

Department of Political Science

Purpose and Goals

The Political Science program is committed to excellence in teaching, research, and service. The Political Science Program prepares graduates for employment in a variety of public and private organizations and for admission to graduate and professional programs. The program features impactful scholars who are active in research and service, and provides the curriculum for the B.A. degree in Political Science. Graduates in Political Science are able to demonstrate skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, and oral and written communication. The Political Science Program is committed to providing students with the knowledge and skills necessary to understand political systems so that they may succeed in their careers and become better citizens of the nation and the world. Students in our program have gone on to careers in law, campaign management, city management/planning, non-profit management, international service, business, and education.

The courses offered in the program are an integral component of the university's core curriculum, satisfy political science major requirements, and serve as electives for students who are interested in American politics, international affairs, and public policy. Through its curricular and co-curricular activities, the program seeks to develop global citizens committed to professional development and lifelong learning.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students can explain the terms, principles, theories, and approaches used to understand and explain phenomena in political science.
2. Students can produce properly researched and evidence-based intellectual products on topics pertinent to political science.
3. Students can explain and critically analyze major domestic issues pertaining to law, public policy, and public administration.
4. Students can explain and critically analyze major theories and issues in international relations and comparative politics.

Degree Programs

| Program | Degree Offered |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Political Science | BA |

Minors in the Department of Political Science

Political Science students may pursue a minor or teacher certification. Students are strongly encouraged to add minors that broaden their knowledge base and enhance their marketability.

Requirements for a Minor in Legal Studies (18 SCH)

The Legal Studies minor is interdisciplinary and prepares students for work in the legal field (e.g., paralegal or law clerk), or post-baccalaureate education in the law. The minor requires 18 semester credit hours. Courses may not be used to satisfy multiple academic requirements such as core curriculum requirements, major, or other minor requirements.

Required Courses

| | | |
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| POSC 2314 | Legal Studies | 3 |
| PHIL 2303 | Critical Thinking | 3 |
| Select four (4) courses from the following list but no more than 6 SCH from any one discipline: | | 12 |
| BLAW 2301 | Legal Environment of Business | |
| BLAW 2321 | Business Law | |
| BLAW 2324 | Law of Agency | |
| BLAW 2334 | Law of Contracts | |
| COMM 3351 | Communication Law & Ethics | |
| CONS 4363 | Construction Law and Ethics | |
| CRIJ 1301 | Introduction to Criminal Justice | |
| CRIJ 1306 | Court Systems and Practices | |
| CRIJ 2323 | Criminal Procedure | |
| CRIJ 2366 | Evidence Law | |
| CRIJ 2374 | Law of Juvenile Justice | |
| CRIJ 3362 | Criminal Law | |
| CRIJ 4365 | Constitutional Rights of the Criminally Accused | |
| ENGL 3307 | Writing for Legal Professions | |
| HLTH 4305 | Health Law and Ethics | |
| PHIL 2306 | Ethics | |

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|--------------------|--|-----------|
| PHIL 3305 | Philosophy of Law | |
| POSC 3314 | Election Law and Voting Rights | |
| POSC 4311 | American Constitutional Law | |
| POSC 4320 | Judicial Politics | |
| PSYC 3372 | Psychology and Law | |
| SOCG 3302 | Correctional Treatment and Public Policy | |
| SOCG 3308 | Sociology of Probation and Parole | |
| Total Hours | | 18 |

Requirements for a Minor in Political Science (18 SCH)

Required Courses

| | | |
|--|--|-----------|
| POSC 2304 | Introduction to Political Science | 3 |
| POSC 2341 | Scope and Methods in Political Science | 3 |
| Four (4) Political Science courses, 2000 level or higher | | 12 |
| Total Hours | | 18 |

Honor Societies, Clubs, and Service Organizations

Blackstone Pre-Law Society

Sponsored by the Texas Juvenile Crime Prevention Center and the Political Science Program, the Blackstone Pre-Law Society is open to all students interested in law. The society promotes an awareness of the LSAT and general law school requirements, thereby facilitating preparation for entry into law school.

Rho Nu Chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha

Membership in the *Rho Nu Chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha*, the national Political Science Honor Society, is open to students, undergraduate and graduate, who have completed at least twelve semester hours of coursework in political science at the 2000 level or higher, with an average grade of a "B" or higher. Consult the Political Science program coordinator for information on other requirements and the induction ceremony.

Political Science Club

Membership in the *Political Science Club* is encouraged for all political science majors. The purpose of this organization is to promote an awareness of politics at all levels and facilitate understanding of public policymaking through field trips, seminars, lecture series, and other educational activities.

Courses

POSC 2304 Introduction to Political Science: 3 semester hours.

This is an introductory course in the study of politics, the various sub-fields in the discipline, and the variety of approaches used in the study of Political Science.

Prerequisites: POSC 2305 or POSC 1113 and (POSC 2306 or POSC 1123).

POSC 2305 American Government: 3 semester hours.

Surveys the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution; the structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches; federalism; areas of political participation; the national election process; public policy ; civil liberties and civil rights.

POSC 2306 Texas Government: 3 semester hours.

Surveys the origin and development of the Texas Constitution; the structure and powers of Texas Government, including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches; local government; areas of political participation and public policy in Texas.

POSC 2311 Political Parties and Elections: 3 semester hours.

This course is designed to study the nature, functions, evolution, and organization of the American political parties and elections.

POSC 2312 Public Administration: 3 semester hours.

This course provides an examination of the organization, responsibility, personnel management, fiscal processes, functions, and problems of public administration.

POSC 2314 Legal Studies: 3 semester hours.

This course is designed to be an extensive examination of the structure, functions, and processes of this nation's legal system. By the end of the course, students will have training in a wide variety of topics involving the law and have the skills necessary to succeed on the LSAT or in law school.

POSC 2321 Blacks and the American Political System: 3 semester hours.

This course offers a critical analysis of the position of blacks in the American politico-economic system, both historically and contemporarily.

POSC 2341 Scope and Methods in Political Science: 3 semester hours.

This course introduces majors to the various methods and approaches used in the field of Political Science.

POSC 2342 Data Analysis in Political Science: 3 semester hours.

The course covers the use of software applications and statistical procedures used to analyze data in the study of political science.

Prerequisites: POSC 2304 or POSC 2133.

POSC 2350 Global Issues: 3 semester hours.

Critical evaluation of selected current issues and problems in world politics facing the global community, such as war, terrorism, the environment, hunger, energy, population, migration, human rights, and trade.

POSC 2353 Latin American and Caribbean Politics: 3 semester hours.

Designed to provide a comprehensive introduction to Latin American and Caribbean politics from a multi-disciplinary perspective. Examines the various dimensions of Latin American and Caribbean politics, including political and governmental structures, political and economic development and social stratification patterns. Analyzes the implications of globalization on Latin American and Caribbean political and socio-economic systems.

POSC 2354 State and Local Government: 3 semester hours.

Analysis of state and local governments in the federal system; encompasses an examination of the state and local politics in the United States with an emphasis on politics and public policy.

POSC 3312 Political Theory: 3 semester hours.

Explores the history of political theory across time and place and provides a vehicle for understanding political concepts such as justice, power, liberty, and equality from a wide range of thinkers.

POSC 3314 Election Law and Voting Rights: 3 semester hours.

A thorough examination of election laws at the federal, state, and local levels and how they guide the conduct of elections by officials and voters alike.

POSC 3321 Public Policy Analysis: 3 semester hours.

The course explores the processes involved in the formulation and implementation of authoritative decisions, with emphasis on alternative models of policy analysis and selected issues pertaining to the federal government and bureaucracy.

POSC 3331 Political Studies Thru Film: 3 semester hours.

This course critically analyzes films that portray concepts and issues that are fundamental to the study of political science, including freedom and equality, power imbalances, revolution and war, and political structures and processes.

Prerequisites: POSC 2305 or POSC 1113 and (POSC 2306 or POSC 1123).

POSC 3341 Gandhi and King: 3 semester hours.

Historical examination of Gandhian and Kingian nonviolent political resistance in the context of the Indian independence movement and the American civil rights movement.

Prerequisites: POSC 2305 or POSC 1113 and (HIST 1302 or HIST 1323).

POSC 3342 Political Resistance and Social Change: 3 semester hours.

Examines instances in which ordinary citizens forge ways to address the political system when "normal" channels are unavailable to them. Investigates social movements and how ordinarily quiescent masses attempt to impact the political process.

POSC 3351 Comparative Politics: 3 semester hours.

Examines contemporary states in the context of current trends, including modernization, democracy, the environment, human rights, terrorism, security and globalization. Compares countries' governing institutions in case study format.

POSC 3353 U.S. Foreign Policy: 3 semester hours.

This is a study of the American foreign policy, including the objectives, capabilities and formulation process.

POSC 3354 International Politics: 3 semester hours.

The basic problems of international politics, focusing on the power competition among states and other transnational institutions, are the major focus of this course.

POSC 3355 African Politics: 3 semester hours.

Explores the political history and development of African states.

POSC 3359 Middle East Politics: 3 semester hours.

This course makes a comprehensive study of the major issues and dilemmas in contemporary Middle Eastern politics, including the clash of religions and nationalisms, security and stability in the Persian Gulf, the Arab-Israeli conflict, efforts at democratization, and the role of women.

POSC 3399 Independent Study: 1-3 semester hour.

Readings, research, and/or field-work on selected topics. Prerequisite: consent of advisor.

POSC 4310 Urban Government and Politics: 3 semester hours.

This course examines the structure and functions of urban government. Considerable attention is given to the politics and current problems of metropolitan areas.

POSC 4311 American Constitutional Law: 3 semester hours.

The principles of the American constitutional system, judicial interpretation and application of these principles, relative to the powers of government and the rights of individuals, are examined in depth.

Prerequisites: POSC 2305 or POSC 1113 and (POSC 2306 or POSC 1123).

POSC 4313 The Presidency: 3 semester hours.

This course traces the evolution of the office of the President of the United States while examining presidential powers in the areas of politics, administration, legislation, war, and foreign affairs.

POSC 4314 The Legislative Process: 3 semester hours.

Provides a detailed study of the nature and extent of the legislative process, with special attention to the organization, procedure, and dynamics of policy-making by American legislatures.

POSC 4319 Special Topics in Political Science: 3 semester hours.

This course will focus on specific topics in political science which the professor deems appropriate and students desire. This course is repeatable for up to 9 semester credit hours when topics vary.

POSC 4320 Judicial Politics: 3 semester hours.

This course makes an extensive analysis of the structure, functions and processes of the U.S. judicial and legal systems on both the federal and the state levels.

POSC 4321 Seminar in Political Science: 3 semester hours.

This course is devoted to intensive reading, writing, research, and discussion focusing on selected topics.

POSC 4324 Race, Gender and Public Policy: 3 semester hours.

Examines how racial and gender groups, broadly defined, both influence and are influenced by, American public policy.

Prerequisites: POSC 2305 or POSC 1113.

POSC 4399 Independent Study: 3 semester hours.

Readings, research, and/or field-work on selected topics. Prerequisite: consent of advisor.

POSC 4615 Internship in Political Science: 1-6 semester hour.

The student will participate in the ongoing work of a government agency, at the local, state, national or international level or a related nongovernment organization that engages in domestic or international political affairs. Administered by the Political Science Program Coordinator in conjunction with on-site intern supervisor.