

**PPOL Approved Electives Course Descriptions**  
(Updated: 4/25/2022)

**AH 2580 – Spectator to Citizen: Community Organizing**

**Specialization – None**

This course is the first course of the three-course sequence, "Spectator to Citizen," offered by the Center for Community Engagement to advance Scholarship and Learning (CCESL). This sequence is designed to provide opportunities for students to develop a set of public skills and a civic knowledge base that will allow them to actively participate in the public life of their communities. This course strongly encourages students of diverse backgrounds, politics and values to learn together, and from one another, in a safe and challenging learning environment. In this course, students learn about the history of community organizing in the United States and are provided with opportunities to learn and apply public skills, collect and produce knowledge that improves communities, and develop a collaborative and collective worldview across differences. In particular, students define their self-interest and individual public lives, build consensus across multiple perspectives, become experts on a community issue, and then bring this issue back out into the community for dialogue and possibly action. Cross-listed with CUI 3987, SS 2580.

**COMN 1012 – Speaking on Ideas that Matter**

**Specialization – None**

The purpose of this course is to assist students in becoming more competent and comfortable when speaking about their opinions. Students learn how to develop and analyze rhetorical arguments, including the full range of the speech-making process, but especially how to support those opinions they assert. Assignments, class discussions and course materials provide students with a foundation of knowledge and practical application of speaking skills, which will prove useful in a variety of personal, professional, and public contexts.

**COMN 2700 – Introduction to Political Communication**

**Specialization – None**

Course description to be announced.

**ECON 2610 – International Economics**

**Specialization – US Foreign Policy**

The student learns about balance of payments, accounting, international monetary arrangements, international trade, and international investment. Certain policies that have a direct impact on a country's balance of payments, e.g. macroeconomic policies, exchange rate policy, and commercial policies, are examined. Some features of recent US trade policy stances is also be surveyed. Prerequisite: ECON 1030.

**ENVI 3000 – Environmental Law**

**Specialization – Sustainability**

Purpose and applications of federal laws pertaining to environmental protection, including NEPA, RCRA, CERCLA, and Clean Water and Clean Air Acts; addresses role of states in implementation of federal environmental laws.

**GEOG 2100 – Introduction to Geographic Information Systems**

**Specialization – None**

Overview of GIS, including background, development, trends, and prospects in this technological field; software package and hands-on exercises used to examine basic geographic concepts and spatial data characteristics associated with automated mapping, projections, scales, geocoding, coordinate referencing, and data structures for computerized land-based data bases. Cross listed with GEOG 3100.

**GEOG 2500 – Sustainability & Human Society****Specialization – Sustainability**

Sustainability has become a catch phrase in discussions concerning the long-term viability of a number of phenomena, from the environment to the economy. Sustainability is commonly defined as meeting the needs of the current generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Students are introduced to issues inherent in discussions of sustainability. The major areas of focus include definitions of ecological and environmental sustainability, economic and political sustainability, and social justice, and various metrics used to assess sustainable behavior and practices. Students study the theory, principles and practices of sustainability, and participate in discussion and writing exercises based on lecture and readings. You must be a Sustainability minor or a Geography or Environmental Science major to enroll.

**GEOG 3340 – Geographies of Migration****Specialization – None**

This course explores contemporary movement of people across international borders and the social, cultural, political, economic, and environmental repercussions of such movements. The class looks at the global flow of people across national boundaries and the ways in which these dispersed peoples build and maintain social networks across national borders. While doing so, we address the role of globalization in international migration processes. What motivates people to move long distances, often across several international borders and at considerable financial and psychological cost? How do migrants change--and how in turn do they bring change, social as well as economic, to new destinations as well as places left behind? This course examines politics and patterns of migration, transnational migration, and immigration to the United States.

**GEOG 3400 – Urban Landscapes****Specialization – None**

Urbanization as a process; national urban systems; internal spatial structure of cities; role of transportation in urban development; location of residential, commercial and industrial activities; agglomeration economies; residential congregation and segregation; environmental justice; urban growth and growth coalitions; decentralization and urban sprawl; edge cities; impacts on the urban environment; world cities; globalization.

**INTS 2490 – Global Health****Specialization – None**

This class is an introduction to the field of global health and explores relationships between social, political, cultural, and economic conditions of mostly low and middle-income countries and their impact on health and health services. We will spend some time covering health issues in high-income countries as well. A major focus of the course is the evolution of primary health

care and alternative strategies in global health. Topics addressed include: maternal and child health, nutrition, the rise of non-communicable diseases, water and sanitation, community engagement, global health agencies, and funding sources. The course presents an overview of the multiple factors that influence global health and emphasizes the importance of a multidisciplinary approach to global health challenges.

### **INTS 2605 – Nuclear Weapons in International Security**

#### **Specialization – US Foreign Policy**

What role do nuclear weapons play in international politics? Why do states develop nuclear weapons? How are these weapons used in different crises? This course is an introduction to different themes in nuclear politics. The course will introduce students to the history of nuclear weapons, theories of nuclear deterrence, crises, non-proliferation, and disarmament. We will examine the nuclear weapons choices of different states, including those who have developed nuclear weapons, and those which have chosen to give them up. We will also assess if the international nuclear non-proliferation regime has been successful in attempting to spread nuclear weapons. The course will train students to pay attention to theoretical debates on nuclear weapons and how they speak to policy considerations and assess these arguments using historical empirical evidence. The course will also use these tools to assess current nuclear challenges with regard to U.S.-China competition, and the different crises involving North Korea, Iran, Russia, India, and Pakistan.

### **INTS 2708 – Contemporary US Foreign Policy**

#### **Specialization – US Foreign Policy**

When the United States first won its independence, its leaders sought to avoid at all costs the countless problems awaiting any country engaging in foreign affairs. Indeed, John Quincy Adams, in 1821, warned the United States of the dangers of "going abroad in search of monsters to destroy." In September of 2002, however, as American forces occupied one country and prepared to invade another, the Bush Administration released its National Security Strategy of the United States, which states: "To contend with uncertainty and to meet the many challenges we face, the United States will require bases and stations within and beyond Western Europe and Northeast Asia, as well as temporary access arrangements for long-distance deployment of U.S. forces." How did we go from isolation to empire? In this course, we will attempt to answer this question by exploring the progression of American foreign policy from its emergence out of isolation to its current stage of interventionist superpower. We will also identify and discuss key issues that are driving America's conduct abroad as well as evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the given policies addressing these important issues. By the end of the class, students should have a solid knowledge of the major themes and developments in the history of American foreign policy as well as the ability to reflect critically upon on-going foreign policy debates.

### **MFJS 2280 – Politics and Media**

#### **Specialization – None**

We examine the nature of the media and how media institutions shape the way citizens understand politics. We discuss global media institutions and the role media play in various societies. We explore the role of media in providing information for citizens in a democracy, examine how the media influence the political process, and investigate how the goals of and

changes within the media industry influence the effect media coverage has on the political process. Through our study, we explore how the media either enhance or limit the potential for citizens to contribute to democracy. This course counts toward the Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture requirement.

### **MFJS 3040 – Media Law**

#### **Specialization – Law and Policy**

Introduction to freedom of expression and media law. Students learn how the American legal system works and gain an understanding and appreciation of the philosophical foundations of free expression. In addition, students confront many of the issues facing professional communicators today. Topics include incitement, hate speech, student speech, copyright, defamation, and other issues crucial to mass media professionals. The course examines also explores challenges to free expression brought by new(er) communication technologies. The purpose of this class is to give students the knowledge and critical thinking skills needed to be successful in today's rapidly changing communication environment. Cross-listed with MFJS 4300.

### **PLSC 2415 – Campaigns and Elections**

#### **Specialization – US Domestic Policy**

The U.S. holds hundreds of elections every year, but presidential elections stand alone as the only truly national contests. What influences presidential selection? What information can we gain as citizens and scholars from national presidential debates? These elections are guided by distinct rules (including nominations via primaries and caucuses, evolving campaign finance laws, and the strict requirements of the Electoral College) with ever-changing strategies to maximize support under these rules. This class provides students with the historic context and political science concepts and theories to better understand the many steps involved in electing U.S. presidents.

### **PLSC 2755 – Legal Actors and Institutions**

#### **Specialization – Law and Policy**

This course examines the legal system from the points of view of those who work within it. It considers the social characteristics of lawyers, judges, regulators, elected officials and non-state actors, and how they matter to the social construction of law. The emphasis is on the social organization of law and the everyday interactions that bring meaning to the legal system. It considers and seeks to understand how legal roles, legal institutions and power relations within the law influence its development and practice. Throughout the course, students are required to think critically about how society and the social relationships of law influence law's outcomes. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

### **PLSC 2830 – Judicial Politics**

#### **Specialization – Law and Policy**

This course considers the role of courts, especially the Supreme Court, in the U.S. political system. Topics include the potential dangers and benefits of allocating significant power to unelected justices, judicial decision-making, Court-Congress interaction in developing public policies, the social and political effects of court rulings, and legal interest groups. Prerequisite: Sophomore standing.

**SOCI 2250 – Criminology****Specialization – None**

Social meaning of criminal behavior; relationship between crime and society in particular, how production and distribution of economic, political and cultural resources shape construction of law, order and crime; different types of crime, criminals and victims, and efforts to understand and control them. This course counts toward the Scientific Inquiry: Society and Culture requirement.

**SOCI 2420 – Social Inequality****Specialization – None**

Dimensions of social class and its effect on economic, political and social institutions as well as style of life. Cross listed with GWST 2420. Prerequisite: SOCI 1810 and sophomore standing or permission of instructor.

**SOCI 2628 – Mass Incarceration****Specialization – US Domestic Policy**

This course is designed for upper-level students interested in social policy, politics, inequality and law. It explores the “carceral state” or the institutions and policies that create a system of criminalization and punishment in the United States. Within the carceral state, the focus of the course is on the history and policies in the United States that led to the highest per capita incarceration rate in the world. The course examines and moves beyond various common explanations for mass incarceration, including crime, politics, public opinion, racism and the “prison industrial complex.” We then explore specific policies and practices that created and sustain high levels of incarceration, including sentencing, prison programming, and prosecutorial discretion, and the ways that these factors are deeply intertwined with America's history of race and inequality. We will study mass incarceration’s complexity by exploring variation in punishment across federal, state and local levels. Finally, the course addresses recent attempts at reform, including policies around re-entry, drug courts and prison conditions. Prerequisite: SOCI 1810.

**SOCI 2701.1 – Topic: Gangs in America****Specialization – US Domestic Policy**

This course will examine the history and evolution of street and prison gangs as an increasingly complex social phenomenon. Students will gain a clearer understanding of gang culture, organization and involvement. We will address the challenges gangs and gang-involved individuals pose to society. We will focus on issues in juvenile justice and resources for professionals working with gang-involved youth. Prerequisite: SOCI 1810.

**SOCI 2750 – Sociology of Law****Specialization – Law and Policy**

Overview of theory and research about relationship between law and society; legal rules, roles, organizations and inter-institutional relations; activities of legal profession, courts, juries, legislatures and regulatory agencies. Prerequisite: SOCI 1810 or permission of instructor.