Political Science

Department Website: http://political-science.uchicago.edu

Program of Study

Political science is the study of governments, public policies, political processes, political behavior, and ideas about government and politics. Political scientists use both humanistic and scientific perspectives and a variety of methodological approaches to examine the political dynamics of all countries and regions of the world, both ancient and modern. Political science contributes to a liberal education by introducing students to concepts, methods, and knowledge that help them understand and judge politics within and among nations. A BA degree in political science can lead to a career in business, government, journalism, education, or nonprofit organizations; or it can lead to a PhD program in the social sciences or to professional school in law, business, public policy, or international relations. Our graduates have gone into all those areas in recent years.

Program Requirements

Course Requirements

The Political Science major requires twelve political science courses and a substantial paper. All students must take three out of the four courses that introduce the fields of political science. All students must also take the required research methods course. Students may meet the writing requirement by completing a BA Thesis or by writing a Long Paper. The BA Thesis and Long Paper options are explained below.

Introductory Course Requirement

To gain a broad understanding of political science, the department's faculty thinks students should take a wide range of courses. To ensure that breadth, students are required to take at least three of the following four courses:

- PLSC 28701 Introduction to Political Theory
- PLSC 28801 Introduction to American Politics
- PLSC 28901 Introduction to Comparative Politics
- PLSC 29000 Introduction to International Relations

Each course will be offered every year, introducing students to the four principal areas of study in political science. The introductory courses must be taken for quality grades.

Research Methods Requirement

To prepare students to evaluate the materials in their classes and to write research papers, students are also required to take the department's research methods course, which will be offered every quarter:

- PLSC 22913 The Practice of Social Science Research

The department also strongly recommends, but does not require, a course in statistics.

Political Science Course Requirement

In addition to the above requirements, students are required to take six to eight Political Science courses of their choosing in order to develop their interests in and knowledge of the field. Those following the Long Paper path, described below, must complete eight courses while those on the BA Thesis path must complete at least six. It may be appropriate for advanced students to pursue an independent study credit (see below). Courses outside Political Science may be considered for the major only by petition. (Please submit the General Petition form (http://college.uchicago.edu/advising/tools-forms/), found at college.uchicago.edu/advising/tools-forms (https://college.uchicago.edu/advising/tools-forms/), along with a copy of the course syllabus to Pick 406.)

Writing Requirement: Two Options

Students who are majoring in political science must write at least one substantial paper. There are two ways to meet this requirement, by writing a BA Thesis or by submitting a Long Paper.

Option 1: Long Paper

The Long Paper is typically a course paper. It may be written for either a professor in Political Science or a professor in another department whose course is accepted for Political Science credit. Students who write a Long Paper are not required to write a BA Thesis. Students submitting a Long Paper must bring an approval form to the departmental office signed by an instructor who verifies that the paper meets two requirements: (a) the paper is twenty pages or longer, double-spaced (that is, approximately 5,000 words or longer); and (b) the paper received a grade of B or better (that is, a grade of B- or below does not meet the requirement).

The Long Paper might be:
• A class paper for any course used to meet the major’s requirements.

• An extended version of a shorter paper written for a course. If a course requires a shorter paper, students may ask the instructor for permission to write a twenty-page paper instead.

• Written for a course that did not require any papers. Students may ask the instructor for permission to write a twenty-page paper, either in place of another assignment, as an extra assignment, or as an ungraded assignment.

• Written for a Political Science instructor after a course is completed. The student could either produce an entirely new paper or, with the instructor’s permission, take a shorter assignment and turn it into a longer paper.

If the paper is not a graded assignment for class, it still meets the department’s requirement if the instructor attests that it merits a grade of B or better. Unless the paper is written for a graded class assignment, students must ask the instructor’s permission to submit any such paper.

Students are responsible for obtaining an approval form (political-science.uchicago.edu/sites/political-science.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/Long Paper Form.pdf) to verify the successful completion of the Long Paper from the department office and giving it to the relevant instructor. Please ask the instructor to sign the approval form and return it to the departmental office. The deadline for submitting the approval form (http://political-science.uchicago.edu/sites/political-science.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/Long%20Paper%20Form.pdf) and the paper is 4 p.m. on Friday of the second week of the quarter in which the student expects to graduate. Students should complete their paper before their final quarter; the approval form should be submitted to the departmental office as soon as the writing requirement is completed.

**OPTION 2: BA THESIS**

Writing a BA Thesis will meet the writing requirement in Political Science and may also qualify a student for consideration for honors; see sections below for more information. In either case, the paper is typically from thirty-five to fifty pages in length (the length of most scholarly articles in professional journals). It must receive a grade of B or higher. Students choose a suitable faculty member to supervise the research and writing. The deadline for submitting two copies of a BA Thesis to the departmental office is 4 p.m. on Friday of the fourth week of the quarter in which the student expects to graduate.

**BA Colloquium.** Students who choose to write a BA Thesis are required to enroll in PLSC 29800 BA Colloquium in the Spring Quarter of the third year and continue to attend the BA Colloquium in the Autumn Quarter of their fourth year. The colloquium is designed to help students carry out their BA Thesis research and to offer feedback on their progress. Although the course meets over two quarters, it counts as a single course and has a single grade. The final grade for the colloquium is based on the student’s contribution to the colloquium during both quarters. Students who write a BA Thesis must also enroll in PLSC 29900 BA Thesis Supervision for one quarter, normally Winter Quarter of fourth year (although enrollment may be in any quarter).

A few students each year study abroad in the Spring Quarter of third year or in the Autumn Quarter of the fourth year and also intend to complete the Political Science major by writing a BA Thesis. Students who study abroad in the Spring Quarter are not required to enroll in the BA Colloquium in the Spring Quarter, but are expected to enroll and participate in the BA Colloquium in the Autumn Quarter. Students who study abroad in the Autumn Quarter must enroll in the BA Colloquium in the previous Spring Quarter, but are not required to participate in the Autumn Quarter.

All students who intend to write a BA thesis must submit a proposal for the thesis by the end of Spring Quarter, regardless of residency. Students who are away from campus in the Spring Quarter should line up an adviser and discuss ideas about a thesis topic while they are abroad or even during the Winter Quarter before departure. The department has arranged the BA Thesis process so that students arrive back on campus for fourth year ready to execute the research for the thesis in the Autumn Quarter, rather than compressing research and writing both into the Winter Quarter. Students who will be abroad in Spring Quarter and unable to participate in the Spring BA Colloquium should contact the department’s Undergraduate Studies office during the Winter Quarter to receive instructions about the preparations they should expect to make while they are away.

**BA Thesis Supervision.** During their fourth year, students who choose to write a BA Thesis must register with their BA Thesis faculty adviser for one quarter of PLSC 29900 BA Thesis Supervision. Students may also elect to take a second quarter of PLSC 29900 BA Thesis Supervision, which will count toward the twelve required courses. To enroll, students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form, which is available from the College Advising Reception Desk. The final grade for the course will be based on the grade given the BA Thesis by the faculty adviser. Although most BA Theses are supervised by Political Science professors, the adviser need not be a member of the Department of Political Science.

**SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS MEETING THE WRITING REQUIREMENT WITH A LONG PAPER**

Three of the following Political Science courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 28701</td>
<td>Introduction to Political Theory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Political Science

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 28801</td>
<td>Introduction to American Politics</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 28901</td>
<td>Introduction to Comparative Politics</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 29000</td>
<td>Introduction to International Relations</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 22913</td>
<td>The Practice of Social Science Research</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight additional Political Science courses *</td>
<td>800</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulfillment of the writing requirement</td>
<td>000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Units</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* At least five must be courses in Political Science.

**SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS MEETING THE WRITING REQUIREMENT WITH A BA THESIS**

Three of the following Political Science courses: 300

- PLSC 28701 Introduction to Political Theory
- PLSC 28801 Introduction to American Politics
- PLSC 28901 Introduction to Comparative Politics
- PLSC 29000 Introduction to International Relations
- PLSC 22913 The Practice of Social Science Research

Six additional Political Science courses * 600

- PLSC 29800 BA Colloquium
- PLSC 29900 BA Thesis Supervision

Total Units 1200

* At least three must be courses in Political Science.

**Pass/Fail Courses**

Courses that meet requirements for the major are normally taken for quality grades. The three required introductory courses must be taken for quality grades. However, students may take up to two courses in the major on a P/F basis.

**Independent Study**

Students with extensive course work in Political Science who wish to pursue more specialized topics that are not covered by regular courses have the option of registering for PLSC 29700 Independent Study, to be taken individually and supervised by a member of the Political Science faculty. Students must obtain the prior consent of the program director and the instructor, as well as submit the College Reading and Research Course Form that is available from the College Advising Reception Desk. The substance of the independent study may not be related to the BA Thesis or BA research, which is covered by PLSC 29900 BA Thesis Supervision. Only one PLSC 29700 Independent Study course may count toward requirements for the major.

**Honors in the Major**

Students who do exceptionally well in their course work and who write an outstanding BA Thesis are recommended for honors in the major. A student is eligible for honors if the GPA in the major is 3.6 or higher and the overall GPA is 3.0 or higher at the beginning of the quarter in which the student intends to graduate. Students who wish to be considered for honors are required to register for PLSC 29800 BA Colloquium and PLSC 29900 BA Thesis Supervision and to submit a BA Thesis. To graduate with department honors, then, a student must have both honors-level grades and a BA Thesis that receives honors.

**Double Majors**

Students who plan to double major may complete the Political Science requirements by either the BA Thesis option or the Long Paper option. Students who write the BA Thesis must attend the Political Science BA Colloquium even if the other major also requires attendance at its colloquium. A request to use a single BA Thesis for two majors requires the approval of both program directors on a form available at college.uchicago.edu/advising/forms-and-petitions/.

**Courses Taken at Other Universities by Students Who Transfer to the University of Chicago**

Student who transfer into the University of Chicago and wish to transfer courses into the major should see the Director of Undergraduate Studies soon after matriculation. The introductory course requirement and the research methods requirement cannot be satisfied by courses taken elsewhere, but courses may be counted toward the major by petition (see college.uchicago.edu/advising/forms-and-petitions/).

**Becoming a Political Science Major**

Most students declare a major at the end of the second year or beginning of the third. The department encourages students to try out the major even before declaring. To receive announcements about the program
in the major and other information about the Department of Political Science, students should sign up for the undergraduate email list either in the departmental office or at https://lists.uchicago.edu/web/info/ugpolsall

POLITICAL SCIENCE COURSES FOR 2020–21

PLSC 21410. Advanced Theories of Gender and Sexuality. 100 Units.
Beginning with the breakup of the New Left and the proliferation of ‘new social movements’ such as feminism, Black Power, and gay liberation, this seminar explores the key debates around which gender and sexuality were articulated as politically significant categories. How did feminist and queer politics come to be scripted increasingly in terms of identity and its negation? To what extent has a juridical and state-centered conception of politics come to displace quotidian practices of freedom and world-building? What are the limits to rights-oriented political movements? What are the political implications of the recent ontological turn to affect in feminist and queer theory?
Instructor(s): Linda Zerilli Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Undergraduates by consent only.
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 31410, MAPH 36500, GNSE 21400, GNSE 31400, ENGL 21401, ENGL 30201

PLSC 21499. Philosophy and Philanthropy. 100 Units.
Perhaps it is better to give than to receive, but exactly how much giving ought one to engage in and to whom or what? Recent ethical and philosophical developments such as the effective altruism movement suggest that relatively affluent individuals are ethically bound to donate a very large percentage of their resources to worthy causes—for example, saving as many lives as they possibly can, wherever in the world those lives may be. And charitable giving or philanthropy is not only a matter of individual giving, but also of giving by foundations, corporations, non-profits, non-governmental and various governmental agencies, and other organizational entities that play a very significant role in the modern world. How, for example, does an institution like the University of Chicago engage in and justify its philanthropic activities? Can one generalize about the various rationales for philanthropy, whether individual or institutional? Why do individuals or organizations engage in philanthropy, and do they do so well or badly, for good reasons, bad reasons, or no coherent reasons? This course will afford a broad, critical philosophical and historical overview of philanthropy, examining its various contexts and justifications, and contrasting charitable giving with other ethical demands, particularly the demands of justice. How do charity and justice relate to each other? Would charity even be needed in a fully just world? (A)
Instructor(s): B. Schultz Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): This course will feature a number of guest speakers and be developed in active conversation with the work of the UChicago Civic Knowledge Project and Office of Civic Engagement. Students will also be presented with some practical opportunities to engage reflectively in deciding whether, why and how to donate a certain limited amount of (course provided) funding.
Equivalent Course(s): HMRT 21499, PHIL 21499, MAPH 31499

PLSC 21506. Feminist Politics in the US: Lessons from the Second Wave. 100 Units.
Feminist scholars and activists tend to look back on the second wave in the United States as a failure. Indeed, the movement could not pass the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) or regulations of pornography, and abortion became legal only because of a Supreme Court decision. Historical accounts often narrate the women’s liberation movement as dominated by white, wealthy, straight women, who suppressed the voices of women of color and lesbians. This course returns to the era of the ‘second wave’ as a vibrant moment for feminism—perhaps more so than contemporary politics—and to the women’s liberation movement as an important site of feminist organizing and theorizing. After engaging with four notable activist efforts at political and legal transformation, we move on to read Betty Friedan’s famous consciousness-raising text, as well as lesbian manifestos and womanist works that critiqued the mainstream women’s liberation movement. We end by considering the ways in which the backlash against the second wave continues to haunt contemporary feminist politics. Questions raised by the course include: What political goals motivated the women’s liberation movement, and how did they strive to achieve those goals? What lessons can feminist activists and theorists today take away from the movement? Why do we narrate the second wave, and the women’s liberation movement, as a failure? How could re-thinking our treatment of the second wave transform our conception of feminist politics today?
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 21506

PLSC 21538. Racial Universalisms. 100 Units.
This class will discuss the relationship between race and universalism. At first glance, one might think that both terms are opposed, with race as a particular and the universal that which transcends it. The universalism of equal rights, this view would suggest, stands against the divisions drawn along racial lines. But closer inspection reveals that the interplay between race and the discourse of universalism is more complex. In fact, their juxtaposition - as in the seemingly oxymoronic ‘racial universalisms’ in the plural - arguably leads to the heart of what both concepts are about, both in their theoretical contours and historical trajectories. Particular attention will be given to contemporary debates on race and ‘epistemologies of ignorance,’ which have provided theoretical tools to understand the systematic and racialized blinding effects that universalist discourse might entail.
Instructor(s): Niklas Plaetzer Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 27538
PLSC 21539. The Politics of Black Queer Feminist Praxis. 100 Units.
This course critically interrogates contemporary ‘status quo’ power dynamics through a lens of Black Queer Feminism. This course understands Black Queer Feminism as a political praxis that operationalizes intersectionality by seeking to deconstruct normative and hegemonic systems of power. While many of the attendees of the Women’s March of 2017 were white, over 53% of white women had just voted for Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential election. This comes at a stark comparison with the 94% of Black women that voted for Hilary Clinton. As one journalist cleverly wrote, this highlights a ‘53 percent problem in American Feminism’. This seminar-style course, through critical engagement with Black Queer Feminist praxis (thought and action), attempts to reconcile this 53 percent problem. We will begin with a history of Black feminist thought and transition to its contemporary iterations, including trans politics and queer theory. Along with a diasporic and transnational analysis, we will investigate: how do contemporary iterations of radical Black feminism engage with and resist against the state? How does Black Queer Feminism shape politics and society? The syllabus will incorporate readings from various disciplines including political science, sociology, and Black studies and will focus on how the simultaneity of hegemony shapes access to and relationships with power.
Instructor(s): Laterricka Smith Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 27539, GNSE 27539

PLSC 21540. Slave Abolition and Its Afterlives. 100 Units.
In recent years scholars and activists have (re)turned to the abolitionist movement of the 19th century in order to gain critical traction on the interlocking operations of racism, capitalism, and patriarchy. The return of abolishment reveals an aspiration to learn from the failures of the past in order to generate new strategies to overcome the structures of domination that pervade our social and political lives. This quarter we will read a series of texts produced before and after the formal end of slavery in the United States with particular attention paid to the revisions, retrospections, and reformulations made to conceptions of freedom. How did abolitionists understand the meaning of freedom before Emancipation? What political transformations did they endorse? Did formal emancipation actualize or reframe the abolitionist imaginary? We will also track two unfulfilled promises in the thought of black scholars and activists: the attempt to secure economic independence for freed slaves and critiques of patriarchal rule within the family. By tracking these political projects, we will raise questions about the re-emergence of abolitionist promises. How does the present trend to appropriate abolition occlude key political disagreements among early and mid-nineteenth century activists? Which strand of abolitionism are we inheriting in the twenty-first century? Why? These questions will anchor our course and help us think about the uses of history for our own political present.
Instructor(s): Larry Svabek Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 27540, HIST 29008

PLSC 22202. Philosophies of Environmentalism and Sustainability. 100 Units.
Many of the toughest ethical and political challenges confronting the world today are related to environmental issues: for example, climate change, loss of biodiversity, the unsustainable use of natural resources, pollution and toxic waste, and other threats to the well-being of both present and future generations. Using both classic and contemporary works, this course will highlight some of the fundamental and unavoidable philosophical questions presented by such environmental issues. Does the environmental crisis demand radically new forms of ethical and political philosophizing and practice? Must an environmental ethic reject anthropocentrism? If so, what are the most plausible non-anthropocentric alternatives? What counts as the proper ethical treatment of non-human animals, living organisms, or ecosystems? What do the terms ‘nature’ and ‘wilderness’ even mean, and should ‘natural’ environments as such have ethical and/or legal standing? What fundamental ethical and political perspectives inform such approaches as the ‘Land Ethic,’ ecofeminism, and deep ecology? Is there a plausible account of environmental justice applicable to both present and future generations? Are we now in the Anthropocene, and if so, is ‘adaptation’ the best strategy at this historical juncture? How can the wild, the rural, and the urban all contribute to a better future for Planet Earth? (A)
Instructor(s): B. Schultz Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Field trips, guest speakers, and special projects will help us philosophize about the fate of the earth by connecting the local and the global. Please be patient with the flexible course organization! Some rescheduling may be necessary in order to accommodate guest speakers and the weather!
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 22209, HMRT 22201, ENST 22209
PLSC 22205. Utopia’s Eclipse? The Horizon of Political Hope in the Wake of Empire and Revolution. 100 Units.
The twentieth century was a time of extraordinary political hope associated with socialist and anti-colonial struggles that promised to usher in new forms of human freedom. However, by the 1980s, this hope had given way to catastrophe as the horizons of revolutionary aspiration characterizing these struggles collapsed. How do we reckon with this collapse, and what does it mean to make a life for oneself in the wake of these failed emancipatory projects? This course explores this question by examining the place of utopian thinking, broadly understood, in the projects of anticolonial and socialist struggle in the twentieth century and by reading this strain of thought in light of the doubts that certain thinkers have raised about the possibility of attaining utopia’s promise. Taking as a starting point the idea that utopian thinking—at least in its modern, universalistic form—has always existed in a complex relationship to the figure of the ‘savage Other’ and the project of Western imperialism, the first half of the course invites students to test this claim against the aspirations advanced by certain anti-colonial and left revolutionaries. In the second half of the course, we turn to recent reflections on the postcolonial predicament and to arguments for renewed utopian thinking to consider what we might learn from the revolutionary failures of the twentieth century and what critical resources this history has yielded to us.
Instructor(s): D. Grant Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 22205

PLSC 22400. Public Opinion. 100 Units.
What is the relationship between the mass citizenry and government in the U.S.? Does the public meet the conditions for a functioning democratic polity? This course considers the origins of mass opinion about politics and public policy, including the role of core values and beliefs, information, expectations about political actors, the mass media, economic self-interest, and racial attitudes. This course also examines problems of political representation, from the level of political elites communicating with constituents, and from the possibility of aggregate representation.
Instructor(s): J. Brehm Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 26802, CRES 22400

PLSC 22505. Knowledge and Politics. 100 Units.
What is the relationship between knowledge and power, and between science and democracy? What kinds of knowledge are needed in politics, and who needs to know what? In this course we read a number of philosophers, theorists, and social scientists interested in the relationship between knowledge and politics. Topics covered may include: the epistemic properties of political institutions and markets; the role of expertise in politics; values in science and public policy; and theories of epistemic democracy and epistemic injustice. (A)
Instructor(s): M. Landauer Terms Offered: Spring

PLSC 22700. Happiness. 100 Units.
From Plato to the present, notions of happiness have been at the core of heated debates in ethics and politics. What is happiness? Is it subjective or objective? Is it a matter of pleasure or enjoyment? Of getting what one most wants? Of flourishing through the development of one’s human capabilities? Of being satisfied with how one’s life is going overall? Is happiness the ultimate good for human beings, the essence of the good life and tied up with virtue, or is morality somehow prior to it? Can it be achieved by all, or only by a fortunate few? Can it be measured, and perhaps made the basis of a science? Should it be the aim of education? What causes happiness? Does the wrong notion of happiness lend itself to a politics of manipulation and surveillance? What critical perspectives pose the deepest challenges to the idea that happiness matters? These are some of the questions that this course addresses, with the help of both classic and contemporary texts from philosophy, literature, and the social sciences. The approach will involve a lot of more or less Socratic questioning, which may or may not contribute your personal happiness. (A)
Instructor(s): B. Schultz Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 21400, GNSE 25200, HUMA 24900

PLSC 22710. Electoral Politics In America. 100 Units.
This course explores the interactions of voters, candidates, the parties, and the media in American national elections, chiefly in the campaign for the presidency, both in nominating primaries and in the November general election. The course will examine how voters learn about candidates, how they perceive candidates, how they come to turn out to vote, and how they decide among the candidates. It will examine the strategies and techniques of electoral campaigns, including the choices of campaign themes and the impact of campaign advertising. It will consider the role of campaign contributors and volunteers, the party campaign organizations, campaign and media polls, and the press. Finally, it will assess the impact of campaigns and elections on governing and policymaking.
Instructor(s): M. Hansen Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 22710, AMER 22710
PLSC 22755. The Idea of Africa. 100 Units.
The Idea of Africa, a new interdisciplinary course, offers undergraduates students an opportunity to engage
critically with key philosophical and political debates about contemporary Africa on the continent and globally.
The course takes its title from V.Y. Mudimbe’s 1994 book which builds on his earlier work The Invention
of Africa. It asks three questions: (1) How and to what purposes has Africa been conceived as metaphor
and concept. (2) How might we locate Africa as a geographic site and conceptual space to think through
contemporary debates about citizenship, migration and new structures of political economy? (3) What futures
and modes of futurity are articulated from the space and metaphor of Africa? This lecture course co-thought in
an interdisciplinary mode will include public guest lectures, field trips, and engagement with visual arts, and
film related to the themes of the course. The course will be divided into the following four sections: 1) Inventing
Africa; 2) Political Trajectories; 3) Afro-Mobilities; 4) Afro-Futures.
Instructor(s): Natacha Nsabimana & Adom Getachew Terms Offered: Spring, Spring 2021
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 22755, CRES 22755

PLSC 22805. Empire, Law, and Global Justice. 100 Units.
In this research seminar we will read recent scholarship examining the law and politics of empire from the
early modern period through the early twentieth century. Empires present particular problems of constitutional
law, in particular the relationship between center and periphery. They are sites of conflict over membership,
commerce, and the rights of colonized peoples. They are arenas in which conceptions of sovereignty, authority,
and regulation are created and fought over. We will read works by historians, political scientists, and legal
scholars that situate these issues in the context of particular empires, in both the Atlantic and Pacific worlds, as
well as in relation to a more broadly imperial global order.
Instructor(s): J. Pitts Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 42805

PLSC 22913. The Practice of Social Science Research. 100 Units.
This is a first course in empirical research as it is practiced across a broad range of the social sciences, including
political science. It is meant to enable critical evaluation of statements of fact and cause in discussions of the
polity, economy, and society. One aim is to improve students’ ability to produce original research, perhaps in
course papers or a senior thesis. A second objective is to improve students’ ability to evaluate claims made by
others in scholarship, commentary, or public discourse. The specific research tools that the course develops
are statistical, but the approach is more general. It will be useful as a guide to critical thinking whether the
research to be evaluated, or to be done, is quantitative or not. Above all, the course seeks to demonstrate the use
of empirical research in the service of an argument.
Instructor(s): P. Conley Terms Offered: Autumn, Spring, Winter

PLSC 23100. Democracy and the Information Technology Revolution. 100 Units.
The revolution in information technologies has serious implications for democratic societies. We concentrate,
though not exclusively, on the United States. We look at which populations have the most access to technology-
based information sources (the digital divide), and how individual and group identities are being forged
online. We ask how is the responsiveness of government being affected, and how representative is the online
community. Severe conflict over the tension between national security and individual privacy rights in the U.S.,
United Kingdom, and Ireland will be explored as well. We analyze both modern works (such as those by Turkle
and Gilder) and the work of modern democratic theorists (such as Habermas).
Instructor(s): M. Dawson Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 27101

PLSC 23501. International Political Economy. 100 Units.
What explains a government’s decision to block a trade deal, prevent foreign investors from gaining control of
a local factory, or ban the export of rare earth minerals? This course develops theory and evidence that these
decisions reflect domestic and international politics. We will discuss the political dimension of the integration
of the global economy and the way that globalization separates workers, business, and consumers. Drawing
on methods and theory from international political economy, we will critically examine the prospects for
international cooperation on trade and immigration, as well as the future of international governance.
Instructor(s): R. Gulotty Terms Offered: Spring

PLSC 25311. Models of Ancient Politics I: Athens, Sparta, Rome. 100 Units.
This course begins a two-quarter sequence on Athens, Sparta, and Rome as models of politics and their
subsequent reception and appropriation in the history of Western political thought. This quarter, we will focus
on understanding the institutions, political culture, and political theory of ancient Greece and Rome through
an engagement with ancient texts and modern scholarship. Readings will include Thucydides, Plato, Aristotle,
Xenophon, Plutarch, Polybius, Livy, and Sallust.
Instructor(s): M. Landauer Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 35311
PLSC 25312. Models of Ancient Politics I: Modern Receptions. 100 Units.
This is the second course in a two-quarter sequence on the importance of Athens, Sparta, and Rome for Western political theory. This quarter we will focus on the reception and appropriation of ancient political models in modern European political thought. Authors to be read include Machiavelli, Montesquieu, Adams, Hume, Rousseau, Mill, and Grote, as well as modern scholars.
Instructor(s): M. Landauer Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 35312

PLSC 25610. Authority, Obligation, and Dissent. 100 Units.
What is the basis of political authority? What, if anything, makes it legitimate? Under what conditions are we obliged to follow the laws and orders of government authorities? Under what conditions can we legitimately disobey such laws or orders, or even engage in violent rebellion? How have some of the most influential political thinkers answered such questions historically and which of their theories are most helpful for illuminating these issues for us today? Readings include classic writings by Plato, Hobbes, Locke, Burke, Paine, Kant, Thoreau, Gandhi, Fanon, and Martin Luther King, Jr.
Instructor(s): S. Muthu Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 25610

PLSC 25705. Radical Enlightenments. 100 Units.
An examination of some of the roots of radical critical theory in the writings of a variety of European eighteenth-century thinkers on topics such as despotism, prejudice, oligarchic interests, slavery, empire, sex/gender equality, private/public goods, state power, and revolution/reform.
Instructor(s): S. Muthu Terms Offered: Spring

PLSC 26205. American Political Economy and Race. 100 Units.
This course will explore how individual or group identity and social location is understood in economics. Specifically, we will use a political economy framework, which emerges from the premise that economic life has material, cultural, and political dimensions and that an individual's (or group's) identity or social location—e.g., race, gender, and class—may constrain or empower agents in their participation in economic and political life. The readings will draw from diverse disciplines including political science, economics, and sociology and will focus primarily on the intersection of race and class.
Instructor(s): P. Posey Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 26205

PLSC 26502. Race and Criminal Justice Systems in the US. 100 Units.
This course will familiarize students with major themes in research on criminal justice and race in the United States. These include how racial hierarchies influence legislation, the role criminal justice plays in racial construction, the functioning of bureaucracies in racialized societies, the political consequences of criminal justice policy, and the historical development of the contemporary criminal justice system.
Instructor(s): A. McCall Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 26502

PLSC 26603. Democracy and the Immigrant in Classical Greek Thought. 100 Units.
Readers have long marveled at classical Greek thought's ability to capture the enduring dilemmas of democratic life. But on the increasingly urgent issue of immigration, political scientists persistently bypass the Athenian democratic polis and its critics even though Athenians lived in a democracy that invited, but kept disenfranchised, a large number of free, integrated immigrants called 'metics' (metoikoi). With this curiosity in mind, we seek to understand how ancient philosophers, dramatists, and orators saw the democracy's dependence on immigrants to support its economy, fight its wars, educate its citizenry, and express a precarious way of living in the polis. On what grounds were metics excluded from citizenship? What do critics think citizenship comes to mean under such conditions? Can they shed new light on contemporary assumptions about the relationship between democracy and immigration? Readings of primary texts in translation will be paired with contemporary political theory, gender theory, and classical studies.
Instructor(s): D. Kasimis Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 26603

PLSC 26615. Democracy’s Life and Death. 100 Units.
How are democracies founded and maintained? What are their advantages and disadvantages with respect to stability, security, liberty, equality, and justice? Why do democracies decline and die? This course addresses these questions by examining democracies, republics, and popular governments in both the ancient and modern worlds. We will read and discuss primary texts from and social scientific analyses of Athenian democracy, the Roman Republic, the United States, and modern representative governments throughout the globe.
Instructor(s): J. McCormick, D. Kasimis Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 26615
PLSC 26920. Freedom, Justice and Legitimacy. 100 Units.
In this course we will explore two main questions, which are central to both contemporary political theory and political discourse: (1) how different concepts and conceptions of freedom ground different theories of social justice and political legitimacy and (2) how to understand the relationship between justice and legitimacy. To what extent are justice and legitimacy separate ideas? Does legitimacy require justice? Are just states necessarily legitimate? We will critically analyze and normatively assess how different contemporary theories have answered, whether explicitly or implicitly, such questions. The course will focus on five major contemporary theories: liberal-egalitarianism as represented by the work of John Rawls; libertarianism, as represented by the work of Robert Nozick, neo-Lockean theories as represented by the work of John Simmons, neo-republicanism as represented by the work of Philip Pettit, and neo-Kantian theories as represented by the work of Arthur Ripstein.
Instructor(s): C. Cordelli, J. Wilson Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 36920, LLSO 26920

PLSC 27002. Norms, Ideas, and Identity in International Politics. 100 Units.
This advanced seminar examines the role of norms, ideas, and identities in world politics. The main goal is to help students understand academic and policy debates over the role of non-material factors in theories of international politics. Our emphasis will be on the tradition of constructivist scholarship in International Relations, its trajectory, and its critics. This course is intended for advanced undergraduates (political science majors and non-majors welcome) with prior coursework in International Relations.
Instructor(s): R. Terman Terms Offered: Spring

PLSC 27301. Weimar Political Theology: Schmitt and Strauss. 100 Units.
This course is devoted to the idea of ‘political theology’ that developed during the interwar period in twentieth-century Central Europe, specifically Germany’s Weimar Republic. The course’s agenda is set by Carl Schmitt, who claimed that both serious intellectual endeavors and political authority require extra-rational and transcendent foundations. Along with Schmitt’s works from the period, such as Political Theology and the Concept of the Political, we read and discuss the related writings of perhaps his greatest interlocutor, Leo Strauss.
Instructor(s): J. McCormick Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor.
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 37301, FNDL 27301

PLSC 27500. Organizational Decision Making. 100 Units.
This course examines the process of decision making in modern, complex organizations (e.g., universities, schools, hospitals, business firms, public bureaucracies). We also consider the impact of information, power, resources, organizational structure, and the environment, as well as alternative models of choice.
Instructor(s): J. Padgett Terms Offered: Winter

PLSC 27541. Race, Capitalism and the Atlantic World. 100 Units.
This course serves as an introduction to the long history of racial capitalism. While understandings of racial capitalism vary across disciplines and historical periods, this interdisciplinary course will focus on the construction of the Black Atlantic world as a way of understanding how race, capitalism and gender are constitutive elements of modernity. Taking the Black Atlantic as both a discursive formation and historical world-event, the course will explore the articulations of power made possible by the modern geography of the Atlantic world. The course will necessarily draw from sources both historically minded and theoretically rich, encouraging students to consider how the development of modern regimes of racialization and capitalism inform contemporary understandings of race, gender and power.
Instructor(s): Cameron Cook Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 27541

PLSC 27703. Exemplary Leaders: Livy, Plutarch, and Machiavelli. 100 Units.
Cicero famously called history the ‘schoolmistress of life.’ This course explores how ancient and early modern authors-in particular, Livy, Plutarch, and Machiavelli-used the lives and actions of great individuals from the Greek and Roman past to establish models of political behavior for their own day and for posterity. Such figures include Solon, Lycurgus, Alexander, Romulus, Brutus, Camillus, Fabius Maximus, Scipio Africanus, Julius Caesar, and Augustus. We will consider how their actions are submitted to praise or blame, presented as examples for imitation or avoidance, and examine how the comparisons and contrasts established among the different historical individuals allow new models and norms to emerge. No one figure can provide a definitive model. Illustrious individuals help define values even when we mere mortals cannot aspire to reach their level of virtue or depravity. Course open to undergraduates and graduate students. Readings will be in English. Students wishing to read Latin, Greek, or Italian will receive support from the professors.
Instructor(s): J. McCormick, M. Lowrie Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 27716, CLCV 27716, CLAS 37716, PLSC 47703
PLSC 27815. Politics and Public Policy in China. 100 Units.
This course offers a historical and thematic survey of Chinese politics and of salient issues in China’s public policy. We review the patterns and dynamics of political development or lack thereof in the Mao and reform eras, including the Great Leap Forward, the Cultural Revolution, and the politics of reforms. Later sections of the course look at China’s political institutions, leadership, as well as various issues of governance and public policy, including state-society relations, the relationship between Beijing and the provinces, corruption, population and environment. Emphasis is on how institutions have provided the incentives for change as well as how institutions have been transformed.
Instructor(s): D. Yang Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 27815

PLSC 28301. Nuclear Weapons and International Politics. 100 Units.
The aim of this course is to examine: 1) the impact of nuclear weapons on the conduct of international politics; 2) how states think about employing nuclear weapons in a war; 3) the different theories of nuclear deterrence; and 4) the causes and consequences of nuclear proliferation.
Instructor(s): J. Mearsheimer Terms Offered: Spring

PLSC 28400. American Grand Strategy. 100 Units.
This course examines the evolution of American grand strategy since 1900, when the United States first emerged on the world stage as a great power. The focus is on assessing how its leaders have thought over time about which areas of the world are worth fighting and dying for, when it is necessary to fight in those strategically important areas, and what kinds of military forces are needed for deterrence and war-fighting in those regions.
Instructor(s): J. Mearsheimer Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 49500

PLSC 28405. Democratic Erosion. 100 Units.
Until recently, democracies died dramatic deaths. Tanks rolled out, politicians were arrested, a free press was suddenly closed. In recent years, the coup d’etat is being replaced by slower and less easily identified challenges to democratic governance. The attacks often arise from within, as elected leaders chip away at democratic institutions and norms. What are the causes of the erosion of democracy? What are the early warning signs, and can it be reversed? This course, which is being taught in tandem among 35 universities across the U.S. and several abroad, delves deeply into these themes. It offers students opportunities to write policy briefings and to blog about challenges to democracy in the world today.
Instructor(s): S. Stokes Terms Offered: Autumn

PLSC 28602. American National Security Strategy. 100 Units.
This course surveys contemporary National Security Strategy around the world, focusing on the most urgent and important issues of the U.S. national security agenda. The purpose of the course is to help students better understand how the U.S. formulates national security strategy, key debates over how the U.S. should handle contemporary challenges, and provide important conceptual frameworks that will enable students to grapple with the security challenges of the decade ahead. The course covers recent changes in American grand strategy, nuclear policy, and the use of conventional forces in contemporary conflicts.
Instructor(s): R. Pape Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 38602

PLSC 28620. The Intelligible Self. 100 Units.
The Delphic maxim ‘know thyself’ is one of the cornerstones of Western philosophy. But how, exactly, do we figure ourselves out? This course examines three approaches to self-knowledge: Buddhism, Psychoanalytic Theory, and Social Neuroscience. We will learn both the theories behind each approach and how they can foster deeper perspectives on our own condition. We will explore the nature of love, guilt, anxiety, and other emotions, the origins of morality, and the many biases in our cognition. Readings include Sigmund Freud, Patricia Churchland, Daniel Kahneman, Pema Chodron, and Walpola Sri Rahula.
Instructor(s): E. Oliver Terms Offered: Autumn

PLSC 28701. Introduction to Political Theory. 100 Units.
This course will address several major, pressing questions of political morality, and introduce students to theoretical approaches to those questions. The class aims to develop students’ abilities to address political problems in rigorous and thoughtful ways. Topics will include property rights and distributive justice; the meaning of freedom and equality; arguments for and against democracy and the proper design of democratic institutions; war and the use of force; racial and gender justice; and global economic justice and human rights. The focus will be on contemporary approaches to these problems rather than on classical works of political thought. Familiarity with some such works will be helpful but is not required.
Instructor(s): J. Wilson Terms Offered: Autumn
PLSC 28765. The Politics of Authoritarian Regimes. 100 Units.
This course provides an overview of topics related to politics in authoritarian regimes. We begin by introducing the concept of authoritarianism: how it differs from democracy and how authoritarian regimes differ from each other. We then investigate the tools authoritarian rulers employ to maintain power, including institutions, policies, and tactics, and we examine the effects and side effects of these tools. Finally, we study transitions of power and of institutions, both on the way out of authoritarianism (democratization) and on the way in (democratic backsliding). Students who take this course will acquire a broad understanding of authoritarian politics and how it is covered in the literature.
Instructor(s): Scott Gehlbach; Zhaotian Luo Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s):
Note(s): Prior recommended coursework: one semester in Statistics (Stats 220 or equivalent) and current or prior training in game theory (PBPL 222, Social Science Inquiry core, or equivalent).
Equivalent Course(s): PBPL 28765

PLSC 28801. Introduction to American Politics. 100 Units.
This survey course canvases the basic behavioral, institutional, and historical factors that comprise the study of American politics. We will evaluate various modes of survey opinion formation and political participation both inside and outside of elections. In addition to studying the primary branches of U.S. government, we will consider the role of interest groups, the media, and political action committees in American politics. We also will evaluate the persistent roles of race, class, and money in historical and contemporary political life.
Instructor(s): R. Bloch Rubin Terms Offered: Autumn

PLSC 28901. Introduction to Comparative Politics. 100 Units.
Why are some nations rich and others are poor? Why is inequality skyrocketing across the developed world? Why are some countries democratic and others are dictatorships, and what determines switching between regimes? Does democracy matter for health, wealth, and happiness? Why are some countries beset by civil violence and revolution whereas others are politically stable? Why do political parties organize themselves politically around ethnicity, language, religion, or ideology? This course explores these and other similar questions that lie at the core of comparative politics. Drawing on political science, economics, sociology, and anthropology, while utilizing a wealth of data and case studies of major countries, we will examine how power is exercised to shape and control political, cultural, and economic institutions and, in turn, how these institutions generate policies that affect what we learn, what we earn, how long we live, and even who we are.
Instructor(s): M. Albertus, M. Nalepa Terms Offered: Spring

PLSC 29000. Introduction to International Relations. 100 Units.
Humans face many challenges today. These range from wars and nuclear proliferation, to economic crises and the collapse of global order. International Relations—the study of global anarchy and the commitment problems it creates between sovereign governments—offers analytical tools for understanding the causes and consequences of these challenges. This course introduces students to the scientific study of world politics, focusing on the areas of security, economic cooperation, and international law.
Instructor(s): P. Poast Terms Offered: Autumn

PLSC 29102. Game Theory I. 100 Units.
This course introduces students to games of complete information through solving problem sets. We will cover the concepts of dominant strategies, rationalizable strategies, Nash equilibrium, subgame perfection, backward induction, and imperfect information. The course will be centered around several applications of game theory to politics: electoral competition, agenda control, lobbying, voting in legislatures and coalition games.
Instructor(s): M. Nalepa Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): PLSC 40801 Social Choice Theory and PLSC 43401 Mathematical Foundations of Political Methodology or consent of instructor
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 30901

PLSC 29103. Game Theory II. 100 Units.
This course introduces students to games of incomplete information and several advanced topics through solving problem sets. We will cover the concepts of Bayes Nash equilibrium, perfect Bayesian equilibrium, and the basics of mechanism design and information design. In terms of applications, the course will extend the topics examined in the prerequisite, PLSC 30901. Game Theory I to allow for incomplete information, with a focus on the competing challenges of moral hazard and adverse selection in those settings.
Instructor(s): Z. Luo Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): PLSC 30901 or equivalent and consent of instructor. Undergraduates by consent only.
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 31000

PLSC 29700. Independent Study. 100 Units.
This is a general reading and research course for independent study not related to the BA thesis or BA research. Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Summer Winter
Prerequisite(s): Consent of faculty supervisor and program chair.
Note(s): Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form.
PLSC 29800. BA Colloquium. 100 Units.
The colloquium is designed to help students carry out their BA thesis research and offer feedback on their progress. 
Terms Offered: Autumn Spring
Note(s): Required of students who are majoring in political science and plan to write a BA thesis. Students participate in both Spring and Autumn Quarters but register only in the Spring Quarter of the third year. PLSC 29800 counts as a single course and a single grade is reported in Autumn Quarter.

PLSC 29900. BA Thesis Supervision. 100 Units.
This is a reading and research course for independent study related to BA research and BA thesis preparation. 
Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Summer Winter
Note(s): Required of fourth-year students who are majoring in political science and plan to write a BA thesis. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form.