



CAPSTONES FOR FALL 2013 (AY14)

FP471A, Security Challenges in the Western Hemisphere, This capstone seminar focuses on the security challenges facing the United States within the Western hemisphere. Students will be required to analyze a particular challenge and to develop a creative and comprehensive policy response. This will include transnational criminal networks, illicit trafficking, insurgent groups, the growing influence of external actors (e.g., Russia and China), and the spread of anti-U.S. populism in Latin America. You can approach these topics from an IR or comparative perspective. (Chavez)

FP471B, Visualization and Politics. A social science analysis of the use and impact of visual images (photos and editorial cartoons) in the political process. Students will develop image literacy and apply it using polling, focus groups and/or content analysis techniques. (Frantzych)

FP471C, Comparing Legislatures, In democratic societies, legislatures transform election results into public policies. This capstone seminar will consider how elections, political parties, and institutional structures affect the behavior of legislators, and how those behaviors shape policy outcomes in different countries. (Kellermann)

FP471D, Transatlantic Relations and European Security under Challenge? Addresses major issues in transatlantic relations focusing on the stated priorities of the alliance – terrorism/weapons of mass destruction/failing states – as well as Afghanistan, Libya and other transatlantic issues. Topics will range from Iraq to NATO enlargement to views of individual allied members toward relations with the U.S. or the development of European Security and Defense Policy to be pursued outside the NATO alliance. (Mattox)

FP471E, Politics of Transition, The conceptual objective is to analyze the rapid pace of political and social transition from one paradigm to another (from authoritarian rule to liberal democracy, for example), through adaptation of new values, rules of conduct, institutions and reorientation of international objectives. The sovereign debt crisis in Europe. The economic crisis in the US and the socio-economic transformation known as the Arab spring are just a few examples of the most recent transitional politics. (Rachwald)

FP471F, Natural Security: “How Natural Resources Shape Power in the 21st Century” It will examine how resources, like food, water, energy, precious metals, oil, etc. shape power and international relations, now and in the future. Specific themes include food security, global population growth, the rise of the new middle classes in China and India, the future of resource rich Africa, climate change, alternative energy, and other forces reshaping global relations in an era of impending resource scarcity. (Wheeler)

FP471G, American Empire, The capstone will track the idea of an American empire, from Jefferson’s isolationist “Empire of Liberty” through recent neoconservative manifestos for geopolitical activism. We will compare American with Roman, British, French, and Chinese ideas of empire and consider empire as an electoral issue. (Wrage)