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.

AFFILIATED FACULTY

Richard P. Adelstein
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VISITING FACULTY

Benjamin Wurgaft
BA, Swarthmore College; MA, University of California, Berkeley; PHD, University of California, Berkeley
Visiting Assistant Professor in the College of Social Studies; Visiting Assistant Professor of History

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 uses a topical approach to explore the history of economic thought. We begin with a brief introduction to writers who predated Adam Smith: the scholastics, mercantilists, and physiocrats. Over the subsequent weeks, we compare competing schools of economic thought: classical, Marxian, utilitarian, Austrian, neoclassical, and Keynesian. We include selections of radical critiques
from the political right and left including monetarist, supply-side, behavioral, Austrian, evolutionist, and institutional approaches. The theoretical debates both reflect and shed light on the economic and social problems of their time. As you master the material, you should keep several goals in mind. First, learn to link the debates to the economic problems faced by nations over the past 300 years. Second, become skilled at explaining how economic theory has altered its shape and content from the 1700s to the present. Third, sharpen your awareness of the interaction between the scientific and the social aspects of human knowledge. Finally, develop and learn to defend your assessment of mainstream economics; decide which aspects reflect theoretical advancement and which are simply reflections of political agendas or outmoded perspectives. Throughout the course we will use contemporary articles to illustrate modern-day versions of the historical disputes. The course material is designed to provide a fuller context for what you learn in politics, history, and social theory while deepening your understanding of contemporary economic debates.

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

CSS230 Sophomore Government Tutorial: State and Society in the Modern Age
This tutorial examines the rise and evolution of the modern state. While many of the readings focus on Western Europe and the United States, the course draws on cross-regional comparisons to tease out theoretical propositions, compare historical processes across different parts of the world, and consider different understandings of the body politic. We start by exploring what factors account for the rise and consolidation of the nation state in the Western context, after which we consider how the process of state-building occurred in the Middle East and North Africa, and explore some of the challenges the sovereign state model faces outside the European context. We then move on to discuss the emergence of different systems of governance and some of the challenges to the state. We will consider whether there are certain paths that lead to democracy, and whether there is something unique about American democracy. We will take into account the challenges posed by modernization and evaluate what factors best explain the rise of communism and fascism. We will then consider how the communist and fascist past impacted the rise of the social democratic model in Europe, and compare the European and Japanese approaches to welfare provisions. We conclude by considering yet another model for organizing the political community--the religious state. We will examine when, how, and why the notion of the Islamic state emerged, reflect on the extent to which the concept of an Islamic state challenges Western notions of the nation-state, and investigate how the discourse on Islam and the state has changed over time in Indonesia, the largest Muslim majority country.

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

CSS240 Sophomore History Tutorial: The Emergence of Modern Europe
This tutorial sequence analyzes the formation of modern European society from the late 18th to the last quarter of the 20th century. Most attention will be placed on Britain, France, Germany and Russia as these countries were shaped by, and responded to, demographic, economic, social, political, and intellectual forces that led to revolutions, political and social reforms, new modes of production, changes in social hierarchies, and new forms of warfare. Much attention will be placed on the social and political consequences of the French Revolution and industrialization, but empire, the origins and consequences of the two world wars (including the Russian revolution and the rise and defeat of Nazism) will also come under extensive discussion, as will the creation of a more stable and prosperous postwar European order. Europe’s links to Africa, Asia and the Americas will be discussed in the context of imperialism and the two world wars. In addition to developing knowledge of the most important processes that have shaped the modern world, this tutorial seeks to foster a critical awareness of the varieties of historical narrative, the skills needed to interpret historical primary sources, and the possibilities and limits of history as a tool of social investigation.

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

CSS330 Junior Economics Tutorial: China in the Global Economy
China is a country that is both transitioning to a market-oriented economy and developing rapidly into a global economic power. As such, it has characteristics of both an emerging market economy and a developing country. China is large enough to create its own institutional infrastructure to support a third way between capitalism and socialism. This course examines in detail China’s great economic transformation beginning in 1978 in what is often described as a “gradualist” transition to a market economy. In the last four decades, the speed of China’s development and its growth rates of GDP are without precedent in history.

China entered the current decade with an unbalanced economy highly dependent on both state-financed investment through a state-controlled financial sector and a growth strategy focused on exporting finished goods to the global economy with the support of foreign direct investment. The current leadership recognizes the need to rebalance the economy by promoting more domestic-fueled growth through increased consumption so as to achieve more broad-based economic development. Many social issues remain to be tackled, among which are environmental degradation, income inequality, and an aging workforce. After developing the economic background that propelled China rapidly into middle-income-country status, this course considers these issues (and others) to provide insights into the fundamental question of “what is left to be done” to create a fully mature, developed market-oriented economic system open to the global economy.

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

CSS330 Junior Government Tutorial: Global Trends, National Responses
This tutorial will take a look at a number of "great books" of recent vintage that have advanced broad claims about the character of global trends in politics and economics since 1990. What are the forces promoting the homogenization of political values and institutions, and of economic practices? Do countries have any choice but to follow the policies advocated by the institutions of global capitalism? How successful are different local strategies in response to these trends? Is globalization a threat or an opportunity?

Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-GOVT
Prereq: None
CSS340 Junior History Tutorial: The Atomic Bombings of Japan
The dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 was a pivotal moment in the 20th century. This course examines how the histories of Japan and the United States and the history of science and technology came to intersect in this event. There is no question that the atomic bombings were horrific—but how can we best understand them? What do we really know about them? These questions are the starting point for this class. The answers are drawn in part from the trajectory of Japanese and American history, in particular the rise of Japanese imperialism. Another important part of the answer is based on the history of warfare, nuclear science, and the development of the bombs. We also examine some of the political and cultural dimensions of these bombings, especially the question as to what degree the bombs led to Japan’s surrender and the impact the bombs had on both the Japanese and American peoples. Underlying the entire course is the historiographical theme of understanding a single event through multiple narrative dimensions.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Prereq: None

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. It begins 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. It then turns 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, it puts 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

CSS409 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

CSS410 Senior Thesis Tutorial
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: A-F

CSS411 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

CSS412 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

CSS419 Student Forum
Student-run group tutorial, sponsored by a faculty member and approved by the chair of a department or program.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

CSS420 Student Forum
Student-run group tutorial, sponsored by a faculty member and approved by the chair of a department or program.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

CSS465 Education in the Field, Undergraduate
Students must consult with the department and class dean in advance of undertaking education in the field for approval of the nature of the responsibilities and method of evaluation.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT

CSS467 Independent Study, Undergraduate
Credit may be earned for an independent study during a summer or authorized leave of absence provided that (1) plans have been approved in advance, and (2) all specified requirements have been satisfied.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
CSS469 Education in the Field, Undergraduate
Students must consult with the department and class dean in advance of undertaking education in the field for approval of the nature of the responsibilities and method of evaluation.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: None
Prereq: None

CSS491 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
The teaching apprentice program offers undergraduate students the opportunity to assist in teaching a faculty member's course for academic credit.
Offering: Host
Grading: Cr/U

CSS492 Teaching Apprentice Tutorial
The teaching apprentice program offers undergraduate students the opportunity to assist in teaching a faculty member's course for academic credit.
Offering: Host
Grading: OPT