

## RESEARCH CLINIC

### General information

Supervisor:	Brandon C. Zicha
Title of clinic:	Communitarianism, Conservatism, Pluralism and Social Bonds in Social Science- Towards a New Institutional Synthesis
Number of students:	2
Major ( <i>if applicable and approved by the Major Convener</i> ):	none
(Pre)requisites ( <i>if applicable</i> ):	Institutions of Governance and Development, Decision Making Processes.  Foundational Texts in GED desired but not required.

### Research context

Conservative thinkers have long worried about the fraying of social bonds inherent in the expanding liberal order. Most social sciences are largely founded implicitly on liberal assumptions and have developed in recent decades a more homogenous and progressive political culture. However, with recent developments of ‘late stage liberalism’ we find ourselves in a situation where fraying social systems are increasingly targeted as key flashpoints of pathology ranging from the personal (loneliness and suicide), to the macroscopic (the ‘end of globalization’). Concerns about cultural hegemony, and cultural imperialism are back and ‘culture war’ is a hot topic.

This clinic aims to explore the possibility of reintegrating a conservative-inspired pluralist agenda more explicitly into positive political economy by nesting it in the New Institutionalism.

To do this the clinic would be focused on reading, mapping, and synthesizing literatures from multiple fields, pointing out gaps, and building a research programme.

### Students’ tasks and activities

Students will work with the supervisor to collect, read, and synthesize the following literatures across disciplines with an aim of working towards a new institutional synthesis and research programme:

- 1.) Positive theoretical literature on the relevance of social bonds for important political phenomena like social trust and support for democracy.
- 2.) Normative literature at the intersections of public policy
- 3.) Theoretical work on the various schools of thought relevant to the project.