

**SPECIAL AND UPPER DIVISION COURSES IN POLITICAL SCIENCE  
FALL 2015**

**PLS 2503      Legal Research and Argument, 3 credit hours  
Instructor:   Dr. Karen Swenson**

Students will learn how to conduct legal research, and will prepare written arguments and oral arguments advocating for the position of a mock client. The course will include role-playing simulations in which students act as attorneys making an argument before the U.S. Supreme Court. We will work with the national case problem released each year by the American Undergraduate Moot Court Association (ACMA). We will travel as a group so students may compete at an ACMA intercollegiate moot court competition. This course may be repeated for a total of nine semester hours, but no more than three semester hours may count toward the Political Science major or the Political Science minor.

**PLS 3353      Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa, 3 credit hours  
Instructor:   Dr. David Carwell**

The continent of Africa has been largely ignored by the global community, regardless of its size, population, resources and geographic location. This introductory course examines the political environment of selected sub-Saharan African states. Special emphasis will be given to specific challenges facing the political regimes in this area such as the impact of its colonial legacy, problems of economic development, democratization, state-society relations, the impact of AIDS and ethnic conflicts, and various internal and external actors which affect these challenges. There are no prerequisites for this course, and no prior knowledge of African politics or society is expected of the student.

**PLS 3513      Politics and the Legal Process, 3 credit hours  
Instructor:   Dr. Andrew McNitt**

The elements of our judicial system, from local prosecutors to the Supreme Court are all influenced by the political environment in which they operate. This course considers attorneys, juries, judges, and their separate functions in our system. It looks at how they each contribute to, and are influenced by political forces. In addition to the assigned text, course materials will include U.S. Supreme Court decisions.

**PLS 3523      Criminal Law, 3 credit hours  
Instructor:   Dr. Karen Swenson**

In this course, students will read, analyze, and discuss Supreme Court cases interpreting the U.S. Constitution's guarantees of civil liberties to criminal defendants and suspects. Topics will include restrictions on police criminal investigative techniques such as searches and seizures and interrogation of suspects. Topics will also include the rights of criminal defendants at trial, such as the right to counsel and the right to confront one's accusers. We will also address Eighth Amendment issues effecting criminal sentences.

**PLS 3553 Federal Indian Law and Policy, 3 credit hours**

**Instructor: Dr. Jeffrey Ashley**

An introduction to the complex body of Supreme Court rulings and legislative acts impacting indigenous people in the United States. Topics covered include sovereignty, land ownership, taxation, gaming, natural resources, criminal justice and the politics of tribal recognition.

**PLS 3723 Public Opinion/Political Participation, 3 credit hours**

**Instructor: Dr. Andrew McNitt**

Do people suddenly wake up one day and decide they are Republicans, Democrats, Libertarians, Socialists, or advocates of the Green Party? Are all Independents the same? Does a gender gap in female and male political behavior really exist? Does an individual's age affect their political behavior? Can you really trust the results of public opinion polls?

If you are interested in exploring these questions, then you should enroll in PLS 3723. This course focuses on the general topics of public opinion and political behavior. Attention will be given to how political socialization, the media and changes in American society influence political behavior. Class meetings include lecture and discussion. Grades will be based on three exams and two short written assignments.

**PLS 3753 The American Presidency, 3 credit hours**

**Instructor: Dr. Ryan Burge**

Are modern U.S. presidents truly the most powerful leaders in the world, or are they limited to making merely marginal or incremental changes? How powerful *should* presidents be? These questions are central to studying global citizenship. In this course, we will examine these questions by analyzing topics such as presidential elections, presidential powers, relations with other political actors and institutions, and relations with the public. We will expand our critical thinking skills by analyzing presidents and their administrations based on theories and models, rather than our partisan preferences. Students will also expand their critical writing and oral communication skills through their course work, including exams, short assignments, a research project and class presentations. (Meets the Writing Intensive requirement).

**PLS 3903 Women and Politics, 3 credit hours**

**Instructor: Dr. Melinda Mueller**

In this course, we will learn to analyze and apply theories and concepts that explain the role that gender plays in politics. We will explore topics such as political socialization, political ambition and activism, and political leadership—from the local level to the federal level. The course will focus specifically on the unique experiences of women voters, activists, and elected officials, but we will also compare their experiences to their male counterparts. Working both individually, and occasionally on teams, students will learn to conduct and present research about women and politics. (Meets the Writing Intensive requirement).

**PLS 4600 Political Science Capstone, 3 credit hours**

**Instructor: Dr. Richard Wandling**

This course provides a broad overview of classic and contemporary issues in Political Science research, with an emphasis in integrating undergraduate coursework with a research experience. Students in the class will have taken research methodology and a number of specialized courses in political science in order to utilize the theories, models and concepts learned to research and analyze political problems. Thus, the Capstone is intended to (a) strengthen a student's understanding of the basic issues and problems encountered in the study of political science, and (b) give each student an opportunity to design and carry out a research project on a topic in which he or she is particularly interested. The semester will culminate with a public presentation of students' research projects.

**PLS 4853 Contemporary Constitutional Development, 3 credit hours**

**Instructor: Dr. Karen Swenson**

More than most public law classes, this class will concentrate on explaining and predicting why the Supreme Court decides cases as it does, not only by understanding precedent and the doctrine of *stare decisis*, but by understanding other influences on the Court and individual Justices. We will focus on cases pending before the Supreme Court this term as well as the primary cases that the Court will rely on as precedent in deciding these current cases. We will also focus on the personal and political backgrounds of the Justices of the current Supreme Court. The key project for this course is a Prediction Paper; you will set forth a comprehensive theory of judicial decision-making, and apply the theory by predicting how three Justices will vote on a case currently pending before the Court. This course is open to graduate students as well as junior and senior students with some background in law and courts.

**PLS 4873 Human Resource Management in Public and Non-Profit Organizations, 3 credit hours**

**Instructor: Dr. Jeffrey Ashley**

This course involves an examination of personnel management practices in the public and non-profit sectors. It merges a traditional public personnel management approach with contemporary approaches to human resource management. Current issues such as affirmative action, drug testing, and gender discrimination will also be discussed within the context of personnel management.

**PLS 4943 American Political Theory, 3 credit hours**

**Instructor: Dr. Kevin Anderson**

This course investigates the evolution of American political thought and examines the social and political ideologies that have shaped the American political system, including Puritanism, Populism, Progressivism, and Reform Liberalism. This course also studies the role of American political thought in the development of American politics and policy. Short papers will be assigned to allow students to explore American ideas in the context of modern politics and public policy.