

Political Science

Political Science Classes

POLISCI 350/INTS 304: The United Nations and World Politics

This course offers students the opportunity to study the work and processes of the United Nations system. The goal of this course is to build on previous knowledge in pursuing a more advanced understanding of what, how and why the United Nations system does what it does. Special focus is given to the work of the United Nations in the areas of: International Peace and Security, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, and Development. Same as: POLISCI 350.

Units: 3

Prerequisites:

INTS 111 or INTS 114.

POLISCI 305/INTS 305: Democracy and Democratization

What is democracy? Who benefits from it? Is democracy better suited to some peoples than to others? What causes democracy – does it come from within a country or is it caused by international factors? (Why) is democracy desirable? This course addresses these and other questions in a comparative context, looking at established democracies, emerging democracies, and recalcitrant authoritarian regimes from around the world. Students are expected to leave the course with a critical, nuanced view of democracy, an appreciation of various electoral systems, and in-depth knowledge of both a democratic and nondemocratic country of their choice. Same as: INTS 305.

Units: 3

Prerequisites:

previous course in International Studies or Political Science, or instructor consent.

POLISCI 365/INTS 365: State-Society Relations in Comparative Context

What is the state? How is the state organized? From where does it gain the right to rule? How do different countries select leaders, where is power located, who rules, and who is excluded? INTS 365, State-Society Relations in Comparative Context, provides students with a conceptual understanding of the state and its composition in diverse global contexts. Special attention will be paid to various electoral systems and decentralization. Students will also learn how the state interacts with societal forces, namely in terms of co-optation or repression, as well as how society can at times resist the state. Same as: POLISCI 365.

Units: 3

POLISCI 110: Foundations of American Government and Politics

This course explores the organization and operation of national state power in the United States. It begins with a “textbook” account of American government and politics, focused on the formal institutional arrangements of the U.S. national state (viz., the constitution, separation of powers, federalism, congress, president, and Supreme Court) as well as the formal mechanisms through which the state is linked to American citizens (esp., public opinion, elections, political parties, and interest groups). Armed with this formalist view, we turn to an examination of the “real world” of American democracy. Here we engage in a close and careful reading of a handful of empirical studies on the actual workings of the U.S. political system with a focus on citizen-state relationships, the constitutional and institutional organization of the U.S. national state, and the relationship between this state and the nation’s corporate capitalist economy.

Units: 3

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 150: American Political Thought

This course examines the foundations of American political thought through a close and careful reading of key texts written by the Founding Fathers (most significantly, the Federalist Papers); an analysis of the political thought of thinkers who most influenced the founders (including Aristotle, Machiavelli, Grotius, Hobbes, Locke, and Montesquieu); and an examination of classic commentaries on American political thought, especially Tocqueville’s Democracy in America. The main theme throughout the course is the tension in American political thought between democracy and liberty; how the Founders viewed this tension (and why); and how this tension was incorporated into the nation’s founding documents (the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution) as well as how it has been differentially reflected in key Supreme Court decisions ever since the famous Marbury v. Madison case in 1803.

Units: 3

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 290: Topics in Political Science

Units: 1-4

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 298: Special Study

Units: 1-4

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 299: Independent Study

Units: 1-4

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 320: Public Policy

In PUBLIC POLICY, students will learn what public policy is and who makes it. The course focuses upon the policy process, structure, and context of policy-making. Special attention is paid to the institutional and non-institutional actors who make policy and the rules, strategies, culture, and resources that affect the making of policy. The course culminates in the writing of a policy brief that affects problems in the local area. The policy brief allows the students to understand the practical side of public policy-making.

Units: 3

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 330: Constitutional Law

This course is an intersection of political science and the law. It uses the constitution, laws, and the courts to show us how checks and balances, separation of powers, and federalism operate. In the class, students will read and brief U.S. Supreme Court cases that deal with the following areas: the power of the Supreme Court and the Court's decision-making process, separation of powers and checks and balances, and the American federal system. The course explains why the president receives greater leeway in foreign relations than domestic affairs and the United States Supreme Court's role in this determination. It also explains how the Court shaped changes in the American Federal System, which morphed from dual federalism to various forms of cooperative federalism over time. This course is designed to enhance student understanding of the American legal system, American national institutions, the Constitution, the American federal system, and the Supreme Court.

Units: 3

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 335: Urban Politics

For the first time in history, more people live in cities than in rural areas. Cities are the epicenter of many great things, such as entertainment, the arts, parks and recreation, museums, medical care, and employment. They also have more than their fair share of problems, such as crime, poverty, racism, and homelessness. This course examines theories about who governs cities and why and how cities are governed. The course focuses upon the policies that address urban problems. It pays special attention to political institutions, machine politics, informal actors who influence politics, the role of the national and state governments in city politics, and the politics of racial and ethnic minorities in cities. Power, race, and participation are three dominant themes that run throughout this class. Through this course, students will also better understand how culture, demographics, and politics affect California cities. They will devise solutions to major problems in one of the state's urban areas. Even though this course focuses upon American cities, the lessons learned in it allow students to understand and examine cities throughout the world.

Units: 3

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 340: American Ideologies: Power & Choice

If there is a central organizing concept in political science, it is power. One of the fundamental issues in the study of power is choice: who gets what, when, and why? This course examines the relationship between power and choice. It focuses on the wide variety of ways political analysts have conceptualized power and politics in the United States. Through a close and careful reading of a select number of representative texts, the course examines the theoretical underpinnings, ideological content, and political implications of eight major paradigms of American politics:

liberalism, conservatism, Marxism, elite theory, pluralism, race, feminism, and neo-conservatism. Lectures will provide students with the necessary background to situate each paradigm within its proper historical, intellectual and analytical context.

Units: 3

Program: [Political Science](#)

INTS 360/POLISCI 360: American Trade Politics and Policy

The study of American trade politics occupies a special place in the history of political science and policy studies. It has contributed to new insights into the role of economic groups in American politics, the creative and often independent role of state and public officials in the national policy process and the impact of international structures and processes on domestic politics and policymaking. This course examines the formation of American trade policy since World War II, when the United States assumed the mantle of global leadership and embarked on a world historic project designed to create an open international trading system. Organized around an exploration of state-society relationships at the intersection of international and domestic economies, the course seeks to answer an interrelated set of questions: who defines America's national trade interest; under what conditions do they define it; and where does their power come from?

Units: 3

POLISCI 380: American State Formation: From Colonies to Superpower

This course examines the path of development of the American national state, from its roots during the Colonial Period, when the thirteen colonies existed on the periphery of the European state system and world market economy, through the emergence of the United States as a global military and economic superpower during the Post-World War II period. Taking its analytical cue from Alex de Tocqueville, the course places a consideration of the constitutional organization of the American national state and changes in the balance of power between the President and Congress, and the national government and state governments, in global perspective: America's two century move from the periphery of the European-centered international state system and world market economy to its current position of supremacy within it.

Units: 3

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 390: Advanced Topics in Political Science

Units: 1-4

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 398: Special Study

Units: 1-4

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 399: Independent Study

Units: 1-4

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 490: Advanced Topics in Political Science

Units: 1-4

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 498: Special Study

Units: 1-4

Program: [Political Science](#)

POLISCI 499: Independent Study

Units: 1-4

Program: [Political Science](#)