

POLITICAL SCIENCE (PSCI)

PSCI 201 - Introduction to Politics (3 Hours)

An introduction to the fundamental principles of politics and government. This course develops the theoretical foundations and analytical frameworks enabling students to understand and interpret democratic and alternate forms of government and will provide insight into the inherent difficulties faced by democracies. C21:CL,SS,WA.

Curriculum: CL,SS,WA

PSCI 202 - American Government and Politics (3 Hours)

This course considers the fundamentals of American government and politics. It is a survey of the theoretical principles upon which the U.S. national government was founded as well as a practical look at the structure and function of U.S. national government. Emphasis is placed on the U.S. Constitution, American political institutions, mass political behavior, and mediating institutions such as political parties, interest groups, and the media. C21:CL,SS.

Curriculum: CL,SS

PSCI 203 - Success Strategies in Political Science (1 Hour)

This course is intended for new political science majors and those thinking about majoring in the department. The course exposes students to significant concepts and issues in the discipline, provides an overview of the political science major, and assists students with identifying career paths that may be of interest. It also provides students with the opportunity to practice the important critical thinking, reading, writing, speaking, and analytical skills that they will need to use in their coursework within the major and across the college.

PSCI 225 - Environmental Law (3 Hours)

Students will gain an overview of the essential concepts of environmental law that shape the practice of environmental and political science, and learn how to analyze issues in their legal contexts with regard to the environment. The course provides a historical survey of the field from its common law roots to its current applications dealing legislatively with a variety of complex environmental issues, such as air and water pollution, loss of species diversity, and global climate change. It is taught as a seminar in which the historical development of common law concepts and the evolution of the present complex of statutory laws are highlighted through study of the major court cases that have guided environmental legislation and policies.

Cross-list: EVST 225

PSCI 226 - Environmental Policy (3 Hours)

This course will provide the student with a foundation in current U.S. environmental policy. Students will examine the issues associated with specific areas such as air pollution, waste management, and endangered species and will develop an understanding of analytical approaches to environmental policymaking including risk assessment and cost/benefit analysis. The course will focus on the modern environmental policy period which began in the 1970s, primarily through case studies which illustrate problems of pollution control, natural resource conservation and ecosystem protection. Students will have an opportunity to work with primary source documents, and to discuss significant environmental issues such as climate change and biodiversity loss. The course will also examine environmental policies of the current federal administration.

Cross-list: EVST 226

PSCI 301 - Research Methods (3 Hours)

The course will introduce the student to the statistical methods applied in the study of politics domestic, comparative, and international. With an emphasis on applied research, students will learn the basic statistical measurements of central tendency, dispersion, correlation, sampling and survey research, as well as the more commonly used approaches to hypothesis testing. This course should normally be taken by the end of the sophomore year. C21:CC,EL.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 201 or PSCI 202 or permission of department

Curriculum: CC,EL

PSCI 305 - Virginia Politics in Action (3 Hours)

A hands-on study of Virginia politics and policymaking that examines how citizens can change state policy. Students will identify a bill currently active in the VA General Assembly and develop and execute a step-by-step plan for helping to get it enacted or defeated. Periodic travel, during and outside of class time, to the General Assembly in Richmond may be required. Offered alternate years. C21:EL, SA.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 306 - Retail Politics: Presidential Campaigning in the U.S. (3 Hours)

Students will explore an important American electoral tradition – the presidential nomination process. During the first portion of the course, students will meet on campus, where we will discuss the processes through which the Democratic and Republican Parties nominate candidates for president, including the party rules, fundraising laws, and policies regarding voter participation. We will also review the dynamics of the presidential campaign process, including the structure of campaign staffs and methods used for targeting voters. Then, during the second and third week of the course, students will travel to New Hampshire to take part in the nomination process. The the New Hampshire Primary is the first election that helps decide who the major political parties in the U.S. will nominate for president every four years. Campaigning in New Hampshire is intense. Candidates hold many public events in the weeks preceding the contest, while thousands of campaign operatives and volunteers come to work for various presidential hopefuls. The campaigning is notable for its "retail" quality, as many events are held in small venues and feature significant access to candidates. Students will play an active role by volunteering for candidates. This will include canvassing, making phone calls, coordinating events, and distributing literature on behalf of a campaign. When students are not campaigning, our group will attend candidate events and scholarly discussions about the history and significance of the New Hampshire Primary. During the course's final week, students will again meet on campus to discuss our experiences and place them in the context of the broader nomination process. C21:EL.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 202 or permission of the instructor

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 308 - American Campaigns and Elections (3 Hours)

A study of contemporary American political campaigns and elections. The election cycle will be examined from three different perspectives: the political campaign/politician, the mass media, and the voter. State level and federal elections will be analyzed during election years. Offered alternate years.

Cross-list: COMM 308

PSCI 309 - Political Parties (3 Hours)

This course provides a historical, theoretical, and practical examination of political parties in the United States. Students will explore the causes of party development, the two-party system, the history of American parties, and the factors which contribute to changes in party orthodoxy and realignment over time. The interaction of parties with interest groups, state and local governments, and other institutions will also be examined. Through lectures, readings, films, and in-class simulations, students will study the inner-workings of parties, including the process through which candidates are recruited and nominated, potential voters are targeted, and strategic goals are generated. Finally, the U.S. will be compared to other global party structures, allowing students to assess the normative strengths and weaknesses of the American system in a comparative context.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 202

PSCI 310 - Interest Group Politics (3 Hours)

This course provides an introduction to the roles of interest groups in the American political system. The course focuses on how groups are conceptualized, how they recruit members, and how they operate. The course explores interest group goals, how and why they influence members of Congress, the executive, and the courts, as well as their activities and influence during electoral campaigns. Significant attention will be given to the regulatory framework regarding campaign finance and the practice of lobbying. The course will identify how federal spending priorities are tied to groups and their specific interests. Students will conduct original research on a question of interest related to the themes of the course, and will prepare written and oral presentations of their research. Offered alternate years.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 202

PSCI 311 - Identity Politics (3 Hours)

Identity Politics provides an overview of the American political system as it relates to race, ethnicity, gender, class, disability, and sexual orientation. It covers the historical efforts of disadvantaged groups to attain the full rights of citizenship. In doing so, continuing legal and cultural barriers are explored, including those that deter individuals from seeking elected office. The political behavior of disadvantaged groups is also closely examined, including both ideological trends and the effects of descriptive representation by members of these groups. The course also addresses efforts by the economically distressed to achieve rights under the law, including the Labor Movement and modern movements to address rising inequality. Finally, the predicament of women, racial and ethnic minorities, and the poor in the U.S. will be compared with those in other industrialized nations. C21:DI.

Curriculum: DI

PSCI 312 - State and Local Government and Politics (3 Hours)

This course examines the workings of state and local governments and the politics that surround them. Students will learn about the organization, structure, function, and administration of state, urban, and municipal government, and explore the varied actors and stakeholders who demand policy change from local officials. Issues examined may include education, criminal justice, zoning and economic development, and social services. Course content will be based in part on current events taking place at the Virginia State Capitol and in regional local governments. Offered alternate years.

PSCI 313 - Social Movements (3 Hours)

This course examines the theory and history of social movements and other forms of contentious politics. The course focuses on movement politics in the United States, although other contexts will be considered. Students may learn about movements from the past (e.g., abolition) and present (anti-globalization forces, Tea Party activists), as well as from the left (civil rights, feminism) and right (Religious Right). Offered alternate years.

PSCI 314 - Religion and Politics (3 Hours)

This course explores the crucial effects of religion on political outcomes. While focusing on the contemporary United States, students also look to examples from other contexts and countries. The course covers a number of concepts from the interdisciplinary study of religion and politics, including religious social movements, religious fundamentalism, religious doctrines of war and peace, and the challenges to religion's role in politics offered by atheists and other critics. Students also explore selected, contemporary public policy issues that have a religious dimension, such as abortion and marriage equality. Offered alternate years.

PSCI 315 - Public Policy (3 Hours)

Public policy is the interdisciplinary study of government "outputs": the laws, regulations, and court decisions that implement government policies. The course addresses numerous policy theories, but students also engage in the practice of "policy analysis," the normative decision-making that practitioners engage in to decide which policy is best. Offered alternate years.

PSCI 316 - Judicial Process and Behavior (3 Hours)

An analytical course dealing with the role of the judicial branch in America's political life. The course explores the courts as political institutions, the processes courts use, the ways judges behave, influences on judges and justices, and the policy-making aspects of what judges do. The emphasis of this course is at the federal level, although consideration will be given to both state and federal courts and judges. Offered alternate years.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 202

PSCI 317 - The American Presidency (3 Hours)

This course provides an introduction and overview of the American presidency. It focuses heavily on the complex and evolving nature of presidential power and constraint. Considerable attention is paid to the transformation of the office since its creation, especially during the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The scope of various presidential powers, including formal, implied, and informal power, is investigated. In examining the office, the president's interactions with the federal bureaucracy, Congress, and the courts are probed. Finally, the course examines various theories for understanding presidential success and failure.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 202

PSCI 318 - The U.S. Congress (3 Hours)

An analytical treatment of the national legislature and its performance within the American political system. This study of the institutional environment of Congress includes consideration of recruitment patterns, internal leadership structures, the role of party, constituencies and interest groups, decision-making, and the relations with the bureaucracy. Offered alternate years.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 202

PSCI 319 - The Federal Budget (3 Hours)

This course provides an overview of the U.S. federal budget. The course explores the processes through which the budget is developed and refined in the U.S., noting the role of both the executive and legislative branches of government. The historical development, function, and processes of numerous government initiatives including Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the military, and others are reviewed. The U.S. tax code is explored, including the process through which interest groups and others advocate for tax advantages. Finally, students explore multiple perspectives concerning the U.S. budget deficit and national debt. The course is interactive, as students work in groups to pursue budget reforms within the constraints of the U.S. political system.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 202

PSCI 320 - American Foreign Policy (3 Hours)

This course examines both the nature of the foreign policy decision-making process and the substantive content of policy. Specifically, the course studies the roles that the Department of State, the president and his advisers, the Congress, the press, and public opinion play in the formation of foreign policy. The course discusses the overall development of U.S. foreign policy since WW II and on the basis of the insights gained analyze contemporary foreign policy issues. Offered alternate years.

PSCI 321 - International Relations (3 Hours)

This course introduces the student to the nature of the problems facing the contemporary international system. Emphasis will be placed on the relationships of man, the state, and the international system to world politics. The course also surveys several of the more prominent approaches advocated to limit and control the high level of violence which characterizes the world today. C21:GE,SS.

Cross-list: INST 321

Curriculum: GE,SS

PSCI 322 - International Organization: Model United Nations (3 Hours)

The explosive growth of both intergovernmental organizations and international non-governmental organizations (IGOs and INGOs) has led to the increased recognition and importance of such entities in the international system. This course focuses on the history, structure, function, and key issues facing these organizations. To gain a better understanding of the complexities of organizational politics, students will have the opportunity to participate in a Model United Nations Conference. Offered alternate years.

PSCI 326 - U.S. Intelligence and Foreign Policy (3 Hours)

An examination of the history, structure, and function of the U.S. Intelligence Community since 1947. This course studies the collection, collation, evaluation, analysis, interpretation, and integration of information as an input to foreign policy. Analyzing the use and often abuse of U.S. covert actions since 1948, the course explores the inherent tensions between the need for secrecy and democratic processes. Noting the momentous political, economic, and technological changes since the end of the Cold War, the course identifies new challenges and threats that face the U.S. Intelligence Community in the 21st century. Offered alternate years.

PSCI 327 - International Terrorism (3 Hours)

This course introduces students to international terrorism and political violence. It analyzes international terrorism from an individual, organizational, and systems perspective. In addition to examining history, causes, methods, and characteristics of terrorism, this course seeks to provide students with a basis for understanding why international terrorism occurs and what, if anything, governments can do to reduce or to prevent it.

PSCI 330 - Comparative Legislatures (3 Hours)

Comparative Legislatures explores the major differences between the presidential-congressional system of government in the United States and the prime ministerial-parliamentary systems used in other parts of the world. Comparative Legislatures focuses on the factors influencing a particular non-western country's implementation of parliamentary democracy. A travel course, this class offers the opportunity for students to consider the unique geographic, cultural, social, and political characteristics that shape the U.S. and comparison country by travel both to Washington, D.C. and to a major parliamentary democracy for in-depth participant observation of the differences between the two systems.

Recommended: PSCI 201 or 202. C21:EL,NW.

Curriculum: EL,NW

PSCI 331 - European Politics (3 Hours)

A comparative survey of political institutions of major European actors. Focusing on history, structure, and function, it examines the politics, polities, and policies of major European governments. It explores major issues facing Europe, the complexities of addressing such issues in multi-cultural political environments and supranational institutions like the European Union. (Knowledge of European history is preferred.) Offered alternate years.

PSCI 332 - Russian Politics (3 Hours)

An examination of the current government and political system of Russia in the context of the development, character, and structure of the former Soviet Union. The course will also cover the process of disintegration of the former Soviet empire. Offered alternate years.

PSCI 333 - Latin American Politics (3 Hours)

This course surveys the governmental structures and political processes of Latin America. The course focuses on the political theories and political cultures of the region, regime types and the processes of regime breakdown, debt relief, political reform, the drug trade, and environmental protection. Students also study micro-level political behavior by looking at how Latin Americans seek to influence their political environment. Thus the course discusses social movements, patron-clientage, ethnic identity and relations, political parties, and voting. Offered alternate years. C21:NW.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 201 or PSCI 202 or INST 261 or INST/PSCI 321 or permission of department

Curriculum: NW

PSCI 334 - African Politics (3 Hours)

This course surveys governmental structure and political processes in Africa south of the Sahara. Specifically, the course addresses the capacity of the modern African state to govern. The course addresses the history of the colonial state and its modern impact on politics, the question of why states collapse and how to rebuild them, and the ability of the modern state to accommodate subnational and ethnic identities. Along with discussing the pessimistic conclusions about African politics drawn by many analysts, students consider successful cases of effective governance in the region, and how Africans organize to influence policy. Offered alternate years. C21:NW.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 201 or PSCI 202 or INST 261 or INST321 or PSCI 321 or permission of department

Curriculum: NW

PSCI 335 - Chinese Politics (3 Hours)

A survey of the structure and operation of the Chinese political system. Consideration will be given to the development of the Chinese political system during the Imperial Dynastic period, the Republican period, and the present period of Communist rule. Offered alternate years. C21:NW.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 201 or PSCI 202 or INST 261 or INST/PSCI 321 or permission of department

Curriculum: NW

PSCI 336 - Revolution, Politics and Policy in Cuba (3 Hours)

This course studies contemporary Cuban politics and society. Through study, site visits, and meetings and interviews with Cubans, students learn about Cuba's political structure and culture, its domestic and foreign policies, and the importance of the Revolution in shaping Cubans' political identity. Offered every three years. C21:EL,NW.

Curriculum: EL,NW

PSCI 337 - Mexican Politics (3 Hours)

This course surveys the governmental structures and political processes in Mexico. The course examines the historical development of the Mexican political system during the Republican and Revolutionary periods. It then studies the multi-party political system of the twenty-first century. The purpose of this course is to give students a general familiarity with Mexican political history since the late nineteenth century; to investigate how political power is structured and operated in Mexico; and to consider some of the major challenges confronting Mexico today. Offered alternate years. C21:NW.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 201 or PSCI 202 or INST 261 or INST/PSCI 321 or permission of the instructor

Curriculum: NW

PSCI 338 - Middle Eastern Politics (3 Hours)

This course seeks to introduce the student to politics and society in the Middle East. A determined effort is made to take a balanced view of the area, neither looking at it through Western eyes nor through the eyes of any particular adversary in the numerous regional conflicts. Emphasis is placed on the political cultures of the area, as well as on the variety of socio-political structures and processes present. This is followed by a number of comparative case studies on contemporary aspects of Islamic traditionalism, the culture of transition, political modernization, and evolution and revolution in the political processes of the Middle Eastern states. Offered alternate years. C21:NW.

Curriculum: NW

PSCI 339 - Politics of Nationalism (3 Hours)

This course deals with one of the most powerful forces to mobilize people in the modern era nationalism. Students explore the sources and history of nationalism, individual and collective motivations for national identity and action in the name of the nation, and the political patterns associated with nationalist cultures. The course illustrates issues in the study of nationalism through intensive case studies. Offered alternate years.

PSCI 342 - Introduction to Political Theory (3 Hours)

Political theorists ask important questions about the fundamental elements of politics, such as: What is the best kind of regime? How should we distribute wealth and resources? What is the proper relationship between religion and the state? Who should be included in (and excluded from) a political community? This course considers these questions and others through an examination of selected thinkers, theories, and ideologies, ranging from Plato to Machiavelli to Marx, from liberalism to postmodernism.

PSCI 381 - Special Topics in Political Science (3 Hours)

These courses focus on areas of political science not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of advanced students.

PSCI 382 - Special Topics in Political Science (3 Hours)

These courses focus on areas of political science not specifically covered in the general curriculum and are designed to meet the needs of advanced students.

PSCI 385 - Social Entrepreneurship (3 Hours)

Social entrepreneurship is a process that applies innovative solutions to the world's most pressing social problems. Students learn about the theory and practice of social entrepreneurship, while engaging in active, real-world problem-solving with community partners. C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 391 - Independent Study (3 Hours)

C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 401 - Senior Seminar in Political Science (3 Hours)

The seminar provides students with the opportunity to apply the tools, concepts, and skills they have gained from the major in political science to investigate specific topics. Seminar students meet to discuss common themes, but each student writes a major research paper on a particular question of importance to the discipline. Student research findings are reported in both written and spoken form. Extensive consultation between the student and the department's faculty members are expected. C21:CS.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 301

Curriculum: CS

PSCI 421 - Constitutional Law (3 Hours)

A survey of the continuing development of the Constitution through judicial interpretation. This course is divided into multiple units, each of which explores a significant recent Supreme Court decision in detail, with attention both to the specifics of the recent case and to the precedents that informed the Court's decision. It also explores the constitutional and institutional imperatives that guide the Court's actions on a wide range of cases. Offered every three years. C21:DI.

Prerequisite(s): PSCI 202

Curriculum: DI

PSCI 423 - International Political Economy (3 Hours)

This course studies the domestic, international, and ecological sources of economic policy choices made by state and non-state actors. The course is designed to survey the theories of economic policy behavior, and the actions and results of various actors' efforts to influence the international economic environment. Specific attention is given to patterns of trade, finance and property rights, the development of trading blocs and the World Trade Organization, and to the issues of interdependence and world market constraints on national political choices. Offered alternate years.

PSCI 441 - International Law: Model United Nations (3 Hours)

Public international law governs relations between states in the international system. This course is a basic introduction to the rules, procedures, institutions, and actors involved in the development, interpretation, enforcement, and adjudication of public international law. It covers key areas of international public law such as jurisdiction, state recognition, state succession, law of treaties, law of the sea, laws of war, human rights law, environmental law, as well as the role of the United Nations and of various international judicial bodies. To gain an appreciation of the limits of international law, students will have the opportunity to participate in a Model United Nations Conference. Offered alternate years.

PSCI 442 - Seminar in Political Theory (3 Hours)

This course explores ideas, issues, and themes from the study of political theory in a seminar format (discussion-based with active participation by all students). Specific topics vary, and may range from ideologies such as liberalism and socialism to specific historical figures and eras. Offered alternate years.

PSCI 448 - Field Studies in PSCI (3 Hours)

C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 450 - Internships in Political Science: Washington, DC & the United Nations (3 Hours)

Qualified students will be able to combine their classroom knowledge with practical experience in internship placements in Washington, D.C. and in New York with work at the United Nations. In Washington-based internships, students will be placed on the staff of a Representative or Senator, with a congressional legislative or party committee, or with a private interest group or think tank. In New York, students will be placed with a non-governmental organization affiliated with the United Nations. Students will complete academic requirements as well as work part-time (fall or spring terms) or full-time (January or summer terms). Open to juniors and seniors with the permission of the instructor. Application required; see Internship Program. C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 451 - Internships in Political Science: Washington, DC & the United Nations (3 Hours)

Qualified students will be able to combine their classroom knowledge with practical experience in internship placements in Washington, D.C. and in New York with work at the United Nations. In Washington-based internships, students will be placed on the staff of a Representative or Senator, with a congressional legislative or party committee, or with a private interest group or think tank. In New York, students will be placed with a non-governmental organization affiliated with the United Nations. Students will complete academic requirements as well as work part-time (fall or spring terms) or full-time (January or summer terms). Open to juniors and seniors with the permission of the instructor. Application required; see Internship Program. C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 452 - Internships in Political Science (3 Hours)

Qualified students will be able to combine their classroom knowledge with practical experience in internship placements in local governmental offices; local, state, or national party or interest group organizations; courts or law offices; or other appropriate experiences. Students will complete academic requirements as well as work part-time (fall or spring terms) or full-time (January or summer terms). Open to juniors and seniors with the permission of the instructor. Application required; see Internship Program. C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 453 - Internships in Political Science (3 Hours)

Qualified students will be able to combine their classroom knowledge with practical experience in internship placements in local governmental offices; local, state, or national party or interest group organizations; courts or law offices; or other appropriate experiences. Students will complete academic requirements as well as work part-time (fall or spring terms) or full-time (January or summer terms). Open to juniors and seniors with the permission of the instructor. Application required; see Internship Program. C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 455 - Internships in State Government (3 Hours)

Qualified students will combine academic preparation with supervised practical experience in working for a member of the state legislature, a state agency or department, or a lobbying or advocacy organization involved in state politics. Students will complete academic requirements as well as work part-time (fall or spring terms) or full-time (January or summer terms). Open to juniors and seniors with the permission of the instructor. Application required; see Internship Program. C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 456 - Internships in State Government (3 Hours)

Qualified students will combine academic preparation with supervised practical experience in working for a member of the state legislature, a state agency or department, or a lobbying or advocacy organization involved in state politics. Students will complete academic requirements as well as work part-time (fall or spring terms) or full-time (January or summer terms). Open to juniors and seniors with the permission of the instructor. Application required; see Internship Program. C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 491 - Independent Study (3 Hours)

An independent study under the guidance of a member of the department. At least a 3.25 cumulative GPA and approval by the curriculum committee are required. C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 492 - Independent Study (3 Hours)

An independent study under the guidance of a member of the department. At least a 3.25 cumulative GPA and approval by the curriculum committee are required. C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 496 - Senior Project (3 Hours)

Senior majors may, with departmental approval, conduct an independent research project on some area or problem in political science. Student earns a total of six hours for the full senior project experience (496, 497, and 498). C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 497 - Senior Project (3 Hours)

Senior majors may, with departmental approval, conduct an independent research project on some area or problem in political science. Student earns a total of six hours for the full senior project experience (496, 497, and 498). C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL

PSCI 498 - Senior Project (3 Hours)

Senior majors may, with departmental approval, conduct an independent research project on some area or problem in political science. Student earns a total of six hours for the full senior project experience (496, 497, and 498). C21:EL.

Curriculum: EL