COLLEGE OF SOCIAL STUDIES

The College of Social Studies (CSS) offers a distinctive blend of teaching methods, subject matter, and educational structure. Its collegial organization combines tutorials and courses in social theory within the college with individually selected courses from other departments and programs in the University to achieve an integrated education in the social sciences. Founded in 1959, the CSS has provided an unusual educational opportunity for many Wesleyan students whose careers upon graduation have ranged from medicine to law, forestry to college teaching, international business to screenwriting.

FACULTY

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Cecilia Miller
BA, LeTourneau College; DPHIL, Oxford University; MPHIL, University of St Andrews

DEPARTMENTAL ADVISING EXPERTS

Giulio Gallarotti; Cecilia Miller

- Undergraduate College of Social Studies Major (catalog.wesleyan.edu/departments/css/ugrd-css)

CSS220 Sophomore Economics Tutorial: Topics in the History of Economic Thought

This tutorial will consider alternative visions of capitalism as they have unfolded in the economic literature since Adam Smith published The Wealth of Nations in 1776. By capitalism is meant, loosely, an economic system based on market exchange and the private ownership of productive assets; that is, the system which arose in Western Europe roughly five hundred years ago and which now increasingly pervades human society. Necessarily this survey is somewhat selective. In particular, rudimentary knowledge of the neoclassical paradigm (the basis of modern mainstream economics) is taken for granted, and fans of such stalwarts as Thorstein Veblen and Joan Robinson are likely to be disappointed. Our strategy for dealing with severe strictures of time will be to focus our studies primarily on the work of three thinkers who have defined much of the ground...
CSS240 Sophomore History Tutorial: The Emergence of Modern Europe

This intensive survey of European history from the French Revolution to the present will consider European history in terms of many types of history, often from conflicting perspectives, including, for example, political history, economic history, social history, women’s history, intellectual history, and psychohistory. Throughout the history tutorial, emphasis will be placed on developing students’ skills in reading, writing, and debating. The history tutorial is designed to ground students in modern European history and also to develop students’ ability to master related materials in the future.

Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.50
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Prereq: None

CSS271 Sophomore Colloquium: Modern Social Theory

This colloquium examines a number of competing conceptual frameworks in the social sciences derived from major political philosophers and social theorists, such as Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx, Durkheim, Weber, and Freud.

Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-GOVT
Prereq: None

CSS320 Junior Economics Tutorial: Economics of the Welfare State

The role that government plays in the lives of ordinary citizens has evolved dramatically over the past several decades. Even in the “free market” United States, spending on income security, health, and public pensions has increased from less than 10 percent of government spending in the 1950s to more than half of spending today. This tutorial will explore the economic justifications for, and impacts of, this evolution of the role of government. Particular attention will be paid to the theory of social insurance with emphasis on government involvement in the healthcare system. Additional topics will include public pensions, unemployment insurance, and antipoverty programs.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ECON
Prereq: None

CSS330 Junior Government Tutorial: Political Leadership

Political leadership is a term we often hear from journalists, politicians, and even friends and family. It’s commonly heard as part of the phrase “failure of political leadership.” But, what does political leadership mean? If the concept of political leadership is to be useful, it has to mean more than “I think it’s that politician’s fault that I did not get my desired outcome.” This course explores a variety of frameworks for understanding political leadership. We will address questions such as: What makes good or bad leadership? Does political leadership depend on context? What is the relationship between leadership and followership? Not a course focused on American political leadership, this course examines leadership in a range of different cross-national contexts.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-GOVT
Prereq: None

CSS340 Junior History Tutorial: Post-Imperial History, 1945--1990

This tutorial will survey selected themes and subjects in the postwar history of former European colonies and imperial possessions, focusing specifically on the process of decolonization and nation building in Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. The tutorial will consider the legacy of imperialism, the development of nationalism and independence movements, and the challenges posed to newly independent states in the context of the Cold War. It will also analyze the problems of trade relations with the West and the challenge of sustained economic development. The tutorial aims to compliment the sophmore history tutorial (CSS 240) by building on its methods and foundations to broaden the horizon in order to consider the process of modernization in a non-European setting. Throughout we will be testing the possibilities and limits of postcolonial theory as a tool for analyzing the postwar history of modern Africa, the Middle East, the Indian subcontinent, and former Indochina. The tutorial aims to impart a basic understanding of the postwar history of former European colonies and to develop some of the skills needed to write longer research papers.

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
CSS371 Junior Colloquium: Liberalism and Its Discontents
This course presents an overview of social and political theories developed in the post-World War II period. It focuses particular attention upon developments within Liberal political theory during this time, examining this scholarship both for the insights it offers and for the ways in which these ideas have been used to obscure oppressive social relations. Considering the general contours of the Liberal tradition—particularly its relationship to forms of social domination such as colonialism, racism, class inequality, and gender and sexual oppression—the course moves through an examination of canonical thinkers who have both challenged and contributed to Liberal social thought. Taking the ruminations of Nazi jurist Carl Schmidt as a problematic yet demanding provocation, the course asks in part how successfully Liberal theorists have resolved the dilemmas Schmidt identifies within Liberalism (or if, indeed, fascist tendencies pervade Liberal social thought, as Schmidt contends). Theorists within the Liberal tradition such as Friedrich Hayek, Hannah Arendt, and Jürgen Habermas are joined by critics such as Franz Fanon, Carole Pateman, and Michel Foucault in this critical overview of contemporary Liberal social theory. Through this examination of recent interventions in Liberal thinking regarding the social, this class is meant to provide students with an opportunity to think through ways in which various contemporary approaches to social issues both invoke and reformulate political debates of long standing.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-PHIL
Prereq: None

CSS391 Senior Colloquium: Crime and Punishment
This course considers the American criminal law, the procedures through which it is enforced and the nature of criminal punishment from a variety of perspectives. We will begin with the criminal law itself, its moral foundations and assumptions, the essential elements of criminal liability and several of the law's more important doctrines and rules. We will then turn to the institutions of enforcement and punishment, the police, the public prosecutor, the criminal courts and the system of punishment, to see how they work “on the ground” and compare this to the ideals of the law. Finally, we will put the American system in international perspective by comparing it to European institutions of criminal justice.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-ECON
Prereq: None

CSS401 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

CSS402 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

CSS407 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

CSS408 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)
Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Grading: OPT