POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT
U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY

CAPSTONES
AY20 FALL (FALL 2019)

Capstones

(1/C FPS Majors only or with approval of the department Chair)

FP471A - Presidential Primary Politics. This course explores the politics of presidential politics through the lens of the 2020 presidential race. The course will apply political science theories to real world scenarios related to the 2020 campaign. (Dr. Berube)

FP471B - Law and National Security. This capstone seminar course will examine the intersection of law (both domestic and international) and United States national security (both historical and current challenges). Students will explore the role of international treaties in shaping US nuclear deterrence strategy in such areas as the Intermediate Nuclear Forces, new START and Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaties. The use of US military forces abroad in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and other locations will be analyzed under the War Powers Act, Congressional Authorizations for the Use of Military Force, United Nations Security Council Resolutions and the NATO Pact. Other subjects to be covered include the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in the context of current tensions in the South China Sea, the applicability of the Chemical Weapons Convention to Syria's use of such weapons, and the background/future of the Iranian Nuclear Deal. Other topics to be addressed as time and student interest warrant. (CAPT Ostendorff, USN (Ret.))

FP471C - The Politics of European Security. This capstone will explore the current state of European security and security institutions, the new European strategic environment, Russia and Ukraine as well as the future of NATO and Common European Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) of the EU. (Professor Mattox)

FP471D - Coups and Impeachment in Comparative Perspective. Why do some countries experiences coups and others do not? Why do some coups fail and others succeed? Why are some presidents overthrown, others impeached, and yet others survive? These questions and their answers are germane to the study of comparative politics and international relations and inform the way politicians, soldiers, policymakers, and citizens behave in democratic (and non-democratic) society. This seminar uses historical accounts and the scholarly literature to unpack these questions and others, as it examines inter-branch conflict and institutional instability, especially in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. The course shows how institutional design and the actions of political actors, including the military, social movements, and political-economic elites, contribute to the survival or fall of governments and democratic regimes across the globe. (Assistant Professor Polga-Hecimovich)

FP471E - Campaigns and Elections Around the World. This capstone examines how politicians compete for office in different electoral settings around the world. We will compare these processes in countries such as the United States, Britain, Mexico, and Spain, among others. (Associate Professor Kellermann)

FP 471F - Regional and Great Power Competition in the Middle East. The Middle East has been host to great and regional power competition for centuries, but the region is witnessing what seems to be an unprecedented surge in intervention and violence linked with contests among hegemons. From the Qatar blockade, to the war in Yemen; the crisis in Syria, and unresolved tensions in Iraq; to the projection of power in the region by Russia, China and the United States, questions of regime stability, sustainability of resource infrastructures, and what to do about Iran, all animate politics and conflict in the region. This seminar considers all of these issues in light of US foreign policy interests in the region, giving careful consideration to what Womack calls “the politics of asymmetry.” Why should the US care or not care about the future of the Middle East? And what are the best ways to achieve our interests while avoiding regional quagmires. Students will choose some part of this puzzle to explain using their choice of methods and data, after we complete an initial set of readings. (Associate Professor Wheeler)