



9151 West Loomis Rd  
Franklin, Wisconsin 53132  
414.425.8214 FAX: 414.425.9498  
[www.FranklinPublicLibrary.org](http://www.FranklinPublicLibrary.org)

news release

December 21, 2017

## Open Your Mind with the Great Decisions Discussion Series

FRANKLIN, WI – Franklin Public Library is proud to announce the return of the Great Decisions Discussion Series in 2018. This fourth annual event will be Wednesday evenings February 7 through March 28 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 7:** *Turkey: A Partner in Crisis* with Beth Dougherty, PhD - Beloit College, Department Chair, International Relations Professor.

Of all NATO allies, Turkey represents the most daunting challenge for the Trump administration. In the wake of a failed military coup in July 2016, the autocratic trend in Ankara took a turn for the worse. One year later, an overwhelming majority of the population considers the United States to be their country's greatest security threat. Even more important than its place on the map is what Turkey symbolically represents as the most institutionally Westernized Muslim country in the world. ([fpa.org](http://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](http://Beloit.edu))

**February 14:** *South Africa's Fragile Democracy* – DVD and Roundtable Discussion Event

The African National Congress (ANC) party has governed South Africa since the end of apartheid in 1994, but the party today suffers from popular frustration over official corruption and economic stagnation. It faces growing threats from both left and right opposition parties even as intraparty divisions surface. A weaker ANC could lead to political fragmentation in this relatively new democracy. ([fpa.org](http://fpa.org))

**February 21:** *China and America: The New Geopolitical Equation* with Dimitri D. Lazo, PhD – Alverno College, Professor Emeritus

In the last 15 years China has implemented a wide-ranging strategy of economic outreach and expansion of all its national capacities, including military and diplomatic. Where the United States has taken a step back from multilateral trade agreements and discarded the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), China has made inroads through efforts like the Belt and Road Initiative and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). What are Beijing's geopolitical objectives? What leadership and political conditions in each society influence growing Sino-American tensions? What policies might Washington adopt to address this circumstance? ([fpa.org](http://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](http://alverno.edu))

**February 28:** *Global Health: Progress and Challenges* – DVD and Roundtable Discussion Event

The collective action of countries, communities, and organizations over the last 30 years has saved millions of lives around the world. Yet terrible inequalities in health and wellbeing persist. The world now faces a mix of old and new health challenges, including the preventable deaths of mothers and children, continuing epidemics of infectious diseases, and rising rates of chronic disease. We also remain vulnerable to the emergence of new and deadly pandemics. For these reasons, the next several decades will be just as important—if not more so—than the last in determining wellbeing across nations. ([fpa.org](http://fpa.org))

**March 7:** *The Waning of Pax Americana* with Martin Farrell, PhD – Ripon College, Professor Emeritus

During the first months of Donald Trump's presidency the U.S. began a historic shift away from Pax Americana, the liberal international order that was established in the wake of World War II. Since 1945, Pax Americana has promised peaceful international relations and an open economy, bolstered by U.S. military power. In championing "America First" isolationism and protectionism, President Trump has shifted the political mood toward selective U.S. engagement, where foreign commitments are limited to areas of vital U.S. interest and economic nationalism is the order of the day. ([fpa.org](http://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](http://ripon.edu))

**March 14:** *U.S. Global Engagement and the Military* – DVD and Roundtable Discussion Event

The global power balance is rapidly evolving, leaving the United States at a turning point with respect to its level of engagement and the role of its military. Some argue for an "America First" paradigm with a large military to ensure security, while others call for a more assertive posture

overseas. Some advocate for a restoration of American multilateral leadership and a strengthened role for diplomacy; still others envision a restrained U.S. role, involving a more limited military. How does the military function in today's international order and how might it be balanced with diplomatic and foreign assistance capabilities? ([fpa.org](http://fpa.org))

**March 21:** *Russia's Foreign Policy* with Martin Farrell, PhD – Ripon College, Professor Emeritus

Under President Vladimir Putin Russia is projecting an autocratic model of governance abroad and working to undermine the influence of liberal democracies, namely along Russia's historical borderlands. Russia caused an international uproar in 2016 when it was it became known that they interfered in the U.S. presidential contest. But Putin's foreign policy toolkit includes other instruments, from alliances with autocrats to proxy wars with the U.S. in Georgia, Ukraine, and Syria. How does Putin conceive of national interests, and how does he maintain support with his constituents? How should the United States respond to Putin's foreign policy ambitions? ([fpa.org](http://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](http://ripon.edu))

**March 28:** *Media and Foreign Policy* – DVD and Roundtable Discussion Event

State and non-state actors today must maneuver a complex and rapidly evolving media landscape. Conventional journalism now competes with user-generated content. Official channels of communication can be circumvented through social media. Foreign policy is tweeted from the White House and "fake news" has entered the zeitgeist. Cyberwarfare, hacking, and misinformation pose complex security threats. How are actors using media to pursue and defend their interests in the international arena? What are the implications for U.S. policy? ([fpa.org](http://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](http://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](http://FranklinPublicLibrary.org).

###