Fall Semester 2017
Political Science

Undergraduate Course Descriptions

Visit our website at www.umsl.edu/~polisci
PS 1100-00A
Introduction to American Politics
Anita Manion

Class Time: Tu and Th from 9:30am to 10:20am
Class Location: 126 Social Science and Business Building (SSB)

Americans expect our government to keep the economy running smoothly, to protect the nation from foreign threats, to help them recover from natural disasters, to ensure that people are treated fairly, and to make certain that we have quality healthcare and education, a clean environment, and good roads, among other things. They also expect government officials to listen to them and care about their problems. Yet we disagree about what problems government should help solve and how government should help solve these problems.

This course aims to provide a fair-minded and thoughtful understanding of why American government works the way it does, as well as the challenges of governing the United States in the 21st century. We will utilize the news and current events to track Congress, the Trump administration, key decisions of the courts, and the actions of Missouri and other states. We will utilize the textbooks and supporting materials to examine the United States Constitution; rights and liberties; participation in politics; political parties, elections, interest groups and the media; Congress, the presidency, and the courts; and the ways that American government has addressed problems like economic downturns, immigration, social welfare, and globalization. Through discussions, quizzes, activities, exams, and a final policy brief, students will demonstrate their knowledge of these areas.
PS 1200/CCJ 122, Foundations of Law, is a rigorous and intense introductory course on law and the American legal system. The material taught in this course is similar to that which students in their first year at an American Bar Association approved law school take. Students looking to take an “easy” course should not enroll in this course. This will probably be one of the hardest courses you encounter during your studies at the University. As a broad liberal arts approach to the study of law, this course is designed to familiarize students with legal ideas, legal reasoning, and legal processes. It also provides comparative and historical perspectives on law that will help explain legal diversity and legal change. Finally, it offers opportunities to explore some of the persistent issues in law and legal theory: for example, issues about the sources of law, the responsibilities of the legal profession, or the relative merits of the adversary system. Individuals confront laws on a daily basis, yet are sometimes totally oblivious that they are affected by them. In the United States, laws guide most social interactions and create an atmosphere of stability and societal norms. Law, as applied, is mostly about limitations on human behavior. In this course, students will learn a wide-range of legal topics, issues, and concepts; among them including: a) case briefing, 2) IREAC, 3) foundations of American law, 4) the judicial system, and 5) substantive areas of law.
PS 1800-001
World Politics
Marty Rochester

Class time: Mo and Wed from 9:30am - 10:45am
Class location: 408 Clark Hall

From bin Laden to Inbev/Budweiser, You will learn about it in PS 1800. The objectives of the course are the following:

Introduce students to the range of phenomena which comprise international politics. Provide students with information and knowledge about both the historical development and current conditions of international politics. Introduce students to concepts which are employed in the study of international politics and provide a basis for understanding contemporary world events.

Among the topics discussed in the course are how foreign policies are made and implemented, the international economy, diplomacy, international law and institutions, power, interdependence, arms races, terrorism, and war. In short, this introductory course is designed to touch upon a wide variety of topics that make up international politics. Although the course is in no way a "current events" course, every effort will be made to relate the reading and lecture material to "real world" concrete events reported daily in the newspaper/on the internet and to provide some insights into important contemporary issues (e.g., how, on the one hand, can the United States, be the single most powerful actor on the world stage since the Roman Empire, as many commentators say, yet, on the other hand, cannot seem to achieve its goals in Afghanistan or anywhere else? Will a $500 billion annual U.S. defense budget prevent a nuclear, biological, or conventional attack on the U.S. by terrorists or other states? Are trade wars among states likely to become more serious in the future? What is the "New World Order" or "Disorder" likely to look like in the future?)
POL SCI 2280: Judicial Politics
Instructor: Prof. Barbara Graham
Class Time: 16-week Online Shared Course with UMKC

Judicial Politics introduces students to the operation of the American legal system from legal and political perspectives. In this course, we will examine the organization and structure of federal and state judicial systems, the politics of selecting federal and state judges, the legal profession, the criminal and civil justice systems, appellate courts and the impact of court decisions. Attention will be paid to the Missouri court system. This course identifies popular myths about the judicial system and contrasts those myths with what really takes place. The topics covered in this course are enhanced with popular examples from film, television and music. Judicial Politics is a UM shared course with the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

Required Text:


POL SCI 3200: Constitutional Law
Instructor: Prof. Barbara Graham
Class Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:30 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.
Class Location: 206 SSB

Constitutional Law is the first part of a two-semester case law course that examines how the Supreme Court shapes our constitutional democracy. In Constitutional Law, we focus on topics that help students understand the constitutional foundation of our political system: the Supreme Court’s power of judicial review, separation of powers in the domestic, foreign policy and war contexts, the relationship between the national government and the states, and property rights. In addition to reading court cases, we will examine the structural provisions and arrangements in the Constitution and the democratic nature of the Constitution.

Constitutional law is highly recommended for pre-law students, students who plan to study American politics at the graduate level and students who want to improve their understanding of the U.S. Constitution.

Required Texts:


PS 2320-001

African Americans and The Political System
Richard Middleton

100% Online

Prerequisites: POL SCI 1100 or consent of instructor.

Examination of the status of African Americans in the context of the American political system. The course will focus on a number of issues, including: attitudes of various publics toward racial concerns; nature of problems in specific policy areas (e.g., unemployment, school desegregation, housing, poverty); representation of African Americans in governmental institutions and the private sector; and the role of African American leadership and civil rights groups in the political process. Course fulfills the state requirement.
PS 2260-001
Law, Politics, and Society
Richard Middleton

Class Time: Fri from 11:00am – 1:40pm
Class Location: 313 Clark Hall

Prerequisites: POL SCI 1100 or POL SCI 1200 or consent of instructor.

This course examines the ways in which law in America connects with politics and society. The course will cover the litigation process, access to the courts, how and why individuals and groups bring litigation to pursue political and policy goals, and how lawyers, judges and other political actors use law to solve policy problems. Attention will be placed on current legal policy issues facing American society.
PS 2430-001
Public/Nonprofit Organizational Behavior
Anita Manion

Class Time: Tu and Th from 2:00m-3:15pm
Class Location: 411 Clark Hall

This course is designed to expose the student to the foundational theories for understanding behavior in public and nonprofit organizations. Students will learn how leaders emerge, assume responsibility, empower individuals, and address organizational challenges. We will consider issues of identity and diversity, social responsibility, and ethical leadership, studying the systems and processes that formally and informally shape individual and organization perspectives and behaviors. This course will also include an exploration of students’ perspectives, leadership styles, values, and skills, and how they can contribute to an organization’s ability to adapt to ambiguity and uncertainty.
This course focus is on developing each student’s comprehension of the history and foundational underpinnings of Public Administration. The course will cover the economic, political, and social dynamics within the field of public administration as well as the management challenges related to human resources, finances, program development, evaluation, technology, and strategic planning. Students will be afforded an opportunity to advance their theoretical and practical knowledge of public administration.
PS 3850-001
International Organizations & Global Problem-Solving
Marty Rochester

Class time: Mo and Wed from 12:30pm - 1:45pm
Class location: 131 Social Science Building (SSB)

Prerequisites: POL SCI 1100, POL SCI 1200, or consent of the instructor.

This is a course about global problems and how humanity is organizing itself to respond to those problems. The objectives of the course are: (1) to provide knowledge about the kinds of international organizations which exist in the contemporary world and an understanding of their role as actors in world politics; and (2) to increase understanding about specific global problems (the control of violence including weapons proliferation and terrorism, management of the world economy, hunger and overpopulation, and protections of the environment).

This course will examine the growing complexity of the post-Cold War world order. The kinds of questions which will be addressed in the course are the following: To what extent can the United Nations be expected to effectively deal with civil wars, human rights violations, nation-building, and other new demands being made on it today? What is the magnitude of the economic, energy, and environmental crises confronting the planet? How powerful are multinational corporations (such as Shell Oil and Toyota) in competing with national governments in driving the world economy? To what extent is the "shrinking and linking" of the globe a reality, or an optical illusion ("globaloney")? Are we witnessing today integration of the planet or disintegration? What might the world look like as the 21st century progresses? Is there truly a "new world order" dawning? Throughout the course, students will be expected to refrain from both the wishful thinking ("bad idealism") and harsh cynicism ("bad realism") which so many observers of international organizations tend to indulge in.
PS 3480-001
Environmental Policy
David Robertson

Class time: Tu and Th from 12:30pm-1:45pm
Class Location: 201 Social Science and Business Building (SSB)

Our hopes, ideals, and conflicts shape our choices about the land, air and water that are essential to our lives. We value our environment for the beauty that ennobles us and the resources that allow us to prosper. Environmental policy reveals what is at stake in society’s decisions about the environment and on the priorities we set. It also tells us about the way that government solves problems and the strengths and weaknesses of government as an instrument for realizing our ideals.

This course has two goals. First, we have to understand the facts about key environmental controversies and the way American government has responded to them. Topics include environmental ideas, land use, energy, water and air pollution, environmental justice, climate change, solid and hazardous waste, endangered species, population growth, and international environmental co-operation. The second goal is to build problem solving skills by applying them to these difficult problems. Political science analyzes the way that groups of people work out problems when they disagree about values and are uncertain about facts. Environmental issues offer a great way to explore our different standpoints, and the way try to solve our common problems together. United States, then, you will have a better understanding of solving other kinds of problems.

This course does not require that you have a background in biological or other sciences. The class enrolls students majoring in Political Science, Biology and other disciplines. Graduate students in biology, political science, and other disciplines should contact the instructor to discuss concurrent individual readings courses to allow them to participate in the course.
PS 3420-001

Public and NonProfit Personnel Management

Russell Signorino

Class time: Mon and Wed from 8:00am – 8:50am Class
location: 305 Clark Hall (CH)

Prerequisite: POL SCI 1100, or 2400, or consent of
instructor.

This course is designed to acquaint the student with
key issues associated with employment and
management in the public and non-profit sectors.
Material is provided to identify factors shaping
human resource policy as it is implemented in those
sectors and learn the concepts and processes of
collective bargaining, recruitment/placement, equal
opportunity, training, development, and performance
evaluation
PS 4090-001

American Government for the Secondary Classroom

Laura Arnold and Martha Jane Neukomm

Class time: Mo from 4:00pm - 6:40pm Class location: 342 Social Science Business (SSB)

Same as: SEC ED 4090 Prerequisites: Admission to the Teacher Education Program. TCH ED 3310 or the consent of the instructor.

Adapts the themes and subject matter of American Government to the secondary classroom and trains teachers in techniques particularly designed to maximize the use of primary sources, foster critical inquiry, and encourage knowledge of subject matter.

Particular emphasis will be placed on defining the broad and connecting methods of inquiry for use in an interactive classroom. Can be counted towards the Political Science major requirement, but not the American Politics subgroup. Counts towards Social Studies certification. Not available for graduate credit.