

Political Science Course Learning Outcomes

PSCI 210IS: Introduction to American Government

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Learn the basics of American government;
- 2) Improve your critical reading skills;
- 3) Hone your critical thinking abilities;
- 4) Expose you to a range of political perspectives and controversies.
- 5) Learn how to interpret and analyze social science data.

PSCI 230D: Introduction to International Relations

This class provides an overview of the main theories and ideas in international relations, with the following goals:

- Gain a better understanding of world politics and develop a systematic framework and vocabulary for thinking about international affairs.
- Understand the meaning and implications of major historical events and how they have shaped the international system.
- Become comfortable reading literature in political science using a variety of ideas and evidence.
- Develop analytical tools for discussing and writing about international politics, regardless of the countries or issues involved.

PSCI 240: Introduction to Public Administration

Objectives:

This course is designed to introduce major ideas, developments, and figures in the field of public administration including topics such as bureaucratic politics, decision-making, organization theory, and public policy. As such, it serves as the primary course for instilling a sense of historical development and context of the field. Students will also begin to explore the connections between the political, social and economic environments; how governments decide to respond to those environments; and how professional administrators fit into this picture. Finally, the course is also intended to introduce students to the basic research discipline associated with the field of political science and to provide students an opportunity to develop their research and analytical skills.

PSCI 250IH: Introduction to Political Theory

Learning Outcomes

- Understand what political theory is, and how it differs from/relates to “politics” and “political science”
- Understand how ideas and approaches in political theory have changed over time
- Develop critical thinking and written communication skills
- Develop the ability to analyze information from different viewpoints, reflective of broad ideologies
- Understand how to think chronologically and thematically across the history of political thought

PSCI 302: Media and Politics

Course Description and Objectives:

This class explores the role of the media in the political process with special emphasis on various mediums including print media, television, film, and the internet. Be ready to read, watch, listen, and learn about the ways that media and politics interact!

This course:

- 1) explains the rise of media-based politics.
- 2) describes the media strategies used to contest elections and govern.
- 3) documents the payoffs associated with these strategies while assessing the liabilities of media-based politics.
- 4) considers the importance of social media platforms as a new arena of media politics that features direct, rather than mediated, communication between voters and politicians.
- 5) raises questions about how media politics and changing forms of mass communication affect the practice of the future of democracy.

PSCI 337: Model United Nations

Course Learning Outcomes: At the end of this course, students should (1) possess a basic working knowledge of the structures, processes, and procedures used in international organizations, with particular emphasis on the United Nations; (2) better understand the history and contemporary functions of international organizations; (3) be capable of analyzing the reasons for and potential resolutions of international crises; (4) be more engaged with current global events and their broader significance; and (5) demonstrate improved skills in the areas of research, writing, public speaking, negotiation, and diplomacy.

PSCI 338: Introduction to Comparative Politics

COURSE OBJECTIVE: At the end of this course, students should: (1) better understand why countries choose different mechanisms and institutions for governing and why these choices are important; (2) be equipped to use the major theories, concepts, and tools of comparative political science in a careful and responsible manner; (3) understand the consequences of differing political practices, ideologies, and historical paths across countries; and (5) have improved their skills related to critical reading, critical thinking, writing and collaboration.

PSCI 339: Culture and Ideology: The Development of the Modern Prison

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

In this course, students will provide:

- an analysis of some of the ways race and class structure mass incarceration the United States.
- a broad, historical exposition of the way prison systems have developed, particularly in the western world, from the ancient world to the present.
- an explanation of the history and politics, particularly vis-à-vis Native Americans, at play in the establishment of Montana Women's Correctional Center.
- a critical, speculative analysis of potential reforms and directions the American Prison system might take and its attendant politics.

PSCI 341: Political Parties and Elections

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Elections are central to democratic governance as they provide the linkage between the governed and the governing. While citizens are the key individual actors in elections, it is political parties which are essential to educating, organizing, and providing choices to voters. This course will explore the foundations of the American party system and its evolution since the nation's founding. We will examine the rationale behind political parties, why two parties dominate electoral politics, and consider how and why political parties have become simultaneously intensely polarized within the electorate and organizationally weak in the 21st century. We will consider the effects of the Progressive Era reforms on party organization, how party elites found ways to dominate the selection of presidential candidates after the development of party primaries, and how the emergence of Donald Trump in 2016 may have shattered the power of party elites and hollowed out the Republican (and perhaps the Democratic) Party. Finally, you will learn how to create academic knowledge by applying what we learn about parties and election to produce a quality research paper by the end of the semester.

PSCI 346: The American Presidency

There are five learning objectives in this course:

- 1) Learn and explore the American presidency;
- 2) Improve your writing skills;
- 3) Improve your critical reading skills;
- 4) Hone your critical thinking abilities; and
- 5) Engage in the collective enterprise of building scholarly knowledge.

PSCI 348: Multicultural Politics in the United States

Course Objectives:

- 1) To explain national community, identity, immigration and assimilation, and race and ethnicity in the U.S.
- 2) To describe and evaluate basic ideas about what multiculturalism is and how the term has been used, including issues relating to how America is defined, what it means to be a nation, how citizenship is defined, and the politics of immigration and assimilation.
- 3) To gain an understanding of the politics of group political identity.
- 4) To examine current policy issues such as voting rights and immigration, and how they are related to multiculturalism and the politics of group identity.

PSCI 356: Classical Political Thought

This course will combine discussion, a little lecture, and participatory activities. To succeed in this course, you will be required to undertake the close and thoughtful analysis of texts and to grapple with challenging questions through engaged class discussion. In other words: reading, thinking, talking. And you may occasionally perform a short play.

PSCI 390R: Political Science Research Methods

Course learning outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students should (1) be capable of explaining the core logic underlying scientific research generally and political science research more specifically; (2) be capable of writing a basic, integrated literature review; (3) be capable of thinking critically about the strengths and weaknesses of various research designs and tools used in political inquiry; (4) have acquired foundational knowledge about descriptive statistics and analysis; and (5) demonstrate improved skills in the areas of critical reading, critical thinking, analysis, and writing.

PSCI 423: Politics of Development

Course Learning Outcomes: At the end of this course, students should (1) better comprehend the multidimensional nature of development; (2) be able to discuss factors responsible for differing levels and types of development; (3) be able to analyze the connections among political, economic, and social processes and development; (4) be aware of methods for identifying effective development strategies; (5) better understand development issues as they apply to different regions of the world; and (6) show improved skills in the areas of critical reading, thinking, writing, and analysis.

PSCI 437: International Political Economy

Learning Outcomes:

- Become familiar with central concepts and political actors in the global economy
- Understand how domestic and international factors interact
- Learn to discuss and write about global economic processes and actors.
- Understand linkages between economic processes and other phenomena such as environmental problems, migration, and conflict.

PSCI 448: The Politics of Climate Change

Course Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

Upon satisfactory completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Analyze the primary political impediments and catalysts to promoting responses to climate change as well as the role of private and public sectors in addressing political barriers and devising policies.
2. Evaluate key institutions, legal frameworks, and societal pressures and related influences that shape responses to climate change, concentrating on the political causes and consequences of various policy initiatives and outcomes.
3. Create a set of policy recommendations on a climate change topic that will result in a more equitable and just response to climate change.

PSCI 455: Politics & Virtue

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students will:

1. Know how to think about what constitutes a virtue, and how to think about the intersection of politics and ethics
2. Understand different sets of virtues in intellectual historical context

3. Know how to think about the political implications of categorizing people in terms of virtue
4. Have developed their reading, analytical and, most crucially, writing skills by preparing a number of complex theoretical papers related to politics and virtue
5. Have developed a personal relationship to their own narrative on virtues, ethics and politics

PSCI 461: Administrative Law

COURSE GOALS:

By the end of the semester, students should

- Gain a better understanding of Due Process rights, the Administrative Procedure Act of 1946, and Supreme Court case law surrounding Administrative Law.
- Understand how Administrative Law highlights broader democratic values of participation, information, accountability, and reasoned decision-making and how these values are embedded in the administrative process and Supreme Court case law.
- Gain the skills necessary to read and understand Supreme Court decisions, administrative rules, and the Administrative Procedure Act.
- Be able to brief judicial opinions by a statement of the facts, a statement of the issue in question, a statement of the holding in the case, and a summary of the reasoning leading to the final ruling.
- Be able to comprehend legal problems by recognizing potential issues, analyzing logically, analogizing from one situation to another, and assessing the relative strengths of one's and others' arguments and develop both sides of a legal issue.
- Be able to construct and communicate a persuasive argument, especially in writing, and make logical, well-supported decisions and recommendations.

PSCI 465: Public Administration & Policy

Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students will:

1. Understand the primary processes by which public policy is developed and implemented in the United States,
2. Recognize the structure and content of public policy discourse as it is associated with agenda setting, policy selection and implementation,
3. Comprehend the mechanisms by which public policy development and analysis can be studied and shaped, and
4. Demonstrate, through field projects, the engagement, inquiry and communications skills relevant to policy development, implementation and analysis.

PSCI 471: American Constitutional Law

Course Objectives

- understand the philosophical and legal foundations of the Court
- understand the rights and liberties provided in the Constitution and certain important debates about them
- be able to analyze the relationship between the Court's political context and its constitutional decisions
- be able to brief judicial opinions by writing in a clear, concise, organized and direct manner
- to understand how arguments are made

PSCI 483: The Politics of Authoritarianism

Learning Goals:

This class will discuss concepts and debates regarding authoritarian regimes with the following aims:

- Gain an enhanced understanding of how dictatorships differ from democracies. Explore how authoritarian states differ from one another and why it is difficult to classify these states.
- Use the tools of modern political science to examine the factors that contribute to authoritarian survival and breakdown, and think about why dictatorships have persisted throughout history.
- Understand how dictatorships shape societies and what their rule in the world is.
- Critically evaluate current political regimes, learn to discuss and write about regime types.

PSCI 520: Leadership and Ethics

The approach to this course is driven by the notion of praxis – the development of a theoretical knowledge base that is operationalized into a range of skills applicable in real-world settings. Students will investigate and analyze relevant management theory and the associated techniques and approaches revealed by that theory. What makes this course different than other management and leadership courses is that the theory shaping the content and trajectory of the class is drawn more from behavioral science and philosophy than political or management sciences. That is, if one wants to affect the thinking and therefore the behavior of others, one should first understand more about the nature of that thinking and behavior and then apply that to specific leadership concerns and contexts.

PSCI 525: Nonprofit Organizations and Democratic Governance

Objectives:

This course has the following objectives: a) to familiarize participants with the legal and normative status of nonprofit organizations, b) to study the basic concepts, models, and theories of nonprofit organizations and their role in society; c) to develop a better understanding of unique structural, environmental, fiscal and administrative attributes of nonprofit organizations, and d) to survey the core activities associated with establishing, leading and administering a nonprofit organization.

PSCI 551: Quantitative Research Methods

Course Learning Outcomes: At the end of this course, students should (1) demonstrate a working understanding of quantitative research designs, tools, and forms of analysis and their use; (2) be capable of identifying elements of effective research questions and literature reviews in quantitative research; (3) demonstrate a working knowledge of basic statistical analyses and how to properly report them; and (4) show relatively advanced skills in the areas of analysis, synthesis of information and ideas, decision making, and communication.

PSCI 552: Public Policy Processes

Course Objectives:

1. To learn alternative approaches to the examination of public policy and their respective strengths and weaknesses
2. To develop an awareness of the role of stakeholders, interests, ideas, evidence, uncertainties, and other factors in relation to public policy formation
3. To gain an understanding of the complexity of policy evaluation
4. To apply different frameworks to a specific policy issue
5. To develop and improve analytic, written, and oral communication skills necessary for the competent practice of administration.

PSCI 553: Qualitative Research Methods

Learning Outcomes

At the completion of this course, students will:

1. Learn how to collect qualitative data by applying various concepts and frameworks.
2. Design and apply various qualitative methodology.
3. Understand how to manage qualitative data using a qualitative data management system (ex. NVivo).
4. Review the relationship between qualitative and quantitative data management techniques and protocols.
5. Analyze and present qualitative data through conceptual maps, matrices, and networks.
6. Communicate qualitative results in both oral and written form.

PSCI 554: Foundations of Public Administration

The specific competencies developed in this course are:

1. To learn the basic vocabulary of the field of Public Administration.
2. To gain an overview of the field of Public Administration and to learn about the major topic and issue areas in the field.
3. To gain understanding of the process of learning itself and the relationship between theory and practice.
4. To develop an awareness of public service values: personal ethics, professional ethics, citizen responsiveness, social responsibility.
5. To begin to articulate the models and theories you use when making administrative decisions and to compare them to those of experts in the field.
6. To develop and improve analytic and written communication skills necessary for graduate education and the competent practice of administration.

PSCI 558: Public Organization Dynamics

This course has the following objectives: a) to familiarize participants with the basic concepts, models, and theories of organization; b) to develop a better understanding of individual, group, and organization behavior; and c) to provide a conceptual foundation upon which theoretical knowledge can be applied to organizational and managerial problems. In pursuit of these objectives, the following subjects will be considered: theories of organization; individual behavior; group dynamics; organization change; organizational performance.

PSCI 559: Program Evaluation

Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to the process of evaluating of public and nonprofit programs, and through the course students will understand and experience:

- The purposes and uses of evaluation in public and nongovernmental organizations;
- A survey of evaluation approaches;
- The political and ethical aspects of evaluation;
- The relationship between Program Evaluation and other aspects of Public Administration and governance theory; and
- Standards for quality evaluation

PSCI 595: Capstone Professional Portfolio

Course Learning Objectives and Outcomes:

Upon the successful completion of this course, students will:

- Understand the basic components of a professional portfolio and how they function together.
- Identify, describe, analyze and compare and contrast various types of professional portfolios and their use to manage, advance, or change one's career.
- Engage in self-reflective thinking required for the construction of an effective portfolio.
- Implement technical layout and design skills related to the development of a portfolio including creating a short-term/long-term goal plan, and assessing one's own and other's ability to plan goals and demonstrate professional knowledge.
- Prepare for the use of a portfolio in professional activities such as job searches, networking, and interviews.
- Conduct and evaluate self and peer reviews of portfolio content.
- Reflect on and analyze the process of developing a professional portfolio and assess it as a resource for future personal or professional aspirations