



## Six Semester Electives For Fall 2011

### *THEATER OF POLITICS/THE POLITICS OF THEATER*

*Mr. Ari Roth, University of Michigan*

Over the past six years, this course has canvassed the Washington theater scene and discovered a wealth of material; much of it, not surprisingly, political in its focus. What does it mean to have a robust artistic presence within an essentially political town? What might be the purpose, or motive, of presenting "political work" in this community? What is the history, legacy, indeed the point of "political theater," and what do we mean when we say that? What are the narratives being told today that reflect how we view the past, understand the present, and envision the future? We'll have a chance to think about the role of theater in society in this most unique setting of Washington, DC—and we'll look inwardly, on the domestic front, as well as outwardly, through an international lens.

That is only fitting for Washington, where the matters are intensely local, national, and international scope. And the theatrical culture has kept pace with this multiplicity of perspectives. That says a lot about the capacity, and the growth of DC as a cultural town. More specifically, DC has emerged as the second most vibrant theatrical city in the nation, rivaling Chicago and surpassing Los Angeles (deferring only to New York) in number of performances offered, audience in attendance, and union actors appearing in Equity-contracted productions, with an unparalleled proliferation of new theatre buildings (over a billion dollars in construction and capital campaign costs over the past decade). Locally, the city now boasts some of the finest classical, flagship and culturally specific theaters in the country. This advent of a robust theater scene planted at the seat of power has created a unique cultural profile; that of an artistic force able to speak truth to power; a local arts community in dialogue with federal policymakers. Yet often times, cultural institutions face pressures forcing them to constrict or self-censor their expression. Sometimes, as happened last year at the Smithsonian Institution's National Portrait Gallery, actual censorship takes place in the form of the removal of a video installation, or the canceling of an artistic event. Is a new round of culture wars heading our way? And what of the repressive forces overseas, and how we come to participate as engaged cultural citizens right here, still thousands of miles away, yet experiencing controversial art created by embattled artists. We'll be on the frontlines this semester to take the temperature of federal law-makers and cultural institutions each weighing their respective charges and responsibilities.

We'll look to take advantage of the recent history of our host theater, Theater J, being the locus for a series of controversial productions and conversations over the past months and years, as we explore the various ways theater is provoking thought and reflection. A survey of some of these recent battles will send us back to other historically controversial productions as we examine how and why a particular piece comes to ignite and inflame passions. And we'll see how a work comes to transcend the heat of controversy to approach real stature as a compelling work of art.

At its heart, this class is a Theater Appreciation course, with an emphasis on viewing plays in performance and in manuscript form, and responding to them in blog entries, a mid-term paper and final reflection, as well as a culminating group presentation. We'll be looking at how our playwrights have crafted the work as they have and why; for what meaning? How does theater work both as metaphor and reportage? How are the elements of catharsis built into the dramatic and tragic mode, and can the insolubility of political conflict ever be satisfyingly rendered in ways which don't demand artistic resolution? Is there, inevitably, a redemptive vision embedded within tragedy and how necessary is it for art to "point a way forward?" We'll see these questions animated in a series of substantive plays and musicals, both brand new and more canonical, all semester long. And we'll have a chance to discuss these matters not only in class but in post-performance sessions with the artists performing in the plays we'll be seeing, and with the audiences who attend them.



***ENVIRONMENTAL POLICYMAKING AND THE POLITICS OF ENERGY AND  
CLIMATE CHANGE***

*Dr. Kathy Wagner, University of Michigan*

As Charles Darwin found in the natural world, so it is true in the policy world that adaptability is critically important. Climate change policy brings these two worlds together, as many around the globe believe that how the United States addresses this issue could determine how effective international efforts will be to reverse global warming trends and whether catastrophic impacts from climate change can be averted. Climate and energy policies also offer a lens through which the U.S. domestic environmental policymaking process can be viewed and its evolution better understood. This course will examine the dynamics of global environmental treaty-making after first studying the development of U.S. environmental protection efforts. Students will then critically analyze the different domestic and international policy approaches taken to address climate change and energy needs in what could be a new structure of world power based on resource scarcity and energy security.

***LOBBYING, MONEY AND INFLUENCE IN WASHINGTON***

*Dr. Steven Billet, Notre Dame*

This course will be an intense examination of lobbying in Washington with particular attention given to the role of money and campaign finance in the operation of what has become a highly sophisticated and poorly understood network of advocacy and influence.

The approach of the instructor is to provide a basic understanding of three different but interrelated knowledge sets: the Congress, political money, and lobbying by interest groups. Students should understand that while the lectures are focused on those individual subject areas and the semester is divided into three separate sections for that purpose, the readings later in the term will often relate to earlier lectures. This is done with the intent of "connecting the dots" among these diverse topical areas.

***AMERICAN POLITICAL JOURNALISM***

*Mr. Carlos Lozada, Notre Dame*

This class will explore the relationships among politics, news media and government. It will do so by focusing on particular news events in which the role of the media became an integral part of the story. The goal is to understand the decision-making and dilemmas behind the news and to become more informed and skeptical consumers of news. Some of the sessions below might change based on guest speakers' schedules; topics of discussion and readings may also change based on breaking news events. Class will include 1-2 sessions that meet at times other than regular class time; students will receive ample advance notice so they can adjust schedules accordingly.

(MH Note: Lozada is the Washington Post's Sunday *Outlook* section editor, and he was previously the Post's national security editor and economics editor. Before that, he was managing editor of *Foreign Policy* magazine. The class meets in the Post's newsroom's conference room.)



### ***SPIES! THE POLITICS OF INTELLIGENCE***

*Prof. Bruce Cain and Ms. Genevieve Lester, University of California, Berkeley*

*Mr. Robert L. Deitz, CIA General Counsel's Office and CIA Officer in Residence, George Mason University*

Intelligence organizations have two qualities that Americans instinctively fear and distrust: secrecy and power. While the intelligence community can attempt to alleviate this fear and mistrust, the secret nature of intelligence work can never wholly put them to rest. Moreover, Americans, particularly since 9/11, hold two opposing views of the intelligence community: that it is both omniscient and incompetent. This course is intended to explore, test, and challenge both of these notions.

In this course students will be introduced to recent issues concerning intelligence, such as intelligence failure, reform, and oversight, focusing particularly on how the change in US intelligence in the post-9/11 context has increasingly emphasized domestic — or "homeland" — intelligence. Students will gain a working understanding of the different types of intelligence, the range of responsibilities that the different TC members hold, and the relationship between intelligence and the policy-making process. They will explore the political context that frames intelligence operations and learn how the three branches of government both collaborate and conflict to utilize this resource. Finally, students will consider some of the major normative questions regarding intelligence, such as: what the appropriate role for intelligence should be in a democracy, how transparent intelligence should be to the public, and how its vast array of activities should be supervised.

This course is primarily a discussion-focused seminar, thus student preparation and participation is vital. The discussions will be augmented by brief lectures touching on the technical points and political context of particular intelligence operations. Two classic novels on intelligence will be assigned so students may understand how matters so secret they can't be discussed directly can be communicated to the public obliquely when presented as fiction. From time to time, guest speakers drawn from the Intelligence Community will be invited to contribute their insights to the course. The reading requirements for this course are somewhat heavy, particularly toward the end of the course. The instructors recommend that students start early on the novels.

### ***U.S. SUPREME COURT: JUDICIAL POLITICS AND CONSTITUTIONAL INTERPRETATION***

*Mr. Jess Bravin, Supreme Court Correspondent, The Wall Street Journal*

*Mr. Nick Bravin, in private practice in New York, specializing in criminal and constitutional issues; clerked for Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg*

This course introduces the Supreme Court of the United States, tracing its development as a legal, political and cultural institution. Students will learn; the court's structure and decision-making methods; the extent and limits of its powers; and, its interplay with the Executive and Legislative Branches of the federal and state governments.