

**The Pennsylvania State University
Departments of Political Science and Sociology**

**Announcing a New Course Especially for Those Interested in
Research and Graduate School**

PLSC/SOC 497 Research Fellowship in Political Science/Sociology

Instructors: Frank Baumgartner (PLSC)

John McCarthy (SOC)

Spring 2004

Tuesdays, 2-5PM, Room 205 Ferguson

This course will focus on developing research skills in political science and sociology. Students will become involved in hands-on individualized research projects dealing with changes in public policy and the development and growth of social movement organizations (SMOs). Readings will focus on articles from the recent professional literature on the growth of interest groups and SMOs as well as on theories and indicators of policy change over time. Using data from the Policy Agendas Project (www.policyagendas.org), and supplementing these with new sources on social movements, each student will learn to develop an individual research project linking a social movement or professional community of their choice with developments in public policy over the past 50 years.

Assignments will include substantial class participation and weekly readings, short papers as well as an independent research paper and presentation. This will involve independent collection and analysis of data from the Agendas Project and from other sources, an oral presentation to the class (using Powerpoint), and a term paper. Such a term paper may then be a useful writing sample for graduate applications. The course is open to students at any level but is best suited for juniors and seniors.

Students interested in taking this course should contact either one of the instructors by email: Frankb@psu.edu or JXM516@psu.edu. Enrollment is limited. The course is designed and especially suited to students with some exposure to research methods and with an interest in developing their independent research and writing skills.