You might have some ideas or even strong opinions about human rights. Perhaps you have already taken a course on the topic. Whatever your background, this course is for you. We will study the philosophical foundations of human rights and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We will also learn about the key debates and address the prominent and contentious human rights challenges that human beings face today. Some of the issues we will discuss are contemporary slavery, human trafficking, refugees, health, humanitarian intervention, torture, the death penalty, and transitional justice.
Is justice or forgiveness the best option for societies emerging from conflict? Are these the only options possible? Does truth-telling provide a guarantee that communities will be able to live together again? Is justice required for painful memories of past acts to be put to rest? Is it possible to pursue both justice and reconciliation at the same time? These are some of the questions we will ask and attempt to answer in this class. We will examine the dilemma that many post-conflict societies face; whether to seek reconciliation with past enemies or exact revenge for their deeds. Problems related to apologies, forgiveness, reconciliation, truth commissions, amnesties, tribunals, purges and reparations will be examined.
Join faculty from the disciplines of ecology, economics, epidemiology, medicine, political science, and sociology to read and discuss the latest findings about how political institutions impact economic, environmental, and public health outcomes. Topics include economic inequality, economic growth, global warming, air pollution, infectious and chronic diseases, and worker health and safety. Building on this foundation of knowledge, students will work together to investigate the impact of political institutions on problems of their own choosing.
American Political Development involves employing history as an active and independent variable (through the use of concepts such as timing and sequence, path dependence, critical junctures, political orders, and intercurrence) to address fundamental questions of political science and political institutional development. Its primary aim is the revelation of factors behind periods of continuity and moments of institutional change through focusing on political phenomena over long stretches of time as opposed to momentary snap shots of history. Race and immigration policy have been intrinsic aspects of American political development. This class will show how historical trajectories in immigration politics and racial politics have — at times — reinforced each other and/or interacted, and how the presence or timing of particular events has had direct and indirect influence on the historical trajectories of the other. Ultimately, both have manifested in particular moments in American political development.
Liberalism, conservatism, Marxism, democratic socialism, fascism, libertarianism, feminism, anarchism, ecologism, etc. We frequently encounter these ideologies ("isms") and may ourselves subscribe to one or more. But what are these things and what do they really mean? This course will explore through primary texts past and present debates on ideologies, both here and around the globe. Along with reading the theories behind these ideologies, we will be exploring ideologies ‘in the wild’, as the class will culminate with a final project involving the ideological ‘diagnosis’ of a contemporary political leader.
This course uses science fiction novels to study the problems of information, truth and falsehood in democracy. The concepts of truth and misinformation have long been themes in science fiction, and as modern democracies grapple with the problems of changes to the media landscape, science fiction novels pose useful social scientific hypotheses, to be read in the context of existing social science research.