

FROM DEPARTMENT CHAIR MICHELE ANGRIST

Dear Political Science Majors, ID Majors, and Minors,

Happy Spring! We hope this newsletter finds you engaged in your spring coursework while enjoying the improving weather. We are also glad to welcome back Professors Seri and Hays from their sabbatical leaves (read on in the newsletter to learn what they were working on while away from the classroom).

It will soon be time to meet with your advisors and register for Fall 2014 classes. As usual, this newsletter contains information regarding the courses Political Science is offering in the Fall. In addition, we are including the *tentative* course plan for the entire 2014-2015 academic year, in case it is helpful to you as you plan.

One special highlight: in the Fall we will welcome Professor Terry Weiner back to campus. Professor Weiner is an Emeritus Professor of Political Science and taught in the department for many years prior to retiring and becoming Provost at Sage College. Professor Weiner also served on the Niskayuna School Board. He is offering "Issues in American Education" in the fall -- so spread the word to friends in other departments (Sociology, Psychology, etc.) that might be interested. He is a wonderful, seasoned teacher and we are lucky to have him back in the classroom teaching in a field in which he has tremendous academic and practical expertise.

On a personal note, as my first year serving as Chair winds down, let me say that I have very much enjoyed meeting and interacting with a larger number of PS majors than I normally would. The major is growing and thriving, and your energy inside and outside the classroom helps make Political Science a dynamic community on campus. I also would like to thank my talented colleagues, the professors who work so hard all year long to make the curriculum come alive. All

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of our thanks are also due to Carol Fortsch, the Department's Administrator, who keeps the office running smoothly, and to the PS work-study students: Alana Grieco, Joe Fiorile, and Ben Densieski. Finally, Roswald Morales deserves special thanks for heading up the production of this newsletter each and every term.

Big congratulations to our Seniors who have completed their theses, and to those on a winter-spring schedule who will complete in a few short weeks. The Department wishes you well as you continue beyond the gates of Union. Don't be a stranger! Stay in touch, and we look forward to seeing you again at alumni events. To our first years, sophomores, and juniors -- good luck as you finish up your spring coursework, and then have a safe and wonderful summer. Fall will be here before you know it.

Professor Angrist

STEINMETZ SYMPOSIUM

The Steinmetz Symposium is Friday, May 9th. Many, many Political Science majors are presenting that day. Juniors especially: **attend a panel or two.** Support your peers and get a stronger sense of what you can achieve with your Senior Thesis or Senior Project next year.

WEST-POINT STUDENT CONFERENCE ON U.S. AFFAIRS

The Student Conference on US Affairs, held annually at the United States Military Academy at West Point, is an excellent event for any Union student interested in foreign affairs. Those who attend SCUSA get to exercise their foreign policy skills while discussing a major current issue with experts and students from across the country and cadets from the academy. The primary work of the conference is done in groups of ten to fifteen students, led by a group of cadets and attended by two professionals who are experts in the specific issue area. These groups discuss a sub topic of the larger conference theme and eventually produce a short working paper about their topic, which they present to the entire conference on the last day. These working group sessions are punctuated by speakers and tours of West Point, which are perhaps the highlight of the entire week: the campus is beautiful and martial culture is interesting, if highly regimented. The other highlight, of course, is interacting with other students and cadets, both socially and intellectually. The intellect and passion of the other attendees is refreshing, and getting to know fellow attendees is stimulating and fun, whether during the working sessions or while sharing a drink at Firstie, the Academy bar. SCUSA is an excellent opportunity for any student of political science at Union. If you are interested in being considered for next fall's conference, contact Professor Lobe.

Zachary Jonas

PROFESSORS SOUND OFF

- 1. What will be the impact on US-Russian relations of Russia's conflict with Ukraine over Crimea and other Ukrainian regions? Is President Obama handling the crisis well?**

Prof. Robert Hislope:

Russia's annexation of Crimea, and its continuing moves against eastern Ukraine, has certainly

soured US-Russia relations. We have now come a long way from the 2001 observation made by President Bush: "I looked the man in the eye. I found him to be very straightforward and trustworthy. I was able to get a sense of his soul." For his part, Obama faces a difficult situation, because Ukraine is Russia's "backyard" and therefore there is nothing the US can do in a military sense to dislodge Russian paramilitary forces, or reverse the annexation. Even heavy sanctions are tricky, as Europe gets 40% of its imported fuel from Russia. A sanction on Russian gas exports would not only hurt Russia, but also Europe, the US, and the world economy. Suspending Russia's participation in the G8 was a good move, but Obama has few effective tools to employ against Putin. Even our moral authority is compromised by our recent misadventure in Iraq. As Michael McFaul, former US ambassador to the Russian federation, has stated, "the United States does not have the same moral authority as it did in the last century. As ambassador, I found it difficult to defend our commitment to sovereignty and international law when asked by Russians, 'what about Iraq?'" Ultimately, I believe Putin is motivated less by a desire to takeover and annex neighboring countries and more by the goal to restore Russian influence over the former republics of the USSR and to secure his western flank against EU/US encroachments. What he is doing in Ukraine is morally reprehensible and illegal in terms of international law, but it is also part and parcel of the realist tradition of great power politics. Domestically, it is an attempt for Putin to shore up popular support as the Russian economy is in bad shape. None of these motivations and maneuvers are foreign to the global projection of American power, as Iraqis (and many other peoples from around the world) will attest.

- 2. Arizona's Governor, Jan Brewer, recently signed off on a Bill allowing surprise inspections of abortion clinics, without warrants, by state health authorities. Does this constitute harassment of such clinics and their clients?**

Prof. Michele Angrist:

It's hard to argue that this policy constitutes *harassment*, considering that Arizona law requires the same types of inspections for standard health care facilities. In this sense, the policy can be seen as one that will facilitate quality control, and that serves women's interests. Moreover, while the prospect of surprise inspections will demand attention and consideration by providers and administrators, it seems unlikely to dissuade clients from seeking clinics' services. The efforts of pro-life protesters outside clinic doors probably are more of a barrier. However, in a state with an already very high level of restrictions and regulations on the practice of abortion, this policy can be read as another incremental effort to (severely) limit access to abortion services.

Congratulations to the Model UN Delegation!



This year's Model United Nations students did an outstanding job in New York City during the first week of term. Union College represented the Republic of Azerbaijan this year, and we put delegates in nine separate UN and UN-related committees, addressing issues ranging from keeping weapons of mass destruction out of terrorists' hands -- to improving food security -- to migration and human rights. For four days, our delegates engaged with delegations from around the country and around the world to build consensus and draft resolutions designed to address these important issues. Highlights included a keynote address from US Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power, and a briefing by First Secretary Elchin Huseynli from

PSC Major Foreign Experience Requirement

All PSC majors, including ID-PSC majors, need to fulfill the 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. Complete a full-length term abroad (miniterms 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.

Azerbaijan's Mission to the United Nations. The delegation brought home *6* separate awards for outstanding Position Papers (written during the winter term) and a group Distinguished Delegation Award for their performance on-site in New York City. The students worked tremendously hard and represented Union incredibly effectively. Applications for next year's delegation will be distributed early in Fall 2014 -- so, watch for them if you are interested in applying! In the meantime, if you have questions about the Model UN class, please see Prof. Angrist in Lippman 120.

PROFESSOR BRAD HAYS' SABBATICAL

I spent the fall and winter terms sympathizing with the Bruce Springsteen lyric, "I'm sick of sitting around here trying to write this book" (Dancing in the Dark, 1984) as I worked to complete a book manuscript, under contract with Routledge, which explores state legislative participation in constitutional politics outside of a legal framework. I also made several media appearances and taught my daughter to say doggie, light, and clap when the Red Sox won.

Fall 2014 POLITICAL SCIENCE COURSES

UPPER-LEVEL COURSE DESCRIPTIONS FOR FALL TERM

Introductory

- PSC111-01: Introduction to US Politics
(Weiner) MWF 9:15AM-10:20AM
- PSC111-02: Introduction to US Politics
(Hays) MWF 8:00AM-9:05AM
- PSC 112: Introduction to Global Politics
(Lobe) MWF 9:15AM-10:20AM
- PSC 113: Introduction to Political Theory
(Marso) TTH 1:55PM-3:40PM

Political Theory

- PSC 231: Theories of Peace and War
(Seri) MWF 10:30AM-11:35AM
- PSC 332: American Political Thought to WWI
(Brown) MW 3:05PM-4:45PM

Comparative Politics

- PSC 245: Populisms in Latin America
(Seri) MWF 1:50PM-2:55PM
- PSC 349: Seminar (Comparative Politics)
(Angrist) TTH 9:00AM-10:45AM

International Politics

- PSC251: American Foreign Policy
(Brown) MW 7:00PM-8:45PM
- PSC254R: Politics of the Arab Israeli Conflict
(Lobe) TTH 10:55AM-12:40PM

U.S. Politics

- PSC 268: Electoral Politics
(Oxley) MWF 11:45AM-12:50PM
- PSC 281: Issues in American Education
(Weiner) TTH 10:55AM-12:40PM
- PSC 370: Constitutional Law
(Hays) TTH 9:00AM-10:45AM

Internships

- PSC 277: Local Political Internships
(Hislope) TBD

231: Theories of Peace and War - Seri

Do aggression and violence arise from individuals or groups from nations, global forces, or from entire civilizations? Is warfare an eliminable pathology or just part of the human condition? Any answer to these questions ultimately involves ontological claims on how things are, key in shaping the ways in which we imagine and inhabit our world. This course revisits arguments on peace, war, and violence central in the tradition of Western political thought. By exploring works of classical, modern, and contemporary political thinkers, contextualized in reference to key cases, we will identify and critically assess contentious explanations and philosophical justifications.

245: Populisms in Latin America - Seri

Many forms of leadership and politics in Latin America are characterized as populist, but there is widespread disagreement as to what populism is. Claimed by no one, most of the time populism is blamed, disapprovingly, upon leaders and movements connoting demagoguery, manipulative appeals to people's emotions and disregard for formal institutions and rules. This course scrutinizes three different "populist moments," from the first half of the 20th century to the present. Major figures such as Perón or Vargas; neoliberal reformers from the 1990s, from Fujimori to Menem; as well as more recent leaders such as Chávez, Morales, Correa, and Cristina Fernández de Kirchner will be examined.

251: American Foreign Policy - Brown

This course will provide an overview of the history of US Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the post-Cold War era. The course focuses on major policy options, issues in the Middle East, reset to Asia, and the choices between multilateralism and hegemonic dominance. The course emphasizes policy-making, especially the role of the President and Executive, in struggles

with Congress, and the role of various NGO's, think tanks, and other lobbyists in the formation of foreign policy outcomes.

254R: 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.

268: Electoral Politics - Oxley

Examination of elections in the U.S. Course is taught as a simulated presidential election with students taking on the roles of presidential candidate, campaign staff member, or journalist. Specific topics include the democratic theory of elections, candidate strategy, fundraising, voter decision making, and the electoral roles of the media, political parties, and campaign consultants.

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 permitted to enroll in this course twice, although the course will count toward the Political Science major only once. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing and permission of the instructor.

281: Issues in American Education - Weiner

The analysis of current conflicts over educational policy at all levels of government including the funding of education, increased testing for accountability, the impact of charter schools and choice, bilingual education, religion, prayer and evolution, tenure laws and the role of teacher unions. Most of the focus will be on K-12 education but we will also address higher education and the recent concerns about tuition costs, financial aid and the mission of colleges and universities

332: American Political Thought to WWI - Brown

Political thought in America from the colonial period until World War I with an emphasis on evolving political, social, cultural, and intellectual perspectives on enlightenment values, nationalism, slavery, the rise of the industrial economy, the political machine, and America's changing role in the world. Until World War I with an emphasis on evolving political, social, cultural, and intellectual perspectives on enlightenment values, nationalism, slavery, the rise of the industrial economy, the political machine, and America's changing role in the world.

349: Seminar (Comparative) - Angrist

West Africa is the site of increasing international scrutiny and concern. From civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia, to insurgency in Mali, to Boko Haram's attacks in Nigeria, to the suspected use by the al-Qaeda affiliate AQIM of Sahara desert territory as a staging ground – instability and a sense of threat tend to crowd the headlines. This course takes you deep beyond the headlines as it poses the following questions: What is the “state of the state” in the countries of West Africa? How well have state institutions provided order, security, good governance, and social services to citizens? How have climate, poverty, ethnic and religious divides, oil and mineral wealth, and other factors impacted the quality of state institutions and the provision of good governance? In what ways are Islamist and other movements challenging incumbent politicians who sit at the helms of states? How do the policies of key external actors – primarily the U.S. and China – shape state institutions? And what are the consequences of (varying) state quality for regular people?

370: Constitutional Law - Hays

An examination of the Constitutional tradition in the United States, focusing upon the structure and powers of the federal government. Topics and themes include the power of the courts to interpret the laws and the Constitution, the power of the federal government and the significance of “states'

rights,” federal government intervention in matters of “commerce” or economics, and the nature and expansion of executive power, especially in the area of national security. The course proceeds mainly through close examination of Supreme Court cases, considered in their political, historical and legal context.

Professor Yelena Biberman-Ocakli Shares About Her Time At Union

It has been an absolute pleasure to teach at Union! My students here have been remarkably engaged, thoughtful, critical, and creative in approaching the major debates surrounding diverse problems, such as the future of India’s democracy, the rise of China, and US counterinsurgency in Afghanistan. One of my favorite assignments, which was also popular among my students, was the writing of an opinion editorial. Op-eds require a very clear argument, consideration of competing views, convincing evidence, and succinct writing. They were very enjoyable to read, and one of my students published her work. I am currently working with several students who are also interested in publishing their op-eds both nationally and internationally.

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 thesis.

NOTE ABOUT PSC 251 in FALL 2014

If you are planning to apply for the Department's Term in Washington, DC program for Spring 2015, you should not enroll in Professor Brown's Fall American Foreign Policy course (PSC 251). The same course is one of three required credits in DC in the Spring, thus taking 251 in the Fall would **preclude** your participation in the DC program.

Many of my students are closely following the Ukraine crisis. We held a video conference with the Diplomatic Academy of the Russian Foreign Ministry in March. My students did an excellent job asking questions and responding to Russia’s next generation of diplomats. My Diplomatic Academy colleague shared with me that his class was very impressed with the Union students’ knowledge and understanding of the situation in Ukraine. Similarly, my students demonstrated keen awareness of the major issues facing South Asia during our February video conversation with a scholar in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir.

Being at Union has been a wonderful teaching and learning experience. I am currently co-authoring a paper with a student seeking to explain the often puzzling and surprising choice of military targets during the US “War on Terror.” Finally, Professor Michele Angrist has been exceptionally helpful and kind in helping me to navigate Union. She has been a wonderful mentor and role model!

PROFESSOR GUILLERMINA SERI’S SABBATICAL

During my sabbatical leave from the Department of Political Science at Union College I worked on a few research and publishing projects, of which the most important was the preparation of a new book manuscript, *For the Common Good? Lawless Governance in Democracies*. With a focus on present democratic regimes, my book identifies distinctive extra-legal state practices and examines the circumstances and arguments under which they

are alternatively legitimized as a source of authority or become treated instead as state crime. If democratic societies make the law their main legitimizing principle, the regular use of emergency legislation and extra-legal or illegal methods of governance puts in danger fundamental individual rights and guarantees, and the legitimate foundation of the democratic order. My book examines these problems on a comparative basis in a dialogue with classical and contemporary works of political philosophy.

Besides working on this book manuscript, I finalized a chapter for an edited volume and revised two essays –one co-authored, for submission to journals. Spending the first part of my sabbatical at NYU during the Fall, drawing on the university’s libraries and auditing a Ph.D. seminar was highly productive for my research.

***Tentative* Plan for WINTER and SPRING Terms, 2015**

WINTER 2015		SPRING 2015	
Course # PSC	Prof	Course # PSC	Prof
111 Intro to U.S. Politics	Dell'Aera	111 Intro to US Politics	Dell'Aera
112 Intro to Global Politics	Hislope	112 Intro to Global Politics	Dallas
112 Intro to Global Politics	Hislope	113 Intro to Political Theory	Cidam
113 Intro to Political Theory	Seri	208 Law, Society, and the Wire	Hays
213 Contemporary Chinese Politics, Economy, and Society	Dallas	217R Global Value Chains	Dallas
220 Social Data Analysis	Oxley	223 Critical Comparisons	Hislope
256 Model United Nations	Angrist	238 American Exceptionalism	Dell'Aera
272 The Environment, Energy, & US Politics	Dell'Aera	242R Challenges to Democratization in Latin America	Seri
277 Local Political Internships	Hislope	249 Middle East Politics	Angrist
288R Constitutional Theory	Hays	251T American Foreign Policy (D.C. term)	Lobe
339 Seminar (Theory): Feminist Film (also WGS 495)	Marso	269 Media and Politics	Oxley
358R Wealth and Power Among Nations	Dallas	277 Local Political Internships	Hislope
362 CIA and the Art of Intelligence	Lobe	280T Internship (D.C. term)	Lobe
2xx Violence and Politics	Cidam	2/3xx Immigration and Human Rights	Cidam
2/3xx Human Insecurity	Seri	369 Seminar (US Politics) (also WGS 495)	Oxley