

POLS 673: The Futures of Governance
Thursdays 5:30 – 8:00
Office Hours: T/TH 10:30 – 12:00 and 2-3 or by appointment
Saunders 641
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Course Introduction:

How might we structure political systems? Is democracy automatically the preferable method? What other options might exist? Can we imagine something different from how we govern/are governed today? This course is intended to provide the starting point for a journey through a number of different political systems and possible designs. On this journey we will seek to escape (as much as possible) the assumptions about governance that structures our current political lives and instead envision possible futures where different choices about governance have been made. Using Dator's governance design model, we will frame the class using a series of important questions that can help us understand the underlying assumptions (and ensuing results) of any given governance choice.

First, what assumptions about human nature are made in the governance design?

Second, might the design itself influence human behavior and design?

Third, what type of authority (from weak to strong) influences the design?

Fourth, because structure matters, what types of structures are put in place?

Fifth, how do things get done? By who? Using what approaches?

Another way to think about this is in terms of values associated with your future.

Individual vs. collective

Freedom vs. order

Penalties vs. rewards

Human vs. unhuman

Self-centered vs. cooperative

Learning Objectives: By the end of the course it is expected that all students will have an understanding of the range of possible governance structures, will have contributed to envisioning futures built upon multiple different governance structures, will understand the underlying value choices and design assumptions used to build governance structures, and can describe the literature associated with governance and design.

Assignments

1. Class Discussion Leader: Each student will sign up for at least two (or more depending on enrollment) days to help lead discussion. At least one of these days should happen during the first part of the semester and one from the second. During the first part of the class, the goal will be to help frame the readings, lead discussion, offer additional perspectives, and set up the second part of the semester.

The second part of the semester focuses on types of governance, some possibly more ideal/radical/far outside the mainstream than others. The key to these discussions will be to structure the course *using the system of governance* that we will be studying. Thus, each student must help *design and structure* how we can experience the governance system we will be learning about for that class period. You should be creative in your applications and the course as a whole should be open for possible experiences that move beyond the official classroom. Thus, think about location for the course, how it might run using that system of governance, etc.

2. Final Project: Each student will need to choose a futures oriented design or an aspect of futures oriented design that can lead to (or help create) their preferred governance design and more fully develop this design in the context of a written paper. These papers can be theoretical or practical, and they can focus on any institution – from a government to an organization to a community group. They should *significantly* move beyond the structures of the status quo. In dealing with governance issues, the final papers should deal with all (or most) of the critiques of existing governments outlined below. This project should generally focus on a design element of governance but can otherwise be directed towards the focus area of interest to each student. Papers should be a minimum of 20 pages (double spaced) and include a bibliography indicative of graduate level work.

Course Grade:

Discussion leader/participation (Part One) 25%
Discussion leader (Part Two) 25%
Final Project 50%

I. The State of the State

Week One: January 15: Introduction:

Dator's Critique of Existing Governments

Then we will consider six of the many complaints levied against all existing governments: that they are bureaucratic, placing the convenience of the governors over the needs of the governed; that they too nationalistic, privileging the nation-state over both smaller and larger units; that they are undemocratic, thwarting participation of some, while favoring other, groups and individuals; that they are murderous, both using and causing killing; that they are patriarchal, insisting on a gender dichotomy that privileges men and violent masculinity, while marginalizing or oppressing other preferences; and that they are unfuturistic, severely discounting the needs and wants of future generations while favoring some people and groups in the present.

Week Two: January 22: Futures and future flaws of governance

- Futures Studies General Overview
- Dator, "What futures studies is, and is not"

- Sardar, et al, "Colonizing the future"
- Dator, "The Unholy Trinity, Plus One"
- Stefen, et al., "The Anthropocene"
- Pick a critiques of existing government and think about it in terms of design flaws – how does the existing government create or facilitate these design flaws? We will discuss this next week.

Week Three: January 29: What does it mean to govern?

- Presentation of design flaws
- Constitutional Governance
- Path Dependency
- Structure Matters (Dator)
- Kim and Dator, "Future Generations: They are our conscience"
- Tough, "Pledge to Future Generations"

Week Four: February 5: Behavioral economics and human natures: Governing by Design

- Nudge
- Tonn, "Non-spatial governance"
- Katyal, "Architecture as Crime Control"
- Dator, "Structure Matters"
- Dator, "Governing the Futures: Dream or Survival Societies"
- Dahl, "Framed Up"

Week Five: February 12: Fine tuning the administrative state

- Swanson and Bhadwal, Creating Adaptive Policies -- (<http://www.idrc.ca/EN/Resources/Publications/Pages/IDRCBookDetails.aspx?PublicationID=51>)
- Dator, "US public administration from laissez-faire to empire."
- Los Horcones, "Personalized Government"
- Fehr, "Strong Reciprocity"
- Rodriguez, "Networking Decisionmaking"

Week Six: February 19 – Failed States

ISA Travel

- Rotberg, "Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators"

Week Seven: February 26: Naomi Klein 6 – 7:30 Campus Center Ballroom

- Klein, "Disaster Capitalism"
- Klein, "This Changes Everything"

II. The Possibilities of the Future

Week Eight: March 5: Corpocracy and the Futures of Free Market Systems

- Cloud Atlas
- Deetz, "Democracy in an age of corporate colonization"
- Verkuil, "Outsourcing Sovereignty"
- Neal Stephenson's Snow Crash

Week Nine: March 12: Feminist Governance

- What does a feminist foreign policy look like?
- Marge Percy – Women on the Edge of Time

Week Ten: March 19: Anarchism and self-organizing systems

- Glassman, "Mutual Aid"
- Zerzan
- Ursula LeGuin The Dispossessed

Week Eleven: March 26: Spring Break/Kuhio Day

Week Twelve: April 2: Digital Futures

WPSA Travel

- Ondrejka, "Virtual worlds"
- *When Google Met Wikileaks* -- <https://www.transcend.org/tms/2014/10/assange-google-is-not-what-it-seems/>
http://www.ted.com/talks/pia_mancini_how_to_upgrade_democracy_for_the_internet_era?language=en

Week Thirteen: April 9: New World Orders and World Government

- Dator, "State of the state"
- Dator, " On explaining the rise of non-state actors."
- McCoy, "How America will Collapse"
http://www.salon.com/2010/12/06/america_collapse_2025/

Week Fourteen: April 16: Surveillance Societies and States of Control

- Gate to Women's Country – Sherri Tepper
- Deleuze, "Postscript on societies of control"
- Dunagan, "Neurofutures"

Week Fifteen: April 23: Ecological Governance

- Sustained 2030 (http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2014/sustained_2030.pdf)
- Rohter, "Envisioning a Green Hawaii"

Week Sixteen: April 30: Indigenous Governance

- Kanahele, "In search of Hawaiian values"
- Rebuilding Native Nations

Week Seventeen and Finals Week: May 7: (last day of instruction is May 6th)

* Wrap up and Discussion