Spring Semester 2018
Political Science

Graduate Course Descriptions

Visit our website at www.umsl.edu/~polisci
PS 6401
Introduction to Policy Research
Adriano Udani

Class Time: Tuesday and Thursday; 5:30 PM – 6:45 PM
Class Location: Social Science Business 102

This course is an introduction to the logics of quantitative analysis used by political scientists, policy analysts, and public administrators for conducting empirical research and generating knowledge for mass publics. Broadly speaking, we will explore the following question: “As civic participants in society who will have the privilege to influence policymaking, how do we know what we think we know?” As students engage with this question, they will develop a strong foundation of methodological skills to not only conduct quantitative policy research, but to critically analyze and master the underlying assumptions of “scientific” approaches that require the aggregation of data and build upon statistical inference. This class will mainly deal with survey data. Using one nationally representative survey, students are expected to write a series of three analysis papers that culminate into a poster that addresses an empirical question of interest, perform various statistical analyses that test proposed hypotheses, and publicly display and explain statistical results and implications by the end of the semester.
PS 6402-G01
Intermediate Techniques in Policy Research
Todd Combs

Class time: Mo and Wed from 5:30pm-6:45pm

Class location: 103 Express Script Hall (ESH)

Prerequisite: Graduate standing and POL SCI 6401.

Elementary distribution theory, statistical inference, and introduction to multiple regression. Emphasis on practical applications.
PS 6410
Introduction to Policy Analysis
Raymond Deppen

Class Time: Wednesday; 6:55 PM – 9:35 PM
Class Location: Social Science Business 328

PS 6410 will provide an introduction to policy analysis that includes both the more scientific, quantitative approaches along with the more interpretive, qualitative approaches. Assignments will reflect the “real world” of policy analysis, meaning the need for “quick and dirty” policy analysis, how to frame the issues, the importance of language, and how to write for a lay audience. Students will be required to choose a policy domain and write three papers applying concepts in the course to their policy domain: an issue-framing paper, an op-ed article, and a final policy analysis paper.
PS 6430-G01
Proseminar in American Politics
David Kimball

Class time: Mondays from 6:55pm-9:35pm
Class location: 344A Social Science Building (SSB)
Prerequisites: Special Consent Form

This course will introduce students to some of the major theories and debates among scholars of American government and politics. The course will also provide different examples of how political scientists test theories. This seminar should meet the needs of graduate students in Political Science who plan to conduct original research, master a doctoral field, or teach in one or more areas of American politics. Topics in the course include political institutions, public opinion, participation and inequality.
Otto Von Bismarck, Chancellor of Germany, once remarked: “Laws are like sausages. It is better not to see them being made.” PS6442 will look inside the political apparatus to see how policies are made in the United States—no matter how unappetizing! Policy process focuses on how political actors get the government to focus on certain problems, form coalitions to enact policies, and generate support for their implementation. Each student will be required to select a policy domain. Throughout the semester, students will use examples from their chosen policy domain to illustrate and critique the models of the policy process we discuss in class. The final seminar paper will be an application of one of the policy models to a specific policy or law, proposing further research to expand our knowledge of the policy process.
When the word "politics" meets the word "economics," together they reveal the deep political currents of the most basic issues in societies: freedom, security, order, justice, and democracy. In *Political Economy & Public Policy*, we will examine how the struggles for power and for wealth affect one another and the development of politics. We will compare and contrast evolving ideas about the way political and market solutions address our common problems. We will explore the way economic disasters, ideas about prosperity, and the institutions we create shape the big struggles for power and wealth and the less obvious struggles to craft a national budget. We will emphasize that these struggles play out in different ways in different nations across time, while focusing on the United States as our chief case. This is a course that students that aims to be of great value to students of American Politics, Public Policy, Comparative Politics, and International Relations.
PS 6488-G01
Studies in International Relations
Seminar on Globalization
Kenneth Thomas

100% Online

PREREQUISITES: Graduate standing or permission of instructor.

Globalization is either the watchword or the most over-hyped term of our time. It has sparked numerous debates, which we will look at from a variety of perspectives. In particular, globalization is alleged to have impacts on the economy, state sovereignty, social life, culture, inequality, the environment, the feasibility of certain economic policies, and the possibility of governing globalization. As always in political science, we will pay special attention to who wins and who loses from different policies.

This course will require readings, discussion, and two 15-page papers.