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The mission of McKendree University is to provide a high-quality educational experience to outstanding students.

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PSI 101 American Politics (3)

A survey course focusing on the development, organization, and dynamics of American political processes and institutions. This course examines how the public, interest groups, the media, political parties, and the constitutional branches of government work together to produce public policies. IAI-S5900

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand the fundamental principles underlying the US Constitution (checks and balances, separation of powers, federalism).
2. Understand the structure of and the interrelationship between the three branches of the federal government.
3. Exhibit personal and social responsibility by participating actively in a community and a democracy.

Course Topics

1. The political landscape
2. The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution
3. Federalism
4. Civil Liberties
5. Civil Rights
6. Congress
7. The Presidency
8. The Judiciary
9. Public Opinion and political socialization
10. Voting and elections
11. Political parties
12. Interest groups
13. The media
14. Current news



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PSI 102 State and Local Government (3)

Introductory course providing an understanding of how state and local governments function and their place within the American political system.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand the fundamental principles of a federalist system of government.
2. Understand the structure of and the interrelationship between state and local governments.
3. Exhibit personal and social responsibility by participating actively in a community and a democracy.

Course Topics

1. The political landscape
2. Federalism
3. State Constitutions
4. State Finances
5. Political attitudes and participation
6. Political parties and interest groups
7. State legislatures
8. Governors
9. State courts
10. Local governments
11. Public policy
12. Current news



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PSI 210 Introduction to World Politics (3)

This course studies the attempts of the international community to deal with current global security issues, including the proliferation of weapons, terrorism, civil war, genocide, and human rights violations.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand the three main theoretical approaches to world politics – realism, liberalism, and critical theory.
2. Apply those theories to a range of global security issues, including civil wars, weapons proliferation, terrorism, and human rights.
3. Evaluate the debates between liberal advocates of global governance and their critics.
4. Demonstrate writing, oral, critical reading, and critical thinking skills.
5. Understand how various cultures around the world interpret international politics, contemporary global security issues, and the global role of the United States.

Course Topics

1. Liberalism
2. Realism
3. Critical Theory
4. War Crimes
5. Human Rights
6. Weapons of Mass Destruction
7. Terrorism
8. War and Conflict
9. Asian Politics
10. Middle East Politics



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PSI 220 Introduction to Comparative Politics (3)

This course is an introduction to the comparative study of politics and government. It includes both a regionally diverse selection of case studies as well as an introduction to cross-national comparison, especially democratization.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand basic knowledge about the history, political culture, and governmental institutions of numerous countries.
2. Evaluate the various ways that countries both adhere to and violate democratic norms.
3. Understand how a range of countries implement a certain public policy.
4. Improve oral, writing, and critical thinking skills.

Course Topics

1. Introduction
2. United Kingdom
3. France
4. Germany
5. Japan
6. Russia
7. China
8. India
9. Iran
10. Mexico
11. Brazil
12. South Africa
13. Nigeria
14. United States Constitutional Convention



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PSI 230 Introduction to Political Theory (3)

An introduction to the classical theorists, including Plato, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Mill, and Marx.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand and evaluate the arguments of major political theorists.
2. Apply the arguments of major political theorists to the US political system.
3. Develop your own political philosophy.
4. Increase critical reading, critical thinking, and writing skills.

Course Topics

1. Introduction
2. Hobbes
3. Locke
4. Mill
5. Marx
6. Rawls
7. Critics of Modern Liberalism



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PSI 300 Congress (W) (3)

A study of the organizational structure of Congress, the nature of its processes, and the behavior of its members. Specific topics include Constitutional powers, the role and importance of the committee and party systems, congressional decision making, and Congressional interaction with other parts of the political system.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand the fundamental principles underlying the US Constitution (checks and balances, separation of powers, federalism).
2. Understand the structure of and the interrelationship between the US Congress and other government actors.
3. Evaluate, design, and conduct research.
4. Exhibit personal and social responsibility by participating actively in a community and a democracy.

Course Topics

1. The political landscape
2. Recruitment, elections, and styles
3. Leadership and political parties
4. Committees
5. Rules, procedures, and deliberation
6. Congress and the Executive
7. Congress and the Judiciary
8. Congress and interests
9. Congress and domestic policy
10. Congress and foreign policy
11. Congress and the American people
12. Current news



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PSI 301 The Presidency (W) (3)

This course examines the historical development, organizational structure, and function of the Presidency. Specific topics include presidential leadership in foreign and domestic policy and the relationship between the President and other political actors, including the public, the media, Congress, and the bureaucracy.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand the fundamental principles underlying the US Constitution (checks and balances, separation of powers, federalism).
2. Understand the structure of and the interrelationship between the Executive Branch and other government actors.
3. Evaluate, design, and conduct research.
4. Exhibit personal and social responsibility by participating actively in a community and a democracy.

Course Topics

1. The political landscape
2. The changing presidency
3. Elections
4. Public opinion
5. Presidential character and performance
6. Legislative politics
7. Executive politics
8. Judicial politics
9. Domestic policy
10. Economic policy
11. National security and foreign policy
12. Current news



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PSI 305 Constitutional Law (3)

Analyzes the role of the judiciary by examining constitutional decisions about civil rights, civil liberties, federalism, contracts, property, and the relative power of the executive and legislative branches.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand the fundamental principles underlying the US Constitution (checks and balances, separation of powers, federalism).
2. Understand the structure of and the interrelationship between the US Judiciary and other government actors.
3. Exhibit personal and social responsibility by participating actively in a community and a democracy.

Course Topics

1. The political landscape
2. Institutional authority
3. Nation-state relations
4. Economic liberties
5. Civil liberties
6. The rights of the accused
7. Civil rights
8. Suggestions for change
9. Current news



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PSI 307 Campaigns and Elections (3)

This course examines the American electoral process for both Congress and the Presidency. Topics covered include voting behavior, public opinion, the nomination and general election process, and the role of interest groups, the media, and political parties in modern elections.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand the fundamental principles underlying the US Constitution (checks and balances, separation of powers, federalism).
2. Understand how elected officials campaign for and attain office.
3. Understand US electoral rules.
4. Exhibit personal and social responsibility by participating actively in a community and a democracy.

Course Topics

1. The political landscape
2. The electoral process
3. The transformation of the American campaign
4. Financing campaigns
5. Modern campaign strategies
6. Political parties and interest groups
7. The media
8. Presidential campaigns
9. Congressional campaigns
10. State and local campaigns
11. Voter participation and choice
12. Current news



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PSI 309 Public Policy (3)

Analyzes how American public policy is formulated and how public policies can be evaluated. Includes a series of case studies to show how the policy process works and to develop a fuller understanding of contemporary public policy issues. Examples of policy areas include the federal budget process, social security reform, welfare reform, education reform, environmental policies, and criminal justice policies.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand the fundamental principles underlying the US Constitution (checks and balances, separation of powers, federalism).
2. Understand the policy landscape and how public policy is formulated.
3. Exhibit personal and social responsibility by participating actively in a community and a democracy.

Course Topics

1. The political landscape
2. The policy process
3. Federalism
4. Rulemaking and regulations
5. Economic policy
6. Criminal justice policy
7. Education policy
8. Civil rights policy
9. Immigration policy
10. Social welfare and healthcare policy
11. Environmental and energy policy
12. Current news



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PSI 311 International Organizations (3)

A study of the attempt to construct “global governance” through international organizations. Focuses on the United Nations, the European Union, and non-governmental organizations.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand the major theoretical arguments about international organizations.
2. Understand the function and influence of the United Nations, regional organizations, and non-governmental organizations.
3. Evaluate the extent to which these organizations have achieved “global governance” in a variety of issue areas.
4. Improve critical reading, critical thinking, research, oral, and written skills.

Course Topics

1. Introduction
2. Mainstream International Relations Theory
3. Critical International Relations Theory
4. The United Nations
5. The European Union
6. Regional Organizations
7. Non-Governmental Organizations



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PSI 312 International Law (3)

An analysis of contemporary international law. Specific topics include the laws of war, arms control treaties, human rights law, environmental law, and the global commons.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand the main principles of international law.
2. Apply international legal principles to relevant issues and events in world politics.
3. Develop legal arguments with precision, clarity, and logical coherence.
4. Improve critical reading, critical thinking, research, oral, and written skills.

Course Topics

1. Introduction
2. Sources of International Law
3. State Sovereignty and State Recognition
4. State Jurisdiction and Diplomatic Relations
5. State Responsibility
6. The United Nations Charter
7. Collective Security
8. The Use of Force
9. International Humanitarian Law
10. Human Rights
11. Law of the Sea
12. Environmental Law
13. Simulation – International Court of Justice cases



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PSI 313 International Political Economy (W) (3)

Analyzes the relationship between states and markets, the nature of capitalism and globalization, international trade and finance regimes, international development, and the problem of global inequality.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand basic international trade and monetary policies.
2. Understand the role of institutions like the World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank.
3. Apply the major theories of international political economy to public policy issues, including development, inequality, and the environment.
4. Develop writing, critical thinking, and oral skills.

Course Topics

1. Introduction
2. Crash Course in International Economics
3. IPE Theory
4. History of IPE
5. International Trade
6. International Finance
7. Economic Development
8. International Inequality
9. The Environment



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PSI 314 United States Foreign Policy (3)

An analysis of post-World War II United States foreign policy from a variety of perspectives, including international relations theory, domestic politics, and group decision making.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Evaluate US foreign policy from a variety of theoretical perspectives.
2. Understand and evaluate the major foreign policies of post-World War II presidents.
3. Enhance critical thinking, research, and writing skills.

Course Topics

1. Introduction
2. Truman
3. Eisenhower
4. Kennedy/Johnson
5. Nixon/Ford
6. Carter
7. Reagan
8. Bush I
9. Clinton
10. Bush II
11. Obama
12. Trump
13. Biden



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PSI 315 Gender and International Relations (3)

An analysis of feminist understandings of the major areas of international relations, including war and conflict resolution, globalization, development, and human rights.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Understand and analyze feminist critiques of mainstream IR theory.
2. Apply feminist theory to a variety of global security issues, including war, terrorism, human rights, and economic development.
3. Improve oral, writing, research and critical thinking skills.

Course Topics

1. Introduction
2. Feminist Critiques of Realism
3. War
4. War crimes
5. Weapons proliferation
6. Feminist Critiques of Liberalism
7. Peacekeeping
8. Human rights
9. Economic development



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PSI 498 Senior Seminar (W) (3)

This course introduces students to the skills required to conduct research in political science. Provides students with the capstone opportunity to do extensive research and present their findings in a seminar setting.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will:

1. Synthesize and make connections between content learned in previous courses (assessed by the reaction papers).
2. Enhance your critical reading, critical thinking, oral, and analytical skills (assessed by class participation).
3. Demonstrate the writing, research and critical thinking skills necessary to participate in academic, civic, and political environments (assessed by a research paper).
 - a. Identify assumptions, consequences, and implications of arguments.
 - b. Generate arguments from a review of scholarly sources.
 - c. Evaluate arguments with empirical evidence.
 - d. Clearly present arguments using appropriate organization and grammar.

Course Topics

1. No set topics for this course.
2. We read and discuss two books on current, relevant topics; and we write the senior thesis.