Have you ever wondered how much power national corporations really have or what the CIA is really up to? Have you thought about the origins and importance of human rights, war, revolution, peace, ecology, and gender in the contemporary world? Why is food such a powerful political reality? What drives national and world economic policies? Are you curious about why so many Americans are critical of Congress? Want to know what it takes to change the political structure? The Department of Politics is the place for you!

We pride ourselves on helping you to develop, explore, evaluate and express your opinions by engaging in a teaching and learning environment that stresses rational methodology, rigorous political theory and sound judgment. Please join us for one or more of our Spring 2022 courses. Our faculty is friendly and available and our courses deal with fascinating, important national and global issues.

INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN POLITICS (POL 002 / 1 unit)
The course surveys the institutions and processes that form the American political system. It is open to all students. Major topics: 1) The constitutional origins of American democracy; 2) The functions of the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government; 3) Key political activities—elections, political participation, and public policy-making; and 4) Questions at the heart of the American democratic experiment: How is political power distributed in America? What is "the common good"? What is its proper relationship to individual rights? And how should we realize the public and individual interest in a diverse, pluralistic society? This course fulfills the Common Good requirement of the Core Curriculum.

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY (POL 003 / 1 unit)
This course explores the great political ideas and ideologies that have shaped domestic and world history. The course offers insight into the belief systems and values that drive human history and gives students profound perspectives on life, liberty, and equality. This course satisfies the Common Good requirement of the Core Curriculum.

WRITING, RESEARCH & ANALYSIS FOR THE POLITICAL MAJOR (POL 100 / 1 unit)
Have you ever thought that some people just know how to think, research, and write, and some just don't? Educators sometimes give the impression that we are basically born good at these things, or we're not. The truth is that being able to do effective research, analysis, and writing does not involve skills we are born with – it involves learned skills, and they can be taught and learned through practice. This course will help you master these skills in a small-group setting with lots of individual support, and it aims to foster the student's transition from lower division to upper division research, writing and analysis. Join the class, develop your skills in a supportive setting, and be empowered by becoming more competent and confident in your upper division politics work. This course fulfills the Writing in the Disciplines requirement of the Core Curriculum.

POLITICS AND RELIGION (POL 109-01 / 1 unit)
This course explores various perspectives about the relationship between religion and government, and the role of religion in practice. We examine various interpretations of the Religion Clauses of the First Amendment, and how those interpretations have shaped the ways that religion has been used to justify repressive and progressive laws and policies throughout American history (e.g., regarding slavery, the women's suffrage movement, the civil rights movements, immigration, and U.S. foreign policy). In addition, in this election year, we examine how religion appears and functions in the political debates among the candidates, their supporters, and the media.

POST COLONIAL THEORY (POL 114 / 1 unit)
Postcolonialism may be defined as the perspective provided by theories that analyze the conditions of postcoloniality and seek to combat the continuing, often covert, operation of an imperialist system of economic, political and cultural domination. In this course we will discuss, through the lens of postcolonial theories, texts that have been produced by people from countries with a history of colonialism, particularly those concerned with the ways in which colonialism and postcolonial identities. This course fulfills The Common Good requirement of the Core Curriculum. Course fee $20.

TOPICS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: PEACE & CONFLICT MANAGEMENT (POL 122 / 1 unit)
In this course, we examine conflict management processes such as mediation, negotiation, conflict prevention, peace enforcement, peacebuilding, and military intervention. We review theories of conflict resolution by analyzing many cases of international conflict such as the US-Iraq, Arab-Israel, and Turkey-Greece conflicts. We also analyze civil conflicts, such as those currently in Syria and Yemen, and past conflicts in Rwanda, El Salvador, and Kosovo, among others. We seek answers to important puzzles such as why countries involved in international or civil conflict decide to negotiate peace, why some peace agreements are more durable than others, why some peacekeeping operations are more successful than others, why some international crises escalate to major wars, and why some diplomatic efforts sometimes produce successful peace agreements but sometimes fail.

SAINT MARY’S COLLEGE – DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS COURSE OFFERINGS SPRING 2020

SAINT MARY’S COLLEGE – DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS COURSE OFFERINGS SPRING 2020
POLITICS OF TERRORISM (POL 128 / 1 unit)
Terrorism is increasingly becoming a significant threat to national and international security. The devastating terror attacks in France in 2015 as well as in the US in 9/11 have shown us that terrorist violence does not only occur in the developing world, but also occur in developed world, too. These devastating attacks in Paris and the US, and ongoing terrorist campaigns in the rest of the world indicate the seriousness of this problem for policymakers and public. Although terrorism is a growing threat to the world, there is no global consensus even in defining this concept. One state’s terrorists is another state’s freedom fighter. In this course, we will discuss various definitions of terrorism. In addition, a significant portion of this course will be devoted to understanding sociological, religious, economic, ideological and cultural underpinnings of terrorism. In discussing these underpinnings, the course will cover the underlying motivations of right-wing, left-wing, religious, ethnic, and/or several other types of terrorist groups. Beyond the definitions of terrorism as well as various causes of terrorism, this course also intends to investigate political, economic and social consequences of terrorism. Finally, the course will focus on numerous counterterrorism strategies and their effectiveness, such as militarized approach, negotiations, leadership decapitation, policing strategies. In covering the effectiveness of counterterrorism strategies, the effectiveness of the US’s counterterrorism strategies, particularly those implemented after 9/11, will be covered in this course.
TTH 9:45-11:20, Mustafa Kirisci

RUSSIAN POLITICS (POL 147 / 1 unit)
A survey of Russian political development from an interdisciplinary and theoretical approach. We examine how key historical economic, political, and social factors including the Russian revolution and the rise (and demise) of the Soviet Union have come to shape Russia’s current political system. We study all things Russian from Petrograd to petro-state, Putin to Pussy Riot, plus hackers, kleptocrats and oligarchs. This course fulfills the Social, Historical, Cultural Understanding requirement of the Core Curriculum.
TTH 1:15-2:50, Suzi Weissman

TOPICS IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS: DEMOCRACY, CIVIL MILITARY RELATIONS DEVELOPMENT (POL 149 / 1 unit)
Civilian supremacy over the military is taken for granted in developed democracies, but in other countries, the military is a dominant power in politics and sometimes directly rules the state. In this course, we examine why some countries are able to establish the principle of civilian oversight over the military, but other countries suffer from unstable civil-military relations. Furthermore, we cover how the relative stability of civil-military relations affects key issues and processes ranging from democratic development, gender inequality, economic inequality, government stability, policy implementation and political economy. We finalize the course by looking at contemporary military challenges faced by modern militaries, such as unconventional warfare (terrorism, guerilla movements), privatization of armed forces, and post-war reconstruction efforts.
MWF 11:45-12:50, Mustafa Kirisci

****NEW COURSE!****
ATTENTION JUNIORS & SENIORS!
CAPSTONE SEMINAR IN POLITICS
(POL 196 / 1 unit)
This seminar style course deals with a fundamental issue in political theory/philosophy, political economy, politics and sociology: the meaning of equality. How do we conceptualize and measure equality -- and inequality? What are their causes and what are their effects? Using a variety of classical and contemporary texts we’ll explore these questions with respect to the current social and political context in the US and the world. The course is open to juniors and seniors. Course fee of $30
TTH 11:30-1:05, Suzi Weissman

#GETPOLITICAL