

Political Science

School

College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (<http://www.stmarytx.edu/humanities/>)

School Dean

Nancy LaGreca, Ph.D. (nlagreca@stmarytx.edu)

Department

Political Science (<https://www.stmarytx.edu/academics/department/political-science/>)

Department Chair

Betsy Smith, Ph.D. (bsmith27@stmarytx.edu)

Mission Statement

The St. Mary's University Department of Political Science educates in the enduring values of social justice, equality, diversity, community, and the common good in global, national, and local arenas. Through the application of theory to practical situations and the inventive use of contemporary research methods and techniques, students learn to understand and propose humane solutions to public needs and problems. In the context of a Catholic and Marianist university, students and faculty alike work to experience and enhance the skills necessary for an active and effective life in democratic and transitioning societies. Likewise, Political Science faculty and students share a common purpose-- to inspire the civic conscience of the university community. As a result, in their many career choices, Political Science graduates are called to a life of service and civic engagement throughout the world.

Majors in Political Science

- B.A. in Political Science (<https://catalog.stmarytx.edu/undergraduate/majors-programs/humanities-social-sciences/political-science/political-science-ba/>)
- B.A. in Political Science - Peace Studies (<https://catalog.stmarytx.edu/undergraduate/majors-programs/humanities-social-sciences/political-science/ba-in-political-science---peace-studies/>)
- B.A. in Political Science - Security Studies (<https://catalog.stmarytx.edu/undergraduate/majors-programs/humanities-social-sciences/political-science/ba-in-political-science---security-studies/>)
- B.A. in Political Science with Social Studies (4-8) Teacher Certification (<https://catalog.stmarytx.edu/undergraduate/majors-programs/humanities-social-sciences/political-science/political-science-ba-teacher-certification-secondary/>)
- B.A. in Political Science with Early Law Admission (https://catalog.stmarytx.edu/undergraduate/majors-programs/other-programs/pre_law/)

Minors in Political Science

- Political Science (<https://catalog.stmarytx.edu/undergraduate/majors-programs/humanities-social-sciences/political-science/political-science-minor/>)
- International Public Career (<https://catalog.stmarytx.edu/undergraduate/majors-programs/humanities-social-sciences/political-science/international-public-careers-minor/>)

PO 1311. American National Government. 3 Semester Hours.

A study of the formal and informal structures and functions of American National Government. Emphasis is placed on the processes by which public policy is made with pertinent examples of that policy.(Fall, Spring).

PO 1312. Texas State & Local Government. 3 Semester Hours.

A study of the formal and informal structures of Texas State Government. Emphasis is placed on the processes by which public policy is made with pertinent examples of that policy at the state and local level. This course is required for Texas Teacher Certification. (GOVT 2306).(Fall, Spring).

PO 1314. Introduction to Global Affairs. 3 Semester Hours.

Surveys wide range of global topics within the context of learning about global actors, governments, and international institutions: previous periods of globalization, international organizations and law, transnational corporations and global economy, immigration and refugees, world environmental concerns, world culture, war and peace, paradoxical presence of nationalism and fundamentalism in a global world, and the anti-globalization movement.(Fall, Spring).

PO 2302. Civic Engagement and Social Action. 3 Semester Hours.

This course focuses on civic engagement, defined as participation in society to effect social change in fostering the common good. As a result of taking this course, students will understand and appreciate the need for engagement in one's community. Students will integrate the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for civic engagement and ethical citizenship at the local, national, and global levels.

PO 2310. Political Research Methodology. 3 Semester Hours.

Introduction to the methods of political research. The focus is on designing research. Students will assess the state of scholarly literature, identify interesting questions, formulate strategies for collecting qualitative and quantitative data for answering those questions. They shall learn how to, and shall conduct a literature review on some substantive question. Successful completion of this course fulfills the information literacy proficiency requirements of the core curriculum.(Fall).

PO 2311. Applied Research Methods. 3 Semester Hours.

The second course of a two-course sequence on research methods in political science. The focus is on conducting and evaluating political science research. Students will assess the state of scholarly literature, identify interesting questions, formulate strategies for collecting qualitative and quantitative data for answering them, further hone methodological tools with which to conduct research, and learn how to write up publishable results. Substantive examples will be drawn from American politics, international relations, comparative politics, and public administration, which all rely on empirical evidence. Prerequisites: PO 2310 or permission of the Instructor.(Spring).

PO 2312. U.S. Latino Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

This course offers an introduction to an American political development perspective of Latino politics in the United States. Topics to be covered will include issues of racial and ethnic political identity, assimilation/accommodation, pluralism, immigration, civil and voting rights, political participation, political representation, and other policy issues, such as education, health and economic development.

PO 3100. Topics in American, State, Pol. 1 Semester Hour.

Study of one of the broad range of topics in federal, state, and local politics, including structures and functions of various institutions.

PO 3110. Topics in Political Behavior. 1 Semester Hour.

Study of one of a broad range of topics in political behavior, including socialization, political participation, ethnic politics, and religion.

PO 3120. Topics in Public Policy. 1 Semester Hour.

Study of one of a broad range of topics in public policy or public administration, including civil rights, immigration, school finance, social welfare, etc.

PO 3140. Topics in Political Thought. 1 Semester Hour.

Problems, values, and uses of selected normative and empirical political thinkers. Topics vary.

PO 3160. Topics in Internat'l/Com Polit. 1 Semester Hour.

Study of any one of the broad range of topics in International or Comparative Politics. To include such topics as peaceful resolution of international conflict, international human rights, and comparative institutions.

PO 3200. Topics in American, State, Pol. 2 Semester Hours.

Study of one of the broad range of topics in federal, state, and local politics, including structures and functions of various institutions.

PO 3210. Topics in Political Behavior. 2 Semester Hours.

Study of one of a broad range of topics in political behavior, including socialization, political participation, ethnic politics, and religion.

PO 3220. Topics in Public Policy. 2 Semester Hours.

Study of one of a broad range of topics in public policy or public administration, including civil rights, immigration, school finance, social welfare, etc.

PO 3240. Topics in Political Thought. 2 Semester Hours.

Problems, values, and uses of selected normative and empirical political thinkers. Topics vary.

PO 3260. Topics in Internat'l/Com Polit. 2 Semester Hours.

Study of any one of the broad range of topics in International or Comparative Politics. To include such topics as peaceful resolution of international conflict, international human rights, and comparative institutions.

PO 3300. Topics in American, State or Local Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

Study of one of the broad range of topics in federal, state, and local politics, including structures and functions of various institutions.

PO 3301. The Nat'l Executive. 3 Semester Hours.

Office and powers of the presidency, individual back grounds, evolution of the office, elections are explored. The President's part in the formulation and implementation of domestic and foreign policy are highlighted.(Fall Even).

PO 3302. The Legislative Process. 3 Semester Hours.

Every aspect of how our national legislature functions and what external and internal variables affect that function is the focus of this class. Both institutional arrangements and interpersonal relationships endemic to the Congress are explored. Consequently, the committee, seniority, party, and leadership systems are thoroughly discussed, together with the role the Congress plays in the overall national governmental scheme.(Fall Odd).

PO 3303. Amer Political Parties&Interes. 3 Semester Hours.

Analysis of the development of American political parties; growth and influence of interest groups; voting, elections and presidential campaigns; research in governmental and political events.

PO 3310. Topics in Political Behavior. 3 Semester Hours.

Study of one of a broad range of topics in political behavior, including socialization, political participation, ethnic politics, and religion.

PO 3312. US Latino Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

This course will offer a political history of the diverse Latino populations in the United States. Topics to be covered will include racism, civil rights, political participation, political representation, and other policy issues, such as immigration and education, at the local, state and national levels.

PO 3313. Ethnicity, Race, and Class. 3 Semester Hours.

The relationship between American society's class, race, and gender cleavage and public policies, at all governmental levels, is explored. Consequently, this course treats this relationship as a two-way interaction.

PO 3314. Religion and Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

The study of the impact of religion on politics; in particular, the emphasis is on the influence of religious institutions, attitudes and behaviors.

PO 3315. Pol Comm, Media & Elections. 3 Semester Hours.

Study of trends in American voting behavior; relationship of political communication and media campaigns, elections and voters' choices; analysis of media in conveying political information; finance and elections; use of survey research in analysis of voting behavior and campaigns; election simulation. (Fall Even).

PO 3316. Gender Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

This course examines and assesses the role and participation of women in American political life. Topics include: women and men as voters, candidates and office holders, the Women's Movement, civil rights, grass roots participation, and key policy issues that have particular relevance to women and families. (Spring Odd).

PO 3317. American Thought and Culture. 3 Semester Hours.

A study of American ideas and how those ideas are expressed in literature, art and architecture. (Spring Even).

PO 3320. Topics in Public Policy. 3 Semester Hours.

Study of one of a broad range of topics in public policy or public administration, including civil rights, immigration, school finance, social welfare, etc. (Spring).

PO 3321. Public Administration. 3 Semester Hours.

An examination of administration and politics, administrative legislative relationships, budgetary processes, personnel administration, administrative rule-making, organization, and policy development. (Fall Odd).

PO 3322. Public Policy Analysis. 3 Semester Hours.

Exploration of various methods used by public agencies to evaluate the economy, efficiency, and/or effectiveness of their operations, with applications to contemporary public policies. PO 2310 preferred but not required as prerequisite.

PO 3323. Urban Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

Concentration on the origins, evolutionary processes, and dynamics of cities and their attendant political institutions and processes. Investigation of the externalities resulting from the decisions and non-decisions of the political and bureaucratic processes of urban governments. (Spring Odd).

PO 3325. Intro to Organizational Leader. 3 Semester Hours.

An introduction to organizational life and the development of the knowledge and skills needed to be an effective leader.

PO 3330. Topics in Law. 3 Semester Hours.

Study of a broad range of topics in law, including race, gender, behavior, civil rights, international law, and comparative judicial systems.

PO 3331. Judicial Politics & Law. 3 Semester Hours.

The study of the development of the U.S. Supreme Court. Analysis of the American court system including the structure and the decision-making process by the United States Supreme Court, and the politics surrounding judicial appointments. Some areas of case law covered include, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, gender discrimination, affirmative action, as well as the rights of criminal defendants under the 4th and 5th Amendments. (Fall Even).

PO 3332. U.S. Civil Rights: The Latino Experience. 3 Semester Hours.

This course designed to examine and assess the Civil Rights Movement as it relates to the Latino experience, specifically Mexican Americans, in the United States. Special emphasis will be given to the experiences of Mexican Americans within the legal system. Some of the policy areas may include educational rights, voting rights, language rights, as well as the rights of women. (Fall).

PO 3335. U.S-Mexico Immigration Law & Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

This course examines and assesses U.S. immigration through the law, politics and public policy. Special emphasis will be given to contemporary debates and recent immigration from Mexico and Central America. (Fall).

PO 3340. Topics in Political Thought. 3 Semester Hours.

Problems, values, and uses of selected normative and empirical political thinkers. Topics vary.

PO 3341. Classical Political Thought. 3 Semester Hours.

Development of political thinking from the ancient Greeks to the medieval period. Critical analysis and evaluation of original sources.

PO 3342. Early Modern Political Thought. 3 Semester Hours.

Development of political thinking from Machiavelli to Marx. Critical analysis and evaluation of original sources. (Fall Odd).

PO 3343. 20th Century Political Thought. 3 Semester Hours.

Basic issues and questions of value in political thought with emphasis upon Lenin, Marx, fascism, existentialism, and contemporary political thought. (Fall Even).

PO 3344. American Political Thought. 3 Semester Hours.

Basic issues and questions of value in American thought from colonial times to the present; relevance of political thought for contemporary prospects and problems.(Spring Odd).

PO 3360. Topics in Intl/Comp Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

Study of any one of the broad range of topics in International or Comparative Politics. To include such topics as peaceful resolution of international conflict, international human rights, and comparative institutions.

PO 3361. International Relations Theory. 3 Semester Hours.

The course examines the themes of international relations, power, order, justice, war and peace, in the context of theory and of contemporary world politics.(Fall, Summer).

PO 3362. European Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

This course will focus on the comparative analysis of the political systems of Europe. The discussion and analysis will focus on the governmental institutions, political cultures, interest groups, and political parties of these countries. The impact of these factors, along with domestic and foreign policy problems, on political stability and instability will be the major focus of research and writing in the course.(Fall).

PO 3363. Latin American Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

This course provides a general overview of the political problems associated with the quest for greater socio-economic development in Latin America. Among the problems and perspectives examined are colonial legacies, governmental systems, political cultures, interest groups and political parties, and contemporary problems. In addition to these themes there will be a brief analysis of contemporary events and political environments in the major countries of this region.(Spring).

PO 3364. Middle Eastern Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

The political systems of the Middle East, the Maghreb, and the Horn of Africa. Islamic culture, the politics of oil, international relations, and analysis of contemporary issues are discussed.

PO 3365. Nations in Transition. 3 Semester Hours.

This course introduces the politics of countries variously characterized as developing, less developed, underdeveloped, and the Global South. We examine the historical and institutional settings of political development and seek to explain the political dynamics of recent events in these countries. (Spring Odd).

PO 3366. Asian Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

A comparative analysis of the political systems of Asia with focus on government, current domestic and foreign policies, political cultures, interest groups. Depending on the topic, the course will deal with East Asia (Japan, China, Korea, Taiwan), South Asia (India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal) or South East Asia (the ASEAN countries). The topic will be indicated on the student's transcript.

PO 3367. African Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

A survey of the political systems of sub-Saharan Africa: government structures, leadership, the role of the military, party systems, international relations, and movements toward democratization.(Spring).

PO 3368. Causes of War. 3 Semester Hours.

This course examines current theories on the root causes of war and violent conflict, both civil and international, including ethnicity, race, religion, territory, water, population migration/refugees, arms race/militarism, personality of leaders, etc. The goal is to build a useful, practical base of knowledge for understanding both ongoing and future issues in war, peace, and international security.(Fall Even).

PO 3369. Conflict Resolution Theory. 3 Semester Hours.

This course offers an overview of theories of conflict and approaches to conflict resolution that seek to settle and to transform the relationships of disputing parties. Emphasis is placed on pairing the appropriate conflict resolution theory to various categories of conflict.(Spring Odd).

PO 3370. Government Leadership. 3 Semester Hours.

This course compares and contrasts the different styles required for effective government leadership within each of four types of government organizations: legislative leadership, executive leadership, bureaucratic leadership and judicial leadership.

PO 3371. Sustainable Human Development. 3 Semester Hours.

This course is designed to help students learn the basic theories, concepts, and issues associated with sustainable international development. The ability to describe how societies develop is changing as we experience successes and failures in efforts to direct development. These concepts can be combined to build a flexible framework that is adaptive to the shifting development landscape.(Spring Even).

PO 3372. Ethics in International Relations. 3 Semester Hours.

The course examines the complex relationship between ethics and politics in international affairs. Starting with an overview of different perspectives on the role of ethics and morality in international relations, the course then explores the ethical dimensions of issues central to foreign policy and the study of world politics, including the use of force, human rights, and global distributive justice. This course aims to foster an analytical approach that encourages students to think about applied international ethics in a rigorous and systematic manner.

PO 3373. Identity Religion and International Conflict. 3 Semester Hours.

This course explores the role of religion in the generation and resolution of conflict in contemporary international relations. Literatures on conventional and revisionist approaches to religion in international relations are considered in order to identify conceptual and theoretical frameworks shaping policy responses to religion in world affairs.(Fall Odd).

PO 3374. Essentials of Comparative Politics. 3 Semester Hours.

Students examine key questions and concepts underlying the subfield of Comparative Politics, such as "why are some countries democracies where others are not?" and "does my vote really count and are there legal strategic ways to make it count more?" A comparative study of the political, institutional, economic, and social factors within states helps students answer these questions and participate in a simulation of a constituent assembly, where they engage in strategic constitutional statecraft to design an original constitution for a newly established country. (Spring only; even years).

PO 3375. Civic Leadership. 3 Semester Hours.

This course begins with an examination of the role of social and civic organizations in democratic society and proceeds to more specific study of how to lead nonprofit organizations, the mission-driven vehicles of social and civic work. Topics include social ecology, mission development, structure and organizational design, fundraising, board recruitment and governance, volunteer motivation, strategic planning, executive leadership and social entrepreneurship.

PO 3378. Model Organization of American States. 3 Semester Hours.**PO 4325. Business, Government & Public. 3 Semester Hours.**

A study of how businesses, workers, public interest groups, consumers and government agencies interact and shape public policies and how those interactions and public policies affect society.

PO 4332. Institutional Powers, Fundamental Rights & Law. 3 Semester Hours.

Analysis of the American constitutional system, including its institutional aspects such as judicial review, federalism, and the presidency. In addition, a study of fundamental rights such as voting rights and a right to privacy will be examined. Constitutional Law II is not required.(Fall Odd).

PO 4333. Civil Rights, Civil Liberties & Law. 3 Semester Hours.

Analysis of the constitutional system, including political and civil rights such as speech, press, assembly, religion, race discrimination, gender discrimination, and affirmative action. PO 4332 is not a prerequisite.(Spring Even).

PO 4334. International Law & Treaties. 3 Semester Hours.

Students examine several core areas of International Law including 1. The sources of International Law, 2. The use of force, and 3. International Human Rights Law. They study original treaties and other documents to assess the dimensions and impacts of these legal instruments in the establishment and maintenance of peace or in the degradation of situations leading to further massive human rights violations. They determine elements of design, implementation, and enforcement within the political, economic, religious, ethnic, and historic contexts in the International Community that make these documents successful. Student research seminal cases in International Law. (Spring only; even years).

PO 4368. International Political Economy. 3 Semester Hours.

The course is an introduction to theories and issues in international political economy. By focusing on the interaction of economic and political factors, both domestic and international, students will better understand the institutions, processes, and outcomes of the global economy and their impact on developed and developing countries.(Spring).

PO 4369. World Security Problems. 3 Semester Hours.

A general overview of the theories, causes, and strategies of contemporary international security problems and policies. This course will include the consideration of such topics as nuclear proliferation, conventional weapons and their transfers, terrorism, and security issues. This course also examines various security agreements, proposals, and prospects for international peace and cooperation.(Spring).

PO 4370. US Foreign Policy. 3 Semester Hours.

The focus of this course is on the relationship between U.S. foreign policy making and implementation and vital national and global interests. Among the perspectives examined are the roles of values, images, and institutions in shaping U.S. foreign policy. The course also considers specific U.S. policies vis-a-vis other countries and regions of the world, as well as important general international issues.(Fall Odd).

PO 5199. Directed Readings and Research. 1 Semester Hour.

Special studies designed for selected undergraduate students with permission of instructor and chair person. Prerequisite: Senior standing .

PO 5299. Directed Readings and Research. 2 Semester Hours.

Special studies designed for selected undergraduate students with permission of instructor and chair person. Prerequisite: Senior standing.

PO 5300. Internship Political Science. 3 Semester Hours.

Experience-based education in the context of an acceptable pre-professional and/or political activity, to include work under the supervision of an elected, administrative and/or judicial official or in some other political context approved by the department. Ordinarily junior or senior status preferred. Credit of 3, 6 semester hours upon recommendation of Internship coordinator. To obtain 3 or 6 semester hours, it is generally recommended that one must spend 10 hours per week to obtain 3 hours credit and 20 hours per week to obtain 6 hours credit. A research paper is required. A reflection paper or weekly log may also be required.

PO 5301. Senior Seminar in Political Science. 3 Semester Hours.

A required capstone course for senior political science majors. Synthesized theories, research, and ethical issues in the field of political science and clarifies the connections between the different sub-fields of the discipline. Prepares students for graduate studies, law school, or careers appropriate for political science majors by emphasizing critical reading, writing, and oral communication skills. Writing intensive course.

PO 5399. Directed Readings and Research. 3 Semester Hours.

Special studies designed for selected undergraduate students with permission of instructor and chair person. Prerequisite: Senior standing.

PO 5600. Internship Political Science. 6 Semester Hours.

Experience-based education in the context of an acceptable pre-professional and/or political activity, to include work under the supervision of an elected, administrative and/or judicial official or in some other political context approved by the department. Ordinarily junior or senior status preferred. Credit of 3, 6 semester hours upon recommendation of Internship coordinator. To obtain 3 or 6 semester hours, it is generally recommended that one must spend 10 hours per week to obtain 3 hours credit and 20 hours per week to obtain 6 hours credit. A research paper is required. A reflection paper or weekly log may also be required.