

POLITICAL SCIENCE & PUBLIC POLICY (PSC)

PSC-1050 Introduction to Public Policy (4 semester hours)

This course introduces students to the policymaking process within the U.S. context. First, students are introduced to how politicians, the media, interest groups, and even ordinary citizens affect policymaking. Second, students are exposed to the basic models and tools of policymaking and their application to specific policy areas. Potential topics examined include welfare, education, homeland security, and economic policy. Ethical issues in policymaking are also considered.

PSC-1300 Introduction to U.S. Government (4 semester hours)

This course examines the history, founding documents, structure, culture, and values of the American political system, along with some of the contemporary challenges (poverty, inequality, discrimination, immigration, crime, corruption) this country faces as it continues to evolve.

PSC-1810-9 Selected Topics in Political Science (Variable semester hours)

This course will address a specific area of study in Political Science not already covered by other course offerings. Prerequisites vary by topic.

PSC-2160 Economics for Public Policy (4 semester hours)

This course introduces students to microeconomics as applied to public policy. The course begins with an overview of basic microeconomics before focusing on economic concepts important to public policy settings. Topics include consumer and producer theory, moral hazards, adverse selection, externalities, and collective action problems.

Prerequisite(s): MTH-1030 or MTH-1100 or MTH-1310 or MTH-2210 or MTH-2100 or MTH-2700 or (MTH-1210, MTH-1220, and NSM-2500).

PSC-2550 Political Advocacy: From the Grassroots to K Street (4 semester hours)

Political advocacy occurs whenever anyone makes a policy pitch to a government official. Sometimes this occurs inexpensively and spontaneously, such as when a constituent chats with an elected official while waiting together in the checkout line at the local grocery store. But more commonly, we think of advocacy in terms of highly paid Washington lobbyists or large-scale grassroots initiatives. In this course, students will learn about the nature of the interest groups that hire lobbyists and direct grassroots initiatives, focusing on their role in the American political system. Techniques for political advocacy appropriate for different actors will be introduced, and students will gain experience by developing an advocacy plan.

Prerequisite(s): PSC-1050.

PSC-2600 Designing Political Campaigns (4 semester hours)

In democracies, the individuals who formulate and implement public policy frequently hold elected office. Thus, those hoping to influence public policy often must first win election. This course focuses on political campaigns in the United States. Students will learn about campaign organization and planning, including advertising, messaging, fundraising, fieldwork, and precinct analysis. Students will also examine ethical issues involved in the design and implementation of political campaign strategies. In familiarizing themselves with the campaign process by creating a campaign plan, students will learn how politicians and their surrogates position themselves to craft public policy.

Prerequisite(s): PSC-1050.

PSC-2700 Research Methods for Public Policy (4 semester hours)

In this course, students are introduced to research methods commonly used in public policy settings. Emphasis is placed on principles of research design and applied quantitative data analysis. Topics include sampling, descriptive statistics, basic inferential statistics, and the ethics of data analysis. Through an in-depth statistical analysis, students will learn to apply statistical tools to real world settings and present their findings to diverse audiences. Includes instruction in SPSS.

Prerequisite(s): MTH-1030 or MTH-1100 or MTH-1310 or MTH-2210 or MTH-2100 or MTH-2700 or (MTH-1210; MTH-1220; and NSM-2500).

PSC-2810-9 Selected Topics in Political Science (Variable semester hours)

This course will address a specific area of study in Political Science not already covered by other course offerings. Prerequisites vary by topic.

PSC-3100 Environmental Politics (4 semester hours)

Citizens around the world are demanding a cleaner and healthier world as well as more just access to, and benefits from, the environment, in what some call the greening of international environmental politics. Problems such as air pollution, deforestation, famine, access to clean water, and loss of biodiversity pose numerous problems for states and policymakers, including, but not limited to, the increased potential for conflict. Unfortunately, creating effective governance regimes and negotiating such policies is difficult given the disparity between the political and economic power of various national and international actors, access to information, large number of diverse stakeholders, and disparate national priorities. Some multi-national corporations, small businesses and consumers are also actively involved in international environmental issues through the decisions they make in production and consumption of consumer items. While some critics argue that such activity is merely greenwashing, other supporters argue that business can and should play a more active role in global environmental sustainability. This course examines many of these problems central to the challenges of global environmental politics and enables students to identify and analyze their own values regarding these problems.

PSC-3130 Gauging Public Opinion (4 semester hours)

Elected officials are expected to take the public's opinion into account when designing public policy. But how well informed is the public on policy issues, and how can their opinion be measured? What exactly is public opinion, and do policymakers in fact take it into account when making decisions? In this course, students will first learn about the nature of public opinion and its effects on public policy - how attitudes are formed, how knowledgeable citizens are about public policy, and the degree to which public opinion is reflected in public policy. Students will then learn about the rewards and perils of conducting public opinion research, gaining experience in survey methodologies by designing survey instruments and collecting and analyzing survey data.

Prerequisite(s): PSC-2160 or PSC-2550 or PSC-2600 or PSC-2700.

PSC-3180 Constitutional Law and the Judicial System (4 semester hours)

The case method is utilized to analyze the principles of the American Constitution. Topics include presidential, congressional and Supreme Court power, equal protection of the law and race, gender, sexual orientation, implied fundamental rights to abortion choice and education, free speech and religion, and modern constitutional theories.

Prerequisite(s): PSC-1300.

PSC-3300 Comparative Public Policy (4 semester hours)

This course introduces students to the public policies of selected countries other than the United States.

Prerequisite(s): PSC-1050 or PSC-1300.

PSC-3340 U.S. Domestic Policy (4 semester hours)

This course provides students with an overview of contemporary U.S. domestic policy, as well as intensive instruction in a salient domestic policy problem.

Prerequisite(s): PSC-1050 or PSC-1300.

PSC-3350 Politics and Policy in the Latino Community (4 semester hours)

This course familiarizes students with the major public policies and political activities affecting Latinos in the United States. Course topics may address issues of immigration, assimilation, identity, mobilization, and voter behavior. Historical trends will be examined.

PSC-3380 U.S. Foreign Policy (4 semester hours)

This course provides students with an overview of contemporary U.S. foreign policy, as well as intensive instruction in a salient foreign policy problem.

Prerequisite(s): PSC-1050 or PSC-1300.

PSC-3410 Pressing the Agenda: Politics of Media (4 semester hours)

The media influence the direction of public policy in at least two major ways. One way is by functioning as newsmaker, deciding what events are newsworthy. A second way is as a medium through which politicians and interest groups disseminate their views to the public. In this course, students will learn about the media's role in politics, how it has changed over time, and how it has been influenced by new technologies. In addition, students will learn about how different political actors exploit television, radio, print, and social media to their advantage. Finally, students will apply their knowledge by producing a political advertisement based on a contemporary public policy issue.

Prerequisite(s): PSC-2160 or PSC-2550 or PSC-2600 or PSC-2700.

PSC-3810 ST Advanced Topics in Political Science (0.5-17 semester hours)

This course will address a specific area of study in Political Science not already covered by other course offerings. Prerequisites vary by topic.

PSC-3810-9 St:advanced Topics in Political Science (Variable semester hours)

This course will address a specific area of study in Political Science not already covered by other course offerings. Prerequisites vary by topic.

PSC-4700 Capstone in Political Science and Public Policy (4 semester hours)

This is the capstone course in political science and public policy. Students will demonstrate their cumulative knowledge of public policy by examining and proposing detailed solutions to problems faced by actors in the public and private sectors.

Prerequisite(s): PSC-1050; PSC-2160; PSC-2700.

PSC-4810-9 ST:Reading Seminars in Political Scienc (Variable semester hours)

These are regular courses reflecting faculty research interests. These readings seminars assume proficiency in foundational and intermediate-level subject matter and provide students with the opportunity to analyze a specific political topic in depth. This course designation is repeatable for credit.

PSC-4940 Internship in Political Science and Public Policy (2-4 semester hours)

Students will have the opportunity to gain work experience through a political science and public policy internship. Students will work with a faculty coordinator to identify an organization where they can develop practical skills in public policy. Specific new learning objectives will be set and agreed upon by the student, site coordinator, and faculty member. Permission of the instructor required.

Prerequisite(s): Instructor permission.