

2015-2016 Political Science Course Descriptions

POL 100 Introduction to Public Service. This course provides students with a comprehensive introduction to public service, which will be defined and contrasted with “not-for-profits” and the “private sector.” There will be a broad analysis of the role of government in contemporary American society. Several topics pertaining to applied public service will be introduced: the organization, responsibilities and limitations of the public sector, organizational theory, bureaucratic behavior, decision making, public finance, intergovernmental relations and comparative approaches to governing. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 1055 American Government and Politics. This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the structure and processes of government in the United States. It is a survey course covering the foundations of American government, its major institutions and the various forces that shape political decision making. Some of the topics which will be addressed include: democratic theory, the constitution, federalism, state and local government, public opinion, interest groups, elections, the courts, Congress, and the presidency. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 1205 World Politics. This course examines the structure and operation of the international system, providing an overview of the nature, forms and dynamics of world politics covering issues of international security, international political economy and emerging trends in the post-Cold War world. This course will include an experiential learning component. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 180 Introduction to Geography. This course introduces the general student and the prospective teacher of integrated social studies to an examination of geography, focusing in particular on spatial patterns of political organization, cultural diversity and economic activity; overview of major world regions; in-depth introduction of key countries; human geography; and the overall use and relevance of geography. Geography for Life: National Geography Standards will be addressed. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 225 International Relations. This course provides students with an introduction to the basic theories and methods used in the study of international relations. The course covers such topics as the dynamics of conflict and cooperation, the processes of foreign policy decision-making and the evolution of the modern international system. Prerequisite: POL 120. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 235 Introduction to Political Philosophy. An examination of the principal themes, philosophies, and ideologies of the western tradition which have molded and continue to affect our political institutions, our political beliefs and our politics. The course will begin with the classical Greek roots of our civilization; will explore the religious, primarily Christian, components of western society; will then discuss the contribution of scientific thought, and conclude with a brief examination of post-modern perspectives. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 240 Environmental Policy. An in-depth look at environmental policy in the United States. This course covers Congress’s power to regulate the environment as well as successes and failures of major pieces of environmental policy. Students will consider not only the policy but the impact the policy has/had on the environment, society, and the economy. This class will require active in-class participation and will culminate with the completion of a major project. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 245 Comparative Politics. This course introduces students to the comparative political analysis. The primary purpose is to familiarize students with the basic themes, concepts, and theoretical and methodological approaches to analyze, compare and contrast the development, governmental structures, political processes, and socio-political and socio-economic dynamics of contemporary political systems. Prerequisite: POL 120. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 270 American Foreign Policy. This course provides a critical analysis of the foreign policy of the United States looking at both its content and process. The course will examine the key actors and institutions involved in the foreign policy-making process as well as major trends in US foreign policy and contemporary foreign policy challenges. Prerequisite: POL 120. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 275 Intelligence Gathering, Analysis, and Dissemination. The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the departments and agencies – collectively known as the Intelligence Community (IC). Students will gain a detailed understanding of the definition of intelligence and the role it plays in national security policy. The course will examine the intelligence process, how the IC analyzes threats, and how intelligence fits into American government more broadly in terms of public policy development, bureaucratic politics, and international relations. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 300 Introduction to Law and the Legal System. This course is intended to provide students with a general understanding of law and the judicial system in the United States. This course will consist of three major segments: The first will analyze the meaning of law, define our legal system and explain the major sources of law. The second will explain our federal judicial system. It will provide an extensive analysis of the state and national courts. The final section will introduce students to specific areas of substantive law. Prerequisite: POL 105 or permission of instructor. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 302 The U.S. Congress. This course examines the origins and development of the American Congress, theories of representation and legislative behavior and the legislative process, with particular emphasis on Congressional rules and procedures. The course also explores the electoral connection between members of Congress and their constituents and the relationship between members of Congress and other political officials and organized interest groups. Prerequisite: POL 105. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 303 The American Presidency. This course examines the creation of the presidency and the development of the role of the president within our constitutional system of separated powers. In particular, we will focus on the emergence of the ‘public’ presidency. Additional topics include the presidential election process, decision making and personality, and policymaking in both domestic and foreign affairs. Prerequisite: POL 105. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 305 Constitutional Law. This course will provide students with an in-depth study of American constitutional law. It will include an historical analysis of the constitution and its political and social importance. Than substantive areas of constitutional law will be addressed including the incorporation doctrine, legal federalism, civil rights, and civil liberties. Within this context specific issues which will be examined are the commerce clause, the equal protection clause, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, rights against self incrimination and unreasonable searches and seizures, sex and race discrimination, and affirmative action. Prerequisite: POL 300. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 310 The Electoral Process. An analysis of political campaigns and elections for president and Congress. Specific attention will be paid to election trends, voter characteristics and the impact of technology and polling on modern election campaigns. Recommended: POL 105. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 315 Public Policy. An analysis of the governmental policy making process and substantive policy issues such as health care, education, criminal justice, and the environment. Within this context we will compare U.S. policy approaches with those of other countries. Recommended: POL 105. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 320 Legal Advocacy. This course will introduce students to the methods, concepts, and practice of legal advocacy. Essential to this objective will be instruction in effective techniques of written and oral argumentation as they apply to legal procedure. Course activities will include writing legal and appellate briefs and conducting a mock trial and a simulated oral appellate hearing. Prerequisite: POL 105 or permission of instructor. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 321 Terrorism. This course will involve an examination of the historical evolution of terrorism and its development both on a national and international level. Some of the topics covered will include the psychological profile of terrorists, the socio-political conditions that contribute to the growth of terrorism, terrorist group strategies, tactics and targets as well as methods of counterterrorism. Prerequisite: POL 120. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 330 Western Political Philosophy. An analysis and evaluation of the principal themes of Western political philosophy from ancient times to the 17th century. Major thinkers will include Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Machiavelli, and Hobbes. Major topics will include community, justice, who should rule, rights, consent, liberty, and views on the proper political regime. Recommended POL 235. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 331 Modern Political Philosophy. An analysis of major political thought from the 17th century to the present. Major thinkers will include Locke, Rousseau, Burke, Marx, Mill, and Nietzsche. Major topics will include individualism, rights, consent, liberty, equality and democracy. American society will be referenced throughout the semester. Recommended POL 235. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 340 International Political Economy. This course examines the interplay of politics and economics on an international and global level. Key themes will include debates on globalization; the role of states vs. markets; shifting distribution of wealth and power; and global competition. Specific emphasis will be put on the role and motivations of national and foreign governments as well as international institutions with regard to cross-border flows of 1) production (e.g. foreign direct investment policies, growth poles and agglomeration economies), 2) capital (e.g. capital controls, international financial crises and bailouts, currency wars, sovereign wealth funds) and 3) goods (e.g. national and international trade policies, trade wars). Prerequisite: POL 120. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 345 European Politics. This course provides a comprehensive overview into the situational context, structures, and evolutionary and transformational dynamics of selected European polities (including polities in Western, Northern, Southern, and Central/Eastern Europe) and the European Union. Specific themes will include discussions on European regionalism and supranationalism, social welfare state politics, European integration and enlargement, immigration and demographic challenges, and the rise of extreme right parties, among others. Discussion and contextual analysis of current social, political and/or economic trends and developments, as well as future prospects and challenges, will be an integral part of the course. Prerequisite: POL 120 or POL 180. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 346 Asian Politics. This course is designed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the political systems/processes and socio-economic dynamics of China, Japan, South Korea as well as selected countries in Southeast and South Asia. Specifically, the course will address the historical antecedents, contemporary manifestation and the evolution as well as future prospects and challenges of political culture, political institutions/processes, political economy systems and social structures in these countries. Additionally, discussion and contextual analysis of key contemporary domestic political/economic/social dynamics will also be an integral part of the course. Prerequisite: POL 120 or POL 180. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 347 Post-Soviet Politics. An introduction to the politics of Russia and the now independent states of the former Soviet Union. This course examines the changes and continuity in post-Soviet politics as well as the origins and development of the political and economic systems. Some of the issues examined in the course include the politics of economic reform, democratization, the rise of ethnic conflicts, and the collapse of communism and its aftermath. Prerequisite: POL 120 or POL 180. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 348 Politics of the Developing World. This course is intended as a comprehensive survey of the political, social, cultural, economic and historical factors affecting the developing countries. Particular attention will be devoted to colonial legacies and post-colonial development, domestic political dynamics and the position of developing countries in the global economy and in international politics. In doing so, the course will draw on a diverse range of case studies from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Prerequisite: POL 120 or POL 180. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 350 Introduction to Political Science Methods and Inquiry. This course is designed to introduce students to research methods in political science and international studies. The course will focus on such topics as developing a testable research question, data collection, developing and testing hypotheses, and different methods for analyzing political data with a focus on qualitative analysis. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 351 Quantitative Political Analysis. This course will cover the essential quantitative techniques used to analyze many empirical questions involving government and politics. Students will learn how to conduct, interpret, and present the appropriate statistics to test hypotheses. Basic descriptive and inferential statistics will be covered. Prerequisite: POL 350, or permission of the instructor. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 400/INT 400 Seminar in the major (either Political Science or International Studies depending on prefix). Each student will select a topic within a given area of political science or international studies and will read it, and analyze it, on his/her own initiative. Emphasis will be placed on primary sources and research methods. A major, scholarly paper is required. This will be the Senior Culminating Experience in the major. Prerequisite: POL 350 and POL 351. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 405 Independent Study. Open to juniors and seniors majoring in political science. Emphasis is on independent, in-depth inquiry into a subject. Permission of instructor required. Arrangements must be made with the instructor during the semester prior to the one in which the course is offered. 1-4 Semester Hours.

POL 470 Colloquium in National Security. Each student will conduct an in-depth study of a particular national security issue facing the US and will research and analyze it on their own initiative. Emphasis will be placed on primary sources and research methods. A major analysis paper on the chosen issue is required. This will be the Senior Culminating Experience in the National Security and Foreign Intelligence Analysis major. Prerequisite: POL 270, POL 350 and POL 351. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 494 Honors Thesis/Project. Formal paper written under the supervision of a departmental member. See All-University 494 course description in the catalog. Arrangements must be made with the instructor during the semester prior to the one in which the course is offered. 4 Semester Hours.

POL 499 Internship. An experience-based course in which the student spends a specified amount of time attached to a public, government, legal, or non-profit agency in order to gain actual work experience and then have the opportunity to relate classroom knowledge to a work experience situation. The exact program is to be agreed upon by the intern, the internship coordinator and the cooperating agency or office. Permission of internship coordinator required prior to enrollment. Arrangements must be made with the instructor during the semester prior to the one in which the course is offered. 1-16 Semester Hours.