



9151 West Loomis Rd
Franklin, Wisconsin 53132
414.425.8214 FAX: 414.425.9498
www.FranklinPublicLibrary.org

news release

November 1, 2016

Franklin Public Library Welcomes the Return of the Great Decisions Series

FRANKLIN, WI – Franklin Public Library is proud to announce the return of the Great Decisions Discussion Series. This third annual event will be Wednesday evenings February 1 through March 22 at 6:30pm in the Fadrow Room.

A project of the Foreign Policy Association (FPA), Great Decisions is a grassroots, face-to-face series designed to bring international issues to our attention and highlight how they affect our lives here in America. Tens of thousands of participants take part in these discussions nationwide each year.

To offer the community a comprehensive educational program, the library will host all eight foreign policy topics provided by the FPA in a combination of guest scholar lectures and documentary viewings followed by roundtable discussions. The Great Decisions Discussion Series is possible thanks to the generous sponsorship of Franklin Public Library Foundation, the Jerome J. and Dorothy H. Holz Family Foundation, and Wisconsin Public Radio.

February 1: *Saudi Arabia in Transition* with Beth Dougherty, PhD - Beloit College, Department Chair, International Relations Professor.

As Saudi Arabia struggles to adjust to the drastic decline in oil revenue, Deputy Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman attempts to boldly transform the country and shift more power to the younger generation. At the same time, many countries including the U.S. point out the lack of democracy, women's rights and human rights in Saudi Arabia, and blame its promotion of Wahhabism, an extremely conservative version of Islam, for creating jihadists. What does the future of Saudi Arabia-U.S. relations look like? (fpa.org)

Dr. Dougherty is Manager Professor of International Relations and Professor of Political Science at Beloit College. She received her MA and PhD in Foreign Affairs from the University of Virginia. She has chaired the Beloit College's international relations program since 1996 and is currently the chair of the African Studies minor program." (Beloit.edu)

February 8: *U.S. Foreign Policy and Petroleum* – DVD and Roundtable Discussion Event

What is the effect of U.S. petroleum security on foreign policy? For 45 years, the country has alternated between periods of energy security and insecurity, sometimes able to wield petroleum as a useful instrument of foreign policy, sometimes not. Despite the so-called "energy revolution," the U.S. today is not disentangled from foreign dependence and global

trends. In order to be successful, policymakers must recognize both petroleum security circumstances and patterns in the relationship between petroleum and foreign policy. (fpa.org)

February 15: *Trade and Politics* with Martin Farrell, PhD – Ripon College, Professor Emeritus

The U.S. political mood toward trade has soured. Metrics used to gauge economic strength—Gross Domestic Product and balance of trade—have not kept up with the realities of modern manufacturing. Obtaining an accurate picture of U.S. economic stature requires a critique of those numbers. Only then can the U.S. develop appropriate policy solutions for the challenges at hand. (fpa.org)

Dr. Farrell earned his M.A. in international relations and Ph.D. in political science from University of Chicago. His scholarly interests are Global Political Economy, Politics and Film, Chinese politics and U.S.-China relations, European Politics, and Latin American Politics. (ripon.edu)

February 22: *Latin America's Political Pendulum* – DVD and Roundtable Discussion Event

The pendulum of Latin American politics is swinging rightward once again. Yet as the “pink tide” recedes, the forces of change have more to do with socioeconomics than ideology. Dramatic economic and political crises coincided in Brazil and Venezuela. Still, the final result for Latin America may be the emergence of centrist, pragmatic modes of governance, and with them, opportunities for the U.S. to improve relations. The new administration must look beyond the neoliberal model of the 1990s and develop an approach fit for the 21st century. (fpa.org)

March 1: *The Future of Europe* with Pablo Toral, PhD – Beloit College, Department Chair, Associate Professor of International Relations and Environmental Studies

The outcome of the United Kingdom’s referendum on European Union membership sent shockwaves around the globe. The EU has helped secure peace in Europe for the past 70 years; now it faces an uncertain future. Amid a refugee crisis, lingering financial recession, and the constant specter of terrorism, unity seems more imperative than ever. What will post-Brexit Europe look like, and how can U.S. foreign policy adapt? (fpa.org)

Pablo Toral is Associate Professor of International Relations and Environmental Studies at Beloit College. His scholarly interests include international political economy, environmental politics, international relations theory, international governance and development, with a focus on Latin America and Europe. Pablo received his PhD in International Relations from Florida International University. (Beloit.edu)

March 8: *Prospects for Afghanistan and Pakistan* – DVD and Roundtable Discussion Event

Major internal conflict has plagued Afghanistan for four decades. The U.S. has conducted military operations in the country nearly continuously since 9/11. Today, war with the Taliban persists, and relations between the U.S. and Pakistan have gradually worsened. As his time in office drew to a close, President Obama limited further withdrawal of U.S. troops from

Afghanistan. Will the new administration maintain the status quo, completely reverse the Obama administration drawdown, or withdraw completely? (fpa.org)

March 15: *Conflict in the South China Sea* with Dimitri D. Lazo, PhD – Alverno College, Professor Emeritus

The South China Sea is a locus of competing territorial claims, and China its most vocal claimant. Beijing's interest and China's increased naval presence has intensified country tensions in recent years. Despite rising international pressure, including an unfavorable ruling by the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, China staunchly defends its policies in the region. Preventing tensions from boiling over is a matter of careful diplomacy. (fpa.org)

Dr. Lazo is the founding director of the International and Intercultural Center and Emeritus Professor of History at Alverno College. He specializes in the history of American foreign policy and in Asian history. He holds a PhD in History from the University of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign. He has also taught at Dhaka University in Bangladesh, Catholic University of Korea in Seoul, South Korea, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, and Carthage College. (alverno.edu)

March 22: *Nuclear Security* – DVD and Roundtable Discussion Event

Nuclear nonproliferation was a top priority for the Obama administration. While the Iran Deal was a diplomatic victory toward this end, major threats persist from both state and non-state actors. North Korea, Russia, India, and Pakistan continue to challenge nonproliferation efforts. The possibility that terrorists will carry out an attack using a “dirty bomb” made from captured nuclear materials looks increasingly real. (fpa.org)

To supplement each topic, Franklin Public Library will have Great Discussion Briefing Books available for check out and for purchase. As with all Franklin Public Library programs, this event is free and open to the public. For more information on the series or how you can help sponsor the program, visit the library at 9151 W. Loomis Rd., call 414-425-8214, or log on to www.FranklinPublicLibrary.org.

About Franklin Public Library

Franklin Public Library is open seven days a week: Monday thru Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Sunday, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Programs at Franklin Public Library are open to all members of the public, and all Milwaukee County residents are eligible to receive a Franklin Public Library card. For more information about Franklin Public Library's programs and services, visit the library at 9151 W. Loomis Rd., call 414-425-8214, or log on to FranklinPublicLibrary.org.

###