

COURSES FOR POLITICAL SCIENCE

Political Science Courses

PSC101 Intro American Politics

SB

Hours 3

Survey of the principles, political institutions, and practices of American national, state, and local politics. Elucidation of how people can affect government processes and decisions, and how government processes and policies affect people.

Social and Behavioral Sciences

PSC202 Political Science Methods

Hours 3

Introduction to the conduct of political inquiry and methods of political research.

PSC203 Comparative Politics

Hours 3

Theoretical approaches to the comparative study of national political systems.

PSC204 International Relations

Hours 3

Survey of the evolution of the modern state system and the basic forces in international relations.

PSC205 Political Theory

Hours 3

Survey of fundamental concepts in political theory such as liberty, equality, and authority.

PSC206 Public Administration

Hours 3

Study of the administrative principles and practices in the areas of organization, personnel management, budgeting, government regulation, and democratic controls.

PSC211 State & Local Govt

Hours 3

Study of the institutions and functions of American state and local governments and their relationship to the political process.

PSC311 Pol Party & Elections

Hours 3

Activities of parties and pressure groups in American politics. Attention is given to the social composition, organization, finance, and nominating processes of parties.

PSC312 Amer Legislative Syst

Hours 3

Analysis of the politics and processes of the U.S. Congress, including its Constitutional origins, evolution, current structures and rules, elections, and relationships with the public and other political actors.

PSC313 The American Executive

Hours 3

Examination of the U.S. Presidency, including its Constitutional origins and historical evolution; current structure, selection, and powers; and relationships with the broader executive bureaucracy, Congress, and the public.

PSC314 Amer Judicial System

Hours 3

Introductory analysis of judicial organization, processes, and behavior, with emphasis on the institutional characteristics of the courts.

PSC315 The Bramble Bush

Hours 3

Law school is often portrayed as an incredibly challenging endeavor. Law school brings together the smartest students from colleges and universities and pits them in an intense, often times, aggressive environment. From the famed Socratic Method of instruction to quite literally learning Latin terms and phrases and discerning what language in opinions really matters, law school challenges both the mind and the will of those who attend it. Significant for this course, law school will refine the way that one thinks, writes, speaks, and lives. This course aims to prepare its students for the academic, social, and emotional rigor of law school.

PSC316 Southern Politics

Hours 3

Examination of the party system of the Southern states in terms of its origin, nature, distribution of power, and impact on national politics.

PSC318 Consttn Law Limits Gov Power

Hours 3

Study of the constitutional foundations of federalism and the separation of powers, with emphasis on the role of the Supreme Court.

Prerequisite(s): PSC 101

PSC319 Con Law Civ Rts and Libs

Hours 3

Study of the Constitution's protections for civil rights and civil liberties, and the Supreme Court's interpretations of them.

Prerequisite(s): PSC 101

PSC320 Special Studies In PSC

SP

Hours 1-3

Supervised independent reading and research. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 hours, with permission of the department.

Special Topics Course

PSC321 Special Topics In PSC

SP

Hours 3

Course content varies from offering to offering. May be repeated for a maximum of 12 hours, with permission of the department.

Special Topics Course

PSC322 Special Topics in American Politics

SP

Hours 3

This course focuses on aspects of US political institutions, attitudes, and/or behavior not typically covered in depth in the department's regular course offerings in American politics. Specific offerings will vary by semester and instructor.

Special Topics Course

PSC323 Special Topics in Comparative Politics

SP

Hours 3

This course covers politics in a country or region not typically covered in depth in the department's regular course offerings, or involves a cross-national analysis of a political institution, issue, policy, or behavior not typically addressed in our regular comparative politics courses. Offerings vary by instructor and semester.

Special Topics Course

PSC324 Special Topics in International Relations

SP

Hours 3

This course addresses aspects of international relations (e.g., diplomacy, trade, conflict, and/or international organizations) not typically covered in depth in the department's regular IR course offerings. Specific offerings vary by semester and instructor. Students must consult the International Studies program director to ascertain whether and/or how a particular edition of this course might apply to the INST major or minor.

Special Topics Course

PSC325 Special Topics in Political Theory

SP

Hours 3

This course addresses theorists, issues, cultures, and/or historical eras not typically covered in depth in the Political Science Department's regular course offerings in Political Theory. Specific topics will vary by instructor and semester.

Special Topics Course

PSC326 Special Topics in Public Administration/Policy

SP

Hours 3

This course addresses issues and/or substantive areas within Public Administration and/or Public Policy that are not covered in depth in the Department's regular course offerings. Specific offerings will vary by semester and instructor. Applicability of specific editions of this course to the Public Policy Minor depends on evaluation by the Coordinator of the Public Policy Minor.

Special Topics Course

PSC330 Democratization

W

Hours 3

Examination of democratization processes and outcomes in different areas of the world, as well as success and failure in institutionalizing fully democratic systems. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Prerequisite(s): Sophomore standing or permission of the instructor

Writing

PSC331 Politics of Developing Nations

Hours 3

This course explores political and economic development within the regions of Latin America, Asia, Africa, and the Middle East.

Prerequisite(s): None

Prerequisite(s) with concurrency: None

PSC332 Politics of Latin America

Hours 3

This course will examine Latin American political and economic developments throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries.

Prerequisite(s): PSC 203 would be helpful.

Prerequisite(s) with concurrency: None

PSC334 Government Politics West Europ

Hours 3

Analysis of the democracies of Western Europe. Attention is given to participation, societal cleavages, elections, parties, government institutions, policy making, and the European Union.

PSC336 African Politics

W

Hours 3

This course introduces students to the politics of contemporary Africa. It challenges the dominant representations of the continent as conflict prone, economically underdeveloped, and political unstable. Instead, the course presents Africa as a dynamic region comprised of 54 independent states with diverse political and economic realities. Students will explore core themes such as the politics of the state, politics of identity, economic and political development, the politics of conflict and cooperation, and the role of Africa in global affairs. These themes are examined through a variety of learning materials and collaborative-learning methods that expose students to dominant theoretical approaches and political science methodologies. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Prerequisite(s): N/A

Prerequisite(s) with concurrency: N/A

Writing

PSC337 Politics of the Middle East

Hours 3

This course is designed to introduce advanced undergraduate students to contemporary Middle East politics. The course adopts a thematic approach to the study of Middle East politics. Important themes and questions in comparative politics will guide analysis of the complex political realities in the contemporary Middle East. The course begins with a historical overview of the emergence of the modern state system in the contemporary Middle East. The rest of the course draws on the tools of comparative politics to address some of the major issues facing the Middle East which include, but are not limited to, authoritarianism, political participation, identity politics, economic development, the political economy of oil, Islamist social and political movements, and the politics of gender.

Prerequisite(s): PSC 203 is recommended but not required.

PSC338 Mexican Politics

Hours 3

This course will examine the political history of Mexico and will also provide a survey of contemporary issues in Mexican politics.

PSC340 Civil Wars

Hours 3

This course covers a variety of topics related to civil war using a theoretical and scientific perspective. Topics include the distribution, onset, outcome, recurrence and duration of civil wars, and the management of civil war through third party mediation and negotiated settlements.

PSC343 Authoritarianism

Hours 3

The surprising persistence of authoritarian regimes since the end of the Cold War has inspired a major new literature in comparative politics on how non-democracy works. This course will address a number of important questions related to the functioning of authoritarian regimes and will explore authoritarian politics in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, Asia, and the post-Soviet countries.

Prerequisite(s): None; PSC 203 is recommended.

PSC344 The Israel-Palestine Conflict

Hours 3

How are we to make sense of the present-day conflict between Israelis and Palestinians? How do the parties involved see that conflict, and how does it fit into our own conceptions of religion and politics, war and peace, place and space? Why does it seem so intractable? Why does it occupy such prominence in contemporary political discourse? Through an examination of primary and secondary historical texts, literary works, films and artwork, we will explore the origins and unfolding of this conflict both internally (ie, as emerging from within distinct social-political moments for the people involved) and externally (in relation to broader geopolitical and economic developments). As the conflict remains ongoing, we will strive for compassionate, nuanced engagement; to understand rather than judge; and to find hope for new possibilities.

Prerequisite(s): Background in Middle Eastern politics is not required, but will be of benefit

PSC345 Issues in Global Governance

Hours 3

Global governance refers to institutions, regimes and rules that regulate the conduct of global politics in multiple areas. This class focuses on the challenges facing global governance regimes, such as demands for reform, fragmentation, the establishment of alternative institutions, regionalism and normative resistance. Students will learn about how these challenges impact multiple domains of global politics, including the UN Security Council, the global economy, international law, security, health, and the environment.

PSC353 Modern Political Thought

Hours 3

Key political theorists from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Assigned texts may vary, but typically include works by Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, J. S. Mill, Marx, and Nietzsche. Topics include conceptions of a just society, the state, the value of political participation, liberty, and equality.

PSC361 Fiscal Policy & Budget

Hours 3

Study of governmental revenue and expenditure policies with emphasis on the budget as a method of administrative and fiscal control.

PSC362 Organization Theory

Hours 3

An examination of traditional and contemporary organizational theory and its application to public administration.

PSC364 African Amer & Polit Sys

Hours 3

A historical and contemporary assessment of the political, social and economic development of African-Americans in the American political system.

PSC365 Introduction to Environmental Policy

Hours 3

This introductory environmental policy course reviews major developments in environmental regulation in the United States, considered in a global context. Readings examine the evolution of U.S. environmental policy, the form and function of social institutions used to govern human-environment interactions, including markets, state and civil society, and conventions, norms, and morals. U.S. and U.N. legal structures, agencies, and NGOs are addressed, with attention to comparative regulatory frameworks. The "new institutional approach," "resource regimes," and various incremental and transformative institutional reforms are discussed. The impact of economic and cultural factors—including class, race, gender, and location—on resource use and other policy decisions affecting the physical and built environments will be explored. Evolving institutional approaches to energy use, such as sustainability, "wise use," adaptive management, and resilience are examined. This course is cross-listed with NEW 365.

Prerequisite(s): No prerequisites are required.

PSC369 Social Movements and U.S. Politics

Hours 3

In this course we will examine the causes and consequences of social movements in U.S. politics. Although social scientists have defined "social movements" in somewhat different ways, we will rely on a relatively simple definition that reflects the shared elements of all of the definitions found in the literature. Social movements are collective, organized efforts of non-state actors to promote or resist change, that rely in whole or in part on unconventional political tactics. Throughout U.S. history, it is difficult to identify major examples of policy change that were not spurred by social movement activity. Yet, social movements remain the least studied form of political influence within the discipline of political science. Therefore, much of the material from this course will draw from the fields of sociology and history, where the majority of the research on social movements can be found.

PSC370 American Public Policy

Hours 3

This course provides a broad overview of public policy in the United States. In addition to learning about the policy process and policy analysis, we will examine the historical context and contemporary status of several policy issues.

Prerequisite(s): None

Prerequisite(s) with concurrency: None

PSC395 Civil Law and Judicial Advocacy

Hours 3

This course is designed to permit dedicated instructional time to special issues in the current year's American Mock Trial Association competition problem. The instructional time will be spent both on examination of specific legal issues and questions present in the case and practical exercises, meant to sharpen individual and team trial advocacy skills.

PSC396 Criminal Law and Judicial Advocacy

Hours 3

This course is designed to focus on special issues in the current year's American Mock Trial Association competition problem. The course will focus on both on examination of specific legal issues and questions present in the criminal case and practical exercises, meant to sharpen individual and team trial advocacy skills.

Prerequisite(s): Members of the Mock Trial Association only

PSC399 Internship In PSC

Hours 1-6

Students may receive credit for internships they secure in offices, agencies or organizations related to Political Science. Students must secure the agreement of a faculty member to supervise the internship.

PSC411 Public Opinion

Hours 3

The formation, distribution, structure, properties, and techniques of measuring public opinions in the United States.

PSC413 Amer Foreign Policy

Hours 3

Examination of the forces and processes affecting United States foreign relations. Attention is also given to the content and problems of contemporary American foreign policy.

PSC414 Foreign Policy Decisionmaking

Hours 3

This is an overview of the key components of Foreign Policy Decision Making (FPDM). Students are expected to learn the theories and models of FPDM and be able to apply them to case studies of foreign decisions. This course is distinguished from PSC 413 by specifically focusing on how and why decisions are made.

Prerequisite(s): None; PSC 204 is recommended

Prerequisite(s) with concurrency: None

PSC417 Gender and Politics

Hours 3

The objective of this course is to understand how gender influences women's representation and women's role in the electoral process, both as voters as well as candidates and office holders. We will discuss the concept of gender and cultural norms of womanhood and the way they impact women in the political arena. The political representation of women and their interests, as well as women's experiences as citizens, candidates, and elected officials, cannot be understood without this contextual lens. Over the course of this class, we will investigate women's participation, the conceptualization of women's interests, women's portrayal in the media and women's effectiveness as legislators, both on the state as well as the congressional level in the US. PSC 101, highly recommended.

PSC421 Seminar in Political Science

SP, W

Hours 3

May be repeated for a maximum of 6 hours. Selected problems in various areas of political science. Topics, instructors, and political science subfields covered will vary by instructor and semester. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Special Topics Course, Writing

PSC422 Seminar Political Science

SP

Hours 3

May be repeated for a maximum of 6 hours. Selected problems in various areas in political science. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.

Special Topics Course

PSC434 Internatl Polit Econom

Hours 3

The course deals with the international trade and finance regimes, foreign economic policy, transnational corporations in the world economy, North/South and East/West relations, and the implications of economic interdependence.

PSC435 War And Peace

Hours 3

Study of the causes of war at the individual, societal and international levels of analysis with particular emphasis on international relations research using the scientific method.

Prerequisite(s): PSC 204 or PSC 413

PSC439 Politics and Policy of the United Kingdom

W

Hours 3

This course will introduce you to the government, politics and policy of the United Kingdom (UK). Topics will include political history, parties, interest groups, elections, governing institutions (Parliament, the Prime Minister and Cabinet), regional issues including Northern Ireland, Britain's process of leaving the European Union ("Brexit"), and a number of specific policy areas. After a brief survey of the political history of Britain, the course will focus on post-WWII politics and policy, from the creation of the National Health Service and the growth of the welfare state in the early post-war years, to the "Thatcher revolution" of the 1980s and its emphasis on free market principles, Prime Minister Tony Blair's "Third Way" policies, the coalition government of 2010-15, and the current minority government. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Prerequisite(s): PSC 101 and junior class status, or permission of instructor

Writing

PSC441 Terrorism and Political Islam

W

Hours 3

This is an introductory course into two distinct subjects: terrorism and Islamist movements. The main aim of the course is to show when and why Islamists turn violent, but it also emphasizes that not all Islamists are terrorists. The first part discusses correlates of terrorism, including agents, strategies, and ideologies of terrorist organizations as well as the causal underpinnings of terrorist group formation. The course's second part highlights varieties in Islamist organization, namely social movements, opposition groups, state actors, and militant organizations. The final part of the course focuses on empirical examples of Islamist terrorist organizations: Hamas, Hezbollah, Al-Qaeda, and the Islamic State. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Writing

PSC442 Internatl Conflict

Hours 3

Examination of the various kinds of violent conflicts in which nation-states become involved.

PSC443 Comparative Pub Policy

W

Hours 3

Analysis of domestic policy in advanced industrialized democracies, looking at both policy process and policy substance. Attention will be given to the questions of how and why policies differ across countries, and how one might evaluate policy performance cross-nationally. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.

Writing

PSC444 International Organizations

Hours 3

This course focuses on understanding and analyzing why states create international institutions and why the effects of these institutions vary. Divided into two sections, students will begin with conceptual and theoretical analysis of why states create international institutions and why such institutions do or do not produce desired outcomes. Next, students will examine how international governance has evolved in four different issue areas – peace and security, the international environment, and human rights – and what the current challenges are.

Prerequisite(s): PSC 204

PSC445 Humanitarianism

W

Hours 3

Humanitarian action, that is the desire to relieve the suffering of distant strangers, is an idea that is centuries old. And yet, this idea has always been tangled up with ethical and political questions: What are the bases of the desire to help distant strangers? Is there a responsibility or an obligation to help strangers in need? How do we know when humanitarian action is required? In a context of multiple emergencies, which strangers become recipients of humanitarian action and aid? Are there moral and ethical bases of choosing or is it all political?

Writing

PSC446 Political Economy of Security

Hours 3

The course will cover a variety of topics that link security and political economy. Writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course.

PSC449 International Relations of the Middle East

W

Hours 3

This course surveys the evolution of regional geopolitics in the Middle East. It traces how colonialism, state building, and nationalism formed the Middle East regional system and how domestic political struggles, external interventions, and geopolitical rivalries have defined shifts in state and societal insecurity and the dynamics of the regional order. Special attention is given to US diplomatic and military interventions in the region, their regional consequences, and state and societal opposition to US influence in the region. The course also considers the "new Arab wars" in the wake of the Arab Uprisings, the rise of new regional powers and non-state actors, and current debates about the future evolution of regional politics and the role of the US in the region. PSC 204 is recommended before taking this course, but not required. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student in Political Science or International Relations will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other aspects of the course.

Writing

PSC452 American Political Thought

Hours 3

Investigates primary sources and secondary literature covering the origin and direction of the U.S. political ideology. Topics typically include liberalism, civic republicanism, and debates between contemporary scholars concerning American exceptionalism.

PSC462 Public Personnel Admin

Hours 3

Study of the American public personnel system at the local, state, and national level. Emphasis is on such areas as the political activity of government employees, the application of the principle of equal opportunity and affirmative action, and the role of collective bargaining in government.

PSC464 The Politics of Health Policy

Hours 3

We examine health policy at all levels of government, with particular focus on the interdependence of the national, state, and local governments to provide health services. The political environment of health policymaking and implementation is explored. Health policies such as Medicaid, Medicare, and the Affordable Care Act will be examined, as well as other policies that impact health. We examine the policymaking process in general, applying health policy to the concepts and theories. We compare the US health care system with systems in other industrialized democracies.

Prerequisite(s): Approval of academic advisor and at least junior status.

PSC465 The Politics of Sex

Hours 3

There are three key components to this course: 1) the status of women in politics and society, 2) the role of social movements and the Supreme Court regarding the status of women in politics and society, and 3) a substantive policy issue related to the politics of sex determined by class vote (possibilities include reproductive rights, marriage equality, sexual assault on campus, and others).

Prerequisite(s): Junior status.

PSC466 The Politics of Poverty

W

Hours 3

In this course we will examine one of the most enduring social problems in the United States – poverty. The course is divided into three sections. In the first section, we will primarily focus on the conceptualization and measurement of poverty, as well as the demographic groups that are most likely to suffer from high poverty rates. In the second part of the course, we will review in detail the major government programs aimed at alleviating poverty. We will examine their historical development, their structure and the social science research on their effectiveness. In the third section of the course we will review alternative explanations for poverty, focusing on the distinction between individual and structural explanations and how it influences public discourse and the politics of poverty. As this is an upper level course that fulfills the university's writing requirement, there will be a significant amount of writing in this class. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Writing

PSC467 The Conservative Movement in America

W

Hours 3

This class will examine the origins and history of the conservative political movement in the United States, following the development of this ideology from its origins as a small movement of journalists and intellectuals to the dominant ideology of the Republican Party, and ultimately, for a time, the dominant ideology in the United States. This class will focus primarily on texts written from a conservative or right-wing perspective. That said, the purpose of this class is not indoctrination. Students are encouraged to engage in vigorous, respectful class discussions on the ideas presented, noting any weaknesses perceived in the arguments considered. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Writing

PSC471 Equal Opportunity and the Law

W

Hours 3

The concept of equal opportunity is a bedrock principle of American political culture. We pride ourselves on the idea that all Americans, regardless of race, gender, class level or other demographic characteristics, have a chance to live the American Dream of getting a good job, owning your own home and creating a successful and satisfying life. This course will examine whether equal opportunity is a reality in America, and what effect the law and public policy have on equal opportunity. Writing proficiency within the discipline is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student in this discipline will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Prerequisite(s): PSC 101

Writing

PSC472 Law in Everyday Life: Theory & Application**W**

Hours 3

Law is traditionally studied vocationally. That is, students of the law often learn about it strategically, in order to eventually write legislation, advocate for a client, or decide cases. In this class, students will be introduced to a different way of studying law, one rooted in the interdisciplinary field of legal studies (sometimes known as "law and society") that draws on knowledge, methodologies, and critical theories from several disciplines. Rather than studying law as an enterprise that operates autonomously, this course introduces students to the study of law as an object that cannot be understood apart from the social, political, and cultural contexts in which it exists, to include race and ethnicity, social class, gender, sexual orientation, and nationality. With these goals in mind, this course will explore how law permeates human life and, conversely, how human life permeates law. As this course is one that satisfies the "W" requirement, writing proficiency within this discipline is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Writing