July-September 2010

Message from the Out-going and In-coming Chairs:

Dear Political Science Majors,

We write with news of some our plans for next year.

We hope you are having a restful and productive summer and we look forward to seeing you in September.

Best wishes,

Kristin Bumiller and Amrita Basu

New Courses

We are happy to report that we will be offering several new courses in the fall and spring semesters. We include in this newsletter descriptions of our visiting faculty’s research interests and the courses they will be offering.

Visitor Profiles:

Daniel Altschuler, Copeland Fellow

Daniel Altschuler is a Copeland Fellow at Amherst College for 2010-2011. Daniel graduated from Amherst College and received a Masters in Development Studies at Oxford, where he was a Rhodes Scholar. He was Thomas J. Watson Fellow, pursuing a project in Chile and South Africa entitled *Nascent Democracies Reexamined through the Eyes of the Homeless and Landless*. During this year, he will be completing his doctorate in Politics at the University of Oxford, and working on collaborative publications with Professor Javier Corrales. Daniel’s research focuses on participatory development initiatives; his dissertation explores the dynamics of parental participation in community-managed schools in Honduras and Guatemala. In addition to his academic work, Daniel has worked with various non-profit organizations in the United Stated and South Africa, focusing on issues of housing and community organizing.

Professor Chow, Loewenstein Fellow

Professor Chow is a Karl Loewenstein Fellow in Political Science and Jurisprudence for 2010-11. Currently a Ph.D. Candidate in Political Science at the University of California, Berkeley, Professor Chow conducts research on norms of transnational civil society and how they conflict with religious teachings, as well as on how norms shape regional institutions in East Asia. He has published in *Asian Survey* and the *Review of International Political Economy*. He was a Five College Fellow at Amherst College in 2009-10 and has also held fellowships at Ateneo de Manila University’s Center for Asian Studies and the Institute of International Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. He has also served as Project Director at the Berkeley Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Study Center.
**Professor Picq, Loewenstein Fellow**

Professor Picq is a Loewenstein Fellow in the Department of Political Science at Amherst College. She works on international relations, human rights, and gender and ethnicity in Latin America. Her doctoral research on the international politics of human rights in Brazil won the 2005 Barrett Prize at the University of Miami. During her 4 years in Ecuador, she became a Woodrow Wilson Center fellow, refocusing her research on the rights of indigenous women in the Andes. She is currently exploring issues of gender and sovereignty within indigenous justice in Latin America. Professor Picq is a program track-chair for the 2010 Latin American Studies Association and the vice-president for the Ecuadorian Studies Session.


**Professor Poe, Visiting Assistant Professor**

Professor Poe (PhD, University of California, San Diego) is a political theorist, specializing in the study of democratic theory, modern European political thought, and political emotions. His current research examines the concept of political enthusiasm. Through analysis of the works of diverse political thinkers – from Wieland and Kant, to the “popular philosophy” movement (e.g. Mendelssohn, Gentz, and Garve), and romanticists such as Fichte and Novalis, amongst others – Poe presents a developing portrait of a dual conceptualization of enthusiasm in late 18th century thought. His research discloses historical efforts to disentangle these two conceptions, ultimately illustrating how contemporary failure to distinguish between enthusiasm and fanaticism leaves a void in understating affective motivations in democratic politics. In addition to his current work, Poe has authored a variety of articles on such diverse topics as political judgment, disgust, the reception of Carl Schmitt, and the aesthetics of nationalism. His research has received numerous awards, including recognition from the University of California, the German Academic Exchange Commission, and the American Political Science Association. Professor Poe was a predoctoral fellow at UCLA’s Center for 17th and 18th Century Studies, and – most recently – he held the position of research fellow at the *Institut für Sozialforschung* in Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany. In future research, he intends to explore the phenomenology of political disgust. In addition to an introductory course ‘Unraveling Assumptions,’ he will offer a variety of courses on democratic theory, the history of political thought, and political emotions.

**Professor Thaxton, Croxton Lecturer**

Professor A. Thaxton, Jr., is Professor of Politics at Brandeis University. He is the author of three books, including *Catastrophe and Contention in Rural China: Mao’s Great Leap Forward, Famine and the Origins of Righteous Resistance in Rural China* (Cambridge University Press, 2008). Professor Thaxton received his Ph.D. in Political Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has been a post-doctoral fellow at the University of California-Berkeley Center for Chinese Studies, the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, and the Dartmouth College John Sloan Dickey Center for International Understanding. Thaxton has won multiple national and international fellowships and grant competitions, including three major awards from the National Endowment for Humanities, and he has served as a Harry Frank Guggenheim Fellow. Professor Thaxton is currently working on a book that focuses on contention and reform in contemporary China.
Professor Klare, Five College Professor of Peace and World Security Studies

Professor Klare is the Five College Professor of Peace and World Security Studies, a position he has held since 1985. Prior to that, he was a program director at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C. Professor Klare is the author of several books on resource politics and world security affairs, including, "Resource Wars" (2001), "Blood and Oil" (2004), and "Rising Powers, Shrinking Planet" (2008). A documentary movie version of "Blood and Oil," with Klare as narrator, was released by the Media Education Foundation (www.mediaed.org) in 2009.

Professor Western, Five College Professor of International Relations, Mount Holyoke College

Professor Western is Five College Professor of International Relations at Mount Holyoke College and the Five Colleges, Inc. He is the author of Selling Intervention and War: The Presidency, the Media, and the American Public published by Johns Hopkins University Press in 2005 and co-editor of Global Giant: Is China Changing the Rules of the Game published by Palgrave in 2009. He is completing a book manuscript that examines US efforts at state building in historical and comparative perspective. Professor Western's articles have appeared in numerous publications including Foreign Affairs, Security Studies, International Security, Harvard International Review, Perspectives on Politics, and Political Science Quarterly. Prior to joining the Mount Holyoke faculty, Professor Western served as a Peace Scholar-in-residence and the coordinator of the Dayton Upgrade Project at the United States Institute of Peace. He has taught at Columbia University and George Washington University and served as a Balkans analyst in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research at the U.S. Department of State. He holds a Ph.D. from Columbia University, an M.P.P. from the University of Michigan, and B.A. from Macalester College.

Courses Offered By Five College Faculty (Fall 2010):

Professor Klare will be teaching POSC 84, "Global Resource Politics." In 2010, this course will focus on the challenge of devising sensible energy policies in a world where energy sources are likely to be increasingly contested and in which the need to reduce carbon emissions from fossil fuels will become increasingly urgent. Students will be required to pick an important energy producer or consumer for intensive study and to devise an optimal energy policy for that nation.

Courses Offered By Visiting Faculty (Fall 2010):

Professor Picq will be teaching POSC 39, "Global Gender Politics." This course is designed to provide students with a solid understanding of the mechanisms by which international norms of gender equality and women’s rights develop and are implemented, with a special emphasis on discourses and practices of international human rights. The course analyzes international treaties such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and addresses issues regarding domestic violence, political participation, reproductive rights, economic opportunities, and modern slavery, among other gendered problems. Bridging gender and global politics, we explore the ways international norms are transported from the United Nations to the daily reality of women throughout the world, and how states, civil society and institutions collaborate (or not) to promote women rights where they are most needed.

Professor Poe will be teaching POSC 10, "Unraveling Assumptions." This course is an introduction to political theory, and thus works to explore the normative foundations and ontological parameters of politics. The course will examine three main currents of political life – political foundations, the politics of ordinary life, and problems of extraordinary measure. Throughout, we will use a variety of resources – philosophic, literary, cultural, cinematic, and historical – to develop ways of engaging political concepts, unraveling the very assumptions on which our politics (sometimes too comfortably) depend.
Professor Poe will be teaching **POSC 43, “Ancient Political Thought.”** This course will survey ancient Greek and Roman political thought, examining such subjects as democratic citizenship, the rule of law, the public sphere, and civil liberties as each finds their first articulation in these ancient polities. The course aims to illustrate that, although the ancient world was remarkably different from our own, many of the concepts and ideas that dominate our thinking about politics today have been influenced by our inheritance of these classic traditions. Indeed, many of the questions and problems that plagued ancient political thought – What is justice? What are the obligations of democratic citizens? What is the best form of government? – are still vibrant today, and such histories provide ample points of reflection for our very contemporary concerns.

Professor Thaxton will be teaching **POSC 33, “Politics and Change in China.”** This course is an introduction to political change in contemporary China. We will focus mainly on the post-1949 period and come all the way up to 2010. We also will delve into late Qing and Republican era history so that you understand temporal influences on the present. We will pay special attention to the formative events of Maoist state building and how people in urban and rural China remember these episodes hinder the process of reform today. The course will provide a broad sweep of Chinese political history and show key individuals, both at the local and national level, have participated in and experienced Chinese Politics. Special attention will be given to the nature of power and the extent of state legitimacy in authoritarian China, modalities of rule, popular understandings of power, authority, and justice, and the rise of popular resistance, protest, and contention in the Mao and post Mao eras. From time to time, we will compare the nature of politics and regimes in China with other places, including Iran, Spain, Cambodia, India, and South Africa.

**Courses Offered By Visiting Faculty (Spring 2011):**

Professor Chow will be teaching **POSC 31, “Threats and Security in Postwar East Asia.”** This course examines the political processes that have promoted or hindered regional integration in East Asia. We will discuss the concept of what a region is and briefly review some of East Asia's Cold War history before examining a variety of topics relating to security and trade in the region. Topics include the rise of the developmental state model; what China's economic and military growth mean for regional stability; the Asian financial crisis; the U.S.-Japan alliance; the North Korean nuclear crisis; the development of ASEAN as an institutional model for regional cooperation; attempts to develop regional free trade regimes, and the problems of developing a regional identity. Open to sophomores, juniors and seniors. Students who took PS 31 in Spring 2010 are NOT eligible for enrollment.

Professor Picq will be teaching, **POSC 44, “Political Economy of Gender in Latin America.”** Latin America has the greatest extremes of wealth of any region in the world, and gender is one of the most important factors leading to this inequality. The study of gender therefore offers a valuable window into the socio-economic structures and political systems of the region. Bringing together the disciplines of comparative politics, political economy, and gender, this course proposes to analyze the gender implications of economic and political reforms at large in Latin America, from the military dictatorships of the 1970s through the democratization of the 1980s, the neoliberal reforms of the 1990s, and the New Left. We will also explore the history and geography of women's rights in terms of political participation, agrarian reform, informal economics, reproductive rights, welfare policies, migration, and human trafficking. Beyond women's rights, the class offers a larger analysis of social movements and the politics of contestation in Latin America, the movements’ interactions with state actors and the impact of changing markets on women’s empowerment.
Courses Offered By Five College Faculty (Spring 2011):

Professor Western will be teaching **POSC 82, “United States Foreign Policy: Democracy and Human Rights.”** Is the United States committed to promoting democracy and human rights abroad or just advancing its own strategic and domestic corporate interests? What influence does the United States have on the development of democracy around the world and the emergence of-and compliance with-international human rights conventions, protocols and laws? This seminar begins with an historical overview of American democracy and human rights rhetoric and policies and seeks to uncover the range of political, economic, cultural and geostrategic motivations underlying U.S. behavior. We will then examine American foreign policy responses to a broad range of contemporary human rights and democracy issues with special attention given to analyzing and comparing the post-Cold War state-building efforts in the Balkans, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Previous course work relating to international relations, American politics or foreign policy, or political theory required.

Senior Thesis Writers:

We hope you are thinking about your thesis topics during the summer. Professor Basu will meet with prospective thesis students on **Tuesday, September 7, 2010, 4:30 pm, Clark House, room 100.** Please bring your thesis proposals with you and indicate on them your first and second choice of thesis advisors, if you know who you would like to work with. We will try to accommodate your preferences subject to the availability of faculty members and their familiarity with your topics. We will give priority to working with students whose theses are in our areas of expertise. Professor’s Poe, Chow and Picq have offered to advise theses that are closely related to their teaching and research interests.

Department Reception:

Please join us for a department reception on **Tuesday, September 14, 2010, from 4-6 pm, in Lewis-Sebring, Valentine Hall** where we will welcome our visitors and welcome you back to campus.