POSC 3612 Youth and Politics  
Interdisciplinary Capstone Course  

Spring 2014  
Tuesday/Friday, 10:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.  
Campbell Hall 2-124, Tower 2

Instructor: Olena Nikolayenko  
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Office Location: Faber Hall, Rm. 677  
Office Hours: Tuesday, 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. or by appointment

Course Description

Youth is widely regarded as the future of the nation and an agent of social change. Young people aged between 15 and 29 constitute approximately 20 percent of US population. How does the young generation participate in politics? Where do young people obtain information about current events? Do young people in different parts of the world share a similar set of values? The course will address these issues from an interdisciplinary perspective by drawing upon literature in anthropology, political science, psychology, and sociology.

This course is divided into several parts. Part I examines how youth participates in politics and acquires politically relevant attitudes and beliefs through family, schools, and the mass media. Part II discusses the use of social science methodology to prepare students for designing their own study of American youth. Part III focuses on youth political behavior in different parts of the world, including East Asia, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East.

Students in the course will be expected to investigate the linkage between youth and politics by carrying out original empirical research. Each Fordham student will conduct a few in-depth interviews with his or her peers to analyze patterns of youth’s political behavior. At the end of the course, students will complete a research paper based upon their empirical findings.
Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will

- advance their knowledge of multiple approaches to the study of youth and politics
- deepen their understanding of world politics
- strengthen their communication and research skills
- learn ethical principles in human subjects research

Course Requirements

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<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Presentation</td>
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<td>Quiz</td>
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<td>Research Design</td>
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<td>Literature Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Research Paper</td>
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Participation
Student participation is critical to effective learning. Students are expected to complete assigned readings prior to the class and regularly engage in classroom discussions of the course material.

Presentation
At the end of the semester, each student will make a short presentation based upon his or her research project. Students are also expected to attend their fellow students’ presentations and ask thoughtful questions about their research.

Quiz
There will be one quiz administered in class to test one’s knowledge of key concepts. The quiz will be composed of ten multiple-choice questions.

Research Design
This assignment is designed to prepare students for writing an empirical research paper. Each student is required to submit a one-page single-spaced summary of the proposed research project. Students need to clearly state their research question and briefly describe their methodology.

Literature Review
The purpose of the literature review is to provide a critical overview of existing literature on the topic related to one’s research project. The literature review should be approximately five double-spaced pages long, including a list of references at the end of the text. Please use the APSA citation style to cite sources.
**Final Research Paper**

Each student is expected to write a research paper at the end of the course. This paper will be based upon original empirical research carried out by the student this semester. The paper should be 18-20 pages long, including references and the appendix (double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font). The research paper should be divided into several sections: introduction, literature review, methodology, findings, and conclusion. More detailed guidelines regarding this assignment will be provided in class.

**Important Dates**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>February 21</td>
<td>Literature Review due</td>
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<td>March 7</td>
<td>Research Design due</td>
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<td>April 15/25/29</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 5</td>
<td>Final Paper due</td>
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**Late Penalty**

Students are responsible for submitting *a hard copy* of each assignment at the beginning of the class on due date. Assignments handed in after the class will be considered late. The late penalty is ten percent of the assignment’s grade per day.

**Academic Integrity**

Failure to properly acknowledge the intellectual contribution of others constitutes plagiarism and is a very serious academic offence. Please consult the *Fordham University Undergraduate Policy on Academic Integrity* to get familiar with the standards of academic integrity.

**Required Readings**

There is no general “textbook” for this course. Most assigned readings are articles published in peer-reviewed journals. The course readings are available via the Blackboard. Students are expected to download the assigned readings from the course web site and read them prior to the class.
Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Jan 14. Introduction

Jan 17. Portrait of a Generation


Jan 21. American Youth and Elections


Jan 24. Who Protests?


Jan 28. The Role of Family


Jan 31. The Importance of Education


Feb 4. Mass Media and the Internet


Feb 7. How to Write a Literature Review


Feb 11. The Impact of Neighborhoods


Feb 14. Immigrant Youth


Feb 21. Research Design

NOTE: The literature review is due.

Feb 24. Quantitative Research Methods


Feb 28. Qualitative Research Methods


March 4. Ethics in Human Subjects Research


March 7. The Art of Interviewing

*NOTE: The research design is due.*


March 10. Review of the Research Design

*NOTE: Individual meetings with each student*

March 14. Youth in the Middle East


March 25. Youth in Eastern Europe


March 28. Youth in East Asia


April 1. Writing an Empirical Research Paper

April 4. Writing an Abstract

April 8. No Class

Attend a panel at the Fordham Undergraduate Research Symposium, held on the Rose Hill campus on April 9/Wednesday, and write a short summary of what you have observed to facilitate an in-class discussion of the event

April 11. How to Make a Research Presentation


April 15. Student Presentations

April 22. Student Presentations

April 25. Student Presentations

April 29. Wrap-Up Discussion