Political Science

Faculty

Rosa Aloisi, Ph.D., Assistant Professor
David A. Crockett, Ph.D., Professor; Chair
John R. Hermann, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Keesha Middelmass, Ph.D., Associate Professor
Katsuo A. Nishikawa, Ph.D., Associate Professor; Director of the Center for International Engagement
Peter O’Brien, Ph.D., Professor
Sussan Siavoshi, Ph.D., Una Chapman Cox Distinguished Professor of International Affairs
Hyon Joo Yoo, Ph.D., Associate Professor

Requirements

- The Major
- Guidelines for Acceptance of Majors
- The Minor
- Internships

The Major

The requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts with a major in Political Science are as follows:

I. Departmental requirements:

   A. Lower-division requirements: nine hours of lower-division coursework
   
   B. Distribution of courses in four subfields. The student is required to take at least one course in each of the following four subfields: American Politics/Public Law, Comparative Politics, International Politics, and Political Theory. Lower-division courses may be used to satisfy this distribution requirement.
   
   C. Twenty-one hours of upper-division coursework.

   II. University requirements: completion of all other required elements of the Pathways curriculum and at least 124 credit hours.
Guidelines for acceptance of majors

I. Completion of two lower division courses with grades of C or better.
II. An overall grade point average of at least 2.0.

The Minor

The requirements for the Minor:

A minimum of 18 credit hours of political science. Six hours shall be lower division; the remaining 12 shall be upper division.

Internships

The department encourages majors and minors to actively pursue internship opportunities that are available locally or through a variety of study abroad or Washington, DC programs, with or without credit. PLSI 3-97 Internship in Politics, Administration, and Law can only be taken Pass/Fail.

Courses

Lower Division

PLSI-1301 American Politics
A study of the institutions, processes, and behavior of American government, with an emphasis on how enduring constitutional features impact contemporary concerns. This is the basic introductory course in American government. (Offered every semester.)

PLSI-1331 Global Politics
A comparative study of different political systems around the globe and the major issues faced by governments as they manage the economy, immigration, climate change, and other issues. This is the basic introductory course in comparative politics. (Offered every year.)

PLSI-1332 Film, Literature, and Politics of the Third World
An examination of challenges facing Third World societies through literature and film. Relying primarily on the
works of Third World artists and writers, the course will explore issues such as poverty, the plight of ethnic minorities, the status of women, and the legacy of colonialism. (Offered every year.)

PLSI-1342 International Politics
An introduction to the interaction among state and non-state actors in the international arena. This course reviews international theory and examines important historical and contemporary issues in international relations. Topics include international security, war, globalization, terrorism, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. This is the basic introductory course in international relations. (Offered every semester.)

PLSI-1361 Politics & Morality
An introduction to some of the most important moral issues persons confront as citizens of a given polity. For example, when should one (dis)obey a law? Is the community’s interest greater than the individual’s? Students read selected prominent thinkers who have taken positions on such questions and then formulate their own positions in the context of their own situation. (Offered every year.)

Upper Division - American Politics

PLSI-3301 Political Parties and Interest Groups
An analysis of the development, structure, functions, and activities of political parties and interest groups in the American political system. In addition to an analysis of the interaction of these institutions, attention is given to the role of parties and interest groups in organizing mass political behavior in the electoral and policy making processes.

PLSI-3303 Elections and Campaigns
A study of the recruitment, nomination, and election of public officials in the United States with an emphasis on election theory, the legal framework of elections, campaign strategy and tactics, voting behavior, political advertising, and campaign finance.

PLSI-3304 Political Communication
Studies communication aspects of the political processes in a democratic society with an emphasis on contemporary political campaigns; presidential and congressional rhetoric; and less public forms of communication in the policy-making process. (Also listed as HCOM 4350.)

PLSI-3305 The U.S. Congress
An analysis of the U.S. Congress, with an emphasis on its historical roots and constitutional foundations, the legislative process and policy outcomes, the development of institutional structures and organizations, and the role of political parties, interest groups, and legislative behavior.

PLSI-3306 The American Presidency
An examination of the Presidency in the constitutional order, including recruitment, powers, and responsibilities
and its relationship to the other major agencies of the state.

PLSI-3316 Urban Politics
An exploration of the urban space, including the politics, institutions, power centers, policies, and the people who live in urban environments. Emphasis is given to why cities matter, how cities are organized, how cities operate as an economic engine, and how cities shape identity and experiences while producing inequality. Contemporary urban issues are considered, such as demographic changes, community power, and public transportation. (Also listed as URBS 3336).

PLSI-3329 Special Topics in American Politics
Occasionally courses will be offered on special topics. Students are encouraged to bring to the attention of the Department Chair topics they wish to have offered. Students may take this course more than once provided the topics vary.

PLSI-3413 Policy Analysis and the Policymaking Process
An examination of public policy from an interdisciplinary perspective. Students study public policies from a historical, theoretical, institutional, political, and social perspective; they study how "problems" are identified and which problems government responds to and why; and they learn how to examine the role of race, ethnicity, gender, social class, and other differences when policies are analyzed, created, and implemented. (Offered every Fall).

Upper Division - Comparative Politics

PLSI-3333 Latin American Politics
A comparative survey of government and politics in Latin America, focusing on illiberal democracies, political participation, and clientelism in the region.

PLSI-3334 State, Society, and Change in the Middle East
A comparison of the political systems of major Middle Eastern countries, emphasizing the socio-economic and cultural characteristics of selected cases. Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor.

PLSI-3339 Special Topics in Comparative Politics
Occasionally courses will be offered on special topics. Students are encouraged to bring to the attention of the Department Chair topics they wish to have offered. Students may take this course more than once provided the topics vary.

PLSI-3430 European Politics
A study of the successes and failures, strengths, and weaknesses of parliamentary democracy in various European countries. (Also listed as GRST 3470). (Offered every other year).
PLSI-3431 Comparative Political Economy of North America, Europe, and East Asia
A comparative study of the relationship between the public and private sectors in North America, Europe, and East Asia, with special emphasis on the extent to which government intervenes in the economy. (Also listed as GRST 3471.) (Offered every other year.)

Upper Division - International Politics

PLSI-3343 Chinese Foreign Policy
An examination of Chinese foreign policy by focusing on leadership, economic conditions, political settings, public opinion, and China’s relations with other countries. Includes a brief exploration of the historical role of China in international politics. Taught in English. (Also listed as CHIN 3343)

PLSI-3344 The Middle East and the World
An examination of international relations in the Middle East with an emphasis on domestic, regional, and global factors in shaping the foreign policies of major countries of the region. Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor

PLSI-3345 US Foreign Policy
An examination of US foreign policy and actions in a globalizing world. Prerequisite: 1342 or consent of instructor.

PLSI-3346 War and Alliance
A study of theoretical and empirical studies on the nature of international conflicts and alliance. Topics include the causes of war, crisis management, escalation of conflicts, termination of war, and the role of alliances in war and peace. Prerequisite: One lower division course in Political Science or consent of instructor.

PLSI-3349 Special Topics in International Politics
Occasionally courses will be offered on special topics. Students are encouraged to bring to the attention of the Department Chair topics they wish to have offered. Students may take this course more than once provided the topics vary.

PLSI-3366 Governance and Public Policy in Contemporary China
This course covers most significant issues of contemporary policies and public policy in China. It explores the forces changing the lives of nearly a fifth of humanity, the 1.1 billion people of China. This course is designed to be experimental in both subject and teaching methodology. In order to explore the political, economic, and social processes of liberalization that have created this new era of the increased circulation of people, ideas, commodities and technologies across national boundaries, seminar participants must use materials and methods from many scholarly disciplines and traditions: urban studies, political science, sociology, history, anthropology, economics, and media/cultural studies. In order to study these increasingly mobile populations that often fall outside the boundaries of conventional area studies approaches, students must develop innovative comparative case study and survey methodologies. (Also listed as CHIN 3366, URBS 3366).
PLSI-4341 International Political Economy
An examination of the relationship between international politics and international economy. Particular attention is given to the explanation of political decisions based on economic determinants. Emphasis will be given to concepts of power, interdependence, poverty, imperialism, justice, and development.

PLSI-3441 East Asian Security
An examination of core debates and arguments with respect to international security in East Asia. Topics include important cases in past and current dynamics in East Asia, such as Chinese hierarchy, Japan's political role in Asia, the Korean Peninsula, growing interactions in Southeast Asia, and U.S foreign policy in East Asia. (Offered every other year.)

PLSI-3442 International Law
An introductory survey of public international law as practiced by states and international organizations, with an emphasis on philosophical and theoretical perspectives, and on different subfields of international law such as international criminal law, law of the sea, human rights, economy, and international humanitarian law. (Offered every Fall).

Upper Division - Public Law

PLSI-3351 Constitutional Law
A study of the U.S. Supreme Court’s role in defining the nature and scope of national judicial, executive, and legislative authority. Additional topics include federalism, commerce power, and economic substantive due process. Emphasis on the development of basic legal research skills.

PLSI-3352 Civil Rights and Liberties
A study of the U.S. Supreme Court’s role in defining the meaning of the Bill of Rights, selective incorporation, privacy doctrine, and the Fourteenth Amendment’s Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses. Emphasis on the development of basic legal research skills.

PLSI-3354 Judicial Process
An examination of the functions and roles of courts in the American political and legal system. Topics include legal education/profession, group litigation strategies, methods of judicial selection, theories of judicial decision-making, and judicial philosophy.

PLSI-3359 Special Topics in Public Law
Occasionally courses will be offered on special topics. Students are encouraged to bring to the attention of the Department Chair topics they wish to have offered. Students may take this course more than once provided the topics vary.
Upper Division - Political Theory

PLSI-3361 Classical Political Thought

PLSI-3362 Modern Political Thought
An examination of freedom, authority, and democracy through the writings of the great political thinkers of the modern age. Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx, Mill, and de Tocqueville, and feminist thinkers such as Mary Wollenstonecraft and Simone de Beauvoir. Prerequisite: Junior standing or consent of instructor

PLSI-3369 Special Topics in Political Theory
Occasionally courses will be offered on special topics. Student are encouraged to bring to the attention of the Department Chair topics they wish to have offered. Students may take this course more than once provided the topics vary.

PLSI-3463 Masters of Suspicion: Contemporary Political Thought
A study of many of the sharpest contemporary thinkers who have been opposed to democracy or pessimistic about its prospects. This course examines some of these thinkers and then takes up the work of other prominent contemporaries who have sought to defend democracy. (Also listed as GRST 3472). (Offered every other year).

Upper Division - Special Courses

PLSI-3315 Iceland - Its Unique Geological, Economic and Cultural History
This course will expose students to the unique economic, geologic, and cultural history of Iceland. The economic aspects will focus on the role of financial markets and monetary institutions in economic booms and crashes using Iceland as a case study, possible solutions to public good problems such as the Icelandic fishing quota, business practices which often prioritize protection of the environment and social responsibility, and the role of international trade in development of a small country. The geological history will emphasize Iceland’s plate tectonic setting, volcanism, glacial history and related hazards, geothermal energy, and the effects of climate change. The cultural portion will explore the fundamental role of literature in a country with virtually no illiteracy, and the role of the sagas in the transmission of culture, language, and the law in the country with the oldest parliament in the world. (Offered every other year).

PLSI-3372 Research Methods in Political Science
An introduction to quantitative political science with emphasis on epistemology, falsifiability, research design, and statistical analysis. Students will produce an original empirical research paper by the end of the semester. Prerequisite: One lower division course in Political Science or consent of instructor
PLSI-3-90 Reading and Conference
Individual work under supervision. Varies in credit from one to six credit hours. Prerequisites: Junior standing with 6 hours upper division credit and consent of instructor.

PLSI-3-91 Special Topics in Political Science
Occasionally courses will be offered on special topics. Students are encouraged to bring to the attention of the Department Chair topics they wish to have offered. Students may take this course more than once provided the topics vary.

PLSI-3-97 Internship in Politics, Administration, and Law
Students enrolled in PLSI 3-97 will be assigned to various party, governmental, or law offices on the basis of individual preferences and the availability of the assignments. The nature of the student's responsibilities will vary with the assignment involved and subject to the approval of the supervising faculty. Must be taken Pass/Fail. Permission of instructor required.