

Political Science

Department Location

Giles Hall – Room 217

Goals

The goal of the Political Science Department is to transmit the knowledge of the discipline by providing courses and instruction that are characterized by excellence. Courses are designed for students who desire a basic, general knowledge of American government; students who major in the discipline but do not plan to go to graduate school; students who plan to go to graduate or professional schools; and students who plan to teach in the social sciences in the public schools of Georgia.

Objectives

Upon completion of courses in the political science major program, students should be able to

1. demonstrate an understanding of the concepts and principles of political science in the structures, institutions, and processes of the United States and other nations
2. apply the knowledge of the discipline, using technology as well as traditional methods, to contemporary questions
3. organize ideas and focus them effectively on the issue in question
4. demonstrate an outstanding of verbal and written communicative, analytical and critical thinking skills in various academic and professional settings
5. recognize their personal value systems and apply these to their own social and political worlds
6. provide content for integrating skills for teacher preparation, and graduate and professional schools

General Core Requirements

Non-majors may use PSC 190 Introduction to Political Inquiry and PSC 201 National Government to satisfy the social science core requirement.

International/Women's Studies Requirement

Courses that satisfy the International/Women's Studies requirement are listed in the Course Sequence Booklet or on the Spelman Web page.

Major Cognate Courses

PSC 201 is a prerequisite for all courses in the major. This requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Department Chair. MATH 107 is the highest level of math required; however, MATH 115 is recommended. Also, ECON 241 and 242 are suggested, but not required.

Major Requirements

Students majoring in the subject must take at least 44 hours of political science courses. The following courses are required:

- PSC 201 National Government in the United States
- PSC 203 Data Analysis and Research Methods
- PSC 321 International Relations
- PSC 325 Comparative Political Systems
- PSC 315 American Constitutional Law
- PSC 415 Introduction to Political Theory
- PSC 497 Senior Seminar

The required courses total 28 hours; the remaining 16 hours may be electives. Majors may select a concentration in American Institutions and Processes or International Relations. All courses must be passed with a grade of "C" or better.

Students who wish to take courses at other colleges must obtain permission from the chairperson.

Honors Program students are required to have two semesters of faculty supervised in Thesis Honors Research. This requirement may be satisfied in political science with PSC 400 and PSC 497.

Minor Requirements

A minor in political science consists of 24 hours (six 4-hour courses). Students minoring in political science are required to take all of the required courses in the major program with the exception of Senior Seminar.

Teacher Certification

See Education Studies Program

Departmental Honors

The qualifications for departmental honors include

1. a grade point average of 3.5 or above in the major
2. completion of a senior research paper
3. no grade lower than a "B" in political science courses
4. no more than two electives taken outside of the Spelman Political Science Department, excluding domestic and international exchange programs
5. no withdrawals from major courses unless for reasons of serious illness or other extenuating circumstances
6. all major courses must be taken in the Spelman Political Science Department

Departmental Honor Society

Pi Sigma Alpha National Political Science Honor Society is open to junior and senior majors who have earned at least a 3.5 grade point average and have taken at least four political science courses.

Student Organization

The Department sponsors the Political Science Society that is open to all majors.

Course Descriptions

PSC 190 – INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL INQUIRY (4)

An introduction to political inquiry that is intended to prepare students for more advanced coursework by giving them a sense of the disagreement and debate that lies behind major issues and institutions. Cannot be used as a major elective.

PSC 200 – INTRODUCTION TO ASIAN STUDIES (4)

A survey course that introduces the Asian region through a focus on three countries. Conceptual and theoretical underpinnings and substantive problems/prospects facing the region and each country are discussed. A historical, social and political lens is adopted in examining the three countries.

PSC 201 – NATIONAL GOVERNMENT IN THE UNITED STATES (4)

An introduction to American political processes and institutions, including Congress, the Presidency, the courts, political parties, elections, and related topics. Offered both semesters.

PSC 202 – STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT (4)

An examination of the governmental structure and politics of the South, Georgia, Fulton County, and Atlanta in particular. Required for teacher certification of all social science majors who plan to teach in public schools in Georgia. Prerequisite: PSC 201. Offered every year.

PSC 203 – DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH METHODS (4)

An introduction to the traditional and behavioral methodologies used in political science research; includes the study of basic statistical concepts and the interpretation of political data as presented in graphs, charts, tables, and game simulation. Offered each semester. Prerequisite: PSC 201.

PSC 303 – DATA ANALYSIS II (4)

A continuation of PSC 203. Course content emphasizes hypothesis testing (using both parametric and non-parametric statistics), data analysis with SPSS and effective data presentation. Students will master these topics through completing frequent, short problem sets and the execution of a team research project. Offered every other year.

PSC 310 – INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND FILM (4)

An examination of international film in the contest of its role in enhancing our understanding of the realm of twentieth and twenty-first century international relations. Topics will include international conflict, international development, religion, and women in politics. Ideologies considered will include communism, totalitarianism and liberal democracy.

PSC 312 – PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION (4)

An examination of the organizational structure of the government, the budgetary process, public policy issues, and programs. Management techniques, consumer demands, and governmental response to social and political concerns. Offered in alternate years. Prerequisite: PSC 201.

PSC 315 – AMERICAN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW (4)

An examination of the basic structure and powers of the national government as defined by the Constitution. Concentrated on historical developments and current controversies as they affect the American constitutional framework. Prerequisite: PSC 201.

PSC 316 – AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES (4)

An examination of the Supreme Court's interpretation of constitutional law on civil rights and civil liberties. Specific topics include first amendment rights, due process, equal protection for minorities and women, equal protection and voting rights. Prerequisite: PSC 201 and 315 or permission of the instructor.

PSC 317 – BLACK WOMEN: DEVELOPING PUBLIC LEADERSHIP SKILLS (4)

An honors program elective that is a rigorous, discussion-based, writing intensive, interdisciplinary seminar. Discussion topics include effective leadership, communication skills, and organizational development. This course focuses on the idea of self-assessment and self-improvement through essay writing, public speaking, and collaborative learning.

PSC 320 – ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS AND POLICY (4)

An intensive introduction to the study of environmental politics and policy, examining the development of environmental policy in the United States and the increasing globalization of environmental politics. It explores the role of key actors in environmental policy formation and implementation.

PSC 321 – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (4)

An introduction to the study of international politics, the course provides a theoretical framework in which to analyze international events and identifies the basic concepts of the discipline. Emphasis is placed on factors responsible for the interconnectedness of international and domestic politics and the role of international actors outside of the nation-state construct. Recommended: PSC 201 and PSC 325. Offered both semesters.

PSC 322 – LEGISLATIVE PROCESS (4)

An in-depth examination of the "first among coequal branches" of the U.S. government, Congress, drawing upon the introduction provided in PSC 201 (National Government). Major topics covered include formal and informal rules of behavior, committees, interest groups, information problems, and member decision making. Throughout the course, the problem of constituency representation is emphasized. Prerequisite: PSC 201. Recommended: PSC 202 and PSC 203.

PSC 325 – COMPARATIVE POLITICAL SYSTEMS (4)

An examination of the political systems of a number of major countries. Emphasis on commonalities and differences in the politics of various countries. Theories and the basic concepts that political scientists use in comparative political analysis are examined. Offered each semester. Prerequisite: PSC 201.

PSC 328 – FORCED MIGRATION IN AND FROM AFRICA (4)

A fervent introduction to forced migration and refugee issues with an emphasis on women. This is a service-learning course that encompasses intense reading, writing and action components. Through class dialogue, technology and community service, students will learn the processes of resettling refugees, as well as assist those in the Atlanta metropolitan area as they adjust to their new lives in the United States

PSC 340 – INTRODUCTION TO URBAN GOVERNMENT AND POLICY MAKING (4)

An examination of contemporary urban politics and policy making. Emphasis on patterns of cleavage, conflict, convergence of interests, and consensus that structure the urban arena in the United States as well as structural and ideological factors. Prerequisite: PSC 201.

PSC 342 – JAPAN IN ASIA (4)

A study of the political, security, and socio-economic facets of Japan's post-war "miracle." This course places Japan within the context of Asia, particularly East Asia, and examines different aspects of its postwar political evolution. The course begins with an overview of Japan's pre-war roots, the war itself, and the impact of both on post-war development. Japan's domestic politics and Japan in the context of Asia and in the larger context of global international relations are a major consideration. Offered in alternate years.

PSC 345 GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS OF INDIA (4)

An examination of the unfolding of post-independence politics and society in India. Parliamentary and party politics, India's economic rise, women and politics, and security issues facing the country will be examined. Models of democracy and economic growth that examine India's place in the world in comparison with other emerging powers, will be discussed. We will accomplish this through engagement in relevant readings, discussions and films. This course will fulfill the requirements for the QEP for developing intercultural competence and will serve as a Political Science and Asian Studies elective.

PSC 346 – AFRICAN POLITICS (4)

An introduction to the basic concepts, theoretical perspectives, and fundamental information that are necessary for understanding the complexities and diversity of the region. Emphasis on Sub-saharan Africa. Prerequisite: PSC 321 or 325. Offered in alternate years.

PSC 348 – PSYCHOLOGY AND POLITICS (4)

An examination of the influence of personality on political behavior. An exploration of the concept of personality; how political values are learned; psychological explanations of the political behavior of individuals; the psychology of nations and smaller political communities. Prerequisite: PSC 201. Offered in alternate years.

PSC 350 – INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY (4)

A study of the relationship between politics and economics with an emphasis on the dynamic interaction of states and market. Selected approaches

to international political economy focusing on mercantilism, liberalism, and structuralism will be examined. Economic policy issues such as trade, finance, investment, and aid will be explored. Prerequisite: PSC 321 or 325.

PSC 363 – AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY (4)

A study of American foreign policy in terms of its substantive content including the origins, sequence, and nature of specific policies; and foreign policy analysis. Prerequisite: PSC 321 or 325. Offered in alternate years.

PSC 380 – HUMAN RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION (4)

A survey of the problems related to political repression and governance issues in selected countries. Strategies for achieving and maintaining peace through nonviolent means are examined and evaluated. Offered every year.

PSC 400 – INDEPENDENT STUDY (4)

A supervised research course providing the student the opportunity to pursue a project in depth. For Honors Program students and students who began research papers in PSC 497 Senior Seminar. Offered second semester.

PSC 402 – INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (4)

A study of the national and international agencies utilized in the conduct and regulation of international transactions and the procedures employed. Emphasis placed on a critical survey of the major themes, ideas, and trends of international organizations. Offered in alternate years.

PSC 415 – INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY (4)

An examination of the writings of major Western and non-Western theorists. The ideas of major thinkers approached from an historical perspective and placed in their historical settings. Offered every year.

PSC 419 – THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY (4)

An examination of the scope and power of the American presidency and the structure and functions of the executive branch of government. Analysis of the President's expressed constitutional authority and the power of the President vis-à-vis the Congress and the Supreme Court. Prerequisite: PSC 201. Offered in alternate years.

PSC 420 – CURRENT ISSUES IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS (4)

An exploration of current international issues. This course utilizes the expertise of visiting professors, ambassadors-in-residence and others to teach a course in their respective areas.

PSC 422 – LAW ACROSS CULTURES (4)

A study of the role of law in different civilizations and cultures, the course examines the impact of cultural diversity on the development of law. It isolates the cultural prerequisites in several distinct cultures that have played a role in institutionalizing norms and expectations into a system of law. It further seeks to examine the ways in which domestic laws determine adherence to international law in selected societies. Offered in alternate years.

PSC 480 – SEMINARS IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES (4)

An interdisciplinary study of the economic, political, and cultural interdependence of the world's peoples. Emphasizes the process of policy making in international affairs. Topics vary. Offered first semester.

PSC 483 – AFRICAN-AMERICANS IN POLITICS (4)

An examination of contemporary Black politics and participation of American Blacks in the politics of the United States. Focus placed on participation from systemic, organizational, and problematic perspectives. Offered in alternate years. Prerequisite: PSC 201.

PSC 484 – RACISM AND THE LAW (4)

An examination of the role played by the Supreme Court in supporting or destroying racism in the United States and the legal interpretation of the Constitution based upon case law, which can be used toward ending public and private discrimination. Offered in alternate years. Prerequisite: PSC 201.

PSC 497 – SENIOR SEMINAR (4)

A capstone course required for senior political science majors. Students begin a research paper and prepare for the Senior Exit Examination. Students may complete their research paper in PSC 400. Prerequisite: PSC 203.