Middle Eastern State Formation in Comparative Perspective  
Professor Lisa Blaydes  
If political institutions are a key determinant of economic growth, can a better understanding of regional institutional history help to explain disparities in economic development across world regions? This project will explore political development of the Middle East from a long-term historical perspective. Students will also have the opportunity to examine related questions for other world regions. Student researchers will be responsible for reviewing literature in history and related fields, as well as creating and managing data sets based on historical records. Experience with data analysis and ArcGIS are helpful but not required. Careful bibliographic skills and an interest in the Middle East are required.

Forecasting Candidate Entry and Congressional Election Outcomes Using Supervised Machine Learning  
Professor Adam Bonica  
The 2016 presidential election highlighted the limitations of election polls in predicting election outcomes. I am developing an alternative approach to election forecasting, based on administrative data. The research will take advantage of detailed data on campaign contributions, electoral geography, and the personal characteristics and political histories of candidates. We will use past election results to train a supervised machine learning model to predict the outcomes of congressional elections. We will also build models to predict which candidates from a district are most likely to run for office. The work will be data intensive. Students will extend the database, which currently covers the election cycles between 1990 and 2014, through the 2016 elections. Students will also link candidates to their personal contribution records. Experience with SQL is preferred but not required. Most importantly, students will have the opportunity to work with and train machine learning models.

Mapping Militant Organizations  
Professor Martha Crenshaw  
The project identifies and analyzes militant groups in specific conflict theatres and produces a public interactive website, mappingmilitants.stanford.edu. Students will research and write individual profiles of the groups, using a standard format. They will also trace changes in relationships among the groups. Students should have excellent writing and research skills and be attentive to detail and accuracy. A computer science background would be helpful. The ability to take the initiative is most welcome. An interest in international security and the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, Africa, and south and central Asia is also important.

The Geography of the New Nationalism  
Professor Judith Goldstein  
This project seeks to measure the economic effects of the Great Recession on public attitudes toward nationalism and trade. Students will analyze a rich data set that includes seven waves of public opinion surveys and captures changes in the circumstances and attitudes of respondents. We will map when and why attitudes shifted across the US to help explain the apparent rise in populist sentiment. Applicants need to know how to program in R and be comfortable with statistical inference.
How Accountable Are International Organizations?
Professor Erica Gould
Critics have argued that international organizations suffer from a democratic deficit. They are not sufficiently accountable to states or domestic publics and, worse still, their activities may do more harm than good. In this project, I am examining how international organizations are controlled, including through formal decision-making rules, transparency and recent reforms designed to increase IO accountability. I am searching for two undergraduate research assistants who will assist with a combination of data collection/coding, qualitative research and quantitative data analysis. The ideal student will be detail-oriented, self-motivated and independent, as well as interested in international organizations. Given the variety of work, it would be useful for students to have either previous experience conducting research using Stanford libraries or coursework in statistics or both.

Global Populisms: Causes and Consequences
Professors Anna Grzymala-Busse and Michael McFaul
Populist parties and politicians have now gained support—and power—in many established democracies. The United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Poland, Hungary have all seen populist surges in the last few years—with the election of Donald Trump in the United States as perhaps the most striking of these gains. In this project, undergraduates will work with Professors McFaul and Grzymala-Busse to examine the factors contributing to the rise of populist movements, as well as their consequences and potential policy responses. A strong background in qualitative research and experience preparing bibliographies and citations is required. In addition, the ideal candidates will have the ability to manage databases, conduct basic quantitative analysis, and generate graphical representations of populist trends. Preference will be given to students familiar with Stata, R, and/or Python.

Climate, Geography, and the Wealth of Nations
Professor Stephen Haber
The purpose of this research project is to test the hypothesis that a large portion of variance in Gross Domestic Product across countries can be explained through differences in climate and geography. One important factor we are investigating is the frequency of aggregate weather shocks (destructive weather events capable of wiping out all food production in a market). We have developed a dataset on aggregate weather shocks at the 0.5 by 0.5 grid cell level for the entire planet since 1850. We now need to investigate whether this dataset captures the severity of actual, recorded historical droughts (e.g., the Dustbowl of the 1930s, the Great Famine of 1876-78 in India, the Northern Chinese Famine of 1876-79). Our research assistant(s) would have the opportunity to develop data analysis skills while working in ArcGIS and Stata, in addition to performing qualitative research on historic weather shocks.

Immigration Policy Lab
Professors Jens Hainmueller and David Laitin
Professors David Laitin and Jens Hainmueller are seeking research assistants to assist in the Immigration Policy Lab’s research on the impact of immigration policies in the United States. The Immigration Policy Lab has a number of projects underway, including a large-scale randomized study to assess the impact of naturalization in the United States and a multi-method study assessing the health impacts of deferred action for undocumented immigrants. The research assistants will be responsible for data collection (quantitative and qualitative), data analysis, and drafting literature reviews, as well as producing journal quality graphics and tables. Interest in immigration is a must, and a background in social science and statistics is preferred.
The Psychology of Americans' Political Decisions
Professor Jon Krosnick
Political psychology is an interdisciplinary enterprise blending psychology with the study of politics. For this project, you will join the Political Psychology Research Group, a team of undergraduates, graduate students, and other researchers led by Professor Jon Krosnick. We will explore what the American public thinks about global warming and what they want the federal government to do on the issue. We will also be investigating the forces that inspire some people to vote in national elections while others decline to participate, and the forces that shape voters' candidate choices. No special background is necessary for an undergrad to join our team, although comfort with mathematical/statistical write-ups and some experience with statistics would help you take on more challenging tasks. Students who have statistical skills may be able to conduct original analyses of existing data to write papers for publication.

The Politics of Energy and Climate Change
Professor Philip Lipscy
The Research Assistant will assist Professor Phillip Lipscy on a book manuscript on the politics of energy and climate change. The primary tasks for the RA will be to research and summarize the background for specific legislation and international agreements related to energy policy and climate change and to collect and analyze data. Any of the following would be helpful but are not required: prior coursework in political science or economics, prior experience with data collection, and familiarity with spreadsheet or statistical programs.

Stalin and Europe
Norman Naimark
This project covers the early Cold War period, 1945-1953, and focuses on a series of case studies of the interaction between Soviet foreign policy aims and actions and the domestic political dynamics of European countries. The case studies include: Finland (1944-47), Denmark (the Bornholm crisis, 1945), Germany (the Berlin Blockade), Italy (Elections of 1948), Austria (State Treaty), Albania (the Yugoslav split, 1944-48), and Poland (the Gomulka problem). The idea of the project, which will result in a book, is to assess the relative flexibility of Soviet policy in face of the goals of European political parties and movements. Ideally research assistants will know one or more of the relevant languages (Russian, Polish, German, Italian, Finnish, Albanian, Serbian, and Danish) in order to work in primary sources. Translated sources are also a possibility.

The Ideological Contradictions of NIMBYism: Explaining Local Opposition to Affordable Housing
Professor Clayton Nall
This project investigates how citizens respond to new housing proposals in their neighborhoods and communities. Students will contribute in three ways. First, they will assist with a literature review about American housing policy. Second, they will assist in the testing, deployment, administration, and analysis of a new geographically targeted survey examining how residents in the immediate vicinity of affordable housing projects respond to such projects as they are being proposed, and how they adapt after projects have been built and are no longer the subject of political controversy. This part of the project will entail work in GIS, R, Excel, and survey research. Finally, students will work with local government documents and open public records related to housing controversies. All students with an interest in urban politics, transportation and housing, geography, and/or American politics are encouraged to apply. While previous experience with GIS and some coursework in math or statistics would be appreciated, students will receive training in ArcGIS, R, government documents research, and other project-specific skills.
The Soviet Union, Iran, and the Disintegration of Afghanistan
Professor Robert Rakove
Much is known of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979; relatively little is known about the longer history of the Cold War in Afghanistan. An undergraduate research assistant, fluent in Russian or Persian, with a deep interest in either Iranian or Russian history or politics, is sought for a summer research project. The research assistant will be asked to research, analyze, and translate Soviet or Iranian records pertaining to Afghanistan. Our shared objective will be understanding the roots of the disintegration of Afghanistan in the late 1970s, examining the respective roles of Iran, the Soviet Union, the United States and local Afghan actors.

Mapping the 2016 Election
Professor Jonathan Rodden
County-level maps of the 2016 election are ubiquitous and fascinating. They can also be very misleading, since they mask considerable heterogeneity within counties. County-level data can easily lead us to the wrong conclusions. For instance, county-level data would lead us to miss the strong negative correlation between population density and turnout that is apparent in the precinct-level data. The research team will collect 2016 precinct-level data from county election administrators, merge it with past precinct results, and, most importantly, connect the precinct-level results with geo-spatial boundaries to allow for the creation of fine-grained electoral maps. We will focus in particular on Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Michigan. After the data are assembled, we will be in a position to explore various hypotheses about the evolving geography of turnout and support for the two major parties in the period from 2000 to the present.

Just War Doctrine, Public Opinion, and Nuclear Weapons Use
Professor Scott Sagan
Professor Sagan seeks research assistants to help with a project on “Just War Doctrine, Public Opinion, and Nuclear Weapons Use.” Students will help analyze data from public opinion and elite surveys and survey experiments about potential nuclear use scenarios conducted in the U.S., Israel, and the United Kingdom. Background knowledge about nuclear weapons from Stanford courses such as Technology and National Security, International Relations, or the Rules of War will be a plus, though all interested and motivated students will be considered. Students must write clearly and quickly, work cooperatively with others on the research team to finish group projects promptly, and be interested in contemporary issues of war and peace.

The Geography of Separatist Violence
Professor Kenneth Schultz
Research assistance is needed for a project on mapping separatist conflicts within states. The goal of the research is to understand the strategies employed by violent separatist groups by analyzing where and how they target their violence. To do this, we will develop maps of the contested regions and link them to data on the location of attacks. Research assistance is needed for a variety of tasks including (1) identifying and collecting maps and other documents that describe in detail separatist groups’ territorial claims, (2) using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software to convert this information into digital maps, (3) collecting physical and demographic data about the disputed regions, and (4) identifying groups engaged in separatist violence. Training in the use of GIS software will be provided, but applicants should demonstrate a willingness and ability to master new computer programs. Strong library research skills and attentiveness to detail are a must. Foreign language skills would be useful but are not required.
The CIA Declassified
Professor Amy Zegart

This project examines intelligence challenges in the 21st century. The undergraduate research assistant will work in a team with Dr. Amy Zegart and graduate students on a book entitled The CIA Declassified. The book will equip readers with an overview of intelligence basics (what US intelligence agencies do and how they do it) and a balanced discussion of intelligence controversies such as interrogation techniques, surveillance, and analysis of Iraqi WMD. The undergraduate research assistant would be responsible for conducting literature reviews for specific chapters; compiling information from publicly available sources; and helping to design, field, and analyze a national survey about public knowledge of intelligence and attitudes toward intelligence controversies. Strong candidates will have outstanding academic research, writing, and organizational skills; a deep interest in American foreign policy; a willingness and ability to distill large amounts of information quickly; and exceptional initiative and flexibility.