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 (https://humanities-web.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/college-prod/s3fs-public/documents/General%20Petition.pdf), along with a copy of the course syllabus, to the department or electronically.)

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 submit an approval form (https://political-science.uchicago.edu/sites/political-science.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/Long%20Paper%20Form.pdf) to the department (electronic submission permitted), signed by an instructor who verifies that the paper meets two requirements: (a) the paper is 20 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 20-page paper instead.

Written for a course that did not require any papers. Students may ask the instructor for permission to write a 20-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 (https://political-science.uchicago.edu/sites/political-science.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/Long%20Paper%20Form.pdf) to verify the successful completion of the Long Paper and giving it to the relevant instructor. Please ask the instructor to sign the approval form and return it to the departmental office (electronic submission permitted). The deadline for submitting the approval form (http://political-science.uchicago.edu/sites/political-science.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/Long Paper Form.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 department as soon as the writing requirement is completed (electronic submission permitted).

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 35 to 50 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 the BA Thesis to the department 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 Director of Undergraduate Studies 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 (https://humanities-web.s3-us-east-2.amazonaws.com/college-prod/s3fs-public/documents/fillable-reading-research-form.pdf). 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>

300
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  100
Eight additional Political Science courses  800
Fulfillment of the writing requirement  000
Total Units  1200

* 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  100
Six additional Political Science courses  600
PLSC 29800  BA Colloquium  100
PLSC 29900  BA Thesis Supervision  100
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 (https://humanities-web.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/college-prod/s3fs-public/documents/fillable-reading-research-form.pdf). 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 the Petition to Use a Single Bachelor’s Paper for Two Majors (https://humanities-web.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/college-prod/s3fs-public/documents/BA_Double_Major_0.pdf) form.

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

Students 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 (https://humanities-web.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/college-prod/s3fs-public/documents/General%20Petition.pdf).
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 through the departmental office or on the Undergraduate Political Science subscription list page (https://lists.uchicago.edu/web/subscribe/ugpolsall/).

POLITICAL SCIENCE COURSES FOR 2021–22

PLSC 10500. What Should Democracy Mean Today? 100 Units.
This course is designed to explore broad themes of democratic crises. Providing first an overview of democracy by way of reflecting on four major democratic models, the course will proceed to take up our first theme, comprising three separate trends: the rise of right-wing populism; the emergence of social media; and the spawning of conspiracism. Disparate as they are in considerable ways, these trends share a crucial trait—their success is invariably undergirded by a robust popular support, mimicking what in democratic discussion we call “participation”. Paradoxically, scholars of diverse orientation have cautioned us against the pernicious effects they have on democracy. Our second theme concerns the problem of globalization and global warming, raising especially the question whether democracy in its conventional sense—tethered to the notion of sovereign nation-states—is any longer viable in the face of an impending climate apocalypse? Scholars like David Held are calling instead for “cosmopolitan democracy,” while Latour implores us to go beyond democracy’s anthropocentric biases. By way of reflecting on these emerging threats to democracy, we will try to explore-through a number of collective and fun exercises—the critical question of what should democracy look like in our present time? Terms Offered: Summer

PLSC 20800. Machiavelli’s Discourses on Livy. 100 Units.
This course is devoted to reading Machiavelli’s Discourses on Livy supplemented by substantial selections from Livy’s history of Rome. Themes include princes, peoples, and elites; republics and principalities; paganism and Christian religion and morality; war and empire; founding and reform; virtue, corruption, liberty, and fortune; ancient history and modern experience; reading and writing; and theory and practice. Instructor(s): Nathan Tarcov Terms Offered: Winter. Course scheduled for Winter 2022. Prerequisite(s): Familiarity with Machiavelli’s, Prince. Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 31710, FNDL 29300, PLSC 32100

PLSC 21207. Ecocentrism and Environmental Racism. 100 Units.
The aim of this course is to explore the tensions and convergences between two of the most profoundly important areas of environmental philosophy. "Ecocentrism" is the view that holistic systems such as ecosystems can be ethically considerable or "count" in a way somewhat comparable to human persons, and such a philosophical perspective has been shared by many prominent forms of environmentalism, from Aldo Leopold’s Land Ethic to Deep Ecology to the worldviews of many Native American and Indigenous peoples. For some prominent environmental philosophers, a commitment to ecocentrism is the defining test of whether one is truly an environmental philosopher. "Environmental Racism" is one of the defining elements of environmental injustice, the way in which environmental crises and existential threats often reflect systemic discrimination, oppression, and domination in their disproportionate adverse impact on peoples of color, women, the global poor, LGBTQ populations, and Indigenous Peoples. Although historically, some have claimed that ecocentric organizations such as Greenpeace have neglected the problems of environmental injustice and racism in their quest to, e.g., “save the whales,” a deeper analysis reveals a far more complicated picture, with many affinities and alliances between ecocentrists and activists seeking environmental justice. (A) Instructor(s): B. Schultz Terms Offered: Autumn Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 21207, HMRT 21207, CRES 21207, ENST 21207, MAPH 31207

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: Spring

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): MAPH 31499, HMRT 21499, PHIL 21499

PLSC 21510. Introduction to Text as Data for Social Science. 100 Units.

Social scientists increasingly use large quantities of text-based data to address problems in industry and academy. This course provides students with an overview of popular techniques for collecting, processing, and analyzing text data from a social science perspective. We will first learn how to collect text data from a variety of sources, including application programming interfaces (APIs) and web-scraping. The second portion of the class provides an overview of popular methods to analyze text data, including sentiment analysis, topic models, supervised classification, and word embeddings. The course is applied in nature. While many of the techniques we discuss have their origins in computer science or statistics, this is not a CS or statistics course. Ultimately, the goal is to introduce students to modern techniques for computational text analysis and help them apply these methods to their own research.

Instructor(s): R. Terman
Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Students should have at least one class in statistics and/or quantitative methods before taking this course. We will also assume basic familiarity with the R programming language.

Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 31510

PLSC 21538. Racial Universalisms. 100 Units.

This course will discuss the relationship between race and universalism. At first glance, one might think of their relationship as one of opposition: particularities of race are transcended by claims to universal rights. The universalism of equality, this view would suggest, stands against divisions drawn along racial lines. But closer inspection reveals that the interplay between race and universalism is a more complex one, such that the affirmation "Black Lives Matter" can open up a horizon of universality whereas it is precisely the universalism of "All Lives Matter" that speaks to the violence of white supremacy. What is the relationship between the struggle for black rights and the struggle for universal rights? Can universalism operate by way of race? Could it be that the universal has a color? Or are there counter-hegemonic ways of staging discourses of universality that break the links between universalism and whiteness, such as, for instance, in the universalist claim to self-determination among colonized peoples? Moving from the Haitian Revolution and the politics of anti-colonialism to contemporary debates about "identity politics" and struggles for universal justice, this course will provide an introduction to debates around race and the language of rights. Particular attention will be given to "epistemologies of ignorance," which have provided theoretical tools to understand the systematic and racialized blinding effects that universalist discourses 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): GNSE 27539, CRES 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 abolitionism 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 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 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: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HUMA 24900, PHIL 21400

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: Winter, Winter 2022
Note(s): Cap 50
Equivalent Course(s): ANTH 22755, CRES 22755

PLSC 22805. Empire, Law, and Global Justice. 100 Units.
This course will consider the entangled histories of international law and European imperialism from the early modern period to the present. Some of the earliest texts of modern international law were written to grapple with questions about the justifiability of European imperial and commercial practices. Later arguments that states are equal and independent under international law were used both to justify and to obscure imperial relations as well as to criticize it, as, arguably, were human rights arguments in the twentieth century. We will read authors including Vitoria, Montesquieu, Vattel, Bentham, Mill, Du Bois, and Mohammed Bedjaoui as well as recent writings on the history of empire and international law.

Instructor(s): J. Pitts Terms Offered: Spring
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 23065. Early Theories of Capitalism. 100 Units.
This course introduces students to classic texts in the history of economic thought. Our readings will focus on debates about the concept of value in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. We will examine disparate explanations of how a commodity’s value is determined and we will consider the role of these ideas in the larger economic theories of which they are a part. Yet as we investigate the ways in which ideas about value changed across the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries we will also explore how economics, as a field of inquiry, developed during the same period of time. To this end, we will consider how different writers understood and demarcated the economic domain of human life, along with their views on the methods and aims of studying it.
In doing so, moreover, we will pay especially close attention to their efforts to identify natural economic laws and the arguments they make about the state’s regulation of economic life. Readings include works by Adam Smith, David Ricardo, Carl Menger, and Alfred Marshall.
Instructor(s): Sarah Johnson Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 29065

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 23313. Democracy and Equality. 100 Units.
Democracy has often been celebrated (and often criticized) for expressing some kind of equality among citizens. This course will investigate a series of questions prompted by this supposed relationship between democracy and equality. Is democracy an important part of a just society? What institutions and practices does democracy require? Is equality a meaningful or important political ideal? If so, what kind of equality? Does democracy require some kind of equality, or vice-versa? The course will begin by studying classical arguments for democracy by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Stuart Mill, and then focus on contemporary approaches to these questions. The course will conclude with some treatment of current democratic controversies, potentially including issues of race and representation; the fair design of elections; the role of wealth in political processes; and the role of judicial review. The course aims to deepen participants’ understanding of these and related issues, and to develop our abilities to engage in argument about moral and political life.
This course is part of the College Course Cluster program, Inequality.
Instructor(s): J. Wilson Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 43301, LLSO 23313

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 23615. Reconstructing Democracy: Tocqueville and Du Bois. 100 Units.
Over the last few years, ideas of democratic crisis and democratic breakdown have been pervasive in public and scholarly discussion. This course examines two classical texts on American Democracy-Tocqueville’s Democracy in America and Du Bois Black Reconstruction. We will think through central puzzles of democratic politics-from majoritarianism to the role of racial identity and imperial expansion guided by Tocqueville and Du Bois.
Instructor(s): A. Getachew Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 33615
PLSC 23917. Anticolonial Political Thought. 100 Units.
This course examines three canonical figures in history of anticolonial thought-Gandhi, Fanon and C.L.R James to reconstruct their political visions of decolonization and independence. Along with each of these thinkers, we will explore key secondary sources that illuminate key interpretive debates.
Instructor(s): A. Getachew Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 33917

PLSC 24202. Chicago Politics. 100 Units.
This course is part of the Spring 2021 Chicago Studies bundle, that will permit students to collaborate with historian and political scientist John Mark Hansen (author of The City in a Garden: A History of Hyde Park and Kenwood) in ongoing research into the history and politics of Chicago’s 10th Ward (Southeast Chicago). Meeting schedule and individualized projects will be decided in collaboration with enrollees' specific schedules and interests.
Instructor(s): John Mark Hansen Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CHST 24202, PBPL 24202

PLSC 24210. Politicizing the Passions: Emotions and Collective Action. 100 Units.
This course will draw from the fields of political science, sociology, psychology & neuroscience, and anthropology to examine the different ways in which emotions drive and impact diverse political phenomena such as social movements, nationalism and statehood, diplomacy, voter behavior, and political intolerance & violence. The first objective of this course is to develop a critical understanding of the different disciplinary and methodological approaches to emotion and its place in political life. To that end, we will begin by analyzing how rationality and emotion are conceptualized and theorized in different disciplines. Throughout the course we will consider the conceptions and methodologies of competing models of the place of emotion in politics, examining both macro and micro approaches, and considering questions such as: how do we measure emotions? Are emotions primarily physiological or cognitive? Are emotions at base universal or socially and culturally constructed? What are the processes by which private, individual emotions become public, collective, and politically relevant? The first half of the course is organized thematically by political phenomenon. The second half of the course is designed to discern patterns and identity concrete ways that specific emotions-such as fear, shame, anger, and hope-shape politics.
Instructor(s): Mekawy, Yasmine Terms Offered: TBD
Equivalent Course(s): GLST 24210

PLSC 24423. Russian Encounters with Blackness: History, Literature, Politics. 100 Units.
This course provides a historical, literary, and political survey of Russia's encounters with black peoples, from the reign of Peter the Great to the administration of Vladimir Putin. Drawing on a variety of sources, including novels, autobiographies, film, media reports, and contemporary scholarly research, the course explores the concepts of race, belonging, and otherness/duality as they evolved in the varying historical contexts of Russia's encounters with "blackness." Particular attention is paid to comparisons of racialization and racial injustice in America and in Russia, as gleaned from the biographies of black 'Russophiles' such as Frederick Bruce Thomas and Paul Robeson, as well as from the memoirs and writings of figures such as Alexander Pushkin, Langston Hughes, and Yelena Khanga. From classic Russian literature, to Soviet propaganda, to contemporary geopolitics, the course asks: How has "blackness" been historically understood and/or used by Russians, and what cultural and political legacies has that left in Russia's post-imperial and post-Soviet space?
Instructor(s): Christy Brandle Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): REES 24423

PLSC 24741. Politics and Popular Culture in the Arab World. 100 Units.
This course will examine the relationship between popular culture and politics in the Arab world, with an emphasis on Egypt. Pop culture, such as cinema, television, street art, music, and social media, has been a means of both resisting and shoring up authority, of affirming and subverting societal norms and taboos, enabling the production of new forms of community and publics, and of motivating and expressing political action. We will critically examine examples of pop culture from societies throughout the region, analyzing their connection to power structures and changes in ideology and nationalism, gender/class/religious identity and practice, comportment and urban space, and state power. This course will draw on research approaches in media studies and anthropology to theorize the role of popular culture in reflecting, challenging, and expanding political horizons in the region.
Instructor(s): Mekawy, Yasmeen Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): GLST 24741

PLSC 24920. Life of the Hive Mind: Digital Media, Politics, and Society. 100 Units.
The development of new media technology has prompted questions about and challenges to conceptions of power, knowledge, and subjectivity. While social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube permeate every aspect of our lives, we often remain unaware of their impact and significance. This course examines the intersection between social media, politics, and society in a global perspective to understand their role in our lives, in political discourse, and in shaping culture. Through course readings and student work we will think through how to analyze social media theoretically and empirically, considering how individuals and groups across the globe use social media to develop relationships, construct and perform identity, coordinate political action, achieve status and distinction, express unpopular opinions, explore sexuality, connect to
subaltern communities, and develop subcultures. We also delve into the darker side of these platforms, exploring the proliferation of fake news, hate speech, terrorist networks, and gendered issues including trolling and cyber-harassment. We will draw on readings from media studies, sociology, anthropology, and political science to develop insights into understanding the relationship between online and offline worlds, as well as the social, cultural, and political consequences of social media in everyday life and global structures.

Instructor(s): Yasmeen Mekawy
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): GLST 24920

PLSC 25068. Feminist Theory and Political Economy. 100 Units.
This course has two related aims: to consider how the regulation of economic life—from the household to the global economy—has been taken up as an object of analysis within feminist thought; and to examine how this analysis has informed feminist theories of domination, freedom, rights, and justice. We will pursue these twin objectives by studying a wide range of texts in the history of feminist thought. Readings may include works by Anna Julia Cooper, Eleanor Rathbone, Simone de Beauvoir, Angela Davis, Nancy Fraser, and Chandra Talpade Mohanty.

Instructor(s): Sarah Johnson
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 20117, LLSO 29068

PLSC 25110. Empire and International Justice. 100 Units.
How did European thinkers from 1492 onward understand and evaluate the extraordinary developments by which some European countries came to rule over much of the non-European world? This seminar examines theories of international justice and global relations from the early sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries. Philosopher, theologians, and political actors in this period responded to the key issues of global politics in the modern age, including the seizure of non-European lands; the establishment of slavery and the slave trade; the religious and cultural conversion of colonized peoples; the emerging institutions and practices of global commerce; and the impact of these developments upon both European and non-European societies.

Indeed, many dilemmas that confront citizens and states today about humanitarian intervention, national sovereignty, conquest and occupation, empire, and human rights in a global context have an intriguing and complex intellectual history. The readings are primary texts by influential thinkers from the period of the initial Spanish conquests of the Americas through the mid-nineteenth century, including Montesquieu, Diderot, Burke, Bentham, Adam Smith, Cugoano, Kant, Herder, Constant, Tocqueville, John Stuart Mill, and Karl Marx.

Instructor(s): S. Muthu
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 25110

PLSC 25205. Racial Justice and Injustice. 100 Units.
The course will explore moral and political problems of racial justice and injustice. Topics may include antidiscrimination theory, the fair political representation of racial minorities, reparations for racial injustice, racial segregation, the use of racial preferences in various practices of selection, and the evaluation of practices of law enforcement and punishment. We will use reflections on particular problems such as these to inquire about the uses of racial concepts in political theory; the connections between racial justice and ostensibly more general conceptions of justice; and the connections between racial equality and other egalitarian ideals.

Instructor(s): I. Wilson
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 25205, LLSO 25205, PLSC 35205

PLSC 25215. The American Presidency. 100 Units.
This course examines the institution of the American presidency. It surveys the foundations of presidential power, both as the Founders conceived it, and as it is practiced in the modern era. This course also traces the historical development of the institutional presidency, the president’s relationships with Congress and the courts, the influence presidents wield in domestic and foreign policymaking, and the ways in which presidents make decisions in a system of separated powers.

Instructor(s): W. Howell
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): PBPL 25216, AMER 25215, LLSO 25215

PLSC 25350. The Arab Uprisings: Social Movements and Revolution in the MENA. 100 Units.
This course examines the reasons for and variations in contemporary uprisings in the Middle East. At once theoretical and empirical, the class focuses on events of the Arab uprisings, which occurred first in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Syria, Libya in the first wave, followed by Sudan, Algeria, Lebanon, and Iraq in the second wave. We will consider the uprisings in relation to prevailing social scientific theories of change and management, covering the following topics: the causes and meanings of “revolution;” class dynamics and the rise of new social movements in a neoliberal era; the importance of digital publics; popular culture and artistic practices in the context of ongoing tumult; the spatial and gendered dynamics of mass mobilization; the various roles of the military; the causes of civil war; counterrevolution, and the politics of empire.

Instructor(s): Mekawy, Yasmine
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): GLST 25350

PLSC 25457. Topics in Contemporary Critical Theory I. 100 Units.
This course considers the question of capital, historically, comparatively and conceptually. What is capital? How is it related to value? How is it different from money? How does it work to organize social relations? In what forms, and through what institutional structures, does it materialize? How does it reflect in modes and relations of production? How is it governed, and what is its relation to the political? This course will enter into
such questions, in the first instance, through a reading of Karl Marx. It will subsequently traverse a heterodox
genealogy of Marxist social thought (with some emphasis on French theorists), in order to understand how a
method of analysis developed to come to terms with nineteenth century European industrial capitalism might
help us understand contemporary worlds of extraction, logistics and finance in comparative perspective. We will
consider how capital is racialized and gendered, how it has expanded and mutated across place and over time,
and what it means that we live in a time today when it is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of
capitalism.

Instructor(s): Kaushik Sunder Rajan Terms Offered: Winter. Offered in alternating years. The program will next
run in Winter 2022.
Prerequisite(s): Admission to the Paris: Social Sciences - Critical Theory study abroad program.
Note(s): This course is part of the College's Paris: Social Sciences - Critical Theory study abroad program.
Equivalent Course(s): CCCT 25457, ANTH 25459

PLSC 25459. Topics in Contemporary Critical Theory II. 100 Units.

This course examines selections from the vast literature on ideology—with attention to the political commitments
and intellectual genealogies that have made the concept both important and vexed. The bulk of the course
will entail examining ideology’s relationship to material practice, the notion of interpellation, the usefulness of
“hegemony,” and the problems associated with false consciousness. We shall also analyze ideology’s connection
to prevailing theoretical and empirical concerns, such as those related to “subject” formation, affect, new
developments in capitalism, the resurgence of populism, and the dynamics associated with contemporary
“democratic” liberal, as well as authoritarian, political order.

Instructor(s): Lisa Wedeen Terms Offered: Winter. Offered in alternating years. The program will next run in Winter 2022.
Prerequisite(s): Admission to the Paris: Social Sciences - Critical Theory study abroad program.
Note(s): This course is part of the College’s Paris: Social Sciences - Critical Theory study abroad program.
Equivalent Course(s): CCCT 25458, ANTH 25458

PLSC 25458. Topics in Contemporary Critical Theory III. 100 Units.

This course investigates the central place of empires in the shaping of the modern world and understands critical
theory as inextricable from its colonial context. We will read authors including Montaigne, Diderot, Tocqueville,
Du Bois, Aimé Césaire, Suzanne Césaire, Fanon, Foucault, Said, and Trouillot, as well as contemporary theorists
including Luce Irigaray, Achille Mbembe, David Scott, Françoise Vergès, and Joan Scott; we will pay particular
but not exclusive attention to the context of French imperialism and to Paris as a site of theorizing, and critique of,
the imperial global order.

Instructor(s): Kaushik Sunder Rajan and Lisa Wedeen Terms Offered: Winter. Offered in alternating years. The program will next run in Winter 2022.
Prerequisite(s): Admission to the Paris: Social Sciences - Critical Theory study abroad program.
Note(s): This course is part of the College’s Paris: Social Sciences - Critical Theory study abroad program.
Equivalent Course(s): CCCT 25458, ANTH 25458

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 25804. Feminists Read the Greeks. 100 Units.

Since the 1970s, thinkers writing on gender, sex, and sexuality have staged a series of generative, critical, and
temporary encounters with ancient Greek thought, politics, and culture. As one classicist puts it, feminist theory has “gone a long way… toward inscribing classical Greek philosophy at the origins of some of the most tenacious assumptions about sexual difference in the Western tradition.” This course explores the ways that the texts and practices of ancient Greece, if not the idea of “the Greeks,” have provided theoretical and symbolic resources for feminists and others to think critically about gender (and sexuality) as a conceptual and political category. What sorts of interpretive and historical assumptions govern these engagements? To what extent might the trajectories of gender studies, feminism, and classics be intertwined? Was there a concept of “gender” in ancient Greece? Of sexuality? Is it fair to say, as many have, that classical Greek ideas about gender and the sexed body are wholly opposed to those of the moderns? What other oppositions could this habit of thought be working to keep in place? Sample reading list: Sophocles’ Antigone, Plato’s Republic, Foucault’s The Use of Pleasure, Ann Carson’s Oresteia, Judith Butler’s Antigone’s Claim.

Instructor(s): D. Kasimis Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CCCT 45804, PLSC 45804, CCCT 25804, KNOW 25804, GNSE 45804, GNSE 25804

PLSC 25807. Plato’s Symposium. 100 Units.

The seminar is devoted to close readings and extended discussions of Plato’s Symposium. We will explore the
views on Eros presented in the various speeches comprising the dialogue, among them: love’s relationship to
physical beauty and human desire; its potential for prompting heroic action and forging moral education; its significance for the soul and place in the cosmos. We will also analyze the literary aspects of the work (plot, action, allegory); the dialogue's historical setting (democratic Athens beset by domestic conspiracies and engaged in an apocalyptic war); its implications for political philosophy; and the function of a symposium in classical Athens. We will devote several sessions at the end of term to major interpretations of the dialogue.

Instructor(s): D. Kasimis, J. McCormick Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 35807

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 26301. Ethnographies of the Middle East. 100 Units.
This class focuses on ethnographies published in the last two to three years, so they represent some of the prevailing questions researchers of the Middle East are working on now. The texts selected cover a variety of topics (revolution, authoritarian retrenchment, the politics of artistic production, gender and sexuality, migration, violence, state infrastructure, and environmentalism) and the books include efforts to learn something about various countries in the region (e.g., Saudi Arabia, Bosnia, Syria, Egypt, Palestine, Turkey, and Morocco). Among the questions we shall ask are the following: What makes ethnography a distinctive sensibility, a particular form of writing or a specific genre of address? What kinds of themes predominate and why? What types of questions can ethnographies grapple with especially well? What skills does one need to produce a compelling ethnography? How does theory tend to get deployed in these works? How well do ethnographies speak to general concerns that extend beyond a particular case or, for that matter, any one discipline's preoccupations? No previous background in anthropology or Middle East studies is necessary. Attendance is mandatory. Students will be required to produce one in-class presentation and to write either a take-home final or a research paper.

Instructor(s): L. Wedeen Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 36301, CCCT 36301, CCCT 26301, ANTH 24115, ANTH 31906

PLSC 26703. Political Parties in the United States. 100 Units.
Politicians and pundits frequently allege that aggressive partisanship is to blame for our contemporary political ills. American voters are similarly jaundiced. Public opinion polls routinely show that citizens, regardless of their ideology, take a dim view of political parties. Using the tools of social science, we will analyze the role that parties have played in politics throughout American history. Over the course of the seminar, we will begin to answer the following questions. What are parties and why do we have them? How do parties structure policymaking? Is too much partisanship really a problem? What is polarization, what causes it, and why does it matter?

Instructor(s): R. Bloch Rubin Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 26703

PLSC 26800. Insurgency, Terrorism, and Civil War. 100 Units.
This course provides an introduction to asymmetric and irregular warfare. From Colombia to Afghanistan, non-state armed organizations are crucially important actors. We will study how they organize themselves, extract resources, deploy violence, attract recruits, and both fight and negotiate with states. We will also examine government counterinsurgency and counterterrorism policies, peace-building after conflict, and international involvement in internal wars. Case materials will be drawn from a variety of conflicts and cover a number of distinct topics. This course has a heavy reading load, and both attendance and substantial participation in weekly discussion sections are required.

Instructor(s): P. Staniland Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 26804

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: Winter

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 27600. War and the Nation State. 100 Units.
The aim of this course is to examine the phenomenon of war in its broader socio-economic context during the years between the emergence of the modern nation-state at the end of the eighteenth century and the conclusion of World War II in 1945.
Instructor(s): J. Mearsheimer Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 37600

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 37815

PLSC 28035. Marx, Revolution, and the Law. 100 Units.
To what extent can we change our world by changing our laws? We will explore this question through an intensive study of Karl Marx’s writings. Although Marx is most widely known for his arguments about political economy and revolution, his earliest scholarly energies were devoted to jurisprudence and throughout his life he frequently returned to questions about the law’s nature, possibilities, and limits. He did so not only in his analyses of the modern state and capitalism, but also in his efforts to document the goals, victories, and set-backs of democratic movements, labor unions, and political radicals as they navigated repressive legal systems, fought for legal reforms, and developed alternative visions of how to regulate social life. We will therefore draw on diverse genres of writing from across Marx’s life-including letters, newspaper articles, pamphlets, and speeches-as we explore the relationship between law and social transformation.
Instructor(s): Sarah Johnson Terms Offered: Spring. Not offered in spring 2022.
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 28035

PLSC 28300. Seminar on Realism. 100 Units.
The aim of this course is to introduce students to the realist paradigm of international relations.
Instructor(s): J. Mearsheimer Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s):.

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’état 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 28605. Challenges to Democracy. 100 Units.
Challenges of Democracy grapples with the possibilities of, and challenges to, democratic government in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The quarter will begin with the debates over national self-determination and the possibility of democracy that proliferated in the decades from the First through the Second World War. Students will consider the normative case made for rights to self-determination (celebrated by figures such as Woodrow Wilson but recognized as a threat to class-based revolution by Rosa Luxemburg) as well as arguments by those skeptical of the possibility or desirability of a more inclusive and participatory democratic regime. Key readings for the first weeks of class will include arguments that identify the dangers in defining the demos or people in ways that enable despotism or even genocide.
Instructor(s): L. Clemens, S. Stokes Terms Offered: Winter

PLSC 28701. Introduction to Political Theory. 100 Units.
This year, Introduction to Political Theory will focus on democracy. Can democracy be defended in the face of critics and skeptics? Is democratic rule the uniquely just form of collective decision-making? What, if anything, legitimates central democratic institutions such as majority rule? How can we deal with persistent disagreement and polarization in politics? Which political institutions and practices best realize democratic values of equality, freedom, and participation? We will take up these questions drawing on canonical and contemporary works of political theory.
Instructor(s): M. Landauer Terms Offered: Spring

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. Then we 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 for undergraduates: one semester in Statistics (Stats 220 or equivalent) and current or prior training in game theory (PBPL 222, Social Science Inquiry core, or equivalent). Prior recommended coursework for graduate students: one semester of statistics and current or prior training in game theory.
Equivalent Course(s): PBPL 28765, PLSC 38765, PPHA 38765

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 28850. Chinese Foreign and Global Policy. 100 Units.
China's rapid development in recent decades is as transformative within China as it has been momentous for the rest of the world. Some see reformist China becoming a global citizen and responsible stakeholder while others view China's growth with alarm and believe a rising China will challenge the existing global order. This course describes and analyzes elements of China's foreign and global policy. We consider historical, organizational, cultural, ideological, and organizational and other factors that influence the making of Chinese foreign policy, examine China's relations with major countries and regions, and look at China's approaches to international organizations and key global issues. We also pay attention to how other countries/regions have responded to China's rise.
Instructor(s): D. Yang Terms Offered: Spring

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: Autumn

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): S. Gehlbach Terms Offered: Autumn
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 29202. The Secret Side of International Politics. 100 Units.
This course introduces students to the secret side of international politics. The class features weekly lectures and "research/writing lab" meetings. The lecture and associated readings survey a wide range of theoretical approaches for describing and analyzing the causes and consequences of conducting international politics "behind closed doors." We will cover intelligence analysis, secret alliances, secrecy in crisis decision-making, and covert wartime military operations. We will draw on political science but also organization studies, psychology, and anthropology. Questions we will address include: What agreements do diplomats negotiate privately and why? For what ends do state use secrecy in wartime? What do covert cooperative partnerships look like and when do they succeed? What espionage practices do states use and how have they changed over time? The core assignment is an original research paper that draws on archival/declassified materials, due from each student at the end of term. Regular checkpoint assignments will take place during the quarter. In the weekly lab meetings, students will receive guidance in the research and writing process, including how to access relevant archival materials, how to organize your research materials, how to effectively prepare to write, and how to write well.

This course is intended for advanced undergraduates (political science majors and non-majors welcome) with a large reading load and a challenging paper assignment.

Instructor(s): A. Carson Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 29202

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.