The Departments of Political Science, Sociology, History, and Communications Studies is excited to offer their majors an opportunity to participate in a course cluster and yearlong roundtable series on American conservatism. This course cluster and series offers students the unique opportunity to work closely with faculty and similarly interested students from multiple departments as we explore American conservatism as both an intellectual tradition and political movement that, while incredibly successful, is poorly understood and fraught by internal disputes and divisions.

Interested students will commit to: (a) enrolling in PLSC 2700 and at least one of the other following classes listed below; (b) participating in a minimum of three (one per quarter) lunchtime roundtable meetings and associated events; (c) participating in events related to an invited guest speaker (or speakers) in the Spring 2018 quarter; & (d) writing a brief 600-800 word reflection on the yearlong experience.

Interested students should contact any of the following participating faculty members:
- Joshua Wilson, Political Science
- Christina Foust, Communication Studies
- Trent Steidley, Sociology & Criminology
- Susan Schulten, History
- Nancy Wadsworth, Political Science

**Classes**

*Modern American Conservatism, PLSC 2700*

**Fall 2017, M/W 10-11:50**

This class will explore elements of the contemporary conservative coalition in America. As such, we will spend time considering what defines conservatism, who the members of the contemporary conservative coalition are, how they came to join the coalition, and how their inclusion has affected the coalition. In addition to studying recent scholarship on American conservatism, we will also use assorted media sources to consider the life experiences and perspectives of some of the voters who identify with contemporary conservative movements.

Beyond satisfying an American Politics credit within the political science major, this class also serves as the common anchor course for students enrolling in the yearlong Conservatism in Context course cluster. Students interested in enrolling in this course cluster commit to taking this course in addition to two of the following courses: PLSC 2425 Religion & Politics (Fall 2017, M/W 2-3:50); SOC 2701 Guns & Society (Fall 2017, M/W 12-1:50); &/or PLSC 1610 Power & Justice (Winter 2018, Time TBD). In addition to the courses listed, the students also commit to participating in a yearlong series of lunchtime roundtables and associated events with affiliated faculty, students, and invited speakers.
Guns & Society, SOC 2701
Fall 2017, M/W 12-1:50
Guns are a fact of life in the United States; there are more guns in the US civilian stockpile than any other nation. Yet the consequences of gun prevalence in the US impact different parts of US society in different ways. People who own guns for hunting or sport often have little in common with people living in areas rife with gun violence. At the same time, the political agendas of people who want to prevent gun violence conflict with the agendas of those who see gun ownership as a human right. In this course we will take a step back from the partisan debates and assess both the history of guns and gun policy in the United States as well as the current state of knowledge around firearms in society. During the course of this class we will explore how science, politics, and culture converge to make guns a controversial topic in the US and what it means for society and policy.

Religion & Politics, PLSC 2425
Fall 2017, M/W 2-3:50
This course offers a broad, critical overview of the relationship, and some of the tensions, between religion and politics in the United States. We first review how the historical presence of a variety of American religious groups and perspectives on the relationship between church and state have impacted the nation's often conflicted sense of identity as well as the tenor of our ongoing debates about - and within - religion in American politics. That gives us a foundation for exploring a number of current "hot button" issues like debates over "moral values" and faith-based initiatives. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.
4.000 Credit hours

Power & Justice, PLSC 1610
Winter 2018, Time TBD
This course presents an introduction to some of the key ideas and questions in the study of politics. As an introductory course, it cannot present a systematic overview of the entire study of politics; rather, it seeks to introduce students to some central concerns in the study of politics. In this course we learn about the basic principles of human conduct in social contexts and explain how social scientific methods are used to understand these underlying principles. This course counts toward the Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture requirement.