POSC 3612 Youth and Politics
Interdisciplinary Capstone Course

Spring 2013
Monday/Thursday, 4:00 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.
Faculty Memorial Hall 313

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Office Location: Faber Hall, Rm. 677
Office Hours: Tuesday, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. or by appointment

Course Description

Youth is widely regarded as the future of the nation and an agent of 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 Americans 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.

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 in-depth interviews with a few young people to identify a pattern of youth’s political behavior. At the end of the course, students will write a research paper based upon their findings.

This course will include a field trip to Ukraine to place the analysis of youth and politics in comparative perspective. The former Soviet republic with the population of approximately 46 million people is located between the European Union, on the one hand, and Russia, on the other. Since the collapse of communism, Ukraine failed to consolidate democracy and remains a semi-authoritarian state. Students will investigate how young people in such different political settings as the United States and Ukraine engage in politics or relate to a particular social issue.
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>
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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 regularly engage in classroom discussions of the assigned material and participate in all the activities associated with the field trip to Ukraine.

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 in the United States and Ukraine. The paper should be 16-18 pages long, using 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.

**Field Trip to Lviv, Ukraine**
Participation in the field trip to Ukraine is a course requirement. Students enrolled in the course are expected to travel to the city of Lviv during the spring break. The Ukrainian Catholic University ([http://ucu.edu.ua/eng/](http://ucu.edu.ua/eng/)) will serve as host institution. UCU will provide housing for Fordham students and foster intercultural dialogue among youth. The collection of original empirical data is a central component of the field trip. Each student is required to conduct in-depth interviews with a few young Ukrainians to collect data for one’s research project. In addition, Fordham students will have an opportunity to learn about Ukrainian culture, visit the UNESCO World Heritage site in downtown Lviv, and watch a performance at the Lviv National Theater of Opera and Ballet.

**Important Dates**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 18</td>
<td>Study Abroad Forms due</td>
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<td>February 11</td>
<td>Literature Review due</td>
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<td>February 28</td>
<td>Research Design due</td>
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<td>March 9-17</td>
<td>FIELD TRIP TO UKRAINE</td>
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<td>April 25/29</td>
<td>Student Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 2</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 24. American Youth and Elections


Jan 28. Civic Engagement


Jan 31. How to Write a Literature Review

Feb 4. Who Protests?


Feb 7. The Significance of Time and Place


Feb 11. Quantitative Research Methods

*NOTE: THE LITERATURE REVIEW IS DUE*


Feb 14. Qualitative Research Methods


Feb 19. Research Design


Feb 21. Ethics in Human Subjects Research

Feb 25. The Art of Interviewing


Feb 28. Getting Ready for Fieldwork

*NOTE: THE RESEARCH DESIGN IS DUE*


March 4. Review of the Research Design

*NOTE: Individual meetings with each student*

March 7. Pre-Departure Orientation

March 9-17. FIELD TRIP TO UKRAINE

March 18. Writing Up Qualitative Research Findings


March 21. Writing an Abstract


March 25. The Role of Family


April 4. The Impact of Education


April 8. The Mass Media and the Internet


April 11. Immigrant Youth


April 15. Writing a Research Paper


April 18. Writing Lab

NOTE: Bring a draft of the introduction in your research paper
Apr 22. How to Make a Research Presentation


Apr 25. Student Presentations

Apr 29. Student Presentations

May 2. Wrap-Up Discussion

NOTE: THE RESEARCH PAPER IS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE CLASS.