

SA.556 (THE UNITED STATES)

Courses

SA.556.100. Thinking About America: Power, Knowledge & the Crisis of Democracy. 4 Credits.

In the past half-dozen years, Americans and foreign observers have suddenly seen the United States in a shocking new light. But why should recent events have come as such a surprise to so many? What explains the flawed perceptions that dominated previous popular and scholarly understandings of America? These are the central questions the seminar aims to answer. Focusing on the intellectual dynamics of the current American crisis, the seminar traces the roles that ideas have played in U.S. political and economic history, and it explores how those roles have changed during the past half-century. The seminar is designed for students with some prior academic preparation in U.S. studies. It will enrich the work of any thoughtful social-science researcher or student of American political development; Limit 15

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.200.729[C]

SA.556.101. U.S. Constitutional Law and the International System. 4 Credits.

The American tradition of judicial review by independent courts has had an enormous influence on the international development of the rule of law in newly emerging democracies. This seminar, taught by a practicing lawyer, reads some of the classic cases of the American constitutional tradition, including cases on school desegregation, separation of powers, foreign affairs, freedom of religion and speech, control of immigration and the right to be left alone. Looks at the indeterminacy of the original constitutional document and how it has developed through the processes of both political and judicial interpretation.

Prerequisite(s): Students may not register for this class if they have already received credit for SA.650.765[C]