POLS - Political Science

POLITICAL SCIENCE Courses

POLS 100S. Introduction to International Politics. 3 Credits.
This course provides a basic introduction to the study of international politics. It considers some of the more prominent theoretical perspectives in the discipline and examines the major political, economic, social and environmental issues presently facing the global community. The course prepares students for advanced study in international politics.

POLS 101S. Introduction to American Politics. 3 Credits.
This course introduces students to the political processes and the institutions of American politics. The course examines American political culture, gender and minority rights, citizen participation, national institutions, public policy, and foreign and defense policy.

POLS 102S. Introduction to Comparative Government and Politics. 3 Credits.
This course introduces basic concepts and methods for the study of comparative politics. It also surveys and compares the political/ socioeconomic development, political cultures/ideologies, political institutions, decision-making processes, and public policies of various countries in the world.

POLS 126S. Honors: Introduction to American Politics. 3 Credits.
Open only to students in the Honors College. A special honors section of POLS 101S.

POLS 127S. Honors: Introduction to International Politics. 3 Credits.
Open only to students in the Honors College. Special honors section of POLS 100S.

POLS 300. Introduction to Public Policy. 3 Credits.
An introduction to various approaches to policy making followed by a detailed study of several of the most important domestic contemporary issues (housing, transportation, education, welfare, etc.). Prerequisites: Six credits in human behavior.

POLS 301W. Introduction to Public Law. 3 Credits.
Introduces the student to the American legal system through an examination of its institutions, practitioners, and processes. A general survey of constitutional law, administrative law, civil and criminal law, and selected topics of substantive and procedural dimensions of the court system. (This is a writing intensive course.) Prerequisites: POLS 101S and a grade of C or better in ENGL 211C or ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C.

POLS 306. Judicial Process and Behavior. 3 Credits.
In-depth analysis of the American court system with an emphasis on the political behavior of the system's participants and the procedural dimensions of the court system. Prerequisites: POLS 101S.

POLS 307. Constitutional Criminal Procedure. 3 Credits.
Development of criminal procedure under the United States Constitution, with particular emphasis on the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Eighth, and Fourteenth Amendments as interpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court. Prerequisites: POLS 101S.

POLS 308. Research Design. 3 Credits.
Covers the design and implementation of quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry in social sciences. Prerequisites: POLS 100S, POLS 101S and POLS 102S or permission of instructor.

POLS 309. Race, Culture and Public Policy. 3 Credits.
This course examines the public policy problems of various racial groups in America. It analyzes the extent to which the American political system protects and promotes the concerns of African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans and Asians. Prerequisites: Six hours in human behavior.

POLS 310. Political Theory. 3 Credits.
This course is a survey of political theory covering political thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, St. Thomas Aquinas, Machiavelli, Locke, Mill, Marx and Rawls as well as central concepts like justice, order, liberty, and equality. Prerequisites: POLS 100S and POLS 101S or permission of the instructor.

POLS 311. Virginia Politics and Government. 3 Credits.
This course is a survey of Virginia state and local government institutions, functions, processes, and behavior of political actors. Prerequisites: POLS 101S.

POLS 312. American Political Thought. 3 Credits.
The course considers the origins, evolution, purposes, and relevancy of American political thought. It includes studies in democracy versus elitism; civil disobedience versus revolution; liberalism versus conservatism. Prerequisites: POLS 101S or permission of the instructor.

POLS 313. United Nations Seminar. 1 Credit.
An examination of the United Nations and key issues facing the international community. Includes a three-day visit to United Nations headquarters in New York. Prerequisites: Junior standing or permission of the instructor.

POLS 314. European Politics. 3 Credits.
Analyzes and compares the major political functions and the social, economic, and cultural bases of European states. Also examines the contemporary movement for European economic, military, and political unity. Prerequisites: POLS 100S or POLS 102S or permission of the instructor.

POLS 316. Politics of Africa. 3 Credits.
This course is intended to familiarize students with the struggles, advances, and setbacks of African peoples for state-building and socioeconomic development during the colonial and post-independence eras. Prerequisites: Junior standing or permission of the instructor.

POLS 319. Lobbies and Interest Groups. 3 Credits.
A survey of the lobby movement in America, its history and present status, with particular attention to current lobbies and interest groups and their impact on the national government. Prerequisites: POLS 101S.

POLS 320. United Nations I. 3 Credits.
Part One of the history, working and role of the United Nations system, stressing contemporary issues and student participation in UN simulations and conferences. Prerequisites: POLS 100S or GEOG 100S or permission of the instructor.

POLS 321W. United Nations II. 3 Credits.
Part Two of the history, working and role of the United Nations system. The course includes management of a major UN simulation, conference attendance and debate on the role of the UN in current global issues. (This is a writing intensive course.) Prerequisites: POLS 100S or GEOG 100S and a grade of C or better in ENGL 211C or ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C; POLS 320 recommended or instructor permission.

POLS 323. International Political Economy. 3 Credits.
Introduces students to the primary mechanisms of the global political economy in allocating goods, income, wealth and the means to produce them, with emphasis on the international division of labor. Prerequisites: Six hours of human behavior.

POLS 324. International Relations Theory. 3 Credits.
Comparative study of the various theories that attempt to explain the patterns of interactions among the different members of the global community. Draws on historical and modern cases to explain traditional and alternative theories. Prerequisites: POLS 100S and an additional three hours of human behavior.

POLS 325W. World Politics. 3 Credits.
This course is designed for intermediate students who are interested in the theoretical and systematic study of world politics. The course first introduces students to several major theoretical approaches to the study of world politics, and then applies these approaches to a number of major issues—ranging from conflict and cooperation, arms control, the protection of human rights, international trade, economic development, and environmental preservation. (This is a writing intensive course.) Prerequisites: A grade of C or better in ENGL 211C or ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C, six hours of human behavior and junior standing.
POLS 326W. American Foreign Policy. 3 Credits.
This course presents those factors that go into the making and analyzing of American foreign policy, explores their application in decision making, and seeks to test their utilization against contemporary problems. (This is a writing intensive course.) Prerequisites: POLS 100S and a grade of C or better in ENGL 211C or ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C, or permission of the instructor.

POLS 327W. Politics of National Security. 3 Credits.
Examination of issues facing America as it debates the use of international force, including the range of national security choices, defense reform, and the tensions between American resort to warfare and global trends transforming the ability to use violence effectively. (This is a writing intensive course.) Prerequisites: POLS 100S or permission of the instructor and a grade of C or better in ENGL 211C or ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C.

POLS 328. Russian Politics. 3 Credits.
Starting with the Soviet communist system, explores Russia's efforts to establish democracy and the rule of law, to fashion a productive, beneficial market economy, to establish viable relationships with the other former republics of the USSR and to craft advantageous foreign and military policies toward the West, Asia, and the developing countries. Prerequisites: POLS 100S or POLS 102S or GEOG 100S or permission of the instructor.

POLS 331. State and Local Government. 3 Credits.
This course is a survey of state and local government institutions, functions, processes, and behavior of political actors. Prerequisites: POLS 101S.

POLS 332W. Europe in World Affairs. 3 Credits.
Analyzes European politics from World War II to the present. Emphasizes the foreign policies of major European states, including policies towards EU and NATO. Prerequisites: POLS 100S and ENGL 211C or ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C.

POLS 333. Media and Politics. 3 Credits.
An examination of the development of the news media and the role of political communication and information in American politics. Analysis of the newsmaking process; media coverage of political campaigns, the President and Congress; the impact of the news media on the American public; and the interaction between public officials and journalists. Prerequisites: POLS 101S.

POLS 334. Electoral Politics. 3 Credits.
A survey of electoral politics and behavior, including the structure of the electoral system, contemporary political campaigning, political partisanship, voting behavior, and role of interest groups in the electoral process. Prerequisites: POLS 101S and another three hours in political science.

POLS 335. Environmental Politics. 3 Credits.
This course examines the evolution of environmentalism in the United States, including the policy-making process, science and the role played by the public and political institutions. Prerequisites: POLS 101S.

POLS 336. South Asia Since Independence. 3 Credits.
This is a comparative study of the main political, economic and social developments in the major countries of South Asia. Themes will include democratization, problems of economic development, the role of caste and religion, the causes of intrastate conflict and interstate conflict and the influence of global forces on the region. Prerequisites: POLS 100S or POLS 102S.

POLS 337. Latin American Politics. 3 Credits.
Examines the evolution of Latin American politics, including early colonial and caudillo rule, populism and radicalism, the emergence of military regimes, and the reestablishment of constitutional democracies. Also considers contemporary economic, social, cultural, and environmental issues which condition state-society relations in the region. Prerequisites: Six hours in human behavior.

POLS 338W. Politics of East Asia. 3 Credits.
This course examines political cultures/traditions, governmental institutions, decision-making processes, public policies, political organizations, and significant socio-political issues of such East Asian countries as China, Japan and Korea. In addition, it explores the collective impact of these countries on world politics and global economy. (This is a writing-intensive course.) Prerequisites: A grade of C or better in ENGL 110C and ENGL 211C or ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C, six hours in human behavior, and junior standing or permission of the instructor.

POLS 350T. Technology and War. 3 Credits.
This course examines the fundamental changes and continuities that the evolution of technology has brought to armed conflict. It explores the historical development of technology and warfare, emphasizing the role of cultural, social and political choice shaping the development of new military technologies and affecting how they are used. What is the future of Western assumptions about technologically dominated warfare? Prerequisites: POLS 100S or permission of the instructor.

POLS 367. Cooperative Education. 1-3 Credits.
Student participation for credit based on the academic relevance of the work experience, criteria, and evaluative procedures as formally determined by the department and Career Development Services prior to the semester in which the work experience is to take place. (Qualifies as a CAP experience.) Prerequisites: Approval of the department chair and Career Development Services.

POLS 368. Internship in Political Science. 1-12 Credits.
Individualized practical experience in public bureaucracies, political groups, administrative agencies or law firms. Group seminars are held periodically under the supervision of faculty. Credits are commensurate with the level of the student's involvement. (Qualifies as a CAP experience.) Prerequisites: Nine hours in political science, 3 of which must be in an upper-level course.

POLS 395. Topics in Political Science. 1-3 Credits.
A study of selected topics designed for nonmajors, or for elective credit within a major. These courses and any additional prerequisites will appear in the course schedule, and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors. Prerequisites: Junior standing and permission of the instructor.

POLS 396. Topics in Political Science. 1-3 Credits.
A study of selected topics designed for nonmajors, or for elective credit within a major. These courses and any additional prerequisites will appear in the course schedule, and will be more fully described in information distributed to all academic advisors. Prerequisites: Junior standing and permission of the instructor.

POLS 400. Congress. 3 Credits.
This is a detailed study of the institutional and behavioral factors at work in legislative decision making, especially at the national level. Emphases are on the interrelationships among Congress, the Presidency, and the bureaucracy and on learning how to do research on specific legislation. Prerequisites: POLS 101S or permission of the instructor.

POLS 401. Global Environmental Policy. 3 Credits.
This course analyzes the causes, severity, potential consequences, and proposed solutions regarding global ecological issues with special attention to the scientific debate and the political and policy process. It examines environmental policies of national governments, regional/international organizations, and global conferences. Prerequisites: Six credits in political science.

POLS 403/503. First Amendment Freedoms. 3 Credits.
The course deals with the development and practice of conflicting judicial and legal theories concerning our substantive guarantees. Students are asked to act as advocates in developing and substantiating theories of their own. Prerequisites: POLS 101S or permission of the instructor.

POLS 407. American Presidency. 3 Credits.
The course covers the development of presidential power and activity, the contemporary operations of the Presidency, and the problems which may confront the institution in the future. Prerequisites: POLS 101S or permission of the instructor.
POLS 408. American Constitutional Law and Politics I. 3 Credits.
An examination of the vexatious line between the rights of individuals and those of the state in the American democracy, focusing on such major issues as freedom of expression and worship; freedom of the press; separation of church and state; privacy; and racial and gender discrimination. Prerequisites: POLS 101S.

POLS 409. American Constitutional Law and Politics II. 3 Credits.
An examination of separation of powers, federalism and the democratic process as reflected by Supreme Court decisions. Also, the Supreme Court as a political institution. Prerequisites: POLS 101S.

POLS 410/510. African American Politics. 3 Credits.
This course examines the political development of Black people in the United States by focusing on the relationship and processes of the American political system. The political dynamics of Black political thought, the Civil Rights Movement, and Black protest politics are also analyzed. Prerequisites: Six hours in human behavior and junior standing.

POLS 412/512. Politics of the Civil Rights Movement. 3 Credits.
Examines the political activities which resulted in the passage of the nation's second Civil Rights policy, the 1960 and 1964 Civil Rights Acts, the 1965 Voting Rights Act and the 1968 Fair Housing Act. The course will analyze the underpinnings, leadership, and political strategies of the Civil Rights Movement. Prerequisites: Six hours in human behavior and junior standing.

POLS 414/514. Politics of Education. 3 Credits.
The question of power, often ignored by education policy analysts and researchers, is a principal focus of this seminar. Issues ranging from the role of education in political socialization and the politics of affirmative action and equal opportunity are examined. Prerequisites: Junior standing or permission of the instructor.

POLS 415/515. Women and Politics in America. 3 Credits.
Examines women's place in political theory and the practice of politics in the United States. A major focus is to trace the development of women's political rights, the impact of public policy on the lives of American women and to see how women influence and participate in the political process. Prerequisites: POLS 101S or permission of the instructor.

POLS 418. Quantitative Methods. 3 Credits.
A survey of and practicum in the basic techniques of quantitative research, including the logic of empirical research, the identification of data sources, and the use of appropriate statistical techniques. Prerequisites: POLS 101S and a grade of C- or better in POLS 308. Pre-or corequisite: A grade of C- or better in STAT 130M.

POLS 419. Jurisprudence. 3 Credits.
An examination of the history of legal thought and developments of natural law, as well as an in-depth analysis of legal positivism and realism. Particular attention is paid to American legal philosophy. Prerequisites: POLS 408 or POLS 409 or permission of the instructor.

POLS 420W/520. Southern Politics. 3 Credits.
This seminar focuses on the politics of the American South from the 1940s to the present. Emphasis is on introducing students to contrasting explanations and analysis about the politics of the American South. (This is a writing intensive course.) Prerequisites: POLS 101S and a grade of C or better in ENGL 211C or ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C, or permission of the instructor.

POLS 421/521. International Law. 3 Credits.
Surveys major areas of public international law (e.g., laws of warfare, law of the sea, conflict resolution, etc.). Emphasizes the relationship between international law and international politics. Prerequisites: Six hours in political science or permission of the instructor; POLS 325W is recommended.

POLS 424/524. International Organization. 3 Credits.
Course provides a basis for understanding the role and importance of international organizations in contemporary international relations. Focuses on development and history of global organizations, with particular emphasis on the United Nations, and regional and functional organizations. Prerequisites: POLS 100S and POLS 325W and additional internationally-focused course or permission of the instructor.

POLS 434/534. Political Participation in the United States. 3 Credits.
An examination of current theories and research on political behavior, conventional and unconventional modes of political participation, and the impact of participation on the political system. Prerequisites: Six semester hours of political science.

POLS 435/535. Chinese Politics. 3 Credits.
A study of origins of the Chinese revolution; development and functions of the Chinese Communist Party; government institutions; the defense establishment; evolution of foreign policy; and post-Mao political and economic reforms. Prerequisites: POLS 100S and POLS 102S or permission of the instructor.

POLS 436/536. Japanese Politics. 3 Credits.
A study of Japan's historical political development and social patterns; government institutions; problems of the constitution; and foreign and defense policy. Prerequisites: POLS 100S and POLS 102S or permission of the instructor.

POLS 437/537. International Relations in East Asia. 3 Credits.
A study of contemporary issues (political, economic, and strategic) in the East Asia area; the interactions of China, Japan, the United States, and the former Soviet republics in East Asia. Prerequisites: POLS 100S.

POLS 439/539. International Relations of African States. 3 Credits.
This course aims to expose students to an examination of the workings of international politics from the viewpoint of Africans and African states. International relations have tended to look at the world from the viewpoint of its most powerful states. Yet, most the world's states - notably in Africa - are weak but have great potential global impact. Prerequisites: Junior standing or permission of the instructor.

POLS 442/542. Twentieth Century Dictatorships. 3 Credits.
A study of the Fascist, Nazi, Stalin and Mao regimes and the forces that brought them to power and sustained them, including a study of the impact of their policies on their people and neighboring states. Prerequisites: Six hours in human behavior and junior standing or permission of the instructor.

POLS 445. Globalization: Dynamics and Implications. 3 Credits.
Explores the essential characteristics of globalization and its implications for social relations and existing institutions. Prerequisites: Three hours in economics and 6 hours in political science.

POLS 455/555. The Politics of Climate Change. 3 Credits.
An examination of the science of climate change and how United States political actors have responded to this global environmental challenge. Prerequisites: Junior standing or permission of the instructor.

POLS 458T. Weapons of Mass Destruction in Global Security. 3 Credits.
Since the end of the Cold War, weapons of mass destruction have emerged as one of the most dangerous and contentious issues in international affairs. The course examines how these weapons are made, how they proliferate, and how they are controlled. Prerequisites: POLS 100S.

POLS 461. Seminar in European Politics. 3 Credits.
This course focuses on one specific European country such as France, Germany, the United Kingdom, etc. Examination of trends and events which most influenced the evolution of domestic politics and foreign relations from World War II to the present. Prerequisites: POLS 100S or POLS 102S and POLS 314 or POLS 332W.

POLS 462. Ethnic Conflict in the New Global Order. 3 Credits.
Ethnically based conflict is presently a pervasive worldwide phenomenon. This course examines internal and external factors causing ethnic conflicts and mechanisms for resolving or mitigating such conflicts. Prerequisites: Six hours in human behavior.

POLS 466/566. Politics of the Middle East. 3 Credits.
An analysis of the political processes throughout the region and in selected nations of the Middle East. Topics to be discussed include inter-Arab relations, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Iran-Iraq rivalry and foreign power involvement in the Middle East. Prerequisites: Junior standing or permission of the instructor.
POLS 470. African Americans and Foreign Affairs. 3 Credits.
This course focuses on race, ethnicity, and the role and influence of African Americans in international affairs and American foreign policy making. It investigates the activities of African Americans in the international arena. The emphasis is on how African Americans have participated and the results of that participation from the era of slavery to Barack Obama. Prerequisites: Junior standing or permission of the instructor.

POLS 480W. Senior Seminar in International Studies. 3 Credits.
Interdisciplinary research and preparation of a senior thesis in international studies (This is a writing intensive course.) Prerequisites: A grade of C or better in ENGL 211C or ENGL 221C or ENGL 231C, senior standing in the BAIS degree program or permission of the instructor.

POLS 481. Seminar in American Politics. 3 Credits.
The advanced study of selected topics in American politics designed to permit small groups of qualified students to work on subjects of mutual interest which, due to their specialized nature, may not be offered regularly. Prerequisites: Junior standing in political science.

POLS 493. Great Decisions. 1 Credit.
An examination and discussion of critical world issues based upon the Foreign Policy Association's Great Decision Series. Prerequisites: POLS 100S or POLS 101S.

POLS 495/595. Topics in Political Science. 1-3 Credits.
The advanced study of selected topics in political science which, due to their specialized nature, may not be offered regularly. Prerequisites: Appropriate survey course or permission of the instructor.

POLS 496/596. Topics in Political Science. 1-3 Credits.
The advanced study of selected topics which, due to their specialized nature, may not be offered regularly. Prerequisites: Appropriate survey course or permission of the instructor.

POLS 497/597. Independent Research in Political Science. 1-3 Credits.
Independent research in political science under the supervision of a faculty member. Prerequisites: Senior standing or permission of the instructor.

POLS 498. Tutorial Work-Special Topics. 1-3 Credits.
Independent research in political science under the supervision of a faculty member. Prerequisites: Senior standing or permission of instructor.

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The course deals with the development and practice of conflicting judicial and legal theories concerning our substantive guaranties. Students are asked to act as advocates in developing and substantiating theories of their own.

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POLS 515. Women and Politics in America. 3 Credits.
Examines women’s place in political theory and the practice of politics in the United States. A major focus is to trace the development of women’s political rights, the impact of public policy on the lives of American women and to see how women influence and participate in the political process.

POLS 520. Southern Politics. 3 Credits.
This seminar focuses on the politics of the American South from the 1940s to the present. Emphasis is on introducing students to contrasting explanations and analysis about the politics of the American South.
POLS 624. National Security Policy. 3 Credits.
Examines U.S. national security policy, strategy and the use of force, the formulation and execution of policy, the international dimension of national security, and contemporary issues in national security.

POLS 626. Seminar in Politics of Russia and the Soviet Successor States. 3 Credits.
Power and authority in Russia and the other successor states of the former Soviet Union. Although focusing on Russia, the course embraces the contemporary internal politics of the states in the space between Germany and Japan/China including Central Asia and the Caucasus. Emphasizes research methodology and strategies.

POLS 631. Seminar in Chinese Politics. 3 Credits.
An advanced survey and research on contemporary Chinese politics, political and economic reforms; intellectuals and politics; China's experience of socialist revolution and economic construction; and foreign policy.

POLS 650. Interdependence, Power and Transnationalism. 3 Credits.
This course covers the fundamental concepts, ideas, and approaches to the study of interdependence and transnationalism. It seeks to expose students to the nature, role, and impact of economic, technological, strategic, and cultural interdependence. Cases of interdependence and transnationalism are explored in the post-Cold War era. Some focus is placed on how interdependence and transnationalism are impacting the power of the state. Prerequisites: Permission of director or instructor.

POLS 665. International Political Economy. 3 Credits.
Analysis of the forces shaping national and transnational economic institutions and their policies on a range of contemporary issues, including North-South relations.

POLS 695. Selected Topics in Political Science. 1-3 Credits.
The advanced study of selected topics which, due to their specialized nature, may not be offered regularly.

POLS 696. Selected Topics in Political Science. 1-3 Credits.
The advanced study of selected topics which, due to their specialized nature, may not be offered regularly.

POLS 697. Independent Research in Political Science. 1-3 Credits.
Independent research in political science under the supervision of a faculty member.