POLITICAL SCIENCE CAPSTONES FALL 2016 (AY17)

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, China's Rise & U.S.-China Relations. China's great-power ascent represents presumably the most important geo-strategic issue for the 21st century and the central factor in the U.S. strategic pivot to Asia. In many ways, it has already become a "peer competitor" to the United States at the bilateral, regional, and global levels. This capstone seminar explores the realities and implications of China's growing power with a focus on the economic, political, and military/security challenges for the United States. (Deng)

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 whom, 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, 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)

FP471E, On Geopolitics. Members of the seminar will explore and test the central proposition of geopolitics: that a country's geographic endowment, human and physical, shapes its power and prospects. "Geography is destiny" is an aphorism, too broad and categorical to be correct, yet it is a persistent idea and was championed here at the Naval Academy by Alfred Thayer Mahan and TR and more recently by Robert Kaplan. The seminar will aim to refine the precept. (Wrage)