Torture, like tyranny, war and genocide, pre-dates human history. The Cold War’s end seemed to herald growing world peace, more rule of law, and increasing civility in politics. But 9/11 and its aftermath shattered these illusions and torture, once thought to be a barbaric relic practiced only by a few rogue regimes, has made a dramatic comeback. Debates about whether it is ever moral, lawful or even useful to use torture have led even some civil libertarians to advocate “torture warrants” in certain cases.

**POLS 4499/5599 Torture: Law and Politics** will examine

- the lasting impacts of torture on victims, civil society and the development of democratic-republican norms of justice and governance
- the growth of national and international prohibitions on torture
- the resurgence in the use of torture under various guises
- "lawyer wars" and "non-coercive interrogation techniques"
- the history of torture, its aims, and its methods

**Strappado**: Most common interrogation tool of 14th-17th centuries

**Water-boarding**: Latest version of millennia-old water torture for purposes of interrogation

**Shabach Position**: Hooded prisoner is forced to sit immobile for hours in position creating great pain in lower back. Leaves no visible marks.