Political Science

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Note: Two-semester courses in this field may be taken in either order. Students may enroll in second-semester courses without having had the first.

PoIS 101 Introduction to Political Science and American Government (3 cr). May be used as core credit in J-3-d. Introduction to the study of politics focusing on basic concepts, processes, and institutions; emphasis on government and politics of the U.S. examined in comparative perspective; probable topics include nature of constitutional democracy, ideology, parties and elections, and formation of public policy.

PoIS C102 U.S. Government: Policies and Issues (3 cr). Survey of major policies and issues conflicts in the U.S.

PoIS C152 Politics and Pollution (1 cr). Political, government, and administrative aspects of overcoming air, water, and other types of pollution of our environment.

PoIS 200 (s) Seminar (cr arr). Prereq: perm.

PoIS 203 (s) Workshop (cr arr). Prereq: perm.

PoIS 204 (s) Special Topics (cr arr). Prereq: perm.

PoIS 205 Introduction to Comparative Politics (3 cr). Basic structures, patterns, and sociocultural environment of foreign political systems; includes case studies of the government and politics in selected countries.

PoIS 235 Political Research Methods and Approaches (3 cr). Introduction to the study of politics, including scope of the discipline, principal fields, research design, and methods of political research and analysis.

PoIS 237 International Politics (3 cr). May be used as core credit in J-3-d. Survey of approaches used to describe and explain conflict and cooperation among states in the international system; special emphasis on games of strategic interaction.

PoIS 275 American State and Local Government (3 cr). American state and local politics from a comparative perspective; focus on parties, interest groups, voting behavior, legislative and executive government, judiciary, intergovernmental relations, and public policies.

PoIS 299 (s) Directed Study (cr arr). Graded P/F. Prereq: perm.

PoIS 304 (s) Special Topics (3 cr, max arr). Prereq: perm.

PoIS 331 American Political Parties and Elections (3 cr). Development and present character of American political parties and of electoral system, functions of parties in periods of relative consensus and of critical choice regarding fundamental principles, party reform, and future prospects for party system.

PoIS 332 American Congress (3 cr). Roles and functions of Congress in the American political system, theories of representation, recruitment of legislators, Congressional organization and behavior, power structure, relationship to the executive, courts, interest groups, and public.

PoIS 333 American Political Culture (3 cr). Relation of public opinion and political action and affiliation to broad economic, social, religious, and intellectual developments.

PoIS 338 American Foreign Policy (3 cr). Analysis of how key decision makers, such as the President and Congress, convert inputs from the international, national, and societal systems into foreign policy outputs.

PoIS 360 Law and Society (3 cr). May be used as core credit in J-3-d. Overview of legal reasoning and functions of law in society; emphasis on capacity of law to affect social change as well as ways in which law responds to social change.

PoIS 364 Politics of the Environment (3 cr). May be used as core credit in J-3-d. Political factors that influence formation, implementation, and impact of public policies aimed at protecting the environment.

PoIS 380 Canadian Political System (3 cr). General examination of Canadian cultural identity, constitutional principles, federalism, govt structure, political process, and electoral behavior.

PoIS 381 Western European Politics (3 cr). May be used as core credit in J-3-d. Examination of political processes in Western European parliamentary systems; topics include parties and elections, coalition formation and dissolution, public policy, and the dynamics of the European Union.
PolS 383 Middle Eastern Politics (3 cr). May be used as core credit in J-3-d. Comparative analyses of political processes in Middle East and North Africa, Islam and politics, role of the military, and Arab-Israeli conflict.

PolS 400 (s) Seminar (cr arr). Prereq: perm.

PolS 403 (s) Workshop (cr arr). Prereq: perm.

PolS 404 (s) Special Topics (cr arr). Prereq: perm.

PolS J410/J510 Game Theory (3 cr). The study of strategic interaction in which an outcome depends upon an individual’s own decision and the choices made by others; introduction to the basic tools of game theory used to conceptualize and model political problems as games, including situations involving conflict, cooperation, contracts between agents and principals, coordination, and bargaining. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PolS J421/J521 Political Leadership (3 cr). Theories of political and social leadership; presidential leadership; international leadership; moral and ethical leadership; case studies of leadership success and failure. Additional projects/assignments required for graduate cr.

PolS J425/J525 History of Political Philosophy I (3 cr). Perennial problems of politics examined through study of seminal authors of classical antiquity (Plato, Aristotle, Cicero); medieval confrontation of theology with classical political philosophy (Augustine, Aquinas, Marsilius). Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PolS J426/J526 History of Political Philosophy II (3 cr). Foundations and development of modern liberalism; analysis of its characteristic goals, and democratic, socialist, and communitarian critics of the project; study of authors including Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx, and contemporary theorists such as Rawls. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PolS J428/J528 American Political Thought (3 cr). Major themes and debates in the American search for political self-understanding; topics include representative democracy, religion and politics, the frontier and its legacy, and individualism vs. communitarian claims; study of original sources (Founding Fathers, Thoreau, Lincoln, Populists) and contemporary implications. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.


PolS 430 Political Participation Internship (1-9 cr, max 9). Directed student internship as a participant-observer in the political process, work during a campaign with a candidate, party, or interest group. Graded P/F. Prereq: perm.


PolS J437/J537 American Presidency (3 cr). Roles, power, and functions of the presidency; relationships with other structures and institutions in the U.S. political system. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr. Prereq: Senior standing or perm.

PolS J439/J539 Public Policy (3 cr). Processes by which domestic policies are formulated and administered; analysis of intentional and unintentional impact of these policies on society. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PolS J440/J540 (s) International Organizations and International Law (3 cr). May be used as core credit in J-3-d. League of Nations, United Nations, and role of international law in international relations; the UN's contribution to international security and economic and social development. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PolS 444 Investigating International Relations (3 cr). Topics range from investigations into national uses of violence, homicide, and drug use across nation states, the containment of international diseases, international poverty, population growth rates, economic development, etc.; emphasis on theory development, appropriate research techniques, and techniques for drawing appropriate conclusions and policy recommendations.

PolS J449/J549 World Politics and War (3 cr). May be used as core credit in J-3-d. A critical analysis of several competing theories that explain why wars occur; some focus on the attempts to control and eliminate warfare as a tool of international diplomacy. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PolS J450/J550 Nonprofit Organization and Management (3 cr). Study of the role of nonprofits as contributors to public service delivery and as private service providers, including organization structures, management practices, financing, legal conditions and challenges they face. Additional projects/assignments required for graduate cr. (Spring, alt/hrs)

PolS 451 Public Administration (3 cr). Environment of public administration, politics of organizations, public decision-making, public relations, leadership, personnel administration, financial administration, administration ethics; related topics.
PoIS J452/ID-J552 Administrative Law and Regulation (3 cr). WSU Pol S 552. Legal and judicial constraints on administration action, rule-making, adjudication, and other modes of administrative action. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PoIS J453/J553 Public Management Techniques (3 cr). Emphasizes management styles and the empirical basis for decision; focus on conflict management through control or participatory strategies, and the acquisition and analysis of management information. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.


PoIS 458 Management Internship (1-9 cr, max 9). Directed internship in an agency of federal, state, or local government or special projects involving federal, state, or local government. One cr for each week of internship work. Graded P/F. Prereq: perm.


PoIS 461 Western Environmental Legal History (3 cr). Examination of the role of the environment in history; focus on the West, its resources and the role of the law; content will vary depending on interests of instructor and students.

PoIS 462 Natural Resource Policy (3 cr). May be used as core credit in J-3-d. Carries no credit after PoIS 562. Political and institutional context for making natural resource policy; emphasis on interaction between private and public sectors and the federal, state, and tribal governments, including an examination of topical issues in natural resource politics.

PoIS J467/J567 Constitutional Law (3 cr). The Supreme Court as a constitutional policymaker; federal jurisdiction; constitutional principles concerning judicial review, federalism, implied powers, separation of powers, and due process. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PoIS J468/J568 Civil Liberties (3 cr). May be used as core credit in J-3-d. The Supreme Court and its role in protecting civil liberties; freedom of speech, press, and religion; due process, the Bill of Rights, and its application to the states; criminal justice. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PoIS J469/J569 The Judicial Process (3 cr). Judicial and legal processes, court structure, procedures; judicial behavior and decision-making; selection of judges. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PoIS J471/J571 Intergovernmental Relations (3 cr). Analysis of fiscal and administrative interdependencies among governmental units in the U.S., with an emphasis on public policies. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PoIS J472/J572 Local Government Politics and Administration (3 cr). Politics, structure, and problems of American cities and other local governments; focus on the urban political economy, the fiscal and social challenges, and the links between public and private sectors; changing social and political functions of American cities and metropolitan fragmentation. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PoIS J480/J580 Politics of Development (3 cr). Role of the state in development, political economy of change, transition to democracy in the Third World, problems of ethnic conflict, overpopulation, and poverty. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PoIS J487/J587 Political Violence and Revolution (3 cr). May be used as core credit in J-3-d. Survey of the dominant theories attempting to understand the conditions under which humans rebel against their government; from political demonstrations and riots to terrorism to revolution; special emphasis given to the revolutions in Iran and Vietnam. Additional projects/assignments reqd for grad cr.

PoIS 495 Applied Political Research (3 cr). Capstone course focused on applying and developing conceptual skills, emphasizing original research, including issues of research design, hypothesis formation, operationalization of variables, testing of models and interpretation of results. Prereq: PolIS 235 and junior or senior standing.

PoIS 499 (s) Directed Study (cr arr). Graded P/F. Prereq: perm.

PoIS 500 Master's Research and Thesis (cr arr). Graded P/F.

PoIS 501 (s) Seminar (cr arr). Areas normally offered incl U.S. politics, U.S. foreign policy, African and Asian politics, community power and politics, U.S. political thought, public law, public administration, and political development. One 2-day field trip is authorized for the seminar in public administration. Prereq: perm.

PoIS 502 (s) Directed Study (cr arr). Prereq: perm.

PoIS 503 (s) Workshop (cr arr). Prereq: perm.

PoIS 504 (s) Special Topics (cr arr). Prereq: perm.

PoIS 510 Game Theory (3 cr). See PolS J410/J510.

PolS 525 History of Political Philosophy I (3 cr). See PolS J425/J525.

PolS 526 History of Political Philosophy II (3 cr). See PolS J426/J526.

PolS 528 American Political Thought (3 cr). See PolS J428/J528.


PolS WS530 Scope of Political Science (3 cr). WSU Pol S 501.


PolS 539 Public Policy (3 cr). See PolS J439/J539.


PolS 544 Investigating International Relations (3 cr). See PolS J444/J544.

PolS 549 World Politics and War (3 cr). See PolS J449/J549.


PolS 551 Seminar in Public Administration (3 cr). Review of significant issues and methodological problems in the field.


PolS 555 Seminar in Administrative Theory (3 cr). Major writers in administrative theory and concepts such as leadership, supervision, authority, decision-making, and human relations. (Alt/hrs)

PolS ID556 Governmental Policy and Program Analysis (3 cr). WSU Pol S 515. Techniques used to analyze policy alternatives and to evaluate programs; developing program objectives, management by objectives, productivity analysis, program evaluation, and policy analysis.

PolS 557 Governmental Budgeting (3 cr). Theory and practice of budgeting in a political environment; focus on potentials and limitations of various budgeting systems, particular viz the federal experience.

PolS 562 Natural Resource Policy (3 cr). Carries no credit after PolS 462. Political and institutional context for making natural resource policy; emphasis on interaction between private and public sectors and the federal, state, and tribal governments, including an examination of topical issues in natural resource politics.

PolS 564 Environmental Politics and Policy (3 cr). Political and institutional context for the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of U.S. environmental policy.


PolS 568 Civil Liberties (3 cr). See PolS J468/J568.


PolS 571 Intergovernmental Relations (3 cr). See PolS J471/J571.


PolS 575 Public Personnel Administration (3 cr). Personnel administration in public agencies; history of the personnel and merit systems; recruitment; selection, training, and evaluation of administrators; collective bargaining and political activity in public service; personnel administration and democracy.


PolS 598  (s) Internship (cr arr).  Prereq: perm.

PolS 600  Doctoral Research and Dissertation (cr arr).  Graded P/F.