
Political Science (POL)

(Global Studies Department)

POL 101—Introduction to Political Science

3 cr. (Fall/Spring)

If politics can be defined as the often uneven and unequal distribution of resources, rights and power, political science represents the systematic analysis of that distributive process through either normative or empirical questions. Normative political scientists examine politics through the lens of ethics; they use reason and logic to ask, “what should be?” Empirical political scientists are concerned not with ideal forms, but with “the way things are.” Employing the methods of science, empirical political scientists seek to develop probabilistic generalizations about how politics works. This course will engage with both normative and empirical questions about politics and will include discussion of: terminology, theory, and method; political philosophy and ideology; governmental systems; democratic and non-democratic regimes; comparative analysis; the interactions between politics and people; public policy; international relations; and revolutions and state breakdowns. Fulfills Category C. (G3A)

POL 102—U.S. Government - State and Local

3 cr. (Fall/Spring)

This course examines the changing role of state and local governments in the United States. In addition to providing students with an overview of the theories and methods of political science, the course will engage students in the discussion of three topics. First the course addresses the nature of state governments, and examines what they do, how they are structured, and the problems they face. Second, the course considers nature and structure of local government—especially, cities and metropolitan areas. Finally, the course will consider issues surrounding democracy at the state and local level, including critical questions of inclusion, democracy and participation. Fulfills Category A. (G4A)

POL 103—U.S. Government - National

3 cr. (Fall/Spring)

This course offers a survey of the U.S. political system at the national level, and explores the social, political, and economic forces that have and continued to shape the development of the US national government, including: the historical background; political theories; the evolution of legislative, executive and judicial branches; the formation and role of political parties; the role of interest groups, and the media; and longstanding public policy debates. In addition to offering insights into the formation, function, structure, and relationships among and between the branches, levels, and actors, the course seeks to explore critical questions of political participation. In so doing, the course will engage students in an examination of role and mechanisms for individual participation, as well as the ways in which institutions, parties, groups, the media, and deep-rooted inequalities have and continue to shape such participation. Fulfills Category A. (G4A)

POL 104—Introduction to Political Thought

3 cr.

An introductory course in the history of political theory with an emphasis on understanding political ideas and concepts and applying them to perennial issues of political life. Students will read selected original texts by theorists such as Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Rousseau, Adam Smith, Marx, Nietzsche, and Max Weber. Fulfills Category D.

POL 220—Comparative Governments

3 cr. (Spring)

An introduction to political processes in nations other than the United States. The course uses the comparative method to analyze such topics as political culture, developed vs. developing nations, the organization of governments, political parties, and the operation of interest groups. Fulfills Category D. (G3A)

POL 221—International Relations

3 cr. (Fall)

This course introduces students to the theory, methods, and analysis of international relations, an important subfield of political science. The course will examine the historical and contemporary foundations of modern international relations, the international system, relations theories, and the methods for analyzing and describing the political relations among nations. Fulfills Category C. (G3A)