

# DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

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Political Science is an exciting discipline, mixing the drama of politics with the development of analytical and communication skills. Students examine:

- elections and campaigns
- the causes and impact of war
- the creation, implementation, and adjudication of law
- the interplay among government, business, and nonprofit sectors

The discipline prepares students to compete in a changing global economy, helping them land jobs in the fields of law, government, nonprofits, and business.

## Mission

The mission of the Political Science Department is to provide students with theoretical knowledge and understanding of core concepts and principles in Political Science while helping students develop practical experience and skills that are necessary for the marketplace. Within that context, the department focuses on programs and courses that emphasize civic engagement, public service, and citizenship and ethics at the local, state, national, and global levels.

To carry out this mission, the Political Science faculty endeavor to:

- Develop students' analytical, writing, speaking, interpersonal, and professional skills;
- Prepare students for professional careers in the 21st century;
- Build students' citizenship skills, knowledge, and activism;
- Help students understand human beings in their diversity and appreciate democratic values;
- Expand the frontiers of knowledge in Political Science and public and nonprofit administration; and
- Contribute to a better community within the university and the society.

## Academic Programs

The department offers courses in five areas:

- American government and politics
- international relations and foreign policy
- comparative politics
- public administration and policy
- political theory and methodology

## Highlights

Political Science faculty members bring unique backgrounds to the classroom. They have strong academic and real-world credentials, with doctorates from top schools and practical experience in government and politics.

## Suggested Minors

The Legal Studies minor is offered through the Political Science department and is designed to help prepare students for law school and the legal profession.

Beyond considering Legal Studies as a minor, students should select a minor that suits their interests and career needs. Common minors include:

- Agriculture
- American Studies
- Communication Studies

- Criminal Justice
- Economics
- English
- Environmental Science
- General Business
- Geography
- History
- Legal Studies
- Mass Communication (Journalism)
- Middle Eastern Studies
- Philosophy
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Foreign Language
- Statistics

## Career Opportunities

The Political Science curriculum lays the foundation for numerous exciting careers. By developing students' critical thinking, writing, and awareness of public problems, students graduate well prepared for jobs in business, government, nonprofits, and teaching. Recent graduates currently work as lawyers, judges, elected officials, lobbyists, nonprofit managers, business leaders, teachers, professors, talk-show hosts, military officers, and in many other fields.

Political Science also helps prepare students for graduate school or law school. Recent graduates have matriculated at top graduate schools across the country in political science, campaign management, and public administration, and SHSU is one of the top seven percent of national universities in producing law-school students.

- Bachelor of Arts, Major in Political Science
- Bachelor of Science, Major in Political Science
- Minor in Political Science
- Minor in Legal Studies
- Minor in Applied Ethics and Critical Thinking

## Student Organizations and Activities

The Political Science department promotes student activities on campus and in the community. Our students hold positions in student government, campus social service, and political organizations. Our students volunteer with local organizations such as Boys and Girls Club, the SAAFE House, the Wounded Warrior Project, and Habitat for Humanity. The department recognizes student achievement with membership in Pi Sigma Alpha, the national Political Science honor society.

## Internships

Advanced students are encouraged to gain professional experience, make contacts, and explore career options through the department's successful internship program. Recently, students have interned in city and county governments, the state legislature, the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Department of State, nonprofit groups, both major political parties, and law offices.

## Scholarships

In addition to the University's student financial aid programs, the Department of Political Science also offers scholarships to majors and minors. For information, contact the department secretary. Information on University scholarships is available on the Office of Academic Scholarships website at [http://www.shsu.edu/~fao\\_www/scholarships/index.html](http://www.shsu.edu/~fao_www/scholarships/index.html) or by phone at (936) 294-1672.

### **POLS 2305. American Government. 3 Hours.**

This course offers an overview of American government at the national level. Topics include the origin and evolution of the U.S. Constitution, political behavior and attitudes, political parties, interest groups, the media, and the three branches of government - Congress, the Executive Branch, and the Judiciary. A goal of the course is to equip students with the knowledge to engage in political and civic life.

**POLS 2306. Texas Government. 3 Hours.**

This course examines Texas government and politics, including political culture, the Texas Constitution, Texas' role in the federal system; individuals' political values and participation, interest groups, parties, elections and campaigns, the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, and fiscal, social, and economic policies.

**POLS 3302. Introduction to Public Policy. 3 Hours.**

Students in this course explore how governmental entities in the U.S. make public policy. Using various policy models, students analyze the effect of policy environments, actors, processes, policy characteristics, and politics on the nature of policy outputs. Students learn to evaluate policies using a variety of program evaluation methodologies.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of Political Science.

**POLS 3331. Local Political Systems. 3 Hours.**

An introduction to the structure, process, and politics of local governments in Texas and the nation. Topics covered range from Metropolitan governments to special districts to county government. Rural and small town politics are also a focus of attention, along with urban and suburban political structures. Home rule, leadership recruitment and behavior, local elections, budgeting, services, and intergovernmental relations are addressed.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3332. State Political Systems. 3 Hours.**

A comparative analysis of politics in the fifty states, including Texas. Variations and similarities in state politics are examined, described, and related to other features of the states.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3334. Judicial Systems. 3 Hours.**

An orientation course for pre-law students and others interested in the legal aspects of government. Emphasis is placed on the development of judicial systems and the policy making role of courts.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3335. Pol Ethnic Minorities & Gender. 3 Hours.**

A study of political theory, behavior, beliefs, and public policy as they relate to race, ethnicity, and gender in the United States.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3336. The Presidency And Executives. 3 Hours.**

A study of the office of President including the institutionalization of the presidency along with a consideration of state governors and the heads of local governing bodies in the United States. Emphasis is placed on comparative development, roles, structures, processes, and functions.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3337. The Congress And Legislatures. 3 Hours.**

An examination of the powers, organization, procedures, and operations of legislative bodies in the United States. Consideration is given to such matters as selection of legislators, legislative leadership, influence of lobbyists, political parties, legislative committees, executives, and legislative roles and norms.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3338. Victims Rights Politics & Pcly. 3 Hours.**

This course introduces students to the politics and policies of victims' rights. The course examines the emergence of victims' rights as a political issue and as a social movement. The course surveys victims' rights policies and programs at the local, state, national, and international level and analyzes their development, their implementation, and their impact.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3339. Nonprofit Organizations. 3 Hours.**

This course introduces students to the history, roles, and types of nonprofit organizations and offers students an overview of the development of nonprofit organizations. Topics covered in the course include: nonprofit and government relations, nonprofit and business relations, nonprofit and policymaking, nonprofits in an international context, and organizational issues.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3360. Political Parties-Interest Grp. 3 Hours.**

This course is a survey of political parties and interest groups in U.S. politics. Topics include the development and evolution of political parties and interest groups, their organizations and functions, and their role in politics. Consideration is given to the influence of parties and interest groups on political values, participation, voting, campaigns and elections, governing, and on policy.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3361. Cent & Eastern European Politi. 3 Hours.**

This course offers a comparative study of the political systems of Central and Eastern European states, including the European portions of the former Soviet Union, with emphasis on the problems of transition from communism to democracy and market economy.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3364. Politics And The Media. 3 Hours.**

The primary focus of this course is on the role and impact of the media on US politics. The relationship between the media and politics in other nations may also be considered. (Media is defined broadly to include the Internet, radio, television, and the various forms of print media.) Some of the topics that may be explored in the course include: the impact of the media on campaigns and election outcomes, the media as a source of political information, the agenda setting power of the media, the role of the free press in a democracy, and citizens' relationship to the media. The course makes use of textbooks but also relies heavily on media product being offered each day through the various contemporary media.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3365. Intro to Comparative Politics. 3 Hours.**

A survey of important issues and trends in world political systems that places American government and politics in a comparative context. Included will be terminology, concepts, and methods of comparative politics. Topics may include institutions, behavior, constitutional processes, political parties and interest groups, public policy, political development, transitions from authoritarianism to democracy and from statist to market economies, sources of domestic violence, and other major concerns of the field.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3366. Public Administration. 3 Hours.**

A survey of national public administration with emphasis on the political processes within the surrounding administrative agencies. Topics include development of the administrative function, policy formulation and budgeting, the relations of administrators to Congress, interest groups, courts and the public. State and local topics may be included.

**Prerequisite:** POLS 2301.

**POLS 3368. Asian Politics. 3 Hours.**

A comparative survey of contemporary politics and government in Asia. The course encompasses most of the countries of East Asia: China, Japan, the Koreas, and Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Vietnam and Cambodia. Time permitting, the course may also include India and South Asia. Considerable attention is given to the history and culture of each country as well as the dynamics of change in the region.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3369. Religion And Politics. 3 Hours.**

This course examines the historical and contemporary relationship between religion and politics. Topics include politics and religion in the United States, the proper role of religion in American public life, the relation between religion and state in the Islamic world, religion and conflict situations, and the role of religion in conflict resolution.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3370. Western European Politics. 3 Hours.**

A comparative survey of contemporary politics and governments in Western Europe. The course typically concentrates on Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, but usually includes other important and interesting countries, such as Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Portugal, and the Scandinavian countries. The European Union - its policies, institutions, and expansion - is fully treated in the course.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3373. Ideologies and Democracy. 3 Hours.**

Students in this course investigate the meaning of the term 'ideology' and the various ideologies that have informed political life in the modern world. Liberalism, conservatism, socialism, communism, feminism, environmentalism, and radical Islam are examined. Democracy in its various modern conceptions is studied along with the question: Is democracy an ideology?

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours in POLS.

**POLS 3374. Quantitative Method For Pol Sci. 3 Hours.**

This is an introduction to research design and quantitative methods used in contemporary political science research. Students will apply the tools of social science inquiry in a series of projects designed to examine such phenomena as political attitudes and behavior. Emphasis is on the use of descriptive statistics; tabular and graphic presentation of data; measures of association and correlations; and multivariate analysis in political research.

**Prerequisite:** POLS major, 6 hours POLS, and departmental approval.

**POLS 3375. Politics Of The Middle East. 3 Hours.**

A comparative survey of contemporary patterns of government and politics in the Middle East. The course encompasses most of the countries of the Middle East, including Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, Iraq, Iran, and Turkey. North Africa may also be included. Considerable attention is given to the historical legacies and continuing impact of colonialism and nationalism, political Islam and secularism, challenges of authority, and legitimacy. The impact on the region and U.S. foreign policy of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and regime change in the region is covered at length.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3377. Survey of Political Theory. 3 Hours.**

A survey of the political ideas, philosophers, and relevant historical events in Western Europe over the past two thousand years. Representative political writings from the time of Plato to Nietzsche are surveyed. Political ideas and values are addressed in their original historical context as well as independently of any particular historical or cultural limitations.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3378. American Political Thought. 3 Hours.**

This course surveys American political ideas and movements from colonial times to the present.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3379. Research & Writing In Pol Sci. 3 Hours.**

This course has two primary objectives. First, students will gain knowledge of basic research methods and design in the social sciences. Particular attention will be given to survey research. Second, students will learn research and writing skills including: how to locate, evaluate, and cite electronic and printed sources; how to conduct a literature review; how to write proposals, reports, and research papers; and how to edit proposals, reports, and papers.

**Prerequisite:** POLS major, 6 hours POLS, and departmental approval.

**POLS 3380. Intro International Relations. 3 Hours.**

This course provides analysis of the relations between nation-states in the international system and the factors influencing their behavior. The changing nature of the international system is analyzed, as are the political and economic sources of tension, war and diplomacy, international law and organization, and the bases of power.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3381. American Foreign Policy. 3 Hours.**

This course examines the domestic and international forces which influence the development of American foreign policy. The course emphasizes the post-World War II era and includes discussion of such major issues of U.S. foreign policy as the settlement of World War II, the politics and crises of the Cold War, and America's role in the post-Cold War world order.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3385. International Law & Org. 3 Hours.**

This course is a comprehensive overview of the role of international organizations and law. Specifically it examines the evolution of the United Nations and its precursors, its structure and governance role in international peace and security, emerging human rights law, laws governing war, and issues of development and the global environment.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3386. International Political Econ. 3 Hours.**

This course examines the interplay between states and markets and the interaction of the world economy and international politics. We study the nature of political economy, the major ideologies and approaches, and specific topics such as the political ramifications of international trade, investment, debt and financial markets and the impact of globalization on the human condition and the environment.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3387. Latin American Politics. 3 Hours.**

A survey of contemporary patterns of government and politics in Latin America with emphasis on institutions, processes, behavior, and problems of democracy, authoritarianism, and political development in selected nations. Historical, social, and economic background factors are also considered, along with major issues of U.S.-Latin American relations.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3391. Govrnmt Organization & Mangmt. 3 Hours.**

Comparison of governmental organizations within society and analysis of the differences and their impact upon practices of administration in public agencies. Consideration is also given to the management tools available to governmental agencies and their capabilities and limitations.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3392. Economic Policy. 3 Hours.**

A general study of the role of modern government in the economy and society. Particular attention is given to governmental activity in regulating and promoting business activity.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3393. Social Policy. 3 Hours.**

A general study of the roles, actions, and problems of modern governments in dealing with social issues such as education, health, housing, transportation, and welfare services.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 3395. Environmental Policy. 3 Hours.**

A survey of the major environmental issues and policies existing in the United States and the world today. An in-depth investigation of such environmental policy areas as clean air and water, endangered species, invasive alien species, public land management, ecosystem management, the conservation of biodiversity, nuclear power, waste disposal and energy production and use.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 4081. Problems in Political Science. 1-3 Hours.**

This course is designated to examine special topics which cut across the usual areas of concentration in government. A single topic will be considered each semester this course is offered. Topics may include political socialization, ethnic politics, crises in political systems, research techniques, and other subjects. May be repeated when topic varies. Variable Credit (1-3).

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of POLS.

**POLS 4095. Dir Std & Inter Pol Sci. 1-3 Hours.**

This course is designed especially for advanced students in Political Science who are capable of independent study. Work may involve advanced readings, directed research, or assignment as an intern in a political or government office. Registration is upon the approval of the Chair of the Department of Political Science and the instructor directing the course. This course may be taken for Academic Distinction Credit. Variable Credit (1-3).

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of Political Science and departmental permission.

**POLS 4334. Const Law I:Civ Rights& Librts. 3 Hours.**

This course is a rigorous examination of the development of rights and liberties through the interpretation of the Bill of Rights by the United States Supreme Court. The course relies on the Court's opinions and is the first course in the two-part constitutional law sequence.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 4335. Const Law II:Gov Pwr/St-Fed RI. 3 Hours.**

This course offers a rigorous examination of the development of government powers at the state and federal level through the interpretation of the Constitution by the United States Supreme Court. It is the second course in the two-part constitutional law sequence.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 4372. Political Attitudes & Behavior. 3 Hours.**

An examination of political socialization, political recruitment, voting behavior, and public policy outputs. The approaches examined include role, group, political culture, systems analysis, and functional analysis.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 4383. International Human Rights. 3 Hours.**

This course explores the theory and practical meaning of human rights. Issues covered may include the definition of human rights; the relationship between civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights; the meaning and impact of humanitarian and international human rights law; the impact of cultural relativism in the definition and assessment of the promotion and protection of human rights; the significance of different religious perspectives; the question of the legitimacy of humanitarian interventions; and the effects of globalization on human rights perceptions and practices.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of political science.

**POLS 4384. Conflict Studies. 3 Hours.**

This course examines the causes of international conflict and the path to international peace. The topics explored include the changes in the nature of war, the theories of the onset of interstate war, and the various methods of achieving peace.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of POLS.

**POLS 4385. Political Violence & Terrorism. 3 Hours.**

This course focuses on political violence that occurs within states perpetrated by the state against its own citizens as well as the violence that accompanies anti-government movements. Students examine cases and theories of political violence, as well as methods of their resolution. Domestic political violence in the form of state repression, domestic terrorism, guerilla warfare, civil wars, and revolution are given special emphasis.

**Prerequisite:** 6 hours of POLS.

Chair: **Tamara A. Waggener**

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## Interim Faculty

**Kelley Sadler Brown, MA** (ksb016@shsu.edu), *Lecturer of Political Science, Department of Political Science*, MA, Sam Houston State University

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