

POLITICAL SCIENCE (PSCI)

PSCI 135. American Politics and Government. (4 Credits)

American Politics and Government. An introduction to the foundations and institutions of the United States' political system. Explores the political behavior of individuals and groups and engages contemporary political debate.

Tags: SI

PSCI 145. Political Philosophy. (4 Credits)

An exploration of some of the major themes in the tradition of western political thought, to include the nature of politics, freedom, equality, justice, and virtue. The course will center around some of the tradition's most significant texts, including works by Plato, Augustine, Hobbes, Mill and more contemporary authors.

Tags: PI, SI

PSCI 201. U.S. Education Policy: Problems and Possibilities. (4 Credits)

This course has three primary purposes: 1) introduce today's major education policy issues in historical, social, and cultural contexts; 2) investigate the ways U.S. education policy questions are addressed at federal, state, and local levels with comparative analysis to other countries; and 3) develop oral and written skills in generating and recommending appropriate policy options and solutions as a Christian seeking to influence schools, society, and human flourishing. Topics include: comparative analysis of policy; executive, judicial, and legislative policy actions, motivation, and history; equity, standards, and accountability reforms; teachers and instructional quality; and access affordability, and persistence. Crosslisted with EDUC 201.

Tags: DUS, SI

PSCI 236. Intercollegiate Trial Advocacy. (0 or 0.5 Credits)

A hands-on exploration of the theory and practice of trial advocacy through competition in intercollegiate mock trial tournaments. Graded pass/fail. One credit hour per year based on full participation in the fall and spring semesters. Register for credit in the spring semester. Prerequisite: Instructor permission.

PSCI 244. Film and Political Theory. (2 Credits)

This course explores how films develop, offer, and apply arguments about human nature, human flourishing, and other topics central to normative theorizing about politics. Course offered occasionally.

PSCI 274. Introduction to Law. (4 Credits)

This course provides a general introduction to the nature and function of law in society.

PSCI 301. Topics in Political Science. (2 Credits)

Selected topics, designed to give added breadth and depth to the understanding of American politics and/or political behavior.

PSCI 302. Topics in Political Science. (4 Credits)

Selected topics, designed to explore an important topic in American politics, political behavior, or political theory.

PSCI 311. Constitutional Law. (4 Credits)

An examination of the American constitutional system, with special emphasis given to the role of judicial institutions and the impact of Supreme Court decisions.

PSCI 312. Politics & Pop Culture. (2 Credits)

An exploration and evaluation of portrayals of political themes and concepts in various forms of popular culture including film, television, and plays.

PSCI 323. Chinese Political Thought. (4 Credits)

What is a "state" and what is "human nature"? Does one have an obligation or responsibility to the state and, conversely, do rulers owe anything to their people? How ought a state relate to individual or communal ethics or social custom, if at all? In this course, we will seriously consider—from a distinctly Christian perspective—how various pre-imperial (771-221 BCE) Chinese political thinkers like Confucius, Mencius and Xunzi, among others, have addressed these questions and the degree to which we find these arguments persuasive (or not) as they bear both on Christian faith/practice as well as on the world. Through dialogue and writing, students will develop their ability to compare and critically (though charitably) assess disparate articulations of the relationship between the state, individuals, and communities across the history of classical Chinese political thought. Further, students will cultivate a nuanced view of classical Chinese political thought—and the lasting legacy it has had on the global church, particularly in Asia and the Asian diaspora—as well as formulate their own political and philosophical opinions on the varied, and often contradicting, conceptions of the relationship between political entities and the people they aspire to govern.

Tags: GP, PI

PSCI 324. Black Political Thought. (4 Credits)

What is "freedom"? What is "justice"? What role do politics, law, economics, faith, and ethics play in securing freedom and justice? How do the interrelated nature of social identities such as race, ethnicity, class, gender, and sexuality reflect important elements in calls for freedom and justice? In this course, we will seriously consider—from a distinctly Christian perspective—how key authors like Douglass, Jacobs, Wells, Washington, DuBois, and Davis (among others) have answered these questions and the degree to which we might find these arguments persuasive (or not) as they bear both on Christian faith/practice as well as on the world. Through dialogue and writing, students will develop their ability to compare and critically (though charitably) assess disparate articulations of the relationship between domination, freedom, and justice in the history of black political thought, from the 18th century to the present. In so doing, students will cultivate a nuanced view of Black diasporic thought—both within and outside of the global church—as well as formulate their own political and philosophical opinions on the varied, and often contradicting, visions for how politics might secure conditions of freedom and justice in the modern world.

Tags: DUS, PI

PSCI 325. Criminal Law Procedure. (2 Credits)

This course provides a general introduction to the process by which government investigates, charges and proves criminal offenses committed by individuals.

PSCI 326. Caribbean Political Thought. (4 Credits)

What is “freedom”? What is “justice”? What role do politics, law, art, economics, faith, and ethics play in securing freedom and justice? How do the interrelated nature of social identities such as race, ethnicity, class, and gender reflect important elements in calls for freedom and justice? In this course, we will seriously consider—from a distinctly Christian perspective—how key Caribbean figures like Frantz Fanon, Marcus Garvey, C.L.R. James, Claudia Jones, Toussaint L’Overture, and Sylvia Wynter (among others) have answered these questions and the degree to which we might find these arguments persuasive (or not) as they bear both on Christian faith and practice as well as on the world. Through dialogue and writing, students will develop their ability to compare and critically (though charitably) assess disparate articulations of the relationship between domination, freedom, and justice in the history of Caribbean political thought, from the 18th century to the present. In so doing, students will cultivate a nuanced view of Caribbean diasporic thought—both within and outside of the global church—as well as formulate their own political and philosophical opinions on the varied, and often contradicting, visions for how politics might secure conditions of freedom and justice in the modern world.

Tags: GP, LE

PSCI 327. Civil Rights and Police Action. (2 Credits)

This course provides a general introduction to the constitutionally protected civil rights individuals have in the United States and whether use of force by law enforcement violates these rights. The course focuses on use of force issues from wrongful arrest to fatal use of force by law enforcement.

PSCI 328. Immigration. (4 Credits)

What are the duties of U.S. citizens and institutions towards those who migrate here from other countries? How have laws, court cases, and executive orders concerning U.S. immigration been formed throughout history and what consequences have their legacies had for modern and contemporary understandings of politics? What relationship is there between immigration and racial (in)justice, if any? In this course, we will seriously consider—from a distinctly Christian perspective—how various actors, institutions, and policies involved in debates about immigration have contributed to notions of justice, equality, membership, and law and the degree to which we might find these arguments persuasive (or not) as they bear on both Christian faith/practice and on the world. Through dialogue and writing, students will develop their ability to compare and critically (though charitably) assess disparate approaches to immigration while also establishing their own scholarly and political voices. In so doing, students will work out a nuanced view of prominent actors, institutions, and policies involved in the ongoing narrative of immigration in the U.S.

Tags: DUS, SI

PSCI 332. Media and Politics. (4 Credits)

This course explores the interrelationship between the mass media (including print, broadcast, and new media), public opinion, and American politics. Prerequisite: PSCI 135 or equivalent.

PSCI 343. Political Ethics. (4 Credits)

This course brings philosophical ethics and normative political theory into dialogue with the distinctive practical problems associated with contemporary American politics and policy. Topics to be considered include abortion, euthanasia, affirmative action, war, distributive justice, deception and manipulation, and the ethics of roles.

PSCI 344. Women, Politics, and American Society. (4 Credits)

An exploration of the role of women in American politics from revolutionary times to the present, tracing the transformation of the role of American women from outsiders to more full participants in politics and government.

Tags: DUS

PSCI 349. Christian Political Thought. (4 Credits)

An engagement with the varieties of Christian thinking about politics, including both its historical development and the contemporary alternatives. Thinkers explored will include Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Locke, Niebuhr, Hauerwas, and a number of others.

PSCI 358. Campaigns in Context. (2 Credits)

An examination of federal, state, and local campaigns with an emphasis on the politics and context of the November election. Wheaton-in-Washington Program. PSCI 135 recommended. Course offered occasionally.

PSCI 359. Washington Workshop. (2 Credits)

Reflections on the meetings, briefings, and excursions in Washington, D.C. Wheaton-in-Washington Program. Course offered occasionally.

PSCI 361. Political Research. (4 Credits)

This course introduces research design to students using the context of political science. While there are many approaches to research design, we will focus upon quantitative analysis. At the introduction students will be exposed to the basic framework of theories, variables, and causation. Students will then construct a research design to test an original political science project. This course is designed to be an introduction to research methods so there are no prerequisites. Students are encouraged to approach projects with creativity and ask questions.

Tags: AAQR

PSCI 363. Race and Politics in the United States. (4 Credits)

This course investigates the complex relationship between racial and ethnic identity and political outcomes in the United States. It explores broad political science concepts like public opinion, political behavior, social movement, media effects, and political representation in the context of racial and ethnic groups.

Tags: DUS

PSCI 364. Analyzing Public Opinion. (4 Credits)

This course equips students to apply mathematical concepts, especially in the area of statistics, to analyze public opinion data. It leverages substantive public opinion topics and a semester-long research project as springboards to learn about and apply quantitative methods to describe phenomena and answer research questions related to public opinion. Course offered occasionally.

PSCI 365. Classical and Medieval Political Thought. (4 Credits)

The western political tradition rests on the interplay between the claims emerging out of classical Greece and Rome on the one hand and out of Christianity on the other. This course explores that interplay by engaging both classical (Homer, Sophocles, Plato, Aristotle) and Christian political thinkers (Augustine, Aquinas). Course offered occasionally.

PSCI 366. Modern Political Thought. (4 Credits)

This course chronicles the replacement of the Christian order and the development of its theoretical alternative, modernity. Thinkers considered include: Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx, Mill, Nietzsche, and Freud. Course offered occasionally.

PSCI 368. American Political Thought. (4 Credits)

An analysis of central ideas in the history of American political thought, from the founding to the present. Course offered occasionally.

PSCI 371. Public Opinion and American Democracy. (4 Credits)

This course helps students understand the factors that shape political attitudes and the actions they trigger in the United States. Particular attention is given to major methods and findings of survey research, as well as to implications of this research for how we think about the role of citizens in democracy.

PSCI 374. Political Psychology: Understanding the Political Mind and Behavior. (4 Credits)

This course equips students to apply the concepts, theories, and methods of psychology to better understand political attitudes and behavior. It emphasizes how new research at the intersection of fields like psychology, biology, and neuroscience can inform our thinking about politics.

Tags: SIP

PSCI 383. Religion & American Politics. (4 Credits)

An assessment of the role of religion in American politics, focusing especially on the contemporary era. Particular attention is given to the role of evangelicals. Periodic.

PSCI 384. The Presidency. (4 Credits)

Examines the role of the presidency in the U.S. political system, focusing on such themes as leadership, decision-making, and Congressional-Executive relations. Alternate years.

PSCI 385. Urban Politics. (2 Credits)

An analysis of the politics of urban areas, including relationships with state and national governments, decision-making, and urban public policy. Course offered occasionally.

PSCI 386. Congress & Policy Process. (4 Credits)

Congress and the Policy Process. An examination of the role of Congress in the American political process, including historical development, structure and functions, and decision-making. Recommended for those seeking Washington internships. Alternate years.

PSCI 387. Law and Religion. (4 Credits)

This course is designed to introduce students to the moral, legal, and constitutional questions surrounding religion and its place in democratic public life. Students will have an opportunity to gain a familiarity with the development of American constitutional law as it relates to religion, explore the alternatives to those developments, understand the contending side of contemporary controversies, and articulate their own considered views on each via both presentations and writing exercises.

PSCI 389. Campaigns and Elections. (4 Credits)

Explores the structures and institutions of American electoral politics, including the nomination process and general elections. Gives special attention to the elements of the modern campaign, including campaign finance, research, polling, advertising, and media use. Offered fall of even-numbered years.

PSCI 394. Spirit of the Laws. (2 Credits)

Since its publication in 1748, *The Spirit of the Laws* has been interpreted as abolitionist, an American Founding essential, anti-Christian, elitist, laissez-faire, racist, and as sociology's early modern forerunner, among others. In this course, we will read *The Spirit of the Laws* with attention to these (and other) interpretations. Our aim is to collectively determine—from a distinctly Christian perspective—the degree to which we might find the arguments encountered in Montesquieu's text persuasive (or not) as they bear on both Christian faith/practice and on the world. Through dialogue and writing, students will develop their ability to compare and critically (though charitably) assess the disparate foundations and influences of Montesquieu's work while also establishing their own scholarly, political, and legal voices. In so doing, students will work out a nuanced view of comparative, global, and European political and legal thought, both within and outside of the global church.

PSCI 396. W.E.B. Du Bois. (2 Credits)

Considered one of the most significant American political thinkers of the twentieth century, William Edward Burghardt (W.E.B.) Du Bois stands as a towering figure in a range of humanistic and social scientific disciplines. From watershed concepts like the "color line" and "double-consciousness" to his pioneering work in what would become urban sociology, revisionist U.S. historiography, and Negro/Black/Africana Studies, Du Bois' contributions to contemporary scholarship are as vast as they are enduring. In this course, we will read select key works of Du Bois' with attention to a variety of interpretations. Our aim is to collectively determine—from a distinctly Christian perspective—the degree to which we might find the arguments encountered in Du Bois' texts persuasive (or not) as they bear on both Christian faith/practice and on the world. Through dialogue and writing, students will develop their ability to compare and critically (though charitably) assess the disparate foundations and influences of Du Bois' work while also establishing their own scholarly, political, economic, and social voices. In so doing, students will work out a nuanced view of comparative, global, and African diasporic political and social thought, both within and outside of the global church.

PSCI 398. Politics of the African Diaspora. (2 Credits)

This course explores the political thought of key figures situated across the African diaspora. Emphasis is placed both upon the diversity of Black political experiences and shared themes that cut across contextual boundaries. In this course, we will grapple with what role(s) politics, law, art, economics, faith, and ethics play in securing freedom and justice as well as how the interrelated nature of social identities such as race, ethnicity, class, and gender reflect important elements in calls for freedom and justice. Through dialogue and writing, students will develop their ability to compare and critically (though charitably) assess disparate articulations of modern African diasporic political experiences and realities. In so doing, students will cultivate a nuanced view of Black diasporic politics—both within and outside of the global church—as well as formulate their own opinions on the challenges and opportunities facing the diaspora now.

PSCI 399. Faith in the Capitol. (2 Credits)

This course will introduce you to personal accounts of how Christian faith has affected the careers of successful public servants from a variety of areas—local, state, and federal—elected, appointed and high-level staff members. Students will read first person accounts and interact with guest lecturers from a variety of backgrounds who have been successful in public service and can share how their Christian faith helped them in times of trial, success, failure, challenges and setbacks. By the end of the course, students should be able to provide examples of how the Biblically based faith of Christian officials from a variety of fields affected ethical challenges, mission formation and accomplishment, and how best to determine a vocation.

PSCI 494. Senior Seminar. (2 Credits)

An analysis of the interrelationship of politics and the Christian faith, focusing on vocational, conceptual, legal, and domestic public policy issues. Senior majors only.

General Education: SHAR

PSCI 495. Independent Study. (2 to 4 Credits)

A guided individual reading and research problem. Junior and senior majors, or discretion of professor.

PSCI 496. Internship. (4 Credits)

A series of programs designed for practical experience in professions frequently chosen by Political Science majors, such as law, government, and public service. Political Science majors may substitute MSCI 401, LAW 496 or HNGR 496 for the PSCI 496 requirement.

PSCI 499. Honors Thesis. (4 Credits)

An independent research project requiring original research, developed into a scholarly paper and culminating in an oral examination. By application only. The honors thesis may not be counted toward the total hours to complete the major.