

POLITICAL SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER



Dear PL Majors and Minors,

It hardly seems possible that we are approaching Thanksgiving break. The warmer temperatures and robust slate of events —not to mention the vibrant new colors of the PL department lounge — have made for a lively semester.

We welcomed Professor Lucas Perelló to our department this fall. He teaches courses in comparative politics and international relations with an expertise in Latin American politics. If you haven't met him yet, you can get to know him a bit in the "Faculty News" section of our newsletter.

It was great to hear from so many alumni. They are doing a range of interesting and rewarding work and they write thoughtfully about how their Skidmore education prepared them for it. Please take some time to read through their reflections. And, of course, we are grateful to Julianna Koch '06 and Dan DiSalvo '98 for returning to campus in October to share their expertise with our American politics classes.

The articles and "Student News" section detail the impressive work that you all are doing. In addition to the familiar sections, the newsletter has some fun new sections, including a PL playlist and podcast recommendations.

As ever, I am very grateful to Barbara McDonough, the PL administrative assistant, and the PL student assistants (Shayna Cohen, Sydney Kass, Izzy Kroeger, Carolina Lucio, Phoebe Marwill) for devoting their time and energy to our newsletter.

The fun isn't over yet! Join us for bowling this Friday, November 18 afternoon!

Professor Natalie Taylor
Associate Professor & Chair

PL Bowling Party

Friday, Nov. 18 | 3 - 5 PM
Saratoga Strike Zone

Please RSVP to bmcdonou@skidmore.edu

with fav profs & co.



FACULTY NEWS

COLLECTED BY PHOEBE MARWILL '24

Prof Yelena Biberman-Ocakli I had an exciting summer conducting research on the Büyükada Island in Turkey, where Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky was forced into exile after a power struggle with Joseph Stalin. Trotsky wrote some of his most influential books on the island, and I traced his movements and ideas there for my book project, with the support of the Judith Johns Carrico '65 grant. After returning from Turkey, I continued my work on the book in collaboration with Billy Lee '23 and Ilena Pizzarossa '24, supported by the Faculty Student Summer Research Program. A high school student, Brendan Kaminski, reached out to me and joined the team. David Kang '24 also kindly and skillfully assisted me with the project. My book centers on the question: Do founding ideas matter? They are often the basis of national identity, animating a sense of collective belonging. How, if at all, do they shape the imaginations and behaviors of the generations that follow? This question is especially timely (and timeless) when applied to the phenomenon of militarism – belief in the ultimate efficacy of military means for achieving societal goals. Do founding ideas matter for how states organize and wield violence? Does it matter if a state was founded by a Lee Kuan Yew or a Mahatma Gandhi? A George Washington or a Leon Trotsky?



Professor Feryaz Ocakli and I traveled to Washington, D.C. in August to conduct interviews for our projects. We met with several former Afghan officials. Feryaz and I also visited the Capitol and the National Archives Museum, where we could glance at the founding documents: Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Bill of Rights.



In addition to conducting research, I published two analytical pieces. One was co-authored with a former student, Sophie Mae Berman '22, and entitled “To Support Afghan Women Activists, Prioritize Local Knowledge Over Numbers.” Published by the Atlantic Council’s *SouthAsiaSource*, it draws on Sophie Mae’s original thesis research, which included interviews with Afghan and foreign peacebuilders who worked in Afghanistan’s government ministries, multilateral agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the military, as well as with humanitarian aid recipients. The second, entitled “Reflections on How Stanislaw Shushkevich Made (Forgotten) History,” was published by Harvard University Davis Center’s *Insights*.

I participated in the Midwest Political Science Association annual conference as well as a Union College panel discussion, entitled “Perspectives on the Russia-Ukraine War,” in April. In October, I presented a paper at the New York

Conference on Asian Studies in Syracuse, after which I enjoyed a chat about Indian politics with Professor Eliza Kent (Religious Studies Department) at the world-famous Dinosaur Bar-B-Que. Among the other highlights from the past few months was watching the production and performance of the musical *Yeltsin in Texas!* with composer and Senior Teaching Professor of Music Evan Mack. *Yeltsin in Texas!* is a comedic depiction



of Boris Yeltsin’s 1989 visit to a grocery store in Texas – a little known event that changed the course of history. I was invited to make introductory remarks. They were well-received, and included in the front pages of the musical score. My student, Grace Grbach '25, is currently collaborating with Professor Mack and me on analyzing the musical from political and historical perspectives.

FACULTY NEWS CONTINUED

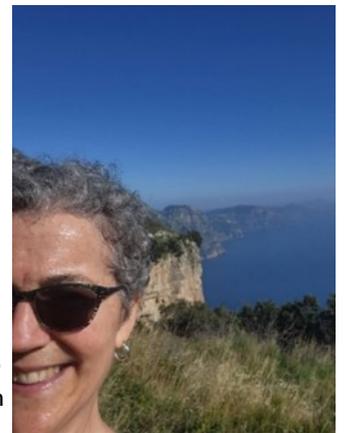
Finally, I am happy to share that my paper, entitled “The Biotechnology Revolution in Military Affairs,” was selected as Andrew W. Marshall Foundation Paper Prize Finalist in New Revolutions in Military Affairs. In addition, a paper I co-authored with my former student, Jared Schwartz '20, entitled “One Asia, Two Systems,” was selected as Andrew W. Marshall Foundation Paper Prize Semi-Finalist in Future Reconfigurations in Asia.



Prof Beau Breslin is teaching a Scribner Seminar called “Dissolving the Bands: The American Revolution from the British Perspective.” His class is reading classic treatises like Paine’s *Common Sense* Franklin’s *Autobiography* and works by Jefferson, Burke, Seabury, and others. The students have visited Benjamin Franklin’s London home, taken in the great theater performance of *Hamilton*, and the British National Archives where they were able to see (and if you can believe it, touch) an original, July 4, 1776 parchment copy of the Declaration of Independence. Beau is having a wonderful time as we expect his students are as well!



Prof Kate Graney has had a busy semester already. Her classes have visited the Tang and Special Collections to think about how Skidmore students and other “normal people” from the past experienced important political phenomena like the founding of the UN and the establishment of the Declaration of Human Rights. She also did an external review of the political science program at Alfred University in south-western New York. She continues to enjoy, more than ever, walks in the woods with her dog Bean. She is very excited to go visit her son, who is studying in Italy this semester, and is grateful to her colleagues for covering for her while she does so, and is in the very beginning stages of a new project on the seven deadly sins and politics.



As usual in even numbered years, **Professor Mann** is trying to keep many plates spinning. He has been working on field experiments on voter mobilization with civic organizations around the country since early summer. This fall his research efforts are focused on how the news media covers the running of elections. The students in Election Research (PL335) are collecting every story from 43 local and national news organizations covering voter registration, voting by mail, early voting, election day voting, vote counting and much more. At the end of the semester, these students will be using the data for their own research. Prof. Mann is also working on a series of survey experiments about how different news coverage impacts public confidence in elections, likelihood of voting, and other attitudes.

FACULTY NEWS CONTINUED

Prof. Mann will be on leave starting in January. He will be working with a major foundation on applying research about voter participation and voting rights to the foundation's grant making strategy in advance of the 2024 election. While he will miss teaching Skidmore students, the opportunity to apply his expertise to the dangers to our democratic republican form of government was too important an opportunity to pass up at this critical moment in American politics.



Prof Lucas Perelló's research focuses on the emergence and evolution of democracy and party systems in Latin America and the Caribbean. This year he has co-authored research articles on partisan and ideological attachments in Guatemala (*International Area Studies Review*), the rise of Nayib Bukele in El Salvador (*Politics*), and reversing competitive authoritarianism in Honduras (*Journal of Democracy*). Lucas's work has been accepted or is under advanced review stages in *Studies in Comparative International Development* and the *Bulletin of Latin American Research*.

Currently, Lucas is working on research articles examining partisanship in Brazil, Belize, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, Panama, and Paraguay. He is also working on a book project focusing on party systems in Central America. Lucas recently presented his research at the American Political Science Association Annual Meeting & Exhibition (Montreal, Canada) and the Public and Democracy in the Americas Conference (Antigua, Guatemala).

Lucas is a big fan of science books. He has become obsessed with dinosaurs (the influence of his 6-year-old nephew, who loves *Jurassic Park*). Lucas is reading *The Monster's Bones: The Discovery of T. Rex and How It Shook Our World* (2022) by David K. Randall. He recently read *The Last Days of the Dinosaurs* (2022) by Riley Black. During the summer, Lucas read *The Rise and Reign of the Mammals* (2022) by Steve Brusatte, who also wrote *The Rise and Fall of the Dinosaurs* (2018). Lucas also read *The Hunt for Vulcan* (2015) by Thomas Levenson, *When We Cease to Understand the World* (2020) by Benjamín Labatut, and *Inglorious Empire: what the British did to India* (2017) by Shashi Tharoor. The next book on his shelf is *Fresh Banana Leaves* (2022) by Jessica Hernández.

The most recent television shows that Lucas watched are *Indian Matchmaking*, *Modern Family*, and *Is it Cake?* Documentaries, however, are his favorite. He recommends *Life and Debt* (2001) by Stephanie Black and *Concerning Violence* (2014) by Göran Olsson.



Prof Ron Seyb shares two photos of Robbie, his canine-BFF, one with Robbie at rest and the other rambunctious Robbie. Can you spot the difference?

Also, he has happily offered streaming recommendations for our majors (who are all "Major Major"):

The Boleyns: A Scandalous Family (Amazon Prime Video) A... well, scandalous tale of a how a family with no noble blood managed to gain a perch in the court of Henry VIII. The end of the tale is, of course, as Hercules once exclaimed, "Disappointing!" for many of the Boleyns (one of whom, alas, learned that a scaffold is not merely a nice item for one's kitchen). The machinations the family members use to rise to power are clever, concupiscent, and oh, so calculating.

The U.S. and the Holocaust (available on the PBS app) Ken Burns' most recent magisterial documentary. His subject this time is, as the title suggests, the United States government's failure to provide sanctuary for hundreds of thousands of European Jews who were fleeing Hitler's Final Solution. The story is told by both historians and survivors. It is a documentary that makes one recoil but never turn away.

FACULTY NEWS CONTINUED

Lost Illusions (Amazon Prime Video) I have a well-earned reputation as a provincial. This French adaptation of the Balzac novel of the same name does, however, touch a soft spot for me: the development of both advertising and the press. A young man travels from the countryside to Paris in the 1920s to become a writer. He quickly gets swept up by the whirlwind of tabloid journalism that is laying waste to Parisian society. He casts off his desire to pursue belles lettres and replaces it with a white-hot craving for notoriety. Ambition, temptation, disorientation, and (needless to say) lost illusions are all depicted here in a lush and compelling way. In short, this is a movie about the protean self, a self that can be lost, found, and then lost again.



Prof Flagg Taylor presented a paper at the American Political Science Association meeting in Montreal in September called “Vaclav Havel and the Problem of Dissent.” His podcast, *Enduring Interest*, just started a series on American identity and culture. The first episode in the series is on two essays by the novelist Ralph Ellison. The two guests are Lucas Moral of Washington and Lee University and our own Marc Conner, President of Skidmore College. In September published a review of *Give Me Liberty: The True Story of Oswald Paya and his Daring Quest for a Free Cuba*. Links below!

<https://enduringinterest.podbean.com/e/marc-conner-and-lucas-moral-on-ralph-ellison-s-the-little-man-at-chehaw-station-and-what-america-would-be-like-without-blacks/>

<https://freebeacon.com/culture/the-courage-to-counter-castro/>

Professor Natalie Taylor is happy to back in Ladd Hall after a year-long sabbatical. Most of her time away was devoted to her manuscript, *Portrait of Democracy: Clover Adams and the American Regime*. Clover was the wife of Henry Adams, great-grandson and grandson to two U.S. presidents and an influential American historian and novelist. She inspired characters in her husband’s fiction as well as Henry James’s fiction. Professor Taylor argues that by understanding the importance of Clover to both Adams and James we can get a clearer picture of American democracy. In addition to this, Professor Taylor published a chapter, “Susan B. Anthony: The Prophetic Eye Discerns the Woman Politician” in *American Statesmanship: Principles and Practice of Leadership*, edited by Joseph Fornieri. She also published a few short pieces on Henry Adams and on the HBO series, *The White Lotus*.



Prof Bob Turner spent the summer researching and writing about local elections in Saratoga Springs with Bella Bruno (2025) and running the Faculty Student Summer Research Program. He also earned the highly coveted, and unpaid, position of fishing writer for the Saratoga Lake Association’s Newsletter. You’ll find his column, *The Fishing Professor*, which is distributed monthly to 1,600 Saratoga Lake households on his website.



MEET LUCAS PERELLÓ

SYDNEY KASS '23

This semester our department welcomes visiting lecturer Professor Lucas Perelló (per-ey-oh!) to Skidmore. We are so lucky to spend the next two years with him and have the opportunity to study Latin American comparative politics. Professor Perelló will receive his PhD in from The New School; he just submitted his dissertation. (Yay!) His research focuses on the emergence and evolution of democracy and party systems in Latin America and the Caribbean. Thus far, Professor Perelló's time at Skidmore has been "lovely." He has felt incredibly welcomed by the Skidmore community and appreciates his students' dedication and motivation in the classroom.

As the son of a geologist, Professor Perelló has lived around the world. He was born in Salt Lake City, Utah, and has lived in Indonesia, Tucson, Arizona, and Santiago, Chile, where he spent the majority of his time growing up. He and his family are originally from Chile.

While he has "always been obsessed with democracies and political regimes," Professor Perelló credits a course that he took as an undergraduate student called "Political and Economic Development of Latin America" for opening him to the complexities of the region and inspiring him to learn more. It was his coursework as a PhD student that piqued his interest in Central America; the more he read about it, the more he wanted to know. And that is exactly what Professor Perelló has done. While writing his dissertation, he spent a year in Honduras doing fieldwork and research as a Fulbright scholar.

Outside the classroom, Professor Perelló loves to follow Latin American *fútbol* (soccer). His team *Universidad de Chile* is his "greatest passion and biggest frustration." Since winning is not something that the team does with much frequency, he has a favorite *fútbol* team in every country in Latin America. This way, Professor Perelló wins every year; he doesn't necessarily see himself as a fair-weather fan.

When he is not researching, teaching, writing, or worrying about soccer, you might find him reading a science book. Specifically, he is very into studying dinosaurs and is reading *The Monster's Bones: The Discovery of T. Rex and How It Shook Our World* (2022) by David K. Randall.

When Professor Perelló was in college, his semester abroad at Syracuse University showed him the reality of winter in upstate New York. We wish him a warm winter as he welcomes back the cold weather into his life and we welcome him into our Ladd Hall community.



SNAPSHOTS OF OUR POLITICAL SCIENCE FAMILY



THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTORS

ILENA BERRO PIZZAROSSA '24, MARIA BIDEIWIY '24, PEYTON BRILL '26, BELLA BRUNO '25, CASE BUTTON '06, MICHAEL CASS-ANTONY '10, ABBY CICCARONE '22, SAMANTHA CLEMMY '20, SHAYNA COHEN '23, OLIVIA COLLAZO '24, OLIVIA COX '18, MICHAEL DECARLEN-BUMILLER '23, NIKOLAS DIPIERNO '24, BRITT DORFMAN '14, MARVELOUS EKEH '23, CARLOS FREEMAN '24, MARAH FRESE-DESPINS '26, NOAH FRYOU '23, GRACE GEURIN '24, DOMINIC GIORDANO '25, ELLA HANEY FOULDS '26, MORGAN HIDLAGO '24, EVAN HOLLAND-SHEPLER '23, SAMANTHA HOTZ '23, HENRY JAFFE '18, DAVID KANG '24, SYDNEY KASS '23, CONRAD KASSIN '24, IZZY KROEGER '24, BILLY LEE '23, CAROLINA LUCIO '24, DAFNE LUCIO '23, MADDIE AIKIN '23, PHOEBE MARWILL '24, GREG MCINNIS '23, RACHEL MCPHERSON '19, KAITLIN MCQUADE '24, AIDENE MERRILL-SKOLOFF '21, JARED MONDSCHHEIN '09, TONY MOTA '25, AVIK NANDY '24, DORREE NDOOKI '23, MATHEW NELSON '22, SADIE NESBITT '25, CLEA O'NEIL '24, KATHERINE POMPILIO '21, TED RANDELL '19, ROB RESNICK '88, MEGAN SCHACHTER '17, ITI SINGH '23, DAVID SOLOVY '20, LAURA SWARTZ '10, RACHAEL THOMEER '18, WILLIAM TONE '23, HUNTER WASSER '23, KIERAN YATER '22, ERIC YE '24

AFTER DOBBS: THE FUTURE OF THE SUPREME COURT

CAROLINA LUCIO '24

I attended the After Dobbs lecture on Friday, September 30th; it was an incredible opportunity to hear renowned law professors discuss current and pressing issues. They stayed true to their beliefs and support of the Constitution, which is not a universal perspective today. Last fall I took a class with Beau Breslin where we had conversations on whether there should be a new constitution or if our current one should stand. Many of my peers have expressed that they feel the constitution is outdated and should be changed to fit our more modern society. Although I agree with them, expanding my view and keeping an open mind to learn from another perspective was beneficial. Continuing the conversation at a post lecture dinner, students were able to establish connections and ask more specific questions of the panelists.



The Skidmore Political Science Department, in tandem with the Periclean Honors Forum, hosted a discussion entitled “After Dobbs: The Future of the Supreme Court.” From the Department of Political Science, Professor Taylor and Sydney Kass '23 prompted the conversation with distinguished law professors Akhil Reed Amar and Saikrishna Prakash. Amar is a Sterling Professor of law and political science at Yale University, and Prakash, once a student of Amar, is James Monroe Distinguished professor of law, and Albert Clark Take Jr. professor of law at the University of Virginia.

Sydney opened with a line of questioning that helped explain the Court’s reasoning behind overturning *Roe v. Wade* and why now. Amar started by pointing out the importance of grounding one’s legal reasoning in what the Constitution says. He highlighted the weakness of *Roe*’s focus on privacy. Although Amar noted his support for a woman’s right to choose, he said he was unsurprised that *Roe* was overturned, given the weakness of the Court’s reasoning in *Roe*. Prakash answered the “why now” portion of the question by discussing the concept of *stare decisis*. Amar added that precedent is not as good as it sounds and that it is more important to look at the Constitution and not simply as prior case law. He noted that the Court has a duty to uphold the Constitution and not simply or even primarily its prior decisions.

Prakash noted that the Court is often inconsistent in how it approaches precedent but that overturning precedent is actually more common than one often thinks. Amar argued that maintaining the judicial power’s fidelity to the Constitution is vital, and if a longstanding precedent is wrong, then it has to go.

The panelists also took questions from the audience. The first of many was: what is the future of the Supreme Court? To this, both Professors agreed that the Court is constantly changing and has dealt with many other controversial cases. The *Dobbs* case is certainly not the last controversial case it will decide. Another audience member asked about unenumerated rights and how that idea applied to the right to privacy that was outlined in *Roe v. Wade*. Amar noted that privacy is alluded to in several places in the Constitution but that it isn’t a good framework for thinking about abortion. He noted that abortions aren’t really private because there are multiple parties involved and some sort of medical transaction. Amar suggested Democrats should be working in Congress to pass a bill on abortion rather than arguing about a decision that has already been decided. Amar worries that if, in 2024, Republicans gain majority control over the House, Senate, and Presidency, they could push to place significant limits on abortion nationally. Amar and Prakash both suggested that more energy should be spent on creating more policies and opportunities for women and others affected by *Dobbs* instead of refuting the decision.

A principle highlighted by both professors Amar and Prakash was that regardless of personal views, the Constitution ought to be interpreted in light of its text, its history and its tradition. In their view the holdings both in *Roe* and *Casey* were untenable so their eventual overturning should not have been as surprising as it was—especially given what conservative jurists and other critics of these decisions had been saying for some time. The panel also discussed other cases including *West Virginia v. EPA* and *Carson v. Makin*.



The Social Contract in the Middle East, Tensions Between Historians and Political Scientists, and Changes at Skidmore

IZZY KROEGER '23

This semester, I had the unique opportunity to take Professor Relli Shechter's class, "Social Contract in the Middle East." Professor Shechter is this year's Greenberg Middle East Scholar-in-Residence. This is his second time as the Greenberg Scholar, his first residency was in 2010. In this class, we read and discussed scholarly articles about the development of different social contracts in the Middle East over time. Our class definition of social contract was "the entirety of *explicit* and *implicit* agreements between all relevant *societal groups* and *their sovereign*, defining their *rights and obligations* toward each other." We learned about the aftermath of colonialism, the formation of authoritarian social contracts, the effects of the global implementation of the neoliberal economic system, and the eventual Arab Spring. As a political science and history double major, I found this class to be a fascinating combination of my own interests; the class was credited to the history department, but I found that many aspects of it also expanded on my political science education, specifically Professor Ocakli's Intro to Comparative and International Politics. The following is an interview I had with Professor Shechter in October.

Please note that this interview has been edited for length and clarity. For a full transcript of this interview, scan the following QR code:



I: How did you come up with the topic and syllabus for this course that you're teaching at Skidmore?

P.S.: First, the broad question really emerged from what I'm interested in professionally these days. I find that when I'm teaching the same subject that I'm actually doing research in, it makes me much more engaged in my teaching as well. This is the broad answer to your question: getting the research and the teaching sides as closely integrated together as possible. The second reason for choosing this topic is to celebrate a forthcoming book on the topic. This book discusses the long-time history of the social contract in Egypt. I find it nice to revisit what I've written. Also, when I revisit the book I re-think it. Although the book will be printed soon, when you talk about it in public the book gets a life of its own, with often larger, broader and sometimes even additional meaning of what you were initially trying to say.

...I also came as a guest lecturer to two of [Professor Ocakli's] classes, ["Across the Bridge: Turkey" and "Democratic Erosion"]. I find

that we actually have much to talk about, he and I. Also, I think that one of your questions [in our class] dealt with this—history as opposed to political science—so... there is oftentimes tensions—professional tension, that is, [laughing] not personal ones—between historians and political scientists. The disciplines and traditions within the disciplines bring out such tensions: historians often being more focused on detailed empirical narratives and emphasize the specificities of events, they tend to focus on one country and its history; social scientists tend to focus more on models and structures and search for commonalities, or at least compare and contrast different countries and are engaged in comparisons more frequently than historians. They are also, of course, more interested in today and current events as opposed to what happened in the past. They also tend to be quantitative as opposed to qualitative in their analysis. So, there are gaps between the professions. What I think went well with my discussion with Professor Ocakli and being in his class is the common ground. The common ground was a joint interest in area studies and in this case in Middle Eastern studies. This allows some commonalities and similar interests in both the contemporary unfolding events and also in what happened in the past and the legacy of the past—how the past influenced the present. So, I could fairly easily talk with him about the Ottoman legacy and how it influenced Turkey or other countries in the region, how national movements emerged from the breakup of the Ottoman Empire but also the influence of European empires on regional nationalism, about authoritarianism and democracy. From this joint interest in the Middle East we could also engage in a broader discussion of democracy or the erosion of democracy in the world, that is, using the case study of the Middle East to come up with broader insights on the erosion of democracy in other parts of the globe. This was actually, I think, clear in my contribution to his classes. These are broad classes, but when he and I can focus on examples from one region, it made the broader discussion clearer to students, and I'm saying this because this was the feedback that I got from Professor Ocakli on the discussion that we had in class. So, it was beneficial for me and I think for students from his perspective as well.

I: Is there anything else you want to add to this interview that I didn't ask you about? Anything you want to tell Skidmore polisci students?

P.S.: In comparison with my past experience at Skidmore, I find greater diversity among the student body but also among faculty. Back then the student body was much more homogeneous than it is now. It's not only ethnic or religious diversity; it's what you [the students] bring with you to class, diversity in terms of perspective, background knowledge, expectations, that you bring with you that I appreciate. Socially, even politically, but more than anything else academically, this is much appreciated because this for me is a significant contribution to class discussion, to the challenges that I face that forces me to be more creative in the way that I try to engage with the readings and my class lectures. It's definitely there, diversity also in terms of the faculty.

JULIANNA KOCH '06 RETURNS TO LADD HALL

SYDNEY KASS '23

After a stop at Uncommon Grounds, a stroll down Broadway and memory lane, Dr. Julianna Koch '06 returned to the PL department on Friday, October 14.

Julianna is the research director at Buzzback Market Research, a firm that works “with companies who seek to advance their business performance with sharper consumer insights.” After graduating from Skidmore with a major in political science and minor in economics, she worked at the Urban Institute in the Tax Policy Center before going back to school to earn her PhD in Government at Cornell University. As research director, Julianna crafts surveys that seek to “measure what people think... in order to influence consumer behavior or choices.”

After helping us solve the PL mystery of the century—that Julianna’s last name is pronounced “Koch” like “scotch” and not “Koch” as in Cola—she visited Professor Seyb’s “Psychology of Politics” class to discuss what she does in market research and how it can be translated into the political world.

Julianna explained that surveys can be used in any field—especially in politics—to predict behavior,



identify tastes and preferences, and subsequently determine the magnitude of those tastes and preferences; with regard to a particular inquiry, what do respondents care about and how much do they care? In addition to discovering “what is the journey of sliced bread,” researchers of politics may use surveys to determine what are the salient issues among (those who are hopefully likely) voters or whom in the polls they support. We learned that public opinion researchers and market researchers like herself face some of the same challenges when seeking to obtain an accurate sample: targeting the relevant demographic, screening respondents to ensure they are qualified to answer the questions, overcoming desirability bias, and understanding the limits of their models.

As a senior, I am constantly considering and exploring how my degree in political science will translate into the post-Skidmore world. And while I can only speak for myself, Julianna’s visit showed us another way of “doing political science.” I am so appreciative of the opportunity to meet her and listen to her presentation and story. Who knows? Maybe one day one of us majors or minors will be back to visit Ladd and help educate and inspire the next generation of PL students.

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CHOOSING LONDON FIRST: BEST DECISION EVER

Ella Haney Foulds '26

Taking this leap across the Atlantic to study abroad my very first semester of college turned out to be the best decision I could have made. Living in London and taking classes about British culture and history have made for the ultimate immersive experience. For example, in my class "The Ethnic Tapestry of Contemporary British Culture," we learned about the Hindu community in one pocket of London, and then the next class took the tube up to Neasden to visit the breathtaking Shri Swaminarayan Mandir that we learned about in class.

My very first class with Beau, we met at the British Library and saw the Magna Carta, Jane Austen's writing desk, and Virginia Woolf's diary, among other incredible relics. London gives me and my peers endless opportunities for fun, as the city is so lively and diverse. Some of my favorite activities have been frequenting the Bloomsbury Farmers Market on Thursdays to try the delicious London street food offered, visiting Old Spitalfield's market for lunch and then going to the underground Vintage Market in Brick Lane on Sundays, and spending time in the British Museum, where the ancient Greek and Egyptian exhibits are the most extensive I have ever seen. We have also gotten the chance to travel outside of London, and my friends and I have become particularly fond of the White Cliffs of Dover, which is an hour train ride away. We have spent a few afternoons lying on the cliffs, enjoying the fresh air and relaxing in the beautiful landscape.

Arriving in London was overwhelming, and it was a hard adjustment. Cooking for myself and finding my way around a huge city was very daunting, but now, two months in, London truly feels like home. The 30-minute walk from my apartment to class every morning is so familiar I could do it with my eyes closed. I can navigate from Covent Garden to home without a map, and I know what my favorite pubs and restaurants are. I have become an expert on the tube and bus systems, and I enjoy riding on the top of the iconic double decker even though it feels like the bus is going to hit every biker that passes. I have made memories with 28 other Skidmore students who chose this adventure, a very intelligent, caring, and close-knit group whom I have come to trust and admire.



FYE IN LONDON: AN IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE

Marah Frese-Despins '26

My time in the city of London has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. This city has so much to offer, and culture is present on every corner. Taking my first-ever college courses in a foreign city has definitely challenged me academically. The classes are taught in a vastly different manner. Teachers do not hand out busy work. The only form of homework we receive is through readings. This may very well be true for American college courses as well, despite that, it was still a major mental shift to make. In addition to the lack of homework, our classes in London differ from American courses because we are often out and about. In my art class, we are at museums every Wednesday and in my history class, we take historical walks through different parts of London. My other classes also incorporate relevant field trips into our studies. This allows us to see the diversity in London that is unlike any other city.

While I have spent a lot of time exploring London through my classes, I have also had the opportunity to experience Europe. For our mid-term break, I traveled with two of my closest friends in the group, Tommy, and Ella, to Budapest, Vienna, and Prague. While I love London, Prague is an amazing place. The city has beautiful gothic architecture everywhere you look and the juxtaposition in the skyline between the old churches and modern offices was super interesting to see. Budapest and Vienna were also fascinating because, despite the fact that they are cities, they almost give the feel of being small towns. They have so much happening within them but they are incredibly quiet and relaxing to be in, unlike London.



My time in the United Kingdom has also been particularly interesting because of the many historical events and times of turmoil within the country that we have experienced. The most shocking of course is the death of the queen. It is hard to imagine that I will ever see such a large population of people in mourning ever again. The country felt sullen but there was also a sense of unity among the people. It was amazing to see how each person reacted including our professors, some of whom had no care and some who were clearly upset. In addition to the queen's passing, we have seen the swearing-in of two prime ministers, and it appears possible that we will see more by the time we are set to leave. Though unfortunate for the British people, it is a great learning experience for us.



Overall, I could not be happier with my decision to study in London and take Beau's class! I have learned so much only halfway through and I am extremely excited to see what I learn in the second half of the term.



COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

MILITARY IN DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRACY IN THE MILITARY

When coming to Skidmore, I wasn't expecting the alienation I felt. To explain, my background is of a military dependent and a former Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) cadet. This gave me deep insider knowledge of the military community. Coming to a liberal arts college, where many people aren't too fond of the military due to various stereotypes and the stigma surrounding it, was a big adjustment for me. Some people did not understand my hardships as a military dependent who had lived overseas. I was even called a "war criminal" for wearing the uniform that my father wore to work, my friend's parents passed away in, and some of my friends are currently wearing. Growing up in a military community, I didn't realize how the general public saw my world. Perhaps it was their lack of information about it, I reasoned.

While taking an introductory political science course (PL103) with Professor Yelena Biberman, I learned that her research focus was on the military and warfare. This sparked my interest in reaching out to her about potential research collaboration. She mentored me as I wrote a paper that focused on the disconnect between the civilian and military worlds; I was able to explore how and why the military community was misunderstood and blamed for what were essentially political decisions – made by politicians who were voted into office. This made me feel more open and freer; I felt that someone understood where I was coming from, and was listening to me with an open mind. This inspired me to offer research support to Professor Biberman, to help her to access some of the resources that I have as a military dependent. Through my fellow Student Government Association (SGA) member Geraldine Santoso '22, I learned that Professor Biberman was pursuing a research project on the question of military democracy. I was thinking that this was the perfect way for us to work together – on a topic that also sparked my passion. I reached out to her during the summer, and we began our collaboration. Now as her research assistant, I gather primary-source material through interviews with military dependents, officers, and cadets on the topic of military democracy. I also provide analyses of secondary-source content (e.g. newspaper articles and reports). Next, I plan to put together a survey. This collaborative opportunity has given me a space to learn and to express myself freely.



David Kang '24

Billy Lee '23 and Ilena Berro Pizzarossa '24

This summer we collaborated with Professor Yelena Biberman on a project entitled *The Military in Democracy and Democracy in the Military*. Our experience was made possible by the Faculty Student Summer Research Program. We started by questioning how the armed forces affect countries' democratic development: whether it is possible to have a genuinely democratic society concurrently with a robust military, one capable of dominating other societies. We also explored how the military, as an organization, is shaped by the society it serves. This big questions-focused research was part of Professor Biberman's larger book project.

Professor Biberman had invited both of us to work with her. Ilena had recently declared her Political Science major, with Professor Biberman serving as her advisor. Being a Latinx student, she was compelled to focus her research on Latinx and other non-Western countries. Her favorite moments during the process were at our regular meetings. We would bring our research together and look for patterns and tensions. When someone made a compelling point or argument, we would work together to explore its implications.

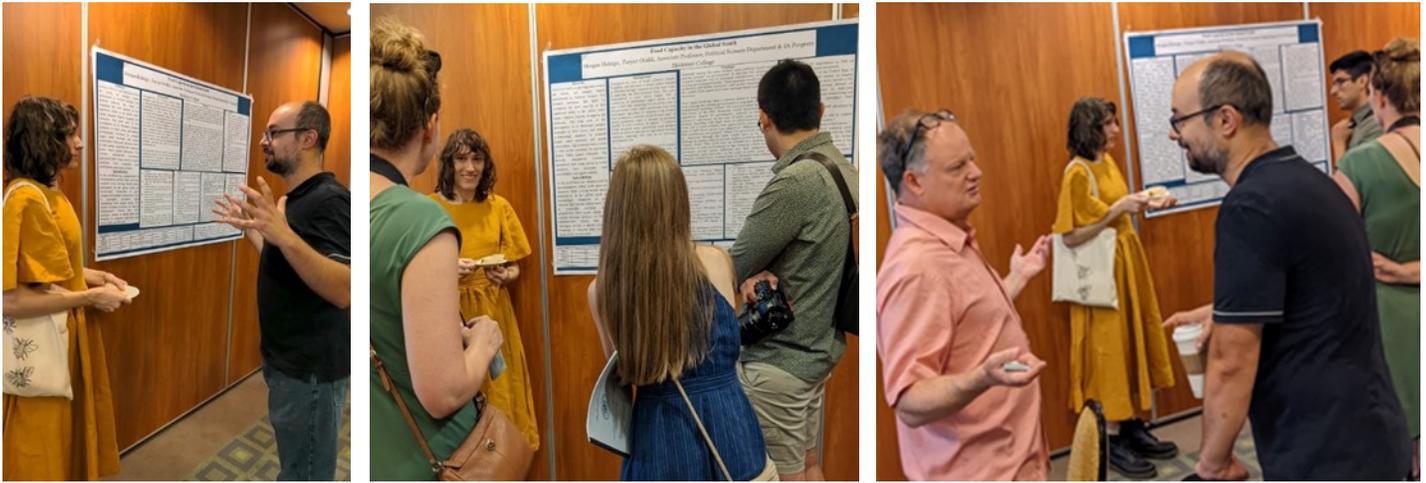
Billy's family has many veterans in it, and he was also in the Boy Scouts of America. The rigidity of military culture was not new to him, but something he always wanted to understand deeper. He feels the summer collaboration vastly improved his research skills, specifically reading, analysis, and applying/categorizing data effectively. He agrees with Ilena that the meetings at which we made novel connections together, sometimes spontaneously, were among the most enjoyable aspects of the experience. It felt like we were real Political Scientists.

We applied a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to data collection and analysis, including interviews with military experts and spatial analysis using GIS. Literature review played a large role in our research. We analyzed military structures in several countries, as is standard in Comparative Politics. We focused on a variety of case studies, including the United States, Singapore, Costa Rica, and Japan. A highlight of our research was when we identified a paradox which we then explored by writing a paper, entitled "The Military-Democracy Paradox: Soldier Subordination vs. Civilian Suffering."

Finally, we had the opportunity to serve as mentors. Brendan Kaminski, a high school student from Baldwin Senior High School in Baldwin, NY, had contacted Professor Biberman with interest in learning about research. Brendan joined our team, and we designed his research assignments while mentoring him about the process. We also regularly met to review his findings. We featured Brendan's findings along with ours at our presentation, in front of Skidmore students and faculty, at the end of the summer.

SUMMER COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH

During the summer, **Morgan Hidalgo '24** and **Professor Feryaz Ocakli** collaborated on a research project that examined the conditions that lead to food security and insecurity in the Global South. They analyzed the class coalitions and state policies that have been associated with states' capacity to defend against food vulnerability. Morgan presented their findings at a Faculty Student Summer Research Program event. As part of the Program, 40 faculty and 115 students conducted research on 40+ projects (49 students funded internally by the Faculty Student Summer Research program and 66 students funded through external grants) from Chemistry, Political Science, Health and Human Physiological Sciences, Neuroscience, Psychology, Geoscience, Environmental Studies and Sciences, Arts Administration, Social Work, Computer Science, Biology, Sociology, Dance, Anthropology, and the GIS Center for Interdisciplinary Research.



Last spring in a ceremony in the Pohndorff Room of the Lucy Scribner Library our newest members of Pi Sigma Alpha were inducted to the National Political Science Honor Society.





This semester we tried something a little new for us in the newsletter survey: we asked you to send us your favorite songs to convey and record “the vibes” of the semester. As the songs to which we listen often change as our lives change, this playlist is a snapshot in history of how we are (and how we were) feeling in the fall of 2022. Well, the results are in, and I must say, we absolutely epically slayed this playlist. I hope that you feel the same. Scan the QR code and listen away!!!

~Sydney Kass



<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/56F71lhcm7DCzPHL9YEx6j?si=a42dc7f085694da3>

THE POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJORS/MINORS PLAYLIST

#	TITLE
1	Viva La Vida Coldplay
2	Mojito Jay Chou
3	Lento Daniel Santacruz
4	Easy Lover (feat. Big Sean) Ellie Goulding, Big Sean
5	Daylight Shinedown
6	BREAK MY SOUL Beyoncé
7	Chamber Of Reflection Mac DeMarco
8	Strawberry Fields Forever - Remastered 2009 The Beatles
9	Castles Made of Sand Jimi Hendrix
10	Be Sweet Japanese Breakfast
11	Anymore Lake Street Dive
12	I'm Not My Season Fleet Foxes
13	October Sky Yebba
14	Coming Home Leon Bridges

15	Flower Power Greta Van Fleet
16	The Hum Margo Guryan
17	Stairway to Heaven - (Live at MSG 1973) [R Led Zeppelin
18	The General DISPATCH
19	Days Go By May Erlewine, Woody Goss
20	I'm Full Wallows
21	Heaven or Las Vegas Cocteau Twins
22	In a Jar Dinosaur Jr.
23	Freedom (feat. Kendrick Lamar) Beyoncé, Kendrick Lamar
24	These Days (feat. Jess Glynne, Macklemore Rudimental, Jess Glynne, Macklemore, Dan Capl
25	Lovely Day Bill Withers
26	These Are Days 10,000 Maniacs

STUDENT NEWS: HOW WAS YOUR SUMMER?

Collected by Shayna Cohen '23

My summer was pretty good! I spent the summer working for Senator Kirsten Gillibrand as a Constituent Affairs Intern in her NYC office. It was a super cool and surreal experience.- Phoebe Marwill (She/Her)'24

My summer was great! I worked at my local bookstore, Eight Cousins, where I had the opportunity to contribute to the book selection itself, which was a new part of the job for me. I also volunteered at my town's Service Center. I spent time with my friends, visited family, went to the beach, and read a lot of good books. -Izzy Kroeger (She/Her) '24

I was a research intern at Boston Children's hospital. -
Noah Fryou '23

Summer was fun! I spent it in Saratoga Springs, giving tours at Skidmore, and interning at a public affairs firm and in the Mayor's office. - Sydney Kass (She/Her) '23

My summer was relaxing, but I also worked remotely for Finance Commissioner and Business Professor Minita Sanghvi. - Maria Bideivy (She/Her) '24

This summer I lived on campus and worked at camp Northwoods as a camp counselor! It was super fun. -
Greg McInnis (He/Him) '23

Good! I was a camp counselor at a marine biology camp. -
Peyton Brill (She/Her) '26

This summer was great! I did a five-week culinary program in Spain, and my favorite dish was paella. -
Caroline Lucio (She/Her) '24

It was nice, my family went on a trip to New Mexico. -
Olivia Collazo (She/Her) '24

Pretty great! I went backpacking in the Tetons for a week with my dad and brother--an incredible trip. -
Hunter Wasser (He/Him) '23

I traveled to see friends, spent time with family, and worked a lot! I also volunteered a little for Governor Hochul's reelection campaign. - Grace Geurin (She/Her) '24

I had a really good summer! I spent the first portion of it at Skidmore researching local politics with Professor Turner. After that I traveled a little and went to Florida, Canada, and St. Thomas. - Bella Bruno '25

I spent my summer working as a line cook on Martha's Vineyard. - Carlos Freeman (He/Him) '24

I worked on the Andy Kim campaign. It was for New Jersey's 3rd district. I also went to Barcelona -
William Tone (He/Him) '23

My summer was lovely. I took Intro to Oceanography in the first summer session, then I had an internship with a global PR firm at their Manhattan headquarters. I learned a lot about the risks (external and internal) that companies have to deal with on a daily basis, and how they interact with the news media and social media outlets. It was an extremely fulfilling internship and I learned many valuable skills. -
Shayna Cohen (She/Her) '23

It was fun. I got to travel around with my family which was fun. - Nikolas DiPierno (He/Him) '24

It was great! I am an international student but I stayed in Saratoga for the whole summer. I was an online intern for a financial trading company (I'm also major in Business). Also, I took two online summer courses. - Eric Ye (He/Him) '24

I worked at a summer camp and volunteered for Planned Parenthood. - Maddie Aikin (She/They) '23

My summer was... alright! From May to August I served as chief of staff with Pat Ryan for Congress. That took up the bulk of any summer fun I may have had. -
Evan Holland-Shepler (He/Him) '23

STUDENT NEWS: HOW WAS YOUR SUMMER?

I interned in finance and administration, coached a club lacrosse team, and studied abroad in London - Iti Singh '23

I worked at Prep for Prep, a prestigious summer academy that takes disadvantaged students of color and propels them to the top private schools of New York City. Coincidentally, I did this when I was of the age of the program too. - Tony Mota '25

Spent a lot of time reconnecting with my roots in nature where I live in upstate New York, worked diligently with multiple local businesses, one of which involved landscaping for the lake houses up at Schroon Lake. I also reconnected with members of the Warren County Historical Society to wish the executive director a happy retirement. My summer also involved a little bit of traveling around the north east, parts of Connecticut and western Mass. Dominic Giordano '25

I took a social psychology class during the first summer session, so half of my summer was spent at Skidmore! I found the course material fascinating and surprisingly relevant to topics I've learned about in political science, such as terrorism. I love having the opportunity to take summer courses. It's a great way to immerse yourself in a subject that you're interested in that might be outside of your major or minor. - Samantha Hotz '23

This summer I worked at a sleep away camp and a neighborhood advocacy group. I helped organize candidate forums, local outreach, and fundraising events. I was able to meet and speak with a lot of local politicians which I really enjoyed! - Kaitlin McQuade '24

I completed a Research Experience for Undergrads funded by the National Science Foundation. -Clea O'Neil '24

My summer was fantastic! I worked as a Power of Youth Intern for America's Promise Alliance, a non-profit. I reviewed applications and granted funds for young people who were developing and conducting service initiatives in their communities to address racial division and injustice. In addition, I assisted in the management of Americas Promise Alliance's social media. - Dafne Lucio '23

My summer was good. Spent a lot of time healing... Conrad Kassin '24

Summer was tough. I went through two surgeries to repair my torn ACL and meniscus while simultaneously interning at UBS' investment banking division. -Marvelous Ekeh '24

This summer I worked with MDOC's Co-Creation Initiative in their partnership with a local black arts organization known as Black Dimensions in Art. The Co-creation Initiative connects community members, students, and organizations to develop projects that support the arts and storytelling. I was in charge of collective interviews of artists all over New York State who have been connected to BDA since its founding in the 70's. Alongside researching archival materials that will be used for a documentary highlighting BDA's influence on New York artistry. -Dorree Ndooki '23

I was in Bangladesh and India. - Avik Nandy '24



HOW DO YOU FEEL TO BE BACK ON CAMPUS? WHAT ARE YOU EXCITED FOR THIS YEAR?

It's nice to be back on campus! This year I'm really excited to be back to even more in person activities and events after all of the COVID restrictions are starting to be lifted. It'll be so nice to see some people in person for the first time!! - Phoebe Marwill (She/Her) '24

I'm having mixed feelings--excited for fall and the upcoming semester, but of course sad that summer is over. I'm most excited to (hopefully) study abroad in Montpellier in the spring! - Izzy Kroeger (She/Her) '24

It is my senior year, I am excited to be back-
Noah Fryou '23

After a semester abroad, it's nice to see everyone and be a part of the t-breds' semester hustle and bustle.-
Sydney Kass (She/Her) '23

I'm so happy to be back on campus and back to work! I'm really excited to begin preparing to study abroad in Spain and to take interesting Political Science classes.-
Maria Bideiwy (She/Her) '24

Last year I was abroad in London, so I am super excited to finally be back on campus for my last two semesters at Skidmore! I'm excited to apply to grad school.-
Greg McInnis (He/Him) '23

It's exciting but definitely a big change. I'm looking forward to taking new classes and meeting new people.-
Peyton Brill (She/Her) '26

I'm glad to be back on campus and seeing my friends. I'm really happy with all my classes this semester and am looking forward to more guest lecturers. -
Carolina Lucio (She/Her) '24

I'm very happy to be back on campus with my housemates, I'm excited to study abroad next semester -
Olivia Collazo (She/Her) '24

Excited to work on my thesis, nervous to work on my thesis; feeling surprised at how quickly time passes -
Hunter Wasser (He/Him) '23

I am so excited to be back on campus! I am excited to host Democracy Matters events, participate in sustainability efforts on campus, and get to meet more people! -
Grace Geurin (She/Her) '24

Being back on campus is great! It's awesome to be able to see everyone's faces now and overall I think the energy is really high from the students. This year I'm excited to experience the real Skidmore. Everyone is finally able to get fully back into the swing of things post-Covid. I can't wait to see what life at Skidmore is all about. - Bella Bruno '25

Campus looks lovely in the fall, this year I'm excited to study abroad in Australia during the spring semester -
Carlos Freeman (He/Him) '24

It feels great to be back on campus. It is nice to see all my friends. I am excited to take my new classes and learn more about political science - William Tone (He/Him) '23

I'm most excited for the Skidmore News, the campus' student-run publication.- Shayna Cohen (She/Her) '23

I'm happy to be back on campus. I am excited for my interesting classes and my plan to study abroad after this semester.- Nikolas DiPierro (He/Him) '24

It's my first fall term at Skidmore! First fall term was online and last year I was in Shanghai for study abroad program. So I am super excited! This year I am also taking some PL courses, looking forward to have some great take away from classes! - Eric Ye (He/Him) '24

I feel cold being back on campus, I miss the warm weather and the summer. I'm excited to go ice skating on a pond!-
Maddie Aikin (She/They) '23

HOW DO YOU FEEL TO BE BACK ON CAMPUS? WHAT ARE YOU EXCITED FOR THIS YEAR?

CONTINUED

I feel exuberant to be back on campus! I am excited to continue to build great relationships with students and faculty alike. - Evan Holland-Shepler (He/Him) '23

I feel so happy to be back, the fall season at Skidmore is always a delight - Avik Nandy '24

Yes! Grateful to have an in-person experience -
Iti Singh (She/Her) '23

I'm excited to be back on campus and expand my mind globally. I'm taking Chinese and learning different global politics this semester and I'm always happy to brighten my mind. -
Tony Mota (He/Him) '25

It certainly feels nice to be back in Saratoga and back on campus with a lot of the people I've grown close to. I'm excited to see how my character will change and grow over my time here this year and how I'll be able to propel myself further down my career path with the connections I make. -
Dominic Giordano (He/Him) '25

This year I'm most excited about applying to graduate school and taking the next steps to further my education and establish a career path. I'm working on applications for masters of secondary education programs and plan to become certified to teach middle and high school history and government classes. - Samantha Hotz '23

I am excited to be back on campus! I am looking forward to studying abroad in Spain next semester. -
Kaitlin McQuade (She/Her) '24

I am in Washington, DC, this semester and am working as a Research Intern at the Brookings Institution. -
Clea O'Neil (she/her) '24

I am overjoyed to be back on campus! I am quite pleased to be returning to Poli Sci classes (after taking some time off to focus on other courses). I'm also happy since it's Senior Year, and I'll get the opportunity to participate in all of the amazing activities at Skidmore before graduation. -
Dafne Lucio (she/her) '23

Super excited to be working on a local judicial campaign this cycle-- I've learned so much about the local area and local constituency while also getting quite comfortable navigating to any local Stewarts! -Michael DeCarlen-Bumiller (he/him) '23

I feel great about being back. -Conrad Kassin (he/him) '24

I'm indifferent about being back on campus. I'm excited to graduate. -Marvelous Ekeh (he/him) '23

I have felt very excited to be back on campus. There have been so many fun and exciting events organized by students on campus that only increases my love of the Skidmore community. I am excited about the most recent African Heritage Awareness Gala that shined a light on the diversity of African cultures in Skidmore. The incredible talk given by author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie. And I look forward to seeing the many dance and theatre performances that my friends have been working on throughout the semester. -
Dorree Ndooki (she/her) '23

**THE SKIDMORE NEWS WEBSITE
AND QR CODE**



<http://skidmorenews.com/>



What's currently catching your attention in the world of politics? What's missing from current discourse?

It's kinda old at this point but I've been following the aftermath of the Dobbs decision really closely. It was an absolutely heartbreaking decision but the amazing organizing and protests that have come out of it have been inspiring.

...Puerto Rico being hit by Hurricane Fiona is not receiving nearly the attention it should, considering Puerto Rico's status as a territory of the US...

Many Skidmore students, including myself, have been very vocal in their displeasure with some of the Supreme Court's recent decisions. We should talk more about how to use state and local politics as a mechanism of protecting certain rights on a locality-by-locality, city-by-city, and/or state-by-state basis.

The protests in Iran and ongoing occupation of Palestine are consistently on my political radar. Studying Western perspectives on these issues reminds me of the agency Middle Eastern countries have on their own political fates, and how these perspectives are often excluded in an effort to frame these issues as unsolvable.

More emphasis should be placed on food insecurity, specifically at the state and local levels. California recently passed a bill that provides free school lunches for all students in public schools. This is a great step in the right direction, but they are the first and only state to create an all-inclusive bill like this that does not require any further sign-ups or payment.

It's important to continue discussing the war in Ukraine to show support for the Ukrainian people.

War, its consequences for human life everywhere, and how it is that we still find ourselves fighting it all over the world

Russian politics

Perspective on the War in Ukraine (the way it affects both Russian citizens AND Ukrainian citizens).

The Russian-Ukrainian war appears to have changed the landscape of Europe and challenged American foreign policy. I think the US and European allies are acting in concert on the surface level, but there is no full consensus. Who destroyed Nord Stream II? U.S? Europe? Russia? or someone else? My personal guess is the US, but I'm reluctant to make more unsubstantiated speculations.

I think that Russia/Ukraine is catching everyone's attention and I

won't try to lie and exclude myself from that. It's the most visible violence as of now and it's hard to look away.

A trend I find encouraging is this newfound questioning of neoliberalism. For too long, since the '90s, neoliberalism has been the water we swim in.

OPEC+ alliance announced that it will cut oil production by 2 million barrels a day, which will have future implications, especially within the economy

The Ukraine-Russia war and the imminent Chinese invasion of Taiwan has definitely caught my eye. I do think we should learn more about Chinese aggression and expansionism since we never hear about it.

The midterms are the most pressing thing in the American political sphere I feel. I'm interested to see how certain states vote having seen two years of a Biden administration and how different congress will look after the election. I can't say that I have high hopes for the outcome, but such is the case with most aspects of American politics.

I'm currently watching the Brazilian election very closely. There does not seem to be a lot of attention on it (at least amongst where I get my news from) but it seems like it will be hugely consequential.

Election deniers on November's ballot!

The ongoing women's rights protests in Iran are what has caught my attention in world politics right now. I would want to see more discussion on the themes of bodily autonomy and the protection of basic human rights as outlined in the United Nations.

The Russia-Ukraine Conflict / Ongoing U.K. political crisis (new Prime Ministers)

I'm interested in how politicians and policy makers are reacting to the looming U.S. recession.

I have been focused on the Russia-Ukraine war and its global impact. The upcoming midterm elections. And the legal procedures surrounding January 6th and its influence on Donald Trump and U.S. democracy.

STUDENT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PODCASTS, BOOKS AND STREAMING

Podcasts

Betches SUP “does a great job mixing serious policy stuff and interviews with experts with fun pop culture stuff in a way that makes it super fun and approachable. I think it’s a nice thing to listen to in the morning and just hear what’s going on in the world.”

For those interested in philosophy, I recommend a podcast called **Why Theory** hosted by Todd McGowan and Ryan Engley.

Mindscape and Breaking Points with Saagar Enjeti and Krystal Ball “offers a unique, and often more balanced perspective than the typical news outlets.”

The Problem with Jon Stewart

Young Turks

The ReidOut with Joy Reid

Social Media

The Daily Show “Trevor Noah is super funny and his commentary on what’s going on in the world makes me laugh and then go ‘huh, that is really true’ every time I watch their videos.”

Hasan Piker on Twitch - “a political commentator who covers a lot of popular media as well as current events.”

Last Week Tonight with John Oliver

Books

How to Be a Stoic by Massimo Pigliucci

Quantum Mind and Social Science by Alexander Wendt

Blood Rites by Barbara Ehrenreich- “is a fascinating look into humanity’s obsession with blood, sacrifice and war. It spans all of history, touching on ancient civilizations, foundational religions, the medieval times, and through the start of the modern era with Napoleon. For a ‘War nerd,’ it’s definitely worth a read.”

Caste by Isabel Wilkerson

TV Shows/Movies

Parks & Recreation “I’m rewatching Parks & Rec for probably the 10th time! It’s always a good way to remind myself that there are good people out there who do good things just because they want to make their communities better. I like that idea of the world.”

Money Heist, or La Casa de Papel

Mrs. America

Keep Sweet Pray and Obey

The Boys

Game of Thrones

House of Cards (Multiple Recs!!!!)

Ozark (This recommender LOVES Jason Bateman)

Please Vote For Me - a short film about Chinese elementary students learning about democracy

Peaky Blinders “It gave a lot of backstory/context on British politics and the different kinds of discrimination that went on.”

ALUMNI NEWS

With thanks to Sydney Kass '23

Political Science Alumni Survey Results

There comes a moment in almost every young person's life when "what do you want to be when you grow up?" becomes a question to avoid like the plague. Horror movies and haunted houses may no longer scare them, but the great, big prospect of entering a world unexplored still uncertain of where they fit into it is all it takes to spook the young person on Halloween or even college graduation. For me, that moment was when I entered my senior year of college.

In an attempt to quell the fear, calm the mind and quench the curiosity, I sent out a survey to our PL alumni on behalf of the Political Science Department asking "grownups" about their lives post-Skidmore. We received responses from 16 former students between the class years of the late 1980s and 2022. Not only are their answers interesting and impressive, they have given me a dollop of solace. I hope they will do the same for you. Here's what they had to say: ~Sydney Kass '23

What have you been up to since graduating?

(Some answers were modified for brevity.)

After Skidmore I went to law school and have been an attorney since 1991. I spent 25 years as an active duty Judge Advocate in the US Army. Since retiring from the Army in 2016, I have been teaching at two universities in Florida. —*Rob Resnick '88*

I spent a decade with Hillary Clinton, including as a speechwriter at the State Department, and I have worked as senior advisor/chief speechwriter to Senator Hickenlooper and director of executive communications for CU Boulder. Now, I am senior manager for executive communications, Slack. —*Case Button '06*

I'm the research director at the United States Studies Centre, a think tank located at the University of Sydney. —*Jared Mondschein '09*

I currently work in the US Treasury Department's national security policy office working on Russia issues. —*Michael Cass-Antony '10*

I moved to Washington, D.C.; have spent three and a half years at a digital advocacy firm called Red Edge; am halfway finished with my master's in Public Relations and Corporate Communications from Georgetown; and recently got engaged! —*Rachel McPherson '19*

I worked in political research for 4 years and did nonprofit work for a few years before pivoting

into user research. Now I work as a government contractor overseeing design on my company's HHS portfolio of work. —*Laura Swartz '10*

I've been in Washington, D.C. for over 7 years now. I am currently the Manager of Grassroots Advocacy at the Epilepsy Foundation and will be celebrating 5 years there this fall. Starting in January, I'll be attending American University to receive my Master of Public Administration and Policy. —*Britt Dorfman '14*

I graduated Albany Law School in May 2021, took and passed the NYS bar exam, and served as an Excelsior Public Service Fellow at the NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA). Now, I am an Assistant Attorney General at the Office of the New York State Attorney General. —*Olivia Cox '18*

I work in Fintech and live in NYC. —*Henry Jaffe '18*

I live in DC and am completing a Master's in urban planning and working at the District Department of Transportation. —*Ted Randell '19*

I moved to Israel for two years and was drafted to the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). I improved my Hebrew while I was there and connected with family I never met. I also got the chance to do pro-Israel activism during my service which mor-

phed into a career. I now work as an Israel educator in Los Angeles. —*David Solovy '20*

Post-grad to early 2021, I was a financial/insurance coordinator for an orthodontic practice. In July of this year, I started a position as Executive Assistant to the Commissioner of Finance for Saratoga Springs, Dr. Minita Sanghvi, who is a Skidmore Business & Management professor. It has been an absolute privilege to work with her and the other employees of City Hall. I absolutely love working in and for the City that I grew up in! —*Samantha Clemmey '20*

I live in NYC and work as an associate editor of Lawfare, a national security law and policy online publication that produces written and audio content! —*Katherine Pompilio '21*

I moved to Costa Rica and have been living my best life. I work remotely to pay the bills, but spend most of my time with friends, enjoying nature, and embracing a completely new culture and way of life. —*Abby Ciccarone '22*

I am working as a trial paralegal at the Manhattan DA's Office. —*Mathew Nelson '22*

I'm work in regulatory and legislative analysis on transportation and building electrification for SFPUC. —*Kieran Yater '22*

ALUMNI NEWS

With thanks to Sydney Kass '23

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR CURRENT POLITICAL SCIENCE STUDENTS AND PL SENIORS?

Life is what you make of it. Accept all challenges head on and chase your dreams. Set goals and fight for them. Trust in yourself and that Skidmore prepared you for anything that comes your way. Life will be good for you. — *Rob Resnick '88*

Enjoy every second; you'll never have that much free time and bottomless support to think about stuff and do what interests you. Also, I'm sorry, but Esperanto's is bad. You'll agree with me once your palette develops. — *Case Button '06*

Spend a semester in DC if you can. — *Jared Mondschein '09*

Yes, I'm happy to chat about it over the phone. — *Michael Cass-Antony '10*

Go volunteer for a campaign (even locally)! Make calls and knock on doors. — *Britt Dorfman '14*

Office politics gets its name for a reason. Use those PL skills for navigating the workplace no matter where you end up. — *Henry Jaffe '18*

Just because you're a PL student doesn't mean you should automatically go to law school. Be sure that it's what you want to do because it's not an easy road, but for me it's been great! — *Olivia Cox '18*

Partake in the Washington Semester program and get internship experience! Not only will it reinforce what you learn in the classroom, but it will help you find a career post-grad that you enjoy. — *Rachel McPherson '19*

Internships and jobs aren't everything. Surround yourself with people who support you, make choices you won't regret and don't be afraid if your path to a successful and happy life isn't always straight. — *Ted Randell '19*

If you're looking for a job/internship on the Hill, subscribe to Traverse Jobs (trust me) or utilize Skidmore Connect! Also — take a class that's out of your comfort zone!! — *Samantha Clemmey '20*

Do not expect an "A" from Bob Turner, ever. {But if you work hard you can earn an "A"} Join political campaigns and get involved on

campus. Apathy is the enemy of humanity. — *David Solovy '20*

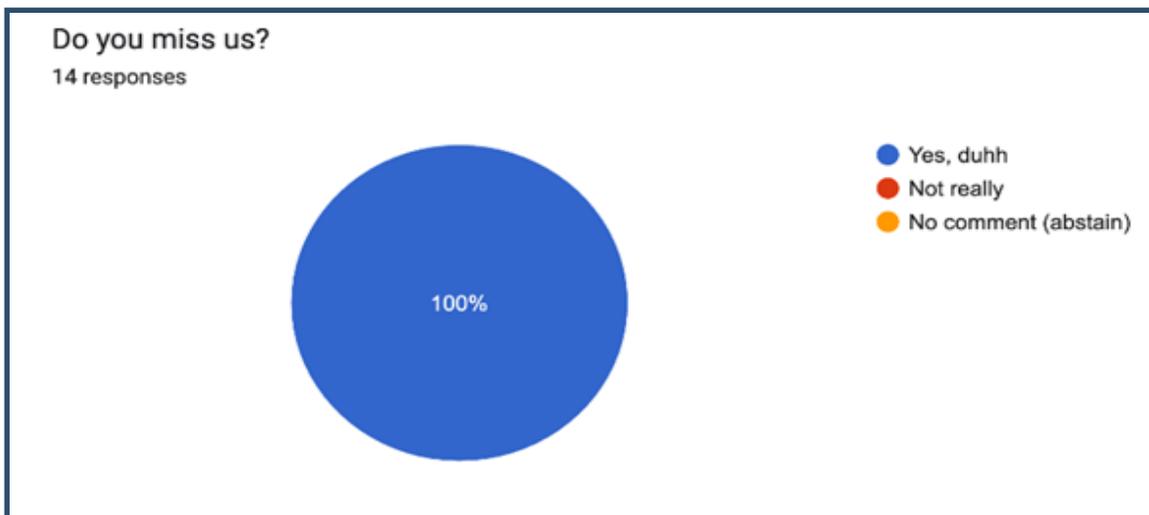
You don't need to have it figured out when you graduate. You don't need to have it figured out at any point. Follow the thread of what interests you, and you'll find your way. — *Laura Swartz '21*

Don't stress about finding the PERFECT job right after graduation. — *Katherine Pompilio '21*

Breathe. Seriously breathe. Doing your best means doing your best while still maintaining your physical and mental health. Never feel guilty for taking care of yourself as long as you are not hurting others. — *Abby Ciccarone '22*

Try to find internship opportunities in government and electoral campaigns! — *Mathew Nelson '22*

Take advantage of how close you live to all your friends. Take some classes with math/data analysis and start looking at jobs early. Lots of fellowships have early deadlines. — *Kieran Yater '22*



ALUMNI NEWS

MARIA BIDEIWO '24 CONTACTED

Rachael Thomeer '18

What year did you graduate? Where do you live now? - I graduated in 2018 and I currently live in Lebanon, NH.

What are you up to now? After working in New Hampshire politics for three years to recruit, train, and support candidates running for New Hampshire's 400-member State House of Representatives, I recently transitioned out of campaign work in favor of more stability. I'm now working at Dartmouth College doing public health research into COVID-19 vaccine confidence.

What do you like about your current job? The work is interesting and I'm learning a lot about public health, health care, and research trials. I really like the people working on the study team too. Coming from a political campaign background, one of my favorite things about this job is the stability and reasonable working hours! I've been able to take art classes, join community groups, and volunteer (including political volunteering with a group that helps young people run for office in NH).

How did the Political Science major prepare you for your current path? The hands-on classes, especially US Presidency and Campaigns & Elections, my internship and thesis work provided a helpful background for my previous campaign jobs. Now that I'm doing research again for the first time since Skidmore, I am definitely thinking back to my thesis and other research projects. I've been more mindful about using active voice in my writing ever since Professor Seyb's "by the monkeys" passive voice lesson.

*Though Professor Seyb does not have the specific example of "by the monkeys" that Rachael references he has shared this lesson. While speaking in categorical is rarely prudent (e.g., "Donald Trump will never win the Republican nomination for the presidency," "Brad and Angelina's love is eternal," and "Scientists will never be able to put both a pancake and a sausage on a stick"), I do feel confident in stating that you can significantly improve your writing by learning to write in the active voice. The active voice, as William Strunk and E. B. White put it so "actively" in *The Elements of Style*, "is usually more direct and vigorous.... [and] vigorous writing is more concise. A sentence should contain no unnecessary words, a paragraph no unnecessary sentences, for the same reason that a drawing should have no unnecessary lines and a machine no unnecessary parts." You hence should take pains to write in the active voice to make your writing crisper and clearer.*

What lessons or advice do you have for current Political Science majors? Are there any specific classes, skills, or experiences you recommend? I recommend hands-on and real-world immersive classes and internships. However, just as important as the material covered in class is the work ethic, project prioritization, discipline, and time management skills you're learning along the way--maybe without even realizing it. There is so much you can do with a Skidmore political science degree, whether you end up working in politics or not, so much of our world is shaped by politics. I'm remembering the blue sweater *Devil Wears Prada* clip we watched in Prof Natalie Taylor's political philosophy class. The course material and the skills you're learning will help you become a well-rounded citizen, no matter what you end up doing. Also, if you have room in your schedule, take a class in something else you're interested in just for the fun of it!

*Professor Natalie Taylor explains the blue sweater clip. I sometimes show a clip from *The Devil Wears Prada* to explain the importance of studying political philosophy. Miranda Priestly (Meryl Streep), the editor-in-chief of a fashion magazine, is working with several others to put together an outfit for a photo shoot while her assistant, Andy Sachs (Anne Hathaway) looks on. Andy giggles as Miranda contemplates two nearly identical belts. In her haughtiest tone, Miranda says, "you think that this has nothing to do with you" and then calls attention to Andy's sweater. It "is not blue... it actually cerulean" and tells Andy that she is "blithely unaware" of the first designer who used cerulean in a Paris fashion show. Other designers adopted the color in their own fashion lines and eventually it was used for mass produced clothes for retail outlets. Miranda concludes by snidely telling Andy, "You are wearing a sweater that was selected for you." We might compare political philosophers, such as Plato and Machiavelli, to those designers. They articulated complicated ideas, which had far reaching influence. The ideas were adapted by other thinkers and gradually filtered down to the media for the general public-- just like Andy's sweater. They are cheaper versions of political principles that were "selected for us" centuries ago by political philosophers. Political philosophy, and liberal education more generally, prevents us from being "blithely unaware" of the ideas that animate politics and frees us from the purveyors of mass-produced opinion.*



ALUMNI NEWS

MARIA BIDEIWOY '24 CONTACTED

MEGAN SCHACHTER '17

What year did you graduate? Where do you live now? I graduated from Skidmore in 2017. I now live in Dayton, Ohio.

What are you up to now? I graduated from law school this past May and am clerking for a federal judge in the Southern District of Ohio for one year. I began just over a month ago and still have a lot to learn, but I'm loving it so far.

What do you like about your current job? Working for a judge provides a valuable and unique perspective on how to be an effective litigator. Plus, there are so many different types of cases and the variety makes every day different, challenging, and exciting.

How did the Political Science major prepare you for your current path? The political science department inspired my interest in public service, and the professors always pushed us to think critically and creatively. That has been essential everywhere I've gone.

What lessons or advice do you have for current Political Science majors? Are there any specific classes, skills, or experiences you recommend? I truly loved every political science class I took. While reading the news, I often think back to the "Politics of Congress." "First Amendment" made me begin to consider law school. Also, I did a full-time internship in Albany during my last semester of college and that helped me feel ready and excited to graduate. Most importantly, take advantage of the Saratoga restaurants and proximity to the Adirondacks. It took leaving to realize how special Saratoga is.



AIDEN MERRILL-SKOLOFF '21 by Bella Bruno '25



I graduated from Skidmore in 2021, and I am now working in political/nonprofit finance for a company called DLM Strategies. My boss, Danielle McCourt, is also a Skidmore alum and we were connected through our mutual advisor, Bob Turner. I just moved to Allston (Boston), MA.

Being a Political Science major was useful in teaching me how to think about the world critically, and it improved my writing/analysis skills. My favorite Political Science class at Skidmore was *Real Democracy* with Bob Turner, my Scribner Seminar freshman year. Easily the coolest class I took (I got to work on a campaign) and Bob was not afraid to talk about the realities of politics and elections.

One piece of advice I would give my undergrad self is to study hard, make connections, and do meaningful things with your weekends.

This is a photo of me with MA State Senator Jamie Eldridge (a client of mine, pictured left) and Bob Durand, the former Secretary of Environmental Affairs in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (pictured right), at a fundraiser for Senator Eldridge that I helped organize.

**THE Skidmore Political Science/Government
Majors LinkedIn Group**

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/1127747/>



POLITICAL SCIENCE TOPICS COURSE DESCRIPTIONS SPRING 2023

PL 251A: Comparative Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements

This course provides an introduction to revolutions and revolutionary movements worldwide. We will try to answer the following ambitious question: Why do some revolutions and revolutionary movements succeed while others fail? In the first half of the class, we will review foundational work and updated takes on revolutions and revolutionary movements to understand their origins, evolution, and impact on societies. In this regard, we will pay close attention to the internal and foreign factors that shape revolutionary efforts. The selected readings stem from different disciplinary traditions and used various research methods for their empirical research. We will draw on multiple examples, predominantly from the global south, to comprehensively understand revolutions. Then, in the second half of the class, we will examine the primary revolutions and revolutionary movements that shaped the 20th and 21st centuries. The case studies include the Russian Revolution (1917), the Chinese Revolution (1949), the Cuban Revolution (1959), the Angolan War of Independence (1961-1974), the Iranian Revolution (1979), revolutionary movements in Central America (Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador), and the Arab Spring (2011). **Lucas Perelló**

PL 251C: Demagogues, Demons, and Democracy: The Origins of America's Venomous Politics

"American politics has often been an arena for angry minds." While the American historian Richard Hofstadter made this statement in the midst of Barry Goldwater's unconventional presidential campaign in 1964—a campaign that Hofstadter thought had unleashed the "heated exaggeration, suspiciousness, and conspiratorial fantasy" that characterized the "paranoid style" in American political life—many contemporary commentators have suggested that the anger of many current voters, candidates, and officeholders has curdled our political discourse and poisoned our political institutions.

This course will trace the roots of American political invective by examining the historical, institutional, and cultural influences on America's peculiar brand of emotionally labile politics. It will, in particular, ask whether anger or "passion" is always harmful to democracy? Does, in short, America need to tolerate the presence of demagogues such as William Jennings Bryan, Huey Long, Joe McCarthy, Ross Perot, and Donald Trump in order to create space for the "righteous anger" of those seeking healthy political change? **Ron Seyb**



NOVEMBER 5TH WAS A MEMORABLE DAY!



Professor Biberman organized a trip to the United States Military Academy at West Point for students in her PL 346 class.

POLITICAL SCIENCE TOPICS COURSE DESCRIPTIONS SPRING 2023

PL 251D: Free and Civil Speech Americans today live in a time of deep political polarization, cultural tribalism, and self-segregation. Those with whom we have deep disagreements, assuming we interact with them at all, are often viewed as not just wrong but as irrational, immoral, even contemptible. What are the causes and costs of these trends? What remedies might exist? Are there habits of mind that we might cultivate to build better citizens and a healthier democracy? This course is divided into three parts. In the first part we will examine some recent attempts to grasp the strange and disturbing trends that seem to define our present moment. Next we'll move on to examine some of the philosophic, political and literary texts that have grappled with questions of free and civil speech—from the ancient world to the present day. We'll consider the problem from many different perspectives—from the most strident proponents of freedom of speech to its most vociferous critics. The last part of the course we'll attempt to put what we've learned to the test. The class will conduct a series of debates on a variety of difficult ethical and political questions. These might include abortion, immigration, and other topics that tend to generate deep commitment and passion on each side. **Flagg Taylor**

PL 351B: Contesting the Constitution On September 17, 1787 the Constitutional Convention concluded its work on the Constitution and forwarded it to the states for ratification. An intense national debate on the size and scope of government and the nature of the legislative, executive, and judicial powers got underway. The defense of the new Constitution offered by James Madison, John Jay, and Alexander Hamilton in *The Federalist* provides the theoretical underpinnings of the American government. In addition to being political theorists, Madison, Jay, and Hamilton were astute politicians. They understood the rhythms and nuances of the ratification process and responded to the anti-federalist arguments against the Constitution. This course will examine both the arguments of the federalists and the anti-federalists in an effort to understand how their understandings of the Constitution shaped American democracy and how those debates reverberate in contemporary politics. **Natalie Taylor**

PL 365: Food Politics This course examines food security and insecurity in the global arena. It investigates the role of food in the development of global politics, domestic political hierarchies, class politics, as well as environmental issues. We will investigate our food system, and discuss critical issues about the future of food from comparative, international, and historical perspectives. **Feryaz Ocakli**

PL 365: A World of Nations Examines the historical and contemporary lives of the nation and nationalism. What is a nation? How does a nation form, and reform? What does it mean to live in a world of nations? Why does nation identity seem to play such an (increasingly?) important role in so many people's lives? As we explore these questions together, we will pay particular attention to the rise of a trans-national network of white Christian nationalisms across Europe and North America, and we will explore the culture of contemporary nationalism other states as well (China, India, Brazil, and Russia). **Kate Graney**

PL 366: Technology and International Politics Technology is evolving faster and more globally than ever. It is a central aspect of international politics, shaping communication and conflict between state and nonstate actors. This course examines the emergence and evolution of technology as a function of politics, social institutions, and economics; the impact of technology on international security; the ethical questions raised by disruptive innovations; and attempts to regulate technologies through international law and institutions. The course will cover the emergence and impact of historical technologies such as the tank, the aircraft carrier, and nuclear weapons, and contemporary technologies such as drones, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and cyberspace. **Yelena Biberman-Ocakli**



<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/56F7lIhcM7DCzPHL9YEx6j?si=a42dc7f085694da3>

SPRING 2023 — WHAT COUNTS FOR WHAT?

AMERICAN POLITICS	POLITICAL THEORY	INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	COMPARATIVE POLITICS
PL 231: Environmental Politics and Policy (BT)	PL 351B: Contesting the Constitution (NT)	PL 226: States, Rebels and Warlords (YBO)	PL227: From Genghis Khan to Gorbachev: Power and Politics in Russian History (KG)
PL 251C: Demagogues, Demons, and Democracy: The Origins of America's Venomous Politics (RS)	PL 251D: Free Speech and Civil Discourse (FT)	PL 309: Latin America and the U.S. (LP)	PL 233: Political Islam (FO)
PL 311: Constitutional Law (BB)		PL 366: Technology and International Politics (YBO)	PL 251A: Comparative Revolutions and Revolutionary Moments (LP)
PL 314: Civil Liberties (BB)			PL 365: A World of Nations (KG)
PL 362: Politics of Congress (RS)			PL 365: Food Politics (FO)

SPRING 2023 POLITICAL SCIENCE COURSE OFFERINGS

PL-101 001	Intro to American Politics	Breslin, Beau	M W F	09:05 AM-10:00 AM
PL-101 002	Intro to American Politics	Turner, Robert	T R	09:40 AM-11:00 AM
PL-102 001	Intro Political Philosophy	Taylor, Flagg	W F	10:10 AM-11:30 AM
PL-103 001	Intro Comp/Intnl Politics	Graney, Katherine	W F	08:40 AM-10:00 AM
PL-103 002	Intro Comp/Intnl Politics	Perello, Lucas	M W	02:30 PM-03:50 PM
PL-226 001	States, Rebels, and Warlords	Biberman-Ocakli, Yelena	M W F	01:25 PM-02:20 PM
PL-227 001	Power and Pol in Russ Hist	Graney, Katherine	M W F	11:15 AM-12:10 PM
PL-231 001	Environ Politics and Pol	Turner, Robert	T R	03:40 PM-05:00 PM
PL-233 001	Political Islam	Ocakli, Feryaz	T R	08:10 AM-09:30 AM
PL-251A 001	Comparative Revolutions	Perello, Lucas	T	06:00 PM-09:00 PM
PL-251C 001	Demagogues and Democracy	Seyb, Ronald	T R	12:40 PM-02:00 PM
PL-251D 001	Free and Civil Speech	Taylor, Flagg	M W	02:30 PM-03:50 PM
PL-309 001	Latin America and U.S.	Perello, Lucas	M W	04:00 PM-05:20 PM
PL-311 001	Constitutional Law	Breslin, Beau	M W	04:00 PM-05:20 PM
PL-314 001	Civil Liberties	Breslin, Beau	W F	12:20 PM-01:40 PM
PL-351B 001	Contesting the Constitution	Taylor, Natalie	T R	11:10 AM-12:30 PM
PL-362 001	Politics of Congress	Seyb, Ronald	T R	02:10 PM-03:30 PM
PL-365 001	A World of Nations	Graney, Katherine	M W F	12:20 PM-01:15 PM
PL-365 002	Food Politics	Ocakli, Feryaz	T R	02:10 PM-03:30 PM
PL-366 001	Technology and Intl Politics	Biberman-Ocakli, Yelena	W F	10:10 AM-11:30 AM