

Political Science

Robert Rodriguez (Department Head)

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Political Science Web Site (<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/colleges/humanitiesSocialSciencesArts/departments/politicalScience/default.aspx>)

The Department of Political Science offers the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Master of Arts, and Master of Science degrees in political science as well as a Bachelor of Science degree in paralegal studies. It also serves as the academic home for the Legal Studies Program that provides students interested in law school an Emphasis in Legal Studies appropriate for law school preparation and the Latin American and Latino American Studies Program that offers a minor.

Students seeking a bachelor's degree in the following major must complete:

1. Degree requirements for a Bachelor of Arts or Science degree, and
2. Core Curriculum Requirements (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/core-curriculum-requirements/>) (refer to those sections of this catalog).

In addition to the core curriculum requirements (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/core-curriculum-requirements/>), at the undergraduate level the department requires that all students take PSCI 347: Introduction to Research Methods and the department's capstone PSCI 488: Contemporary Ideas. Students seeking the Bachelor of Science degree are also responsible for PSCI 348: Applied Data Analysis in lieu of the language requirements for the Bachelor of Arts. Students then choose courses from five broad subject areas in the discipline: Political Theory and Philosophy, Public Policy, American Politics, International Relations, and Comparative Politics. Students seeking the BA or BS in Paralegal Studies take six required courses and then a series of electives to fulfill their semester credit hour requirements and develop expertise in their chosen career path. No political science course grade lower than a "C" will count toward a major, second major, or minor.

Regardless of the path that students choose toward their degree, students will effectively develop competencies in critical and analytical thinking, communication (both oral and written), and a deeper understanding of their own roles as students, citizens, human beings, and the responsibilities that each of these entail. In addition, students will master content and ideas particular to their chosen field of study.

As a traditional "liberal arts" degree, the bachelor's in political science prepares students for a variety of careers in both the public and private sectors.

These opportunities include business, education, public advocacy groups, non-governmental organizations, intelligence service, journalism, lobbying, the foreign service, and the legal profession (this list is not exhaustive—there are many more areas in which a degree in political science is helpful). For those students who desire to continue their academic training, the undergraduate program in political science helps to prepare them for graduate work or law school.

For information on our graduate programs please see the Graduate Catalog: <https://nextcoursecatalog.tamuc.edu/grad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/political-science/> (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/grad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/political-science/>)

Political Science B.A./B.S. (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/political-science/political-science-ba-bs/>)

Political Science Second Major (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/political-science/political-science-second-major/>)

Political Science B.A./B.S. - Legal Studies Emphasis (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/political-science/political-science-ba-bs-legal-studies-emphasis/>)

Paralegal Studies B.A./B.S. (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/political-science/paralegal-studies-major/>)

Paralegal Studies Second Major (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/political-science/paralegal-studies-second-major/>)

Political Science Minor (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/political-science/political-science-minor/>)

Legal Studies Minor (https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/political-science/legal_studies/)

Latin American US Latino Studies Minor (<https://coursecatalog.tamuc.edu/undergrad/colleges-and-departments/humanities-social-sciences-arts/political-science/minor-in-latin-american--us-latino-studies/>)

LALS 101 - Introduction to Latin American & US Latino Studies

Hours: 3

This course is an introduction to the interdisciplinary study of Latin America and the Latin American Diaspora in the United States, as manifested through politics, history, language, the arts, literature, economics, and social realities. Students will be exposed to the principal themes and methodologies of Latin American and U.S. Latino Studies, by synthesizing contributions from various disciplines. The course emphasizes interdisciplinary collaboration across various fields of study and provides students with a basic knowledge base for understanding Latin America and Latinas in the United States in both a contemporary and historical perspective.

PLGL 222 - Introduction to Law

Hours: 3

This course provides an overview of the law and the legal system. Topics include basic legal concepts and terminology in various areas of the law; structure, jurisdictions, functions, practices, and political impact of the judicial system at the local, state, and national levels; current issues in law; and ethical obligations of the paralegal. Prerequisites: PSCI 2305 with a minimum grade of C or PSCI 2306 with a minimum grade of C.

PLGL 223 - Legal Research

Hours: 3

This course is designed to aid the beginning student in acquiring and enhancing legal research skills. Topics covered include the techniques of legal research and writing, sources of the law and how each can be found; case analysis, legal citation, and legal bibliography; and ethical obligations of the paralegal in legal research. Prerequisites: PLGL 222 or concurrent enrollment or consent of the program coordinator.

PLGL 310 - Law Office Management

Hours: 3

This course is designed to acquaint the paralegal student with the fundamentals of law office management and organization. Topics include the organization and utilization of support personnel, time and billing systems, budgets, case and file management, calendaring and docket control, accounting systems, marketing, legal computer applications, ethical obligations of the paralegal in a law office, and career opportunities for paralegals. Prerequisites: PLGL 222 and PLGL 223 or concurrent enrollment or consent of the program coordinator.

PLGL 311 - Constitutional Law for Paralegals

Hours: 3

This course is designed as an introduction to U.S. constitutional law for the paralegal student. Topics include federal governmental powers and the limitation of those powers, federalism, due process, Bill of Rights, and individual rights under the Constitution. Attention is given to the connection between everyday paralegal experiences and constitutional law. Prerequisites: PLGL 222 and PLGL 223 with a minimum grade of C.

PLGL 312 - Bankruptcy For Paralegals

Hours: 3

This course introduces the student to bankruptcy law with emphasis on the paralegal's role. Topics include individuals and business liquidation and reorganization, debtor's and creditor's rights, litigation proceedings in bankruptcy court, legal concepts and terminology relating to bankruptcy law, ethical considerations for paralegals working in this area, and current computer applications utilized in bankruptcy practice. Prerequisites: PLGL 222 and 223 with a minimum grade of C, or consent of the program coordinator.

PLGL 321 - Probate

Hours: 3

This course provides the student with a basic understanding of Texas Probate code and forms of administration of decedents' estates and guardianship. Topics include preparation of probate and litigation documents, inventories, claims against estates, annual and final accountings, introduction to will contest proceedings, county and district court filings, and ethical obligations and professional responsibilities of the paralegal working in this area. Prerequisites: PLGL 222 and 223 with a minimum grade of C, or consent of the program coordinator.

PLGL 322 - Civil Procedure

Hours: 3

This course focuses on the Texas Rules of Civil Procedure while also giving students experience in the aspects of civil litigation in which a paralegal would be involved before trial. The student is introduced to rules regarding commencement of suits, citation, and pre-trial proceedings. The course also has a practical element requiring students to draft a petition, draft all types of discovery, and summarize a deposition. Prerequisites: PLGL 222 and 223 with a minimum grade of C, or consent of the program coordinator.

PLGL 323 - Business Law for Paralegals

Hours: 3

This course provides the paralegal student with a basic and thorough understanding of laws governing the creation and operation of businesses. Topics covered include the formation of business entities (including sole proprietorships, partnerships, corporations, and other business structures), corporate filings, minute book preparation, ethical obligations of the paralegal working in this field, and computer applications being utilized in corporate law practice. Practical skills are emphasized through assigned drafting and formation projects. Prerequisites: PLGL 222 and 223 with a minimum grade of C, or consent of the program coordinator.

PLGL 324 - Criminal Law & Procedure

Hours: 3

Criminal Law and Procedure. Three semester hours. This course presents the Texas Penal Code and Texas Rules of Criminal procedure. Topics include review of the criminal justice system, stages in criminal prosecution, investigation procedures, legal rights of the accused; documents preparation, ethical obligations of the paralegal working in criminal law practice, and the application of computer applications in criminal proceedings. Prerequisites: PLGL 222 and 223 with a minimum grade of C, or consent of the program coordinator.

PLGL 325 - Family Law

Hours: 3

This course is structured around the study of the Texas Family Code, including the principles of divorce, annulment, and suit to declare marriages void, with an overview of child custody and property division. Students are exposed through practical assignments to the legal aspects of marriage/ other relationships, duties and liabilities of husband/wife/children, child custody and support, adoption, guardianship, public records research, and the paralegal's role in alternative dispute resolution/mediation processes. Additional topics covered include ethical obligations, family law terminology, and application of electronic resources in family law practice. Prerequisites: PLGL 222 and 223 with a minimum grade of C, or consent of the program coordinator.

PLGL 328 - Real Estate Law for Paralegals

Hours: 3

This course focuses on legal principles governing real estate transactions, with particular attention to sales contracts, deeds, mortgages, title insurance, and Texas community property and homestead laws. Emphasis is on the practical skills needed by paralegals to perform all types of real estate transactions, ethical considerations for a paralegal working in this area, and emerging computer applications and resources in real estate practice. Prerequisites: PLGL 222 and 223 with a minimum grade of C, or consent of the program coordinator.

PLGL 426 - Paralegal Internship

Hours: 3

Basic internship for paralegals who lack experience in the legal field. Course integrates practical experience with the student's academic program through supervised work in an appropriate legal environment. Requires a minimum of 160 working hours. Prerequisites: Completion of at least 18 hours of paralegal specialty courses, not including PLGL 311, and consent of the program coordinator.

PLGL 427 - Torts and Personal Injury Law

Hours: 3

This course focuses on the fundamental common law and statutory concepts of tort law, with emphasis on the paralegal's role. Topics include intentional torts, negligence, strict liability, products liability, medical malpractice, special tort actions, including mass torts, immunities, and commonly employed defenses, and paralegal ethics. The course has a practical element requiring students to draft documents, such as a petition and motion for summary judgment, in addition to briefing cases. Students will become familiar with computer applications used in a torts practice. Prerequisites: PLGL 222 and 223 with a minimum grade of C, or consent of the program coordinator.

PLGL 497 - Special Topic

Hours: 3

Organized class. May be repeated when topics vary.

PSCI 2301 - Princ of US and Tex Gov

Hours: 3

Principles of United States and Texas Government. Three semester hours A survey of the underlying ideas, principles, and participatory practices of constitutional government in the United States and Texas. Topics considered include civil liberties and civil rights, constitutionalism, federalism, ideology, pluralism, political culture and socialization, political parties and interest groups, public opinion, republicanism, and voting and electoral politics.

PSCI 2305 - United States Government and Politics

Hours: 3

Designed to introduce the students to the principles and function of the government of the United States, this course examines the principles underlying the development of the U.S. Constitution, the operations of the U.S. government under the Constitution, and the opportunities and constraints imposed by and on the political system in the U.S. Topics to be covered include the philosophical preconditions of the American experiment in self-government with justice, the documentary history of American government, the actual function and practice of government under the Constitution, and the actors engaged in the American political system.

PSCI 2306 - Texas Government and Politics

Hours: 3

This course is a survey of the principles and practice of the political system in Texas. In addition to examining the state constitution and the institutions that it empowers, a wider look is taken to consider local governments, the political system, and the actors in the political system.

PSCI 205 - Applied Professional Ethics

Hours: 3

This course is designed to provide the student with the basic understanding of ethics across a variety of contexts using a multidisciplinary approach. Topics will include ethical theories, professional codes of ethics, and applications of ethics in a variety of professions.

PSCI 213 - Introduction to Political Philosophy

Hours: 3

Ultimately, political philosophy is an exploration of human nature and the way in which certain understandings about human nature inform the search for the political and social order best suited to maximize human potential. As the oldest of the social sciences, political philosophy is ultimately concerned with the issue of human happiness--how should one live in order to achieve it; and what social and political order is most conducive to individual and community happiness. Topics may include discussions of human nature, justice, conceptions of community, types of regimes, human rights, ethics, morality and moral order, and the way understandings of human nature inform the conceptions of the origins and shape of political and social order, etc.

PSCI 249 - Politics and Sports

Hours: 3

This course will analyze political, social, historical and cultural issues that are bound to sports, sporting events and athletes within and among various nation-states. Topics are organized thematically and chronologically, providing an overview of the numerous connections between politics and sports. The course analyzes specific political issues such as race, ethnicity, religion, economics, gender and masculinity that have emerged in sports such as soccer, baseball, American football, boxing and international events including the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup. Prerequisites: None.

PSCI 313 - Intro to Comp Politics

Hours: 3

Introduction and survey of the structures and processes of political institutions in major types of political systems in the world. These include parliamentary systems, monarchies, Islamic systems, countries of the former Soviet Bloc system, and systems in developing countries.

PSCI 331 - European Political System

Hours: 3

European Political Systems. Three semester hours. An introduction to the comparative study of the political systems of Great Britain and selected European countries, representing different cultural, social, and political environments.

PSCI 332 - Democ & Democratization

Hours: 3

A study of major theories concerning cultural, social economic, and political conditions that are favorable to the development of democracy. May be repeated when the focus varies.

PSCI 333 - Non-European Polit System

Hours: 3

A comparative study of selected political systems in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. May be repeated when the regional emphasis varies.

PSCI 335 - Political Economy

Hours: 3

Political Economy. Three semester hours. An introduction to the institutions and processes that shape U.S. domestic political economy including its increasing relationship to the global political economy. Emphasis will be placed on major political actors including Congress, the President, and the Federal Reserve Board and how decisions affect everyday citizens. These topics will be linked to the U.S.'s expanding influence in global institutions such as the WTO. Because this course provides a foundation for other upper-level political science courses (except paralegal courses), it should be taken by political science majors and minors, and composite social studies majors and middle school social studies majors at the earliest possible opportunity in their program in the department.

PSCI 336 - American State and Local Government

Hours: 3

This course introduces students to how sub-national governmental entities operate in the United States and the impact that these political systems and processes have on representation and public policy creation. Students will focus on the government institutions and political behavior in the states and their localities. The study of state and local politics is inherently comparative in nature. This course takes advantage of the variation among and within states and localities.

PSCI 341 - American Presidency

Hours: 3

The American Presidency. Three semester hours. The evaluation of the institution of the American Presidency within the framework of the U.S. Constitution, the American democratic and partisan political processes, and the processes by which the national government's public administrators administer and develop public policy.

PSCI 342 - Intro to Global Pub Pol

Hours: 3

An introductory survey of the field dealing with the evolution, scope and nature of public administration in the United States and including such topics as organization, management, personnel, budgeting, decision making and public policy.

PSCI 344 - Amer Pol Par/Electoral Po

Hours: 3

American Political Parties and Electoral Politics. Three semester hours. A study of party and electoral politics, including campaigning and voting behavior.

PSCI 345 - Public Opinion

Hours: 3

Public Opinion. Three semester hours. (2) A study of public opinion in the United States including the sources and characteristics of political opinions, the role of the media in shaping opinion, and the impact of opinion on elections and public policy. Methods used in conducting polls are examined and applied.

PSCI 346 - Intro to Public Policy

Hours: 3

Introduction to Public Policy. Three semester hours. (1) A course designed to familiarize the student with the problem solving activities of government in such areas as pollution, poverty, unemployment, taxation, education, health care, and technology.

PSCI 347 - Intro to Research Methods

Hours: 3

Introduction to Research Methods in Political Science - Three semester hours This course focuses on the important empirical research methodology employed in Political Science. Topics covered include the scientific method, research design, sampling, probability, as well as descriptive and inferential statistics.

PSCI 348 - Applied Data Analysis

Hours: 3

Students will be introduced to introductory empirical and statistical methods in political science. Students will focus on applied methods of sampling, probability, descriptive and inferential statistics, and hypothesis testing for application to political science and social science research. Prerequisites: PSCI 347.

PSCI 367 - Middle East Politics

Hours: 3

This course offers students an overview of contemporary Middle East politics and covers the period from the late 19th to early 21st century. The course explores the social, political and economic roots of contemporary events in the region by focusing on the processes of colonialism, state building and struggles for self-determination. Course material covers the following topics: the emergence of the modern state system in the Middle East; the rise of Arab nationalism; the military in state and politics; party systems; and tUS foreign policy in the Middle East.

PSCI 410 - Order, Justice, and Community

Hours: 3

The 20th century political philosopher Eric Voegelin once noted that "the order of history is the history of order." This course examines conceptions of political order and disorder from the earliest human communities through the Middle Ages. Topics to be covered may include: the nature of human being, the relationship of the person to the community, communities relations with one another, conceptions of justice, the journey of the soul, and civic obligation and moral order.

PSCI 411 - Liberty, the State, and the Person

Hours: 3

Beginning with the Renaissance and historically through the late 18th century, this course is a survey of the changes in conceptions of political order brought about by the rise of national-states and changing ideas about the proper role of government and its relationship to communities and individuals within them. Topics may include: civil and human rights, the rights of kings, the role of faith, the balance between order and freedom, the emergence of "the middle class" and its effect on conceptions of social order, the "social contract," and the right of resistance.

PSCI 412 - The Age of Ideology

Hours: 3

With the French Revolution a new era of political thinking began. No longer moored to the idea that political order rested upon a proper conception of human being in itself, political speculation moved toward notions of world immanent order imposed through ideological systems. Eric Voegelin wrote that the "death of the spirit is the price of progress." In the context of the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries this has manifested itself in warfare, genocide, and disorder. This course is an examination of the origins of ideological thinking, its effects, and the proper role of resistance as "(n)o one is obliged to take part in the spiritual crises of society.

PSCI 414 - Amer Political Thought

Hours: 3

An examination of the development of the American liberal-democratic political tradition from the colonial era to the present and the influence of dissent upon that tradition.

PSCI 421 - Real Estate Law Legal Ast

Hours: 3

PSCI 423 - Fundamental of Bankruptcy

Hours: 3

PSCI 430 - Rev & Revolutionary Movmt

Hours: 3

Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements. Three semester hours. A study of major theories of revolutions- their causes, processes and consequences- including close examination of selected cases. May be repeated when the focus varies.

PSCI 437 - Foreign Policy

Hours: 3

A study of the multiple determinants that shape foreign policy including the individual, national, regional, and international levels of analysis. Particular attention will be given to the formation and substance of foreign policy in the post-Cold War era. Focus may vary from the U.S., Latin America, Europe, Middle East and North Africa, and the former Soviet Union and successor states. May be repeated when the focus varies.

PSCI 438 - International Relations

Hours: 3

A study of the complex nature of both conflict-driven and cooperative interactions among nation-states and non-state actors that function in the international system. Focus may be on a particular region, law and diplomacy, and international organizations including NGOs and IGOs. May be repeated when the focus varies.

PSCI 441 - Congressional Politics

Hours: 3

Congressional Politics. Three semester hours. A study of politics and policy-making in the U.S. Congress. Topics include congressional elections, party and committee politics, constituent service, and legislative executive relations.

PSCI 442 - Constitutional Law

Hours: 3

This course is an introduction to constitutional law in the United States. Attention is given to important constitutional and legal doctrines by examining major decisions of the US Supreme Court. Topic include the powers of the federal government, federal interbranch conflict, federalism and nation-state relations, and state regulatory power. Prerequisites: A grade of C or higher in PSCI 2301 or PSCI 2305.

PSCI 443 - Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Hours: 3

This course focuses on American constitutional law as it relates to the procedural and substantive rights of individuals by examining major decisions of the US Supreme Court. Topics include the Bill of Rights and the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments.

PSCI 444 - Law, Politics, and the Judicial Process

Hours: 3

This course examines the historical, institutional, and political nature of the American judiciary. Students will study the important historical, political and procedural components of the judiciary at both the federal and state levels. Students will also study the important topics of judicial decision making, the political impact of court decisions, and the role of lawyers and judges within the judicial process.

PSCI 465 - American Political Behavior

Hours: 3

The study of political behavior focuses on the actions of—as opposed to the institutional constraints on—non-elite political actors (i.e., political citizens) as they interact with the political world through activities such as voting, joining parties and interest groups, protesting government actions, and consuming mass media. The course evaluates behavior from a variety of perspectives such as psychological, economic, sociological, and political.

Prerequisites: PSCI 2305 and PSCI 2306.

PSCI 476 - Internship Gov/Politics

Hours: 3

Internship in Government and Politics. Three semester hours. Internship for students who have the opportunity to gain practical experience working for some level of government or in political campaigns. Prerequisite: Consent of department head.

PSCI 488 - Contemporary Ideas

Hours: 3

(Same as Eng, Hist, and Phil 488) (Capstone) The course studies contemporary writing, mostly non-fiction, that is characterized by originality of topic, breadth of subject matter, clarity of expression and audacity. In reading logs, students make observations, take notes, and explore questions. In finished writings, they work out connections among ideas from various fields, moving from analysis to synthesis and fresh insights. Prerequisite: Junior standing.

PSCI 489 - Independent Study

Hours: 3

Independent Study. One to four semester hours. Individualized instruction/research at an advanced level in a specialized content area under the direction of a faculty member. May be repeated when the topic varies. Prerequisite: consent of department head.

PSCI 490 - H Honors Thesis

Hours: 3

Honors Thesis.

PSCI 491 - H Ind Honors Readings

Hours: 3

Honors Reading.

PSCI 497 - Special Topic

Hours: 3

Special Topics. One to four semester hours. (1, 2, 3, 4) Organized class. May be repeated when topics vary.

PSCI 497A - Special Topics

Hours: 1-3

Special Topics. One to four semester hours. (1, 2, 3, 4) Organized class. May be repeated when topics vary.

PSCI 497B - Special Topic

Hours: 1-3

Organized class. May be repeated when topics vary.

PSCI 497C - Special Topic

Hours: 1-3

Organized class. May be repeated when topics vary.