

Spring 2010
Government Department
Topics Course Descriptions

GO 351B: Rousseau's Political Philosophy *(4 credits, Professor Flagg Taylor)*

This course will be entirely devoted to a close examination of some of the writings of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Rousseau is acknowledged as one of the pre-eminent thinkers of the modern period, perhaps of all time. Though there is some scholarly consensus about his seminal importance, there is extensive disagreement about Rousseau's teaching on fundamental questions about human nature and the just political order. Rousseau's thought seems to be defined by a series of polarities: the quiet independence and self-sufficiency of natural man versus the dignity and virtue of the republican citizen; the solitary life versus the communal, political life; and a defense of cosmopolitan benevolence versus a defense of national particularity. These are just a few, and they have caused many readers (including some of his contemporaries), to claim Rousseau was hopelessly confused or just plain sloppy. We shall take Rousseau at his word however, and begin with the assumption that there is an order to the whole of his thought. As he stated in a letter, "The majority of my Readers must often have found my discourses poorly structured and almost entirely disjointed, for want of perceiving the trunk of which I showed them only the branches. But that was enough for those capable of understanding, and I never wanted to speak to others." We shall therefore undertake the difficult task of understanding Rousseau's "system."

GO 365: Islam and Politics in the Modern Middle East *(4 credits, Professor Sumita Pahwa)*

Starting with the intellectual engagements of Islamic scholars with political modernity in the late nineteenth century, we ask how and why Islam came to play such an important political role in the contemporary Middle East, and investigate its relationship with nation-states, colonialism, democracy and modern governments. We will study the growth of Islamist movements that focus on social welfare, on alternative economic models, on creating Islamic states, and on participating in democratic political orders. We will also discuss Islamic responses to feminism and human rights, Islamic 'culture wars,' new Islamic media and televangelists, the rise of jihadism and transnational Islamist networks. We will draw on examples from Egypt, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, and occasionally Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq. *(Designated a non-Western culture course)*

GO 366: Understanding Globalization *(4 credits, Professor Aldo Vacs)*

A critical examination of globalization as a political, economic, technological, social, and cultural phenomenon, which has wrought fundamental changes to our lives by making the world smaller and more interdependent. The course will explore the meaning, features and impact of globalization on the role of states, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and transnational corporations; the transformation of national sovereignty; the expansion of liberal democracy; the changes in international economic relations (trade, finance, investment) and institutions (GATT/WTO, IMF, World Bank); the promotion of social progress and backwardness; the rise and decline of nationalistic, ethnic, and religious confrontations; and the development of cultural diversity and homogeneity. Special attention will be devoted to analyzing the ideologies, actors, and interests promoting and opposing globalization as well as the risks and opportunities associated with globalization from the perspective of different groups.

NEW! GO 315: Immigration Politics and Policy *(4 credits, Professor Bob Turner)*

An examination of immigration and the issues arising from it-the reshaping of cities, suburbs and rural areas, and the altering of racial dynamics, labor markets, politics and culture in the U.S. Students will address varied topics such as the historical evolution of American immigration policy, theories of immigration, the economic costs and benefits of immigration, the assimilation of recent immigrants, and the future direction of U.S. immigration policy. Prerequisite: GO 101 This course counts towards the American Government subdiscipline.