

Fall 2019 Course Descriptions

POLS 1120-002 American National Government

Michael Rocca

This course is designed to introduce students to the institutions of American national government and the processes of American political life. We will be concerned with analyzing how well this political system operates in light of its democratic goals and what it actually accomplishes in terms of policy results. To fulfill these objectives, we will examine the constitutional basis of American government and the institutional structure of the Presidency, Congress, and Supreme Court which was built on that political foundation. Complementing this institutional focus will be an exploration of how U.S. citizens translate their political aspirations into governmental action. For example, what is the role of interest groups and political parties in representing the views of the citizenry? And how do elections and shifts in public opinion affect governmental decision-making?

POLS 1120-003 American National Government

Jessica Feezell

This course is designed to provide students with an introduction to American government and politics. It prepares students to think analytically about the interplay of concepts, people, institutions, and theoretical explanations in American politics. This course covers how American citizens interact with governmental institutions to form public policy, the principles on which the U.S. government rests, and the dynamics of American institutions such as: Congress, the presidency, the judiciary, bureaucracy, political parties and interest groups. We will also examine the role the media play in shaping public opinion as well as the value of political knowledge and civic engagement. This course is formatted to first cover the founding of the Constitution and the structure of federalism, followed by political behavior and political participation in the U.S., then we will explore the institutions of the federal government, and finally we will conclude with public policy. This ordering is intentional on the part of the professor and concepts are designed to build upon each other.

POLS 1120-006 American National Government

Michael Hess

This course is an introduction and survey of the institutions and processes of American politics. We will examine the structures, goals, actions and impacts of American governments, as well as look at the basic questions that drive our political processes today. Through readings, online lectures and presentations, exams and individual and group participation, we will explore answers together. Political Science majors will find this course to be a building block to more advanced courses. Non-majors will gain a greater understanding of our various levels of government and the processes behind them.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to understand the basic principles that drive politics in America. The course starts with the definition of politics, moves through the institutions of government, and finally focuses on those who are affected by and participate in the political process.

POLS 2110-001/002/003**Comparative Politics****Jami Nelson-Nunez**

This course offers an introduction to the academic field of comparative (global) politics. It covers the historical, core concerns of the field including the development of the modern state democratization, authoritarian regimes, nationalism and multiculturalism, political parties and electoral systems, racial formation and ethnic conflict, the relationship between the state, and the market, the politics of gender, and the political economy of development. Readings and examples are drawn from all regions of the world.

POLS 2120-001 International Relations**Yury Bosin**

This course will introduce students to the field of International Relations. The course will cover key definitions, central topics and debates, principles, concepts, theories, as well as practical policy issues essential for understanding global politics in the modern age. The students will become familiar with historical, geographical and demographic background of international processes and events. The course will help students develop critical thinking and analytical skills for further study of international politics.

POLS 2120-002 International Relations**Kathy Powers**

This survey course provides an overview of international relations as a field of study. We will examine major issues in such areas as international security, international political economy, foreign policy, international development, human rights and international terrorism. Students learn about international relations as well as refine their critical analysis skills.

POLS 2130-001 Political Ideas: Intro to Political Theory**Matthew Simpson**

This course investigates key questions concerning the nature and justification of political systems. What are the purposes of political institutions? What constitutional arrangements can best achieve those ends? What are the advantages and disadvantages of democracy as a form of government? What are the duties of citizenship? We will take up these questions by reading canonical and contemporary works in political theory with a special focus on theories concerning the foundations, strengths, and limitations of constitutional democracy.

POLS 2140-001 Introduction to Political Analysis**Wendy Hansen**

This course is an introduction to the scientific methods used by researchers to study a wide variety of social and political processes. The goal of this course is to help you develop basic skills for conducting research and to make you a more informed and savvy consumer of research findings reported in political science journals, but also newspapers, magazines, media, and other sources. We will begin with an overview of the basic principles of scientific inquiry and how to apply these principles to the study of political science questions. ***The balance of the course will focus on probability, statistics and data analysis techniques important to doing research.*** Students will learn how to design a research project, develop your own hypotheses, generate or collect data, test your hypotheses through data analysis, and explain your findings. You will learn basic statistical skills using STATA, a statistical software package widely used in political science and other disciplines. No prior math, computer or statistical skills are required, but a basic college or solid high school level math background will be useful.

POLS 2140-002 Introduction to Political Analysis**Jessica Feezell**

This course is intended to give you the training you will need to think critically about political science research and to conduct basic research in political science on your own. Using the scientific method, we will explore theory construction, hypothesis testing, quantitative and qualitative approaches to the study of political science, and overall research design. The majority of this course has a strong focus on quantitative statistical analysis of political phenomenon. The first half of this course focuses on learning about research design in political science, and the second half of this course focuses on statistics and carrying out quantitative political analysis. By the end of this course you should be able to read, understand, and critique advanced political science research, craft a high-quality research design, and carry out your own basic statistical analysis of data. The skills you will learn in this course will help you in the study of political science, many other fields of social science, and in the workforce generally.

POLS 2140-004 Introduction to Political Analysis**Alexis Adams**

Statistics and data are increasingly important to society, from economic forecasts that shape policy to decisions of whether or not a new drug should be approved by the FDA. This course aims to provide students with the tools to critically evaluate empirical research presented both in academic political science and in the news media. Additionally, students will learn basic statistical analysis techniques. No knowledge of statistics, computers or research methods assumed.

POLS 2150-003 Public Policy and Administration**Maria Livaudais**

Introduces public policy and bureaucracy, including decision-making and implementation. This covers contemporary policy issues and the primary policy actors.

POLS 291/491 Internship**Michael Rocca**

Internships place students with professionals working in political parties, government agencies, or other public organizations. Interns work closely with both the field supervisor in the public organization and with the faculty instructor. Internships allow students to observe how professionals and professional organizations operate on a daily basis and afford to students multiple opportunities to apply academic skills and knowledge while contributing to an organization's operation. Through an internship, students have the chance to learn through experiences, insofar as the workplace, office, or agency becomes a text for analysis and reflection. POLS 496: For DC interns only.

POLS 300-008 T: Dem, Community, and Econ Development**Eric Griego**

This course provides an overview of the role of politics, community, and research in economic development. Using current economic development policies and projects as case studies, we will learn about how individuals, groups and governments contribute to the formation of economic development strategies and policies. We will also examine the context of state and local economic development policy, in terms of institutions, theory and outcomes. Students will be required to play an active role in the course, including readings, class participation, research, and debates/presentations.

POLS 300-010 Interest Groups, Corruption, and Power**Jared Clay**

Are interests groups a corrupting influence in government or are we living in a pluralist haven? The course evaluates this question by understanding the roles, activities, and influences of interest groups in American politics. We will look at the theoretical and practical role interest groups have in American politics. The topics of the course include the reasons interest groups form, how they maintain themselves, and why people join them. It will also look at what interest groups do in practice (e.g., lobbying, issue advocacy, election-related activities) and what influence interest groups have on politics and policy-making at various levels of government.

POLS 305-002 Public Opinion and Electoral Behavior**Lonna Atkeson**

This course focuses on understanding political behavior through survey research and quantitative research. We focus on learning about human decision-making through the lens of political psychology. Our goal is to understand where political attitudes come from and acquire intellectual humility in the process. The course focuses on skill development and learning how to manipulate public opinion data to answer questions about political behavior. Students must have a laptop to complete the public opinion assignments.

POLS 311-001 The Legislative Process**Ellen Grigsby**

This is a lecture, experiential, and discussion course on the United States Congress and its historical framework, leaders, processes, and policymaking. Through your internship work in your office you will be a participant observer/participant learner who is positioned to see and experience how work in a busy U.S. Congressional office is carried out.

POLS 311-002 The Legislative Process**Michael Rocca**

This course is designed to meet two goals: (1) to increase students' understanding of Congress as a legislative institution; and (2) to introduce students to important theoretical and empirical works on Congress. Over the course of the quarter we will review how and why Congress is organized the way it is and how the rules of the game influence the legislative process. We will also discuss some of the most influential debates in congressional literature. For instance, what is the purpose of the committee system? What role do the parties and party leaders play within Congress? Are members of Congress single-minded reelection seekers or do other goals also drive their behavior? And which theory best explains how committees are formed?

POLS 324-001 The Politics of Poverty and Inequality**Jami Nelson-Nunez**

The issue of inequality is at the heart of politics. Some scholars, such as Thomas Piketty, have called into question the direction of global and national economies, arguing that without any policy intervention inequality will continue to deepen with devastating consequences. What constitutes the "fair" distribution of resources is a debate in which many are uncomfortable engaging. Perceptions of poverty and inequality are often inaccurate and their causes poorly understood. This course aims to dig into the issues of inequality and poverty at macro and micro levels in both international and U.S. contexts. We will delve into the facts of what we know and do not know about poverty and affluence and consider the causes and consequences of wealth disparities. We will further explore related policies that aim to

address income gaps and ensure that people have the ability to meet their basic needs. Lastly, the course will engage the politics behind the creation and execution of policies, examining institutional arrangements that reinforce or ameliorate poverty and inequality. The class will culminate with a policy analysis students will conduct on an issue of their choice.

POLS 340-001 T: International Organization

Kathy Powers

This course details the essential structures, actors, and processes in international organizations. The first segment of the course provides a general overview of international organizations, both governmental and non-governmental. The second segment of the course focuses on the roles of international organizations in several key issue areas: international security, international political economy, and the global environment. Particular attention will be given to the role of international organizations in human rights, war crimes, and transitional justice.

POLS 341-001 International Conflict and Cooperation

Christopher Butler

The scientific study of conflict processes provides some ability to predict whether interactions will escalate to violence or deescalate in some way. This class examines our understanding of conflict processes, focusing on international politics but also considering civil wars. The major assignment will be an application of theoretical models to predicting an ongoing real-world case. Data collection and a prediction report will take place as a group project; each student will also write an individual reflection essay detailing their learning. Participation, reading comprehension, short assignments, and two others essays make up the rest of the grade.

POLS 400-004 Adv T: Government Regulation

Wendy Hansen

People have debated the role of government in the economy and society as long as governments have existed. Governments affect every aspect of people's lives including their health, wealth, safety, freedoms and security. While government regulation is essential to modern society, it is also the subject of constant criticism as the government interferes with decisions on the food we eat, the products we buy, our health and safety, and even individual behaviors from birth to bathrooms to death. This course will examine the politics and economics of government regulation in society and the roles of business, interest groups, presidents, legislatures, courts, bureaucratic agencies, and state officials that engage in regulation. From both theoretical and practical perspectives, we will address a variety of questions and issues, such as: Why and when do we regulate? What are our regulatory goals? What is and/or should be the role of the government in society? What governmental institutions have been established to facilitate regulation and how well do they perform their tasks? Who benefits and who is harmed? When and why do we sometimes get deregulation and/or regulatory reforms and what is the impact? From a comparative perspective, do regulations differ across states and across countries in the world and how? What effect do regulations have beyond our borders in an international context? And finally, what kinds of regulatory decisions and changes would *you* make given the opportunity; what changes could be made to improve regulation.

POLS 496 For Washington, DC Fred Harris Congressional Interns only

Michael Rocca

POLS 510-001 Pro-Seminar in American Government and Politics**Timothy Krebs**

This course introduces you to the study of American politics. As such, it strives to form the foundation of student preparation for comprehensive exams in the field. Major subject areas include representation, voter turnout, ideology and partisanship, polarization, minority representation, American institutions, federalism, and state and local politics. In addition to these topics, the course will expose you to how scholars study American politics.

POLS 520-001 Pro-Seminar in Comparative Politics**Kendra Koivu**

Why do some countries turn into stable democracies while others suffer from civil war, military coups, and violent insurgencies? What explains why the modern state first developed in Europe? How can we account for the varied development and performance of the state, political parties, and other institutions across different countries and regions? This course, an advanced survey of the subfield of comparative politics, tackles these questions and many others. The course is split into four sections in which we take an extended look at some of the major themes of comparative politics—state building, democratization, institutions, and political economy. The course is designed to train PhD students preparing for qualifying exams in comparative politics and involves extensive reading.

POLS 541-001 Seminar: Transitional Justice**Kathy Powers**

Post-conflict societies face many challenges in the aftermath of conflict. For example, in post-apartheid South Africa, Bishop Desmond Tutu once said the "Allies could go home but we in South Africa must learn to live with one another again." In the aftermath of political violence and mass violation of human rights, how do people, communities and societies come to terms with these atrocities and reconstruct society? How people live together again after suffering and inflicting lethal violence is an important question. In the context of state-sponsored violence, how do successor regimes make a break with the past, establish a new set of social norms, and work toward the administration of justice, redress and reconciliation are important questions we will consider. Course participants will consider what constitutes post jus bellum (justice after war) and assess the determinants and implications of transitional justice globally.

POLS 581-001 Statistics for Social Research**Christopher Butler**

The scientific study of politics relies heavily---though not exclusively---on the statistical analysis of data to ascertain whether a theoretical argument is supported by real-world evidence. Is there really a difference in income levels between two groups? Does level of education really affect voting behavior? Important questions could be endlessly debated by "just looking at" the data. Statistics provide a more decisive arbiter of these questions. This course is an intensive introduction to statistics and the scientific study of politics. Students will learn about the scientific method, data management, descriptive statistics, data presentation, statistical inference, and a variety of methods of testing theoretical arguments against data.

**POLS 582-
of Political Science as a Discipline and a Profession****Kendra Koivu****001 Survey**

This is a required course for all graduate students in political science. First year students are expected to enroll in this 1 credit hour course. The Department offers this course to provide an orientation to graduate school and a structured (but informal) context for learning about the discipline and the profession. This course offers graduate students an opportunity to bring their questions about graduate school and graduate study in political science to the attention of the Graduate Advisor, while at the same time-sharing their concerns and experiences with their fellow graduate students.