

# POLITICAL SCIENCE

**Chair:** Ellen Seljan

**Administrative Coordinator:** Claire Kodachi

Political scientists examine the theory and practice of government, law, and politics within the history of political ideas and philosophy, as well as within the context of contemporary political practices. They use the tools and methods of the social sciences to seek knowledge of political institutions and processes, and to learn how to think critically about public policies and their consequences. Political scientists attempt to evaluate how behavior (individual, group, and mass) affects political institutions, and how institutions shape and constrain political choices.

Because of their understanding and interest in political systems, students who earn degrees in political science often enter such career fields as government service, law, journalism, politics, public policy analysis, and education. Knowledge about politics often extends into other spheres, as graduates also pursue careers in medicine, business, and finance.

## Resources for Nonmajors

Since political science is intrinsic to a liberal arts education, the department makes its courses open to all students. Political science courses guide students in using the discipline's resources and in developing descriptive, analytical, evaluative, and communicative skills needed by participants in a liberal democracy. Two courses are entrées to the field: Introduction to Comparative Politics (POLS 102) and Introduction to American Politics (POLS 103).

## The Major Program

The political science curriculum is organized around five subfields: American politics, comparative politics, political theory, public law, and methodology. Courses are offered in American politics and comparative politics at the introductory and advanced levels. Courses in public law, political theory, and methodology are normally taken only after students have completed introductory courses. The major culminates with a capstone course (which may take the form of a senior thesis by invitation). Capstone courses are advanced 400-level courses, usually specialized in their focus, that require intensive class discussion and a significant research paper. Note that a senior thesis is required for students seeking departmental honors.

Political science majors can pursue independent study under individual faculty supervision, including practical applications and experiences such as internships with elected officials, interest groups, and government agencies. The department's semester of study in Washington, D.C., one of the more distinguished programs of its kind in the country, includes class meetings with some of America's most influential politicians and decision makers, combined with a rigorous curriculum of in-class instruction.

The political science department uses local and regional resources, including visits to the Oregon state legislature in Salem and to county and city political offices in the Portland metropolitan area. Other resources include numerous governmental agencies in the Portland area, interest groups, and political movements.

The political science curriculum is organized into the following subfields:

### American Politics

POLS 103	Introduction to American Politics
POLS 252	Public Opinion and Survey Research
POLS 253	Public Policy
POLS 275	Gender and Politics

POLS 302	Political Parties and Interest Groups
POLS 307	Government and the Economy
POLS 346	State and Local Politics
POLS 350	Congressional Politics
POLS 351	Presidential Politics
POLS 353	The National Policy Process
POLS 359	Religion and Politics
POLS 420	Policy Innovation

### Comparative Politics

IA 220	Global South
IA 230	African Politics
POLS 102	Introduction to Comparative Politics
POLS 250	Transitions to Democracy and Authoritarianism
POLS 314	Russian Politics in Comparative Perspective
POLS 318	Civil Society, Politics, and the State
POLS 325	European Politics
POLS 354	Comparative Electoral Politics
POLS 435	Topics in Comparative Politics

### Political Theory

POLS 309	American Political Thought
POLS 310	Pillars of Western Political Thought: Plato to Machiavelli
POLS 311	Pillars of Western Political Thought: Hobbes to Foucault
POLS 313	International Political Theory
POLS 316	Ethics and Public Policy
POLS 402	Problems in Political Theory

### Public Law

POLS 255	Law, Lawyers, and Society
POLS 301	American Constitutional Law: Equal Protection and Due Process
POLS 305	American Constitutional Law: Civil Liberties
POLS 425	Legal Regulation of American Democracy

### Methodology and Thesis

POLS 201	Research Methods in Political Science
POLS 400	Senior Thesis

## Major Requirements

A minimum of 44 semester credits (11 courses), distributed as follows:

- POLS 102 Introduction to Comparative Politics
- POLS 103 Introduction to American Politics
- POLS 201 Research Methods in Political Science or IA 200 Research Methods for International Affairs
- POLS 301 American Constitutional Law: Equal Protection and Due Process or POLS 305 American Constitutional Law: Civil Liberties
- POLS 310 Pillars of Western Political Thought: Plato to Machiavelli or POLS 311 Pillars of Western Political Thought: Hobbes to Foucault
- Three 200-, 300-, or 400-level electives from at least two different subfields, at least two of which must be 300-level or higher. Students

may apply one of the following IA courses as an elective in the comparative politics subfield:

IA 232	Southeast Asian Politics
IA 290	Middle East Politics
IA 320	Democratization

- One 400-level course chosen from the following:

POLS 400	Senior Thesis
POLS 402	Problems in Political Theory
POLS 420	Policy Innovation
POLS 425	Legal Regulation of American Democracy
POLS 435	Topics in Comparative Politics

- IA 100 Introduction to International Relations
- ECON 100 Principles of Economics

For all majors, courses in European and U.S. history, macroeconomics, and international political economy, as well as a semester in Washington, D.C., are recommended. Majors planning to attend law school should add courses in English literature, philosophy (including logic), mathematics, and history. Majors planning to attend graduate school in political science should take courses in mathematics, statistics, and other social sciences. Majors planning a career in politics, public policy, or urban planning should add courses in statistics, communication, economics, and psychology.

## Minor Requirements

A minimum of 20 semester credits (five courses), distributed as follows:

- POLS 102 Introduction to Comparative Politics
- POLS 103 Introduction to American Politics
- POLS 310 Pillars of Western Political Thought: Plato to Machiavelli or POLS 311 Pillars of Western Political Thought: Hobbes to Foucault
- One course in American politics.
- One course in public law.

## Honors and Senior Thesis

In the spring semester, juniors who have achieved a GPA of 3.000 or higher in the major and overall are invited to apply to the department for placement in POLS 400. Students who fall below a 3.000 GPA may be granted an exception to apply on a case-by-case basis. Majors who have achieved a GPA of 3.500 or higher in the major and overall may be considered for honors. After the student completes and formally presents the thesis, the political science faculty determine whether to grant honors upon graduation.

## Faculty

Benjamin Gaskins. Assistant professor of political science. American politics, public opinion, media and politics, religion and politics. PhD 2011, MS 2008 Florida State University. BA 2006 Furman University.

Leah Gilbert. Assistant professor of political science. Comparative politics, democratization, and Russian politics. PhD 2012, MA 2007 Georgetown University. BA 2002, St. Olaf College.

John Holzwarth. Assistant professor with term of political science, director of the Writing Center. History of political thought, contemporary normative political theory. PhD 2004, MA 2000 Princeton University. AB 1993 Colgate University.

Todd Lochner. Associate professor of political science. American constitutional law, American political systems. PhD 2001, MA 1994 University of California at Berkeley. JD 1993 University of Virginia School of Law. BA 1990 Harvard College.

Ellen C. Seljan. Associate professor of political science, chair of the Department of Political Science. American politics and public policy. PhD 2010 University of California at San Diego. BA 2004 Drew University.

## Courses

### POLS 102 Introduction to Comparative Politics

Faculty: Gilbert

Content: Introduction to the central questions in comparative politics. Fundamental differences in the organization of states, democratic political institutions (presidentialism versus parliamentarism, for example), and domestic social forces (for example, social capital, ethnic versus nonethnic identities). The impact of political organization on economic performance and social peace.

Prerequisites: None.

Usually offered: Annually, fall and spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

### POLS 103 Introduction to American Politics

Faculty: Gaskins, Lochner, Seljan

Content: The politics of the founding period; interactions within and among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches; the federal division of institutionalized powers; public opinion, interest groups, and political parties; the policy process in areas such as defense, welfare, civil rights and liberties, and international affairs.

Prerequisites: None.

Usually offered: Annually, fall and spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

### POLS 201 Research Methods in Political Science

Faculty: Seljan

Content: Introduction to the methodological principles and issues in political science research, using readings within and beyond political science. Identifying variables and mechanisms, developing and testing theories, collecting and measuring data, and assessing a study's ability to achieve causal inference. Introduction to different approaches to research, including experiments, case studies, and regression analysis. Strongly recommended for sophomores or juniors who have declared a POLS major, as this course is a prerequisite for thesis and some senior capstone courses.

Prerequisites: POLS 102 or POLS 103.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Annually, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 244 Practicum**

Faculty: Political Science Faculty

Content: Opportunities for well-prepared students to put academic concepts and techniques to work in the marketplace. Specific activities vary; usually involve work with a public agency or private group. Credit-no credit. May be repeated for credit.

Prerequisites: None.

Restrictions: Considerable preparation before enrollment. Consult instructor and obtain the department's instructions about the program well in advance. Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Annually.

Semester credits: 2-4.

**POLS 250 Transitions to Democracy and Authoritarianism**

Faculty: Gilbert

Content: Why do some countries transition to democratic forms of rule while others do not? We will investigate this question by examining not only the rise of democracy, but also the origins and persistence of authoritarianism. While the course will consider historical processes of democratization and authoritarianism, emphasis will be placed on developments in the past thirty years. This course will draw on country examples from multiple world regions to illuminate why some autocrats have fallen and others have not—even in the current “age of democratization.”

Prerequisites: POLS 102 or permission of instructor.

Usually offered: Alternate Years, fall and spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 252 Public Opinion and Survey Research**

Faculty: Political Science Faculty

Content: The role of public opinion in the American political process; the problem of identifying the public and the extent to which this public exercises political authority; techniques of researching public opinion. Political socialization, formation of attitudes, group differences, mass opinion, elite opinion, direct action. Research design, data collection, scaling, analysis, and interpretation of data in the context of research on polling.

Prerequisites: None.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Every third year, fall semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 253 Public Policy**

Faculty: Seljan

Content: Introduction to major issues in contemporary U.S. public policy, including the environment, social policy, criminal policy, education, health care, and the economy. Examination of the policy-making process, including the role of key policy makers, audiences, and institutions; methods of evaluating public policy, focusing on the difficulties of attributing causal efficacy. Students-led debates and exercises.

Prerequisites: None.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Annually, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 255 Law, Lawyers, and Society**

Faculty: T. Lochner

Content: The role of law and legal institutions in the American political system. Examination of institutional actors such as lawyers, judges, and juries, as well as an examination of discrete case studies such as “mass torts” and the criminal justice system. What features define the American legal system; how does this system compare to those of other countries; what are its respective advantages and disadvantages?

Prerequisites: POLS 103.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Annually, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 275 Gender and Politics**

Faculty: Political Science Faculty

Content: Use of comparative and historical perspective to understand women as political actors. Notions of power, change, participation, politics. The suffrage struggle and the political situation in eastern and western Europe.

Prerequisites: None.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Every third year, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 299 Independent Study**

Faculty: Political Science Faculty

Content: Opportunities for well-prepared students to design and pursue a substantive course of independent learning. Details determined by the student and the supervising instructor. Credit-no credit. May be repeated for credit.

Prerequisites: None.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing and consent required.

Usually offered: Annually, fall and spring semester.

Semester credits: 2-4.

**POLS 301 American Constitutional Law: Equal Protection and Due Process**

Faculty: Lochner

Content: The U.S. Supreme Court and judicial review from 1787 to the present. The court's landmark constitutional decisions, as well as the theory and techniques of constitutional interpretation. The court's authority within the wider political and social context of American government, with emphasis on the court's jurisprudence in the areas of equal protection (including segregation and desegregation, affirmative action, gender discrimination, and sexual orientation discrimination) and due process (including privacy and abortion rights). Discussions of actual Supreme Court rulings, majority opinions, and dissenting arguments, as well as the political and historical context of those decisions in an effort to understand how and why the Supreme Court has played such an influential role in American politics and political thought.

Prerequisites: POLS 103.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Annually, fall semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 302 Political Parties and Interest Groups**

Faculty: Gaskins

Content: The structure and functioning of political parties from the local to the national level; organization, staffing, and policy development of parties. Pluralist analysis, group theory, impact of interest group activity on the American political system.

Prerequisites: POLS 103.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Every third year, fall semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 305 American Constitutional Law: Civil Liberties**

Faculty: Lochner

Content: Focus on the First Amendment, particularly free speech (including areas of national security, incitement to lawless action, individual and group defamation, indecency, and obscenity), as well as criminal defendants' rights (including Fourth Amendment search and seizure law, Fifth Amendment rights against self-incrimination, and Eighth Amendment prohibitions against cruel and unusual punishment in the context of the death penalty). Discussions of actual Supreme Court rulings, majority opinions, and dissenting arguments, as well as the political and historical context of those decisions in an effort to understand how and why the Supreme Court has played such an influential role in American politics and political thought.

Prerequisites: POLS 103.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Annually, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 307 Government and the Economy**

Faculty: Seljan

Content: A framework for analysis of the policy-making process. History, dynamics, and trends of major U.S. economic policies. The scope of American domestic policy; subsidies and aids to business, labor, agriculture, consumers; antitrust policy and the Federal Trade Commission; public-utility regulation; natural-resources policies; full employment; antipoverty and defense spending.

Prerequisites: None.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Alternate Years, fall semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 309 American Political Thought**

Faculty: Johnson

Content: The evolution of political ideas from the prerevolutionary era through the founding period, Civil War, early 20th century, and New Deal, up to present divisions between "liberals," "conservatives," and other contemporary political orientations. Readings include Locke, Montesquieu, Madison, Jefferson, de Tocqueville, Lincoln, Keynes, Hayek, Harrington, and others.

Prerequisites: POLS 103.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Alternate Years, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 310 Pillars of Western Political Thought: Plato to Machiavelli**

Faculty: Johnson

Content: Great works of political philosophy from ancient Greece and Rome, early Christianity, and the Renaissance. Themes include the foundations of morality and justice, the role of hierarchy in politics, and the role of politics in cultivating human excellence. Works may include Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*; Plato's *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Republic*; Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*; Augustine's *City of God*; and Machiavelli's *The Prince*, among others.

Prerequisites: None.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Annually, fall semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 311 Pillars of Western Political Thought: Hobbes to Foucault**

Faculty: Johnson

Content: Great works of political philosophy from early modernity to the present. Themes include social contract theory and justifications for obedience to government, revolutionary theory, the effects of democratic government on individuality and society, and the dangers of politics in the present day. Works may include Hobbes' *Leviathan*, Locke's *Second Treatise of Government* and *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, Rousseau's *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* and *On the Social Contract*, Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Marx and Engels' *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*, and Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.

Prerequisites: None.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Annually, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 313 International Political Theory**

Faculty: Political Science Faculty

Content: Normative issues in international politics, including such topics as national sovereignty, just war theory, international intervention, human rights, cultural rights, secession and self-determination, the competing ethics of patriotism, nationalism, and cosmopolitanism. Historical approaches through such thinkers as Thucydides, Hobbes, Kant, Mill, followed by contemporary readings, including such authors as Rawls, Walzer, Kymlicka, Rorty, Nussbaum.

Prerequisites: None.

Restrictions: Junior standing required.

Usually offered: Alternate Years, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 314 Russian Politics in Comparative Perspective**

Faculty: Gilbert

Content: How unique are politics in Russia? Can the tools of comparative political analysis help us understand the complexities of Russian politics? This course will investigate these questions by studying Russian politics in a comparative perspective. Although this course will begin by examining Russia's political development in the early 20th century, emphasis will be placed on developments in the post-communist period. Throughout the class, close attention will be placed on the ways that Russia is both similar to and different from countries in the "West," former communist countries, and countries at Russia's same level of economic development. We will then use this information to untangle how Russia is ruled today. Students can expect to read predominantly scholarly articles, but will also be exposed to various materials from novels, news media, or films.

Prerequisites: POLS 102.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Alternate Years, fall and spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 316 Ethics and Public Policy**

Faculty: Political Science Faculty

Content: Rigorous consideration of controversial issues in contemporary normative political theory. Introduction to major frameworks for ethics. Topics may include abortion, euthanasia, punishment and the death penalty, multiculturalism, affirmative action, women's rights, gay rights, animal rights, just war theory, social welfare.

Prerequisites: None.

Restrictions: Junior standing required.

Usually offered: Alternate Years, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 318 Civil Society, Politics, and the State**

Faculty: Gilbert

Content: Analysis and evaluation of how civil society and social capital have promoted and shaped a variety of outcomes such as democratization and government performance. Students will critically analyze works from diverse regions of the world such as North America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and Asia. In-class activities and a semester-long project will step students through the research process on a core concept within the subfield of comparative politics.

Prerequisites: POLS 102.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Alternate Years, fall semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 325 European Politics**

Faculty: Gilbert

Content: This course addresses the many political challenges that face individual European countries and the European Union in the twenty-first century. To contextualize and understand these challenges, this course will first investigate Europe's historical political development and then use a combination of in-depth case studies and comparative analyses to examine topics such as political parties, electoral systems, political participation, immigration, and post-communism. Throughout the course we will frequently compare the trajectory of Europe and individual European countries with the United States.

Prerequisites: POLS 102.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Alternate Years, fall and spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 346 State and Local Politics**

Faculty: Seljan

Content: Examination of the operation of state and local governments. Using a comparative methodology, students will gain an understanding of how differences in political institutions among state and local governments substantially affect policy outcomes. The course will also examine how state and local politics and policymaking both complement and interact with the federal layer of government.

Prerequisites: POLS 103 and 201.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Alternate Years, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 350 Congressional Politics**

Faculty: Seljan

Content: Constitutional foundations and the unfolding of various concepts of legislative power throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, and into the 21st century. The dynamics of Congress, its staffing, and how it and individual members manage different visions of legislative power. Other branches of government examined to illuminate the functioning and malfunctioning of the legislative branch.

Prerequisites: POLS 103 recommended.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Every third year, fall semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 351 Presidential Politics**

Faculty: Gaskins

Content: Constitutional foundations and the unfolding of various concepts of executive power throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. The dynamics of the presidency and the extent to which one person can be held responsible for expanded responsibilities. The organizational models and practices of 20th-century presidents. Other branches of government examined to illuminate the functioning and malfunctioning of the executive branch.

Prerequisites: POLS 103 recommended.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Every third year, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 353 The National Policy Process**

Faculty: Political Science Faculty

Content: Theoretical foundations of national government and analysis of its congressional, presidential, administrative, and judicial structures. Specific public policies examined to understand the interaction of interest groups, political parties, research institutes, media, and public opinion with these structures. Offered on Washington, D.C., program.

Prerequisites: POLS 103.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required. Acceptance into Washington, D.C., study abroad program required.

Usually offered: Annually, fall semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 354 Comparative Electoral Politics**

Faculty: Gilbert

Content: Political behavior and party competition through a country-based comparative perspective. Variation in the organization of political parties and electoral systems. The development of and changes to a country's political and social cleavages. The consequences of electoral institutions and social organization on representation and competition.

Prerequisites: POLS 102.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Alternate Years, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 359 Religion and Politics**

Faculty: Gaskins

Content: Measuring religiosity and how or if religious participation affects political participation. The role of the church as a political institution. Religious leaders as political leaders. Emphasis on religion in American politics.

Prerequisites: POLS 103, RELS 101.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Every third year, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 400 Senior Thesis**

Faculty: Political Science Faculty

Content: Choosing a definitive topic and narrowing it; developing a research design, doing the research, submitting drafts, revising drafts, polishing final copy. Presenting thesis to political science faculty and seniors for critique, rewrite of thesis. Final form due at end of semester.

Normally taken for 2 credits in both fall and spring semesters of senior year for a total of 4 credits. A deferred grade will be issued for the first semester of the yearlong series. When the full sequence is completed, the given grade applies to both semesters.

Prerequisites: POLS 102, POLS 103, and POLS 201.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing required.

Usually offered: Annually, fall and spring semester.

Semester credits: 2-4.

**POLS 402 Problems in Political Theory**

Faculty: Johnson

Content: Advanced analysis of a specific problem, theme, or concept intriguing to political theorists. Specific content varies. Themes have included revolution, utopia, the American founding, Nietzsche, identity and self-creation, and the philosophy of history.

Prerequisites: None.

Restrictions: Junior standing required. Open to sophomores with consent of instructor only.

Usually offered: Alternate Years, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 420 Policy Innovation**

Faculty: Seljan

Content: Explores successful and failed public policy experiments by state and local governments. Examines the origins of policy innovations and what factors encourage policy entrepreneurship. Introduces advanced quantitative analysis skills. Culminates in an original, independent research project. This course serves to meet the capstone requirement of the Department of Political Science.

Prerequisites: POLS 201.

Restrictions: Junior standing required.

Usually offered: Alternate Years, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 425 Legal Regulation of American Democracy**

Faculty: Lochner

Content: The legal regulation of the American political system. The equal protection concept of voting rights, particularly the "One Person, One Vote" rule and the Voting Rights Act, and federal campaign-finance regulation. Additional topics include the constitutional rights of political parties and the law relating to ballot propositions. Discussion of descriptive and normative issues. This course is taught at the law school.

Prerequisites: POLS 301.

Restrictions: Junior standing required.

Usually offered: Annually, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 435 Topics in Comparative Politics**

Faculty: Gilbert

Content: Advanced seminar focusing on problems and concepts in comparative politics. Specific content varies; examples of topics include state failure and civil war, electoral competition and legislative behavior, migration and integration, institutional design, and ethnicity and nationalism. Assignments are organized around a substantial seminar paper (25 pages or longer).

Prerequisites: POLS 102.

Restrictions: Senior standing required.

Usually offered: Every third year, spring semester.

Semester credits: 4.

**POLS 499 Independent Study**

Faculty: Political Science Faculty

Content: Same as POLS 299 but requiring more advanced work. May be repeated for credit.

Prerequisites: None.

Restrictions: Sophomore standing and consent required.

Usually offered: Annually.

Semester credits: 2-4.