POLITICAL SCIENCE CAPSTONES SPRING 2016 (AY16)

FP471A, The Priorities of the Modern Presidency. Modern American presidents are, in the words of political scientist Richard Neustadt, expected "to do something about everything." As time is perhaps the president's scarcest resource, a successful president must effectively prioritize goals. Our focus will be objective empirical analysis to evaluate the priorities of the people who hold the presidency – what they aim to do, whether they succeed, and why. (Doherty)

FP471B, Campaigns and Elections around the World. This capstone examines how politicians compete for office in different electoral settings around the world. We will consider how political parties choose candidates, how candidates appeal to voters, how voters are mobilized, and what effect (if any) campaigns have on election outcomes. We will compare these processes in countries such as the United States, Britain, Mexico, and Spain, among others. (Kellermann)

FP471C, Politics of Poverty. More than a billion people in the world live on less than $1 a day. This capstone examines the politics of poverty. It attempts to answer the following questions: What is poverty? Who is poor? Why does poverty persist in spite of globalization and economic liberalization? Does good governance promote poverty reduction? What can be done, and by who, to reduce poverty? Will information technologies help the poor to reach a more equitable existence? Students will explore these issues in light of current theories and cases of poverty reduction worldwide. (Wheeler)

FP471D, Public Policy Study. The focus of this writing and research seminar is public policy defined as "who gets what" in politics and "why" and "what difference it makes." Using any one of Thomas Dye's 8 public policy models, this capstone research seminar permits investigation of the development, implementation and evaluation of policy alternatives. Students will identify domestic policy topics and prepare a systematic analysis of the following components of policy study (1) the political costs and benefits, (2) the perspective of various stakeholders and, (3) the economic and socio-cultural factors which influence decision making. If approved, research can cover a range of issues, for example immigration policy, environmental policy, health care policy and education. (Malone)

FP471E, The Sources of International Conflict. This capstone seminar examines how and why international conflict arises between countries. Students will design and execute a research project to evaluate a hypothesized cause of war. While naturally centered on international relations, there is ample opportunity for students with primary interests in other concentrations to examine the origins of conflict from the perspective of comparative or American politics. (Ling)