

POLITICAL SCIENCE

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The Department of Political Science offers a broad education focused on several enduring concerns in the study of political life: political theory, centering on the philosophical and moral foundation of political life; comparative and international politics, focusing on political developments and interactions around the world; American politics, concerning the study of American political institutions and processes; and law, studying legal institutions and practice in political and social life.

Teaching

In teaching, the Department of Political Science is dedicated to providing a rigorous liberal arts experience for undergraduates. Classes emphasize the development of critical reading, thinking, writing and speaking skills in addition to learning about politics. The department also encourages development of a commitment to public service, an understanding of active citizenship and the development of political organizational skills via internship programs and community-engaged scholarship. In addition, the department encourages students to participate in the Cherrington Global Scholars program, where students gain new perspectives at institutions abroad. For qualified students, a departmental honors program also allows students to engage in substantial research projects that are closely directed by department faculty members; our DU in DC program provides the opportunity for students to study and work in an internship in Washington DC; and our Global Masters Program allows students to complete a BA and MS in political science in five years through coursework at DU and Lund University in Sweden.

Research

Scholarly research—including publications in academic journals and books, as well as presentations at professional conferences—is an essential component of the mission of the department. The department views teaching and research as complementary activities, central to the undergraduate experience. Active research and engagement in the discipline encourage improvement in teaching methods and substance. Much of our research also provides an opportunity for advanced undergraduates to work with department faculty. Faculty and student research has received support from the American Political Science Association, National Science Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the Social Science Research Council, the Fulbright Program and the European University Institute.

Major

Bachelor of Arts Major Requirements

(183 credits required for the degree (<http://bulletin.du.edu/undergraduate/undergraduateprograms/traditionalbachelorsprogram/bachelorofarts/>))

40 credits in political science, with at least 28 credits at the 2000 or 3000 level.

Code	Title	Credits
Introductory Courses		
Complete two of four:		8
PLSC 1000	Introduction to American Politics	
PLSC 1110	Comparing Politics around the World	
PLSC 1610	Introduction to Political Thought	
PLSC 1810	Introduction to Law and Society	
Upper Division Sub-field Requirements		
Complete one course at the 2000 or 3000 level in each of the four departmental sub-fields: American Politics, Comparative and International Politics, Law, Political Theory.		16
Electives		
Complete any two political science courses.		8
Required Courses		
PLSC 2901	Political Inquiry	4
PLSC 3290	Capstone Seminar in Politics	4
Total Credits		40

Secondary Major

Secondary Major Requirements

40 credits. Same requirements as for BA degree.

Minor

Minor Requirements

Minimum of 20 credits in political science, with at least 12 credits at the 2000 or 3000 level.

Departmental Internship Program

Internships for academic credit are offered in the concentrations of American politics and law; they require attendance in a seminar with other students completing an internship. Internships may be taken only after the completion of one course in the relevant concentration. No more than 4 credits earned in a departmental internship may be counted toward the 40 credits required of majors, though if a student earns more than four credits, those credits may be counted toward the maximum of 60 credits in political science.

The "DU in DC" Program

The DU in DC program is the product of a partnership between the University of Denver and American University's Washington Semester Program, and it is an excellent opportunity for University of Denver Political Science students. Attending in American University's Fall, Spring and Summer semester (DU's Fall Quarter, our combined Winter and Spring Quarter, or during the Summer) allows you the opportunity to not only live and work in Washington DC, but it also allows you to earn course credit towards your major and overall graduation requirements.

Distinction in the Political Science Major

Distinction in the major is open to students with a minimum 3.7 major GPA and a 3.5 cumulative GPA. There are three routes to earning distinction in the major: (1) a year-long thesis project (reserved for students pursuing an academic graduate program); (2) the revision of a significant course paper in the major for publication in an undergraduate journal or presentation at an academic conference; or (3) nomination by the student's Capstone professor. In all cases, students should consult a political science advisor at least four quarters before graduation.

Course plans serve as a sample quarter-by-quarter schedule for intended majors. The sample course plan below shows what courses a student pursuing this major might take. Students should anticipate working closely with their major advisor to create a course of study to complete the degree.

Ideally, Common Curriculum (<http://bulletin.du.edu/undergraduate/undergraduateprograms/traditionalbachelorsprogram/degreesanddegree requirements/>) requirements other than Advanced Seminar should be completed during the first two years. Students should anticipate taking an average course load of 16 credits each quarter.

Ways of Knowing courses in the areas of Analytical Inquiry: Society and Culture (<http://bulletin.du.edu/undergraduate/undergraduateprograms/traditionalbachelorsprogram/selectingadegreeprogram/courseplans/ai-society-courses/>) and Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture (<http://bulletin.du.edu/undergraduate/undergraduateprograms/traditionalbachelorsprogram/selectingadegreeprogram/courseplans/si-society-courses/>) introduce students to University-level study of disciplines in the arts, humanities and social sciences. Credits earned in Ways of Knowing courses may also apply to a major or minor.

First Year					
Fall	Credits	Winter	Credits	Spring	Credits
FSEM 1111		4 WRIT 1122		4 WRIT 1133	4
Language sequence or SI Natural sequence	4	Language sequence or SI Natural sequence	4	Language sequence or SI Natural sequence	4
AI Natural	4	AI Society or SI Society	4	AI Society or Elective	4
SI Society	4	PLSC: Any 1000-level Course	4	PLSC: Any 1000-level Course	4
	16		16		16
Second Year					
Fall	Credits	Winter	Credits	Spring	Credits
Language sequence or SI Natural sequence	4	Language sequence or SI Natural sequence	4	Language sequence or SI Natural sequence	4
PLSC 2901	4	2000-level PLSC Course	4	2000-level PLSC Course	4
Elective	4	Elective	4	2000-level PLSC Course	4
Minor Course	4	Minor Course	4	Elective	4
INTZ 2501 ¹	2				
	18		16		16
Total Credits: 98					

¹ INTZ 2501 is required for any student who studies abroad, and may be taken in any quarter within the year prior to studying abroad.

American Politics

PLSC 2410	American Government Simulation	4
PLSC 2420	American Presidency	4
PLSC 2430	Political Parties & Interest Groups	4
PLSC 2470	State and Local Politics	4
PLSC 2500	Political Psychology	4
PLSC 2510	Women in U.S. Politics	4
PLSC 2701	Topics in American Politics	4

Comparative and International Politics

PLSC 2200	Politics of China	4
PLSC 2220	Comparative Democratization: East and West	4
PLSC 2225	European Political Economy	4
PLSC 2235	Politicized "Ethnicity": Cross-Disciplinary Approaches to the Study of Identity Politics	4
PLSC 2250	Democratic Erosion: Comparing Experiences Across Countries and Over Time	4
PLSC 2260	Politics of Japan	4
PLSC 2290	Comparative Politics of Latin America	4
PLSC 2360	Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Resistance in Three Continents	4
PLSC 2370	Global Political Economy	4
PLSC 2460	Re-Inventing Europe	4
PLSC 2702	Topics in Comparative Politics	4

Law

PLSC 2001	Law and Politics	4
PLSC 2703	Topics in Law and Politics	4
PLSC 2755	Legal Actors and Institutions	4
PLSC 2820	Constitutional Law: Civil Rights and Liberties	4
PLSC 2825	The Politics of Rights	4
PLSC 2830	Judicial Politics	4
PLSC 2840	International Law & Human Rights	4
PLSC 2850	Politics of Criminal Justice in the US	4
PLSC 2855	Conservative Politics and the Courts	4
PLSC 2860	Constitutional Law: Governmental Structures and Powers	4

Political Theory

PLSC 2611	Neoliberalism: The Privatization of Everything, and its Problems	4
PLSC 2620	Quest for Community	4
PLSC 2630	American Political Thought	4
PLSC 2660	Feminist Political Thought	4
PLSC 2670	Radical Democracy	4
PLSC 2704	Topics in Political Theory	4

PLSC 1000 Introduction to American Politics (4 Credits)

Philosophical traditions, historical background, structure and functioning of American government, and political attitudes and behavior. This course counts toward the Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture requirement.

PLSC 1110 Comparing Politics around the World (4 Credits)

This course introduces students to the study of comparative politics, a sub-field within political science that uses a "comparative method" to compare and contrast countries to understand questions such as Where do 'states' come from? Why are only some democratic? How do states promote economic development? Why are some states increasingly rich while others remain poor? Why do people mobilize peacefully to influence politics in some places while they violently attack the established order in others? How do distinct identities rooted in ethnicity, gender, race, and religion influence politics differently around the world? How does globalization affect various countries, and why do some seem to cope with contemporary challenges more effectively than others? This course counts toward the "Scientific inquiry: Society and culture" requirement.

PLSC 1610 Introduction to Political Thought: Citizenship and Action (4 Credits)

This course presents an introduction to some of the key ideas and questions in the study of politics. As an introductory course, it cannot present a systematic overview of the entire study of politics; rather, it seeks to introduce students to some central concerns in the study of politics. In this course we learn about the basic principles of human conduct in social contexts and explain how social scientific methods are used to understand these underlying principles. This course counts toward the Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture requirement.

PLSC 1810 Introduction to Law and Society (4 Credits)

This course introduces the relationship between law and society, exploring principles of legal conduct in social contexts and explaining how social scientific methods are used to understand these principles. Questions discussed include what is the relationship between the "law-on-the-books" and "law-in-action," and what can we learn from gaps between formal law and the "real" law that is experienced in society? Empirical examples may include international comparisons and the evolution of law over time. This course counts toward the Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture requirement.

PLSC 1988 Study Abroad Resident Credit (0-18 Credits)**PLSC 2001 Law and Politics (4 Credits)**

Introduces the relationship between law and politics, describing the basic principles of legal conduct in political contexts and explaining how social scientific methods are used to understand these underlying principles. Questions explored may include the following: Where does the law come from? Whose interests does it reflect? Does formal legal change lead to practical political and social change? Why do we comply with the law? What are the limits of enforcement? This course counts toward the Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture requirement. It also satisfies the department distribution requirement in law. Prerequisite: sophomore standing & either PLSC 1000, 1110, 1610, or 1810.

PLSC 2002 Abortion Politics and Law (4 Credits)

Abortion has been, and continues to be, a defining issue in America politics and law. As the traditional story goes, the country has been locked in a high-stakes and highly controversial fight over abortion since the Supreme Court legalized access in 1973 via the *Roe v. Wade* decision. While a convenient story, it egregiously oversimplifies both the past and present of abortion politics and law. This class aims to explore the cyclical and complex relationship between law and politics of abortion in America: how it came to become a national issue; how and why its contours have changed over time; what effects it has had on people's lives and the country's politics; and how we can constructively think about the new, post-*Roe* US. In doing so, we will also consider how the case study of abortion can inform our more general understandings of American politics, law, movements, and political parties.

PLSC 2010 Polarization in America (4 Credits)

This course covers major themes surrounding polarization in American politics. From the 1930s through the 1970s, the most conservative Democrats in the Senate were actually further to the right than the most liberal Republicans. Since that time, the parties slowly but steadily distanced themselves from each other, leading to our current state of politics; One defined not by compromise and conference committees, but rather by obstruction, gridlock, and filibusters. Voters mimic this divide, becoming increasingly hostile and antagonistic to their political opponents.

PLSC 2020 Politics of Desire (4 Credits)

This course surveys political theory literatures on the topic of desire—with a focus on sexuality. Readings will survey historical and contemporary theories of relationships, sexual identity, and power, and topics will include the relationships between ideas about desires and ideas about bodies, needs, and preferences. We will think about desire as it manifests in our individual and collective lives, such as its relationship with race, gender, aesthetics, and freedom. We will especially tackle the problem of how to transcend affinities for hierarchy and distinction and in their place generate desires for democratic equality.

PLSC 2025 Youth Political Participation: Comparative Perspectives (4 Credits)

This advanced undergraduate seminar examines how young people engage in politics across the world, comparing patterns of participation, disengagement, and mobilization across generations. Students explore major debates in youth political participation and citizenship studies through scholarly readings, documentaries, and discussions of current events. This course fulfills the international/comparative politics subfield requirement for political science majors.

PLSC 2070 Power, Politics and Religion in Sub-Saharan Africa (4 Credits)

Focusing primarily on Anglophone cases and the growth and diversification of Christianity over time, this course examines religious justifications for independence struggles, the anti-Apartheid movement, and church-led campaigns for democratization and international debt relief. It also explores the contemporary rise of born-again Christian nationalism in many African states and its policy implications. It uses a combination of audiovisual and written materials, guest speakers, student presentations, lectures, and discussions. This course counts toward the comparative/international politics sub-field requirement for PLSC majors.

PLSC 2100 Political Psychology of Identity (4 Credits)

This course introduces you to the interdisciplinary field of political psychology with a focus on exploring the various foundations of social identity and the implications of these identities for political outcomes in the United States. Throughout the quarter, we'll compare the influence of different identities and examine the psychological and political implications of social identities. The class focuses on two key identities: gender and race. We'll examine the psychological foundations of gender and racial stereotyping and prejudice, how race influences perceptions of the criminal justice system, and the ways in which White identity shapes citizens behavior and opinion in American politics. We finish the quarter with a focus on new, emerging scholarship that further complicates the relationships between human psychology and gender and racial identity.

PLSC 2200 Politics of China (4 Credits)

Napoleon Bonaparte allegedly said, "let China sleep, for when she wakes up, she will shake the world." Two hundred years later, China is indeed waking up, and the world is feeling the dragon's hot breath. In this class we will examine the fall and rise of the Chinese state, with a focus on its political and economic trajectories after the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949. Some of the key issues to be examined are: China's "economic miracle," when, if ever, will China democratize, its potentially explosive relations with Taiwan, its challenges to America's global hegemony, etc.

PLSC 2220 Comparative Democratization: East and West (4 Credits)

This course brings the contested notion of democratization into the East Asian context and tests its relevance for countries at various stages of political and economic development in the region. After introducing the general debates over what democratization is and tracing its emergence in Western Europe and North America, class explores the rise of democratization movements in East Asia and examines the various forms of democratization in different political and economic settings. Satisfies the department distribution requirement in comparative/International politics. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

PLSC 2225 European Political Economy (4 Credits)

Examines major challenges facing European political economies from the postwar era, including transformations in the welfare state, liberalization in light of market transitions and European integration, and global pressures. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

PLSC 2235 Politicized "Ethnicity": Cross-Disciplinary Approaches to the Study of Identity Politics (4 Credits)

What are racial and ethnic identities? Are they more likely to influence political outcomes than other types of identity (e.g., gender, profession, class), and if so, why? This course introduces competing concepts of ethnic identity and connects them to the historical construction of race and national identities. By studying these issues in cases outside of the United States, you will gain unique comparative perspective about the idiosyncrasies of U.S. politics and history. Course materials include readings, podcasts, videos and documentary footage from political science, sociology, legal studies, and other disciplines. Why take this course? Gaining insight into the construction of ethnic, racial, and national identities will help you better understand yourself, your relationships, political campaigns, activist tactics, and episodes of political violence, among other things. The course satisfies the departmental sub-field requirement for majors in comparative/international politics. Recommended before taking this course: one introductory level course in political science.

PLSC 2250 Democratic Erosion: Comparing Experiences Across Countries and Over Time (4 Credits)

As the conclusion of the Cold War spurred a tidal wave of democratization around the globe, western policy makers and pundits often assumed that even in weak, poverty-impacted states attempts to democratize were bound to succeed – at least eventually. By 2008, however, the discourse of democratization had been transformed. "Celebrations of democracy's triumph are premature," wrote a noted scholar of democratization; "in a few short years, the democratic wave has been slowed by a powerful authoritarian undertow." Recently, both the quality and quantity of "democratic" states have declined. Even the world's oldest, most taken-for-granted liberal democratic regimes increasingly flout democratic norms and policies. We consider a range of comparative cases from across world regions. Along the way, we engage with several prominent theories of democratic backsliding or authoritarianization. The course satisfies the departmental sub-field major requirement in comparative/international politics.

PLSC 2260 Politics of Japan (4 Credits)

How did Japan rapidly catch up with more advanced industrial powers? Can other developing countries copy the Japanese model? What was the "darker side" behind Japan's economic miracle? How do we come to terms with the sudden burst of Japan's "Bubble Economy?" Will Japan's current economic recovery process, which started in 2002, be sustainable? Is a genuine international reconciliation between Japan and its neighbors possible? These are just some of the questions we will examine in this class. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

PLSC 2290 Comparative Politics of Latin America (4 Credits)

Latin America is home to the uneasy marriage between politics and economics. This course will focus on two major themes in Latin American politics. First, this course will examine why Latin American countries swing between democratic and authoritarian regimes. Second, the course will examine how local and global economic forces interact with politics in the region. The course will also cover some contemporary issues in Latin America such as corruption, inequality, migration, and climate change.

PLSC 2360 Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Resistance in Three Continents (4 Credits)

This course explores historical and contemporary aspects of racialized power structures as they have specifically impacted indigenous peoples in Australia, the United States, and Latin America. How did the dynamics of imperialism, capitalism, liberal state-building, and racist (and racist) ideology combine to devastate indigenous communities around the world? How did distinct perspectives on time, space, property, and community allow colonizing populations to conquer native populations even while advocating the most egalitarian political structures ever attempted? Satisfies department distribution requirement in comparative/international politics. Sophomore standing required.

PLSC 2370 Global Political Economy (4 Credits)

Global Political Economy (GPE) examines the interplay between politics and economics within and across nation-states in response to international politics and economics. The course explores the effect of political factors on international economic relations and the impact of international economic factors on domestic and international politics. The objective is to evaluate various theories of the global political economy through observation of the global political-economic system. Satisfies the department's distribution requirement in comparative/international politics. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

PLSC 2410 American Government Simulation (4 Credits)

This course explores American politics by simulating the legislative process of the federal government. Students play either a member of the House of Representatives or a member of the Executive Branch. The simulation requires that students seek the goals related to their position. By putting theory into practice, students gain a better understanding of Washington politics. Satisfies the department distribution requirement in American politics. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

PLSC 2415 Campaigns and Elections (4 Credits)

The U.S. holds hundreds of elections every year, but presidential elections stand alone as the only truly national contests. What influences presidential selection? What information can we gain as citizens and scholars from national presidential debates? These elections are guided by distinct rules (including nominations via primaries and caucuses, evolving campaign finance laws, and the strict requirements of the Electoral College) with ever-changing strategies to maximize support under these rules. This class provides students with the historic context and political science concepts and theories to better understand the many steps involved in electing U.S. presidents.

PLSC 2420 American Presidency (4 Credits)

Historical development and current role and powers of the U.S. presidency. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

PLSC 2425 Religion in American Politics (4 Credits)

This course offers a broad, critical overview of the relationship, and some of the tensions, between religion and politics in the United States. We first review how the historical presence of a variety of American religious groups and perspectives on the relationship between church and state have impacted the nation's often conflicted sense of identity as well as the tenor of our ongoing debates about - and within - religion in American politics. That gives us a foundation for exploring a number of current "hot button" issues like debates over "moral values" and faith-based initiatives. Satisfies the department distribution requirement in American politics. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

PLSC 2430 Political Parties & Interest Groups (4 Credits)

Evolution and structure of political parties; how they mobilize voters and provide leadership of political issues. Satisfies the department distribution requirement in American politics. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

PLSC 2450 Latina/x/o/e Politics in the United States (4 Credits)

This class will examine the political trajectory of the Hispanic/Latina/e/x/o/@ population in the U.S. political system. This course serves as an intensive introduction to the scholarship on Latino Politics. The first half of the class will cover different Latin American national origin groups separately. The readings on national origin groups will examine and analyze political outcomes such as political behavior and preferences. The second half of the course will focus on policy outcomes, political behavior, and recent elections as they pertain to Latinos in the United States.

PLSC 2460 Re-Inventing Europe (4 Credits)

Politics, economics and culture of Europe of today including basics of parliamentary democracy, contemporary political economy and national identities of major European countries as well as developments in the European Union and Eastern Europe. This course counts toward the sub-field requirement for PLSC majors in the comparative/international politics.

PLSC 2470 State and Local Politics (4 Credits)

This course examines the general and the unique traits of the politics, institutions, and policy processes of state governments. We will, in addition, take advantage of our location and focus on the government and politics of Colorado. Satisfies the department distribution requirement in American politics. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

PLSC 2480 U.S. Congress (4 Credits)

Structure and functions of U.S. Congress and congressional behavior. Satisfies the department distribution requirement in American politics and counts toward the Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture common curriculum requirement. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

PLSC 2500 Political Psychology (4 Credits)

This course examines the intersection of politics and psychology. Students will examine how emotion, cognition, and group psychology influence political actors and policy outcomes. Students will apply these concepts to voting, foreign policy decision-making, and the formation of belief systems.

PLSC 2510 Women in U.S. Politics (4 Credits)

This course focuses on the role of women in U.S. politics, with an emphasis on voting, elections, and representation. Topics include the woman suffrage movement, women's voting patterns, women as candidates, and women holding elected office. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

PLSC 2520 Public Opinion & Behavior in the US (4 Credits)

Why do people believe the things they believe about American politics? Why do people get involved in politics at all? Through this course, we'll explore the attitudes, beliefs, and behavior of the American voter through traditional participation like voting, higher cost activities like volunteering for campaigns, or less traditional forms like running for office or participating in protests. This class provides a strong background on the scholarly literature surrounding participation and opinion and helps to dispel common myths about voters.

PLSC 2530 Race & Ethnicity in US Politic (4 Credits)

This course addresses the issues of race and ethnicity in American politics through two lenses: the crafting and implementation of domestic policies (such as welfare, education, and the criminal justice system) and the framing of political decisions. After an introduction to historical, sociological, and psychological approaches to the study of race and ethnicity, we apply these approaches to studies of American public policy. The course then transitions, examining the explicit and implicit racialization of political decisions. Throughout the course, students consider the role of institutional design, policy development, representation, and racial attitudes among the general public in shaping the American political environment.

PLSC 2611 Neoliberalism: The Privatization of Everything, and its Problems (4 Credits)

This course examines the origins, evolution, and implementation of "neoliberalism," the policy persuasion that advocates privatizing, marketizing, and deregulating the provision of almost all goods and services. Special attention will be given to the privatization of the provision of national security, what historically has been viewed as the most central function of government. This course satisfies the department's political theory distribution requirement.

PLSC 2620 Quest for Community (4 Credits)

This course explores how political theory over the past several decades has grappled with the benefits, limitations, and paradoxes of liberalism in the post-modern world. Inquiry revolves around whether and how liberalism can deal with the identities, differences, and distributive inequalities that complicate our world today. Is liberalism -or its successor ideology, neoliberalism- an appropriate model for political community, or should it be replaced with a different paradigm? What would it mean to think beyond liberalism to something more radical and democratic? Satisfies the department distribution requirement in political theory. Junior standing required.

PLSC 2630 American Political Thought (4 Credits)

Where do distinctly "American" values and beliefs come from and why are they so fiercely held? Are there viable alternatives to the classic ways in which Americans tend to address our social and political problems? This course offers an exploration of these questions from the perspective of a diverse array of American political thinkers. Starting before the Founding and continuing to political thinkers of the present day, this seminar-style course will examine different interpretations of American identity—and the unique ways they intersect—in American political speech and theory. Satisfies the department distribution requirement in either American politics or political theory. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

PLSC 2660 Feminist Political Thought (4 Credits)

This course surveys political theory literatures on feminist thinking and activism. Readings will survey historical and contemporary theories of gender, identity, patriarchy, misogyny, and liberation. Course will center trans and of-color feminist narratives thinking and practices. Emphasis on critical analysis of various feminist texts in writing and in class discussion.

PLSC 2670 Radical Democracy (4 Credits)

What does it mean to say "the people acted"? What is democracy, or what could it be? This course pursues answers to these questions through an exploration of works in political theory. We will read texts that attempt to move beyond procedural forms of democracy such as elections and representation and argue for more substantive forms of democracy in the form of deliberation, racial justice, and disagreement. To think about the ideas in these texts as resources for enacting radical democracy from within less than democratic institutions, we will also conduct voter registration and/or education on or off campus.

PLSC 2701 Topics in American Politics (4 Credits)

Focuses on specific issues in politics of the United States. PLSC 2701 satisfies the department's distribution requirement in American politics. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

PLSC 2702 Topics in Comparative Politics (4 Credits)

Focuses on topics in comparative and/or international politics. Satisfies the departmental sub-field requirement in comparative/international politics. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

PLSC 2703 Topics in Law and Politics (4 Credits)

Focuses on topics in law from a political science perspective. Satisfies departmental distribution requirement in law. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

PLSC 2704 Topics in Political Theory (4 Credits)

Focuses on topics in political theory. Satisfies departmental sub-field requirements in political theory. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

PLSC 2755 Legal Actors and Institutions (4 Credits)

This course examines the legal system from the points of view of those who work within it. It considers the social characteristics of lawyers, judges, regulators, elected officials and non-state actors, and how they matter to the social construction of law. The emphasis is on the social organization of law and the everyday interactions that bring meaning to the legal system. It considers and seeks to understand how legal roles, legal institutions and power relations within the law influence its development and practice. Throughout the course, students are required to think critically about how society and the social relationships of law influence law's outcomes. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

PLSC 2820 Constitutional Law: Civil Rights and Liberties (4 Credits)

This course addresses major ideas and principles of U.S. constitutional law, with a focus on equal protection of the law, fundamental rights, and freedom of speech and religion. Within each of these areas, we will consider the development of court rulings over time, economic and political influences on court decision-making, and policy implications of these rulings. While PLSC 2860 complements this course, it is not necessary to take both courses. Satisfies the department distribution requirement in law. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

PLSC 2825 The Politics of Rights (4 Credits)

This course examines rights and rights-claims as complex and contingent resources for political actors. The class aims at equipping students to be better able to identify, understand, and critically evaluate how, why, and to what end rights claims are used in politics. Particular attention is paid to social and political movements that use rights-claims, as well as the various advantages, limitations, and problems that can accompany rights-based political appeals. Prerequisite: sophomore standing or above.

PLSC 2830 Judicial Politics (4 Credits)

This course considers the role of courts, especially the Supreme Court, in the U.S. political system. Topics include the the potential dangers and benefits of allocating significant power to un-elected justices, judicial decision-making, Court-Congress interaction in developing public policies, the social and political effects of court rulings, and legal interest groups.

PLSC 2835 European Union law and politics (4 Credits)

This course explores the law and politics of European integration in the postwar era, examining how and why states that invented sovereignty became bound by a supranational legal system that regulates the largest single market in the world and diverse communities across European countries. Questions include the following: What is the origin and future of the European Union (EU)? Why did Russia invade Ukraine about a decade after the EU won the Nobel peace prize for its promotion of peace, prosperity, and democracy in Europe? What are the causes and consequences of the United Kingdom's (UK) withdrawal from the EU, in a process called "Brexit" (British exit)? How has the EU responded to the erosion of democracy and the rule of law in multiple member states? This course may count toward the Scientific inquiry: Society and culture common curriculum requirement and either the law or comparative politics sub-fields of the Political Science major.

PLSC 2840 International Law & Human Rights (4 Credits)

This course explores the role that international law plays in promoting human rights. Why did states first commit to international human rights protections after the Second World War? Why did states voluntarily surrender their sovereignty by signing and ratifying human rights treaties that limit their freedom to act domestically? Does this international law influence governments' human rights practices? Who enforces international human rights law? Which countries are leaders or laggards when it comes to international human rights? This course can count toward the sub-field requirement for PLSC majors in either law or comparative/international politics.

PLSC 2850 Politics of Criminal Justice in the US (4 Credits)

Problems and reforms in American criminal justice system; causes and extent of crime, excessive use of force by police, systemic racism, bail reform, probation and parole; prisons and police/community relations. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

PLSC 2855 Conservative Politics and the Courts (4 Credits)

This course focuses on the reasons for and uses of litigation and judicial politics in the pursuit of conservative ends. As such, the class critically examines the different major sub-groups that define modern American conservatism; how these subgroups compare to and interact with one another; the conditions that allow for political movements generally to use courts in pursuing policy ends; and the specific steps that various American conservative groups have taken in order to influence courts, law, and policy. Introduction to American Politics (PLSC 1000) is recommended, but not required.

PLSC 2860 Constitutional Law: Governmental Structures and Powers (4 Credits)

This course addresses major ideas and principles of U.S. constitutional law, with a focus on federalism, the growth of national power, and separation of powers. Within each of these areas, we will consider the development of court rulings over time, economic and political influences on court decision-making, and policy implications of these rulings. While PLSC 2820 complements this course, it is not necessary to take both courses. Satisfies the department distribution requirement in law. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

PLSC 2880 Comparative Constitutional Politics (4 Credits)

Many fear that democracy is in decline, in the US and around the world. Citizens in the US and many other countries look to judicial review of written constitutions as a way to preserve democracy while protecting rights. Yet can judges serve effectively as guardians of democracy or rights? Do US-style "checks and balances" violate the "separation of powers" when judges declare that laws – approved by elected representatives in the legislative and executive branches – are unconstitutional and must be overturned? Does this approach of "constitutionalism" create a "juristocracy" – government by judges – that is incompatible with representative democracy? In this course, we examine constitutional politics comparatively, (1) exploring why constitutionalism spread widely during the postwar and post-Cold war eras and (2) analyzing its implications for contemporary democracies and their citizens. As a course in the sub-field of comparative and international politics, cases from outside the US will be the focus of our inquiry, with the US discussed in comparative perspective.

PLSC 2901 Political Inquiry (4 Credits)

Introduces political inquiry within the discipline of political science, examining quantitative, qualitative, and historical research methods with a focus on basic principles of effective research design and data analysis; no previous mathematical background is necessary. By the end of the course, students are able to evaluate scientific research, frame a research question, and design a research study. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

PLSC 2988 Study Abroad Resident Credit (0-18 Credits)**PLSC 3290 Capstone Seminar in Politics (4 Credits)**

This capstone seminar is required for all majors and explores theoretical and empirical issues of politics with application to specific political developments. Topics vary by section and instructor. All students complete a significant independent research paper based in part on analysis of primary source materials. Senior standing required. Political Science majors only.

PLSC 3701 Topics in Political Science (1-4 Credits)**PLSC 3702 Topics in Political Science (1-4 Credits)****PLSC 3703 Topics in Political Science (1-4 Credits)****PLSC 3704 Topics in Political Science (1-4 Credits)****PLSC 3982 Political Internship (1-4 Credits)**

This is a hybrid on-line/in-class internship course. Students may work on political campaigns at the federal, state, or local level. Students will keep journals structured by questions from a faculty member, meet in a seminar with others doing an internship to reflect on service in their placement, respond to on-line assignments and writing prompts, and write a research paper integrating their experience with relevant scholarship.

PLSC 3985 Legal Internship (4 Credits)

This is an online class for students working in internships related to the legal profession. Students may work in the local courts, advocacy organizations, the public defender's office, or the district attorney's office, either in Denver or elsewhere in the U.S. Students will complete internship hours in addition to engaging in an online course that focuses on professional development, reflections on the internship experience, and relevant legal scholarship. Students are responsible for applying to and securing their own internships (with assistance from the professor), and should plan to begin this process early, typically in advance of registration.

PLSC 3988 Study Abroad Resident Credit (0-18 Credits)**PLSC 3990 Honors Thesis (2-8 Credits)**

Independent work on honors thesis. Prerequisite: senior standing.

PLSC 3991 Independent Study (1-4 Credits)

Independent scholarship on a theoretical or empirical project. Prerequisite: faculty approval.

PLSC 3995 Independent Research (1-10 Credits)

Students must get instructor permission and fill out an Independent Study/Research form in order to enroll in an independent research course.