intelligence and espionage, and offers perspectives on present day secret intelligence operations of world powers in support of their national security objectives. Discussions on intelligence analysis, evaluation, human and technical intelligence, cryptography, counter-intelligence, moles, various kinds of overt operations, US foreign policy issues and goals.

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)

[Note: Normally, students must have a GPA of at least 3.0 to gain entrance into a seminar.]

PSC Interdepartmental (ID) majors must take one R course to fulfill the research requirement. Students are strongly recommended to complete this requirement before the end of their junior year, as preparation for their senior

PSC Major Foreign Experience Requirement

All PSC majors, including ID-PSC majors, need