GOVERNMENT

Chair, Professor Jennifer Yoder
Professors Anthony Corrado, Guilain Denoeux, L. Sandy Maisel, Kenneth Rodman, Daniel Shea, and Jennifer Yoder; Associate Professors Walter Hatch and Joseph Reisert; Assistant Professors Carrie LeVan, Lindsay Mayka, and Laura Seay; Visiting Assistant Professor Milan Babik

The Department of Government is a community of teachers and students dedicated to the study of politics, defined as the contest for and exercise of power. At the conclusion of their course of study, majors in government should know (a) the major theoretical arguments about the nature and purpose of political communities, (b) the salient features and the strengths and weaknesses of various political systems and the reasons for those strengths and weaknesses, (c) the principal theoretical frameworks for understanding the causes of international cooperation and conflict, and (d) the basic research methods used by political scientists.

Our graduates will demonstrate the ability (a) to think critically and creatively, (b) to conduct political science research systematically, identifying and evaluating different sources of information and evidence, and (c) to communicate effectively the results of that research.

Requirements for the Major in Government

Fulfillment of the government major requires successful completion of 10 courses in government, including Government 111 or 115, 131, 171, and 281 (or an approved equivalent course in another discipline); at least one introductory comparative course (Government 252, 253, 255, 256, or 259); and a 400-level senior seminar. A writing project meeting the department’s guidelines is also required.

Government majors should complete all of the required 100-level courses by the end of their sophomore year. Note that the only 100-level courses that may be counted for the major are the required introductory courses. Students with a score of 5 on the Advanced Placement examination in U.S. Government and Politics may elect to substitute a 200- or 300-level course in American politics taken at Colby for Government 111. Normally the introductory comparative course should be taken before the end of sophomore year, especially for those students contemplating study abroad. Government 281 should be completed in either the sophomore or junior year. All of the required introductory 100-level courses and the 400-level course must be taken at Colby.

Courses transferred from other institutions can count (up to a maximum of two) in the 10-course requirement. For transfer students, the department will count up to five courses from the previous institution with the permission of the department chair, excluding the seminar and writing assignment. Students taking government courses abroad must secure provisional approval for each course prior to leaving; upon return to Colby, brief descriptions of work completed must be submitted to the department for final approval.

To satisfy the departmental writing requirement, students must complete a major analytical research project. The project can be a major paper assigned as part of a course or the product of a freestanding independent study. It must be submitted to and approved by a member of the Government Department faculty.

No government major may take any government course satisfactory/unsatisfactory; only courses in which a grade of C- or better is received may be counted as part of the major. No requirement for the government major may be waived without written permission of the department chair.

The Senior Thesis and Honors in Government

For those students who intend to pursue the study of government in more depth, the department offers a senior thesis program that emphasizes substantial independent research under the close guidance of one or two members of the faculty. Students seeking admission to the senior thesis program are expected to seek approval of a sponsor and the department chair before the conclusion of their junior year. Students whose theses are judged worthy of honors by the department faculty will graduate with “Honors in Government.” Further information is available from the department chair and on the department’s website.

Introductory courses at the 100 level are normally limited to 40 students, 200- and 300-level courses to 25 students, and 400-level courses to 12 students.

Internships are encouraged so that students can experience the practical as well as the more theoretical aspects of the field.

Course Offerings

GO111fs Introduction to American Government and Politics How does the American government work? An examination of the relationships among American values, politics, government institutions, and public policy. Focus on the methodologies of political science as tools for expanding understanding of political phenomena and behavior. Credit toward the major cannot be earned for both Government 111 and 115. Four credit hours. S. LEVAN, MAISEL, SHEA
MAISEL

BABIK, HATCH, RODMAN

LEE

CORRADO, and others, in parallel with philosophical theories about law.

REISERT

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GO216 Political Rhetoric

political speeches and the composition and delivery of original addresses, including intensive practice in persuasive writing and public

GO214 s Parties and the Electoral Process

exploration of the electoral process in the United States, emphasizing the historical development of American parties and elections, the legal

GO212 U.S. Congress

looks at the interactions between the legislature and other governmental institutions, the electoral process, and the constitutional framework establishing the powers of Congress and limits on those powers, the internal operations of the legislature (e.g., committee structure, leadership), interactions between the legislature and other governmental institutions, the electoral process, and suggestions for reform. Prerequisite: Government 111 or 115. Four credit hours. S.

GO214 s Parties and the Electoral Process

what does the 2016 election mean for American elections in the years ahead? An exploration of the electoral process in the United States, emphasizing the historical development of American parties and elections, the legal and constitutional contexts in which they exist, the practical aspects of modern campaigns, and the democratic values inherent in our electoral system and those of other nations. Has the process been changed by the 2016 experience? Prerequisite: Government 111 or 115, and sophomore or higher standing. Four credit hours. MAISEL

GO216 Political Rhetoric

An introduction to the theory and practice of political rhetoric through the study of historically significant political speeches and the composition and delivery of original addresses, including intensive practice in persuasive writing and public
GO221 Capitalism and Its Critics Examines the interaction between politics and markets, both in theory and in practice, linking classic work in political economy with current policy debates. Emphasizes the ways in which markets are embedded in social and political institutions. Studies the formation of markets, current organization of capitalist systems, and their recent transformations in developed, transitioning, and developing economies, considering both historical and contemporary issues. Counts toward the comparative politics requirement. Three credit hours.

GO222f America and the World How have Americans comprehended the world beyond their borders and their role in it? Can we detect any recurring ideas and presuppositions? If so, what are their origins, recent U.S. foreign policy manifestations, and implications? This course looks for answers in a broad historical perspective spanning America's colonial beginnings and today. It identifies several traditional "master" tropes, traces their genealogy in American societal culture, and reveals their presence in U.S. statecraft at key junctures such as the two World Wars, the Cold War, the fall of communism in Europe, and the "War on Terror." Most importantly, it discusses their consequences and critically reflects on their suitability to guide future American foreign relations. Four credit hours. S.

GO226s Media and Politics An assessment of the role of the media in American politics. Examines the media as an institution and how it is both influenced by and reflects our system of government. What functions, for example, do contemporary news outlets afford the democratic process? Is there a connection between the way news is transmitted and the way citizens interact with government? Throughout much of American history the press has been considered a watchdog and the "fourth branch" of government. The challenge will be to explore the nexus of the theoretical role assigned to the mass media and its present character. Four credit hours. S, LEVAN

GO231 U.S. Foreign Policy: The Cold War An analysis of the major events facing the United States during the Cold War and the controversies surrounding them. Academic and policy debates over national security doctrines, the proper place of ideology in foreign policy, the role of economic factors, and domestic political institutions. Topics include the origins of the Cold War, nuclear weapons strategy, the Vietnam War, containment and detente, and the end of the Cold War. Prerequisite: Government 111. Four credit hours.

GO234 Legal Writing and Legal Argument: Through and after Law School Provides students with the writing and oral presentation tools needed in law school. Taught by a Colby alumnus who is a practicing attorney. Introduces students to the skills needed for a law degree and the wide variety of post-law-school career options. Includes a variety of assignments and guest lecturers with experience in an array of legal fields. Designed to give those considering law school an introduction to legal writing and analysis, oral presentation, and advocacy in a variety of contexts facing law students and practicing attorneys. Three credit hours.

GO236s International Law and Politics of Human Rights An introduction to the international laws and institutions established after the Second World War to promote, protect, and enforce human rights, and the political forces which either empower or constrain their influence. Areas of application include civil and political rights; economic, social, and cultural rights; the right to asylum; accountability for war crimes and genocide; humanitarian intervention; corporate social responsibility; and the tensions between counter-terrorism and human rights. Prerequisite: Government 131. Four credit hours.
between Israelis and Palestinians. Explores the forces that have sustained the dispute, the main reasons behind failed attempts at peacemaking, and the factors that account for the current stalemate. Focuses on key historical junctures, including the British mandate over Palestine, the creation of Israel and dispossession of the Palestinians, the "Oslo Process" and its collapse, the failed 2000 Camp David Summit and second intifada, as well as the new situation created by the events of the past decade. Attention also is paid to media coverage of, and U.S. policy toward, the conflict. Prerequisite: Sophomore or higher standing. Four credit hours. S.  DENOEUX

GO252f  Introduction to Politics of the Middle East  Provides the analytical and historical background for making sense of politics in the Arab world today. Highlights the main drivers of politics in the region, with particular emphasis paid to the interaction of political and economic forces, domestic and regional or international factors, and Islam and politics. Explores the roots of authoritarianism in the region, the dynamics that sustain it, and key impediments to substantive (as opposed to cosmetic) democratization. Examines the combination of forces that produced both the Arab Spring of 2011 and the turmoil that followed it. Open to first-years. Fulfills the introductory comparative politics requirement. Four credit hours.  DENOEUX

[GO253]  Introduction to Latin American Politics  An overview of important political and economic phenomena in Latin America over the past century. How can Latin America escape its persistent problems with underdevelopment, poverty, and inequality, and what is the role of a democratic government in tackling these problems? Topics covered include state-directed development models, populism, democratic breakdown and democratization, free market economic models, and contemporary leftist alternatives. Open to first-years. Fulfills the introductory comparative politics requirement. Four credit hours.

GO255f  Introduction to African Politics  An overview of political processes and institutions in sub-Saharan Africa. The development of institutions and norms of political behavior across the continent will be traced from precolonial times to the present, with particular focus on the development of modern states, challenges to the legitimacy of governing authorities, and factors affecting state stability. Students will learn to identify, define, and apply theoretical concepts to the empirical study of African politics. Open to first-years. Fulfills the introductory comparative politics requirement. Four credit hours.  S, I.  SEAY

GO256s  Introduction to East Asian Politics  Both a primer on the domestic politics and foreign policies of states/territories in East Asia (China, Taiwan, Japan, the two Koreas), and an exploration of specific cases of interstate conflict in the region, including competing memories of World War II and confrontation over North Korea's nuclear weapons. Surveys comparative politics in the region; then applies that knowledge to international relations in East Asia. Students acquire basic knowledge about nations in this region, and about the volatile mix of fears and aspirations there. They also learn how to think more deeply about politics, communicate more effectively, and collaborate more successfully. Fulfills the introductory comparative politics requirement. Prerequisite: Sophomore or higher standing. Four credit hours.  S, I.  SEAY

GO259s  Introduction to European Politics  Examines the post-1945 development of European political cultures and systems with special attention to varieties of parliamentarism, electoral systems, party systems, interest group representation, and welfare states. Explores how European societies view the role of the state in the economy, why many of them ceded some policymaking to the European Union, and how Europeans strike the balance between the exclusion and inclusion of different groups, between representative and participatory democracy, and between national and European interests. Open to first-years. Fulfills the introductory comparative politics requirement. Four credit hours.  YODER

GO263f  Global Crisis of Democracy and Democracy Assistance  Explores the manifestations and roots of the current crisis of democratic politics and their implications for democracy assistance. Examines ongoing populist, illiberal, anti-democratic, and nativist challenges to democracy worldwide, and considers competing arguments regarding the value and feasibility of democracy aid in this new context. Reflects on the needed rethinking of democracy assistance to fit both a different global landscape and what development professionals have learned from three decades of experience with supporting democracy abroad. Taught from a practitioner's perspective. Four credit hours.  S.  DENOEUX

[GO264]  Challenges to Democracy in Latin America  What have been the challenges associated with the establishment and consolidation of democracy in Latin America? Examines political regimes and regime changes in Latin America since the early 20th century, with a particular emphasis on the quality of democracy present in the current period. Topics include the breakdown of democracy, democratization, human rights, state capacity, interest representation and citizenship, and the concentration of power in the executive. Previously listed as Government 364 (Spring 2015). Four credit hours. S, I.

GO266f  German Politics  Exploration of contemporary German politics through a variety of texts and media, with attention to the impact of the past on Germany's political culture, political institutions, and its domestic and foreign policies. Students will analyze the 2017 Bundestag election campaign, voting results, and government formation process. Four credit hours. S.  YODER

GO271s  Classical Political Theory  An introduction to the political thought of classical antiquity, including the works of Thucydides, Xenophon, Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero. Topics include the nature of justice, the merits of direct democracy and other institutional forms, and
the attributes of the ideal leader. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the primary texts and their ability to formulate original arguments in political theory by means of papers and exams. Class sessions are conducted as a mixture of lecture and discussion. 

Prerequisite: Government 171 or Philosophy 211. Four credit hours. REISERT

[GO272] Modern Political Theory An introduction to the political thought of modernity, from the Renaissance to the present, including the works of Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, and Rawls. Topics include the idea of the social contract, the relationship between power and morality, competing conceptions of freedom and equality, the philosophy of history, and the intellectual foundations of modern liberalism. Students will demonstrate their understanding of the primary texts and their ability to formulate original arguments in political theory by means of papers and exams; class sessions are conducted as a mixture of lecture and discussion. 

Prerequisite: Government 171. Four credit hours.

[GO273] American Political Thought A survey of fundamental principles of American political thought as presented in the writings of such authors as Hamilton, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Roosevelt. General themes include the notion of republican government, concepts of liberty and equality, and the role of property in democratic society. Designed to provide students with an opportunity to develop critical-thinking and writing skills. Four credit hours.

[GO274] Intellectual Roots of Modern Conservatism Diverse intellectual sources of the contemporary conservative movement in America, Edmund Burke to present. What does it mean to be a conservative? How (if at all) do conservative conceptions of man and society differ from liberal or "radical" visions? What (if any) is the relationship between conservative ideas and religion? How do multiple strands of conservative thought relate to one another? Readings from Burke, Thomas Carlyle, Benjamin Disraeli, Herbert Spencer, Michael Oakeshott, Friedrich Hayek, Russell Kirk, others. Assignments include short analyses of readings, in-class presentations, two longer analytical papers, and an exam (or a long research paper). Prerequisite: Government 171. Four credit hours.

GO281fs Concepts and Methods of Political Science Research An introduction to a variety of approaches to the study of political phenomena, intended to prepare students to craft and complete more sophisticated research projects in political science. After discussion of the nature and aims of scientific inquiry and the general features of effective research design, focus is on two broad methodological perspectives: explanation and interpretation. Topics include hypothesis testing and statistical analysis, the problem of historical truth, symbolic representation, and discourse analysis. Students will complete a number of different types of assignments and will apply course ideas to develop their own original research design. Prerequisite: Sophomore or higher standing. Four credit hours. Q. BABIK, LEVAN, SEAY, SHEA

GO298s 9/11: Origins, Event, Aftermath Actions undertaken by al-Qaeda against targets on U.S. soil on Sept. 12, 2001, shocked the American public and the world at large. Why did 9/11 happen in the first place? What prompted al-Qaeda to target the United States? How was the event portrayed, explained, and interpreted? Is it possible to come up with alternative representations, explanations, and interpretations? If yes, what are they, and why were they obscured at the time? Our purpose is to reflect on these questions and controversies in order to cultivate a critical perspective on the origins, nature, and consequences of 9/11. Four credit hours. S. BABIK

[GO313] National Powers in American Constitutional Law An examination of constitutional debates that have defined the structure and powers of the modern national government. Topics include constitutional interpretation; the operation and desirability (or not) of judicial review; the scope of the states' police powers in relation to congressional power; the conflict between economic rights and the modern regulatory state; and powers of the president, especially in times of terrorism, emergency, and war. Readings include U.S. Supreme Court decisions and related documents as well as secondary works in political science and law. Assignments include case briefs, class participation, papers, simulations (e.g., moot courts), and exams. Prerequisite: Government 111 or 115. Four credit hours.

GO314f Civil Liberties in American Constitutional Law An examination of legal, moral, and philosophical controversies involving rights and liberties arising under the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment. Topics include the nature of rights and theories of constitutional interpretation; the right to the free exercise of religion and the establishment clause; freedom of expression; the "right of privacy" and protections for contraception, abortion, and homosexuality; and affirmative action and the status of women and minorities under the law. Readings include U.S. Supreme Court cases and related works of moral and political philosophy. Prerequisite: Government 111 or 115. Four credit hours. U. REISERT

GO315s Minority Representation Inequalities persist throughout everyday life and remain apparent within American political institutions. We will examine how these inequalities manifest in American political institutions and why they matter. Part I will explore the multifaceted nature of representation. Part II will explore the conditions that affect minority representation, specifically: population size, public opinion/support, interest group support, and group access to resources. Part III will focus on the future of representation, paying close attention to changing demographics. Prerequisite: Government 111. Four credit hours. S, U. LEVAN

[GO316] Presidential Electoral Politics The procedural and electoral environment of presidential elections and the strategies employed
in presidential campaigns by candidates, party organizations, and political committees. Topics include campaign communication strategies, media coverage of elections, and recent controversies associated with the voting process, with a focus on the current or most recent election. Prerequisite: Government 111 or 115. Four credit hours.

[GO320] The Rights Revolution and Its Discontents The past century has yielded a steady expansion in the definition and public protection of individual rights for women, racial minorities, and LGBTQ persons. In addition, new public policies have deeply altered the rights to free expression and protected religious practice. Some applaud these changes in the definition of rights, others lament them. This course explores the ways in which these rights are defined and expanded, the criticisms such changes encounter, and the role of public policy in sorting out these conflicts. Four credit hours.

[GO332] International Organization The structure, politics, and current operation of international organizations within the nation-state system. Topics include conflict resolution, nonproliferation, human rights, and international economic cooperation. Prerequisite: Government 131 and sophomore or higher standing. Four credit hours.

GO336f Politics of Development in Africa Explores the politics and practice of economic development and humanitarian aid in sub-Saharan Africa. Using readings, lectures, class discussions, and an independent student research project, examines the major theories of development in comparative politics; compares traditional top-down models to localized, bottom-up approaches toward development in Africa; raises possibilities of partnership-based models; and critiques the history of colonial and postcolonial development and humanitarian aid in Africa. Prerequisite: Government 131. Four credit hours. I. SEAY

GO338j Field Study in African Development Students will spend approximately three weeks of this global innovation course in Uganda comparing international, local, and diaspora-driven approaches to economic and social development. Through discussions with local, international, and development practitioners, observation of development projects, a rural home stay, and meetings with local and international policymakers, students will learn to identify, compare, and contrast varying theoretical and practical approaches to development in Africa, assess the effectiveness of international, diaspora-driven, and local approaches to development and its promotion in Uganda. Previously offered as Government 397 (Jan Plan 2015). Cost is $3,250. Three credit hours. SEAY

GO344f Post-Communist Transformations Examines the rise and fall of communism in Russia and Eastern Europe, then explores patterns of post-communist political reforms and outcomes. Focuses on the Putin presidency, its impacts on Russian politics and society, and the consequences for stability in the region. Prerequisite: At least one government course. Four credit hours.

[GO354] The European Union How should we understand the European Union? Is it a regional trade bloc, an international organization, or even a state—and, if so, what kind? Is it, as some have suggested, a superpower on par with the United States? If it is as significant as many attest, what are the implications for the primacy of nation-states and national sovereignty? A detailed and critical understanding of what the EU is and how it works. Through a variety of assignments, students analyze the design, construction, and operation of the new institutions of governance in Europe. Prerequisite: Government 131. Four credit hours. YODER

[GO355] Winners and Losers in Chinese Politics An exploration of contemporary Chinese politics, especially the political and social fallout from post-Mao economic reforms. Students will learn how to write an analytical paper using social science methods. Counts toward the comparative politics requirement. Four credit hours. S, W2, I.

[GO356] Winners and Losers in Japanese Politics An exploration of Japanese politics, with a focus on the evolving struggle between traditional insiders (such as government bureaucrats and corporate executives) and traditional outsiders (such as labor unions and housewives). Four credit hours. I.

GO357s Political Economy of Regionalism Comparative analysis of economic and political integration in three regions: Europe (the EU), North America (NAFTA), and Asia. Why do states agree to give up some sovereignty by cooperating on regional projects? Why do these projects vary so much from region to region? Global lab. Four credit hours. HATCH

GO358s Comparative Arab Politics Builds on knowledge acquired in Government 252 to provide an in-depth understanding of the political dynamics of selected Arab countries. Highlights both similarities and differences in political processes across countries, evaluates the political changes taking place in each of them, and delves into the nature of the specific challenges they confront. Prerequisite: Government 252 Four credit hours. DENOEUX

[GO359] Political Ideologies and Revolutionary Movements in Europe An exploration of major ideological currents and movements in modern Europe. Focuses on various forms of radicalism on the right and left of the political spectrum against the background of important political developments in Europe in the last century, such as the Bolshevik Revolution, the rise of fascism and Nazism, the emergence of domestic terrorism, the explosion of nationalism and fundamentalisms, and the collapse of Soviet-style communism. Prerequisite:
GO431f Seminar: Ethics in Politics  A discussion of critical ethical issues faced by American and other national leaders. Case studies of 20th-century decisions, including those involved with violence (e.g., Truman's decision to drop the bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki), deception in government (e.g., Oliver North's decision to lie to Congress about Iran-Contra), disobedience of those in authority (e.g., Daniel Ellsberg's release of the Pentagon Papers), policies regarding life and death (e.g., abortion and euthanasia laws), and others. Prerequisite: Government 131 or 115 and senior standing as a government major. Four credit hours. MAISEL

GO432s Seminar: U.S. Foreign Policy  Examines debates surrounding U.S. foreign policy and multilateral institutions with a principal focus on national security issues in the post-Cold War world. Central questions focus on when the United States should define its security in terms of acting within or strengthening international laws and institutions or whether it should maintain its freedom to engage in unilateral actions in a dangerous world. Areas of application include the use of force, counterterrorism, nuclear nonproliferation, and arms control. Prerequisite: Government 131 and senior standing. Four credit hours. CORRADO

GO435s Seminar: Conflict and Crisis in Africa  Focuses on political violence in Africa from the precolonial period to the present day. Students will be able to identify, compare, and contrast major theories of conflict and conflict resolution as they apply in sub-Saharan Africa. Students will also be able to describe the history of political violence in Africa, including precolonial conflicts, conflict related to colonization, wars of liberation, and post-colonization civil and intrastate wars. Prerequisite: Government 251, 252, 253, 255, 256, or 259. Four credit hours. SEAY

GO451f Seminar: Political Violence  Explores a variety of theoretical perspectives on, and case studies of, political violence, with particular emphasis on terrorism (both secular and religious) and ethnic conflict. Examines drivers of radicalization and violent extremism, the factors that lead to the rise, decline, and/or demise of terrorist organizations, and the nexus between transnational organized crime and international terrorism. Introduces key concepts and analytical frameworks and provides students with an opportunity to apply them to a case study of their choice. Students present the preliminary results of their research projects to the class. Prerequisite: Senior standing as a government major. Four credit hours. DENOEUX

GO455s Seminar: Conflict and Crisis in Africa  Focuses on political violence in Africa from the precolonial period to the present day. Students will be able to identify, compare, and contrast major theories of conflict and conflict resolution as they apply in sub-Saharan Africa. Students will also be able to describe the history of political violence in Africa, including precolonial conflicts, conflict related to colonization, wars of liberation, and post-colonization civil and intrastate wars. Prerequisite: Government 251, 252, 253, 255, 256, or 259. Four credit hours. SEAY

GO456 Seminar: Civil Society and Social Change in Latin America  What are civil society organizations and what is their place in politics? This research seminar examines the evolution of civil society in contemporary Latin American democracies and their roles in effecting social and political change. Over the past 30 years, civil society organizations in Latin America have become vehicles for poor and otherwise marginalized communities to access the political system. Topics include the collective action problem, the role of civil society organizations in interest representation and service provision, relationships with political parties and international donors, and participatory governance. Prerequisite: 200-level government course or a Latin American studies course. Four credit hours. I. HATCH

GO457 Seminar: Germany and Europe  Investigates to what extent Germany has become the 'indispensable power' in Europe, focusing on key events in the postwar period, most recently the Eurozone crisis, the Ukraine crisis, and the migration crisis. Though focused on German foreign and security policy, necessarily examines the European integration process and the politics of the Transatlantic Alliance. Prerequisite: Government 131, 259, 266, 354, or 359. Four credit hours. S, I.

GO483f Honors Workshop  Individual and group meetings of seniors and faculty members participating in the government honors program. Prerequisite: Admission to the honors program. Four credit hours. FACULTY
GO483Jj  Honors Workshop  Noncredit.  HATCH, REISERT

GO491f, 492s  Independent Study  A study of government through individual projects. Prerequisite: Government major and permission of the instructor. One to four credit hours.  FACULTY