PSC 215 — Human Rights
Dr. Gizem Zencirci — M,W,F 12:30-1:30pm

Human rights are a universally recognized aspiration at the center of a global political struggle. Human Rights are also the subject matter of a growing academic discipline. Introduces the legal, political, moral and historical foundations, theoretical underpinnings, and key debates in the field, and familiarizes students with the skills necessary to become effective human rights advocates. (No prerequisite.)

PSC 303 — Urban Politics in the United States
Dr. Anthony Affigne — T,R 11:30am-12:45pm

This course is a survey introduction to political systems in urban regions of the United States. Topics include urban political organization, city governance, and public policy. The course asks, "What are the main problems and dynamics of city politics, and how have these remained the same, or changed dramatically, in recent years?" The course fulfills the political science major’s American Politics requirement, and is an elective for Black studies minors. For writing assessment students may choose either a take-home final exam, or several graded essays during the semester. Attendance is mandatory for all class meetings. Other course elements include field explorations, meetings at Providence City Hall, guest lecturers (politicians and authors), and videos.

(No prerequisite. Fulfills American Politics requirement. PSC 201 pre-requisite)

PSC 305 — The American Congress
Dr. Emily Lynch — M,W,F 11:30am-12:20pm

In this course we will examine the dynamics of the United States Congress. In particular, we will consider the representative-constituency relationship, the internal procedures of Congress, and the congressional role in the policy process. Because the current state of Congress is marked by high levels of polarization, we will also consider the following overarching questions throughout this course: To what extent are congressional members and the mass public polarized? What are the consequences of political polarization in a democracy? Are there any reforms that might change polarization in Congress? (Fulfills American Politics requirement. PSC 201 pre-requisite)

PSC 306 — The American Presidency
Dr. Joseph Cammarano — M,W,F 2:30-3:20pm

This course will use the 2016 presidential election as a frame for examining the evolution of the presidency from a relatively weak executive, to its current form, where there is a tendency for everyone—including presidents themselves—to overstate the role and importance of presidential power. Much of the course will focus on the presidential electoral system and how it has contributed to the modern presidency that relies upon informal and fleeting power instead of constitutional authority. Once a full examination of the election system is completed, the course will then examine the extent to which president can and do exercise power. Students will have projects related to the 2016 presidential nominations as well as a research paper. (Fulfills American Politics requirement. PSC 201 pre-requisite)
PSC 312 — Civil Liberties
Dr. Richard Battistoni—M, R 10:00-11:15am
In this course, we will study U.S. Constitutional development in the areas of civil liberties and civil rights. In particular, the course will focus on the evolution of constitutional interpretation of the First and Fourteenth Amendments, examining how the Supreme Court and other actors have understood the rights and liberties of individuals in the American political system. Students will come away with an understanding of how judges interpret constitutional provisions over time in response to concrete cases and controversies, as well as the role of the judiciary in the historical struggle for freedom and equality in the United States. Each student will have the opportunity to research a Supreme Court case of her or his choosing, to present and lead discussion in class, and out of which to develop a deeper written analysis of the questions involved and the implications of the Court's decision for American politics. (No prerequisite. Fulfills American Politics requirement)

PSC 318 — American Public Policy
Dr. William Hudson — M,W,F 11:30am-12:20pm
This course examines the key issue at the center of nearly all public policy debates in America: What should be the place of government in American life? Policy discussion in the United States usually focus on whether government intervention in addressing a societal problem is appropriate or likely to be effective. Next semester we will look at this question through a detailed review of the size and scope of the federal government. This will include analysis of the federal budget and recent controversies over federal deficits and debt. We also will look closely at certain major public policies that impact broadly the lives of Americans such as Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act, and Food Stamps. Since next year is a presidential election year, policy issues being debated in the campaign will receive special attention. This may include discussion of immigration, gun control, paid family leave, raising the minimum wage, tax cuts, or other issues that on which candidates are campaigning. At the beginning of the semester, students will participate collectively in picking the campaign issues we will study; these will become the basis of student research and debate over the course of the semester. (No prerequisite. Fulfills American Politics requirement.
PSC 102 and 201 prerequisite.)

PSC 319 - Political Attitudes & Public Opinion
Dr. Emily Lynch — M,R 10:00-11:15am
Simply put, political behavior is defined as Americans' responses to politics. These responses may take many forms: discussing politics with friends and family, expressing opinions in a Gallup poll, voting for a presidential candidate, or staging a protest. The purpose of this class is to provide you with a broad perspective of public opinion and political participation, which are two important topics in political behavior. We will study these topics by examining how citizens formulate attitudes and opinions and participate in politics, and then we will take time to reflect on how we think Americans should be acting in a democracy. Therefore, you will be developing your understanding about theories of political behavior as well as sharpening your analytical skills by critically assessing these theories. (Fulfills American Politics requirement.
PSC 102 and 201 prerequisite.)

PSC 321 — Chinese Politics
Dr. Susan McCarthy— T,R 11:30am-12:45pm
This course examines the politics of the People’s Republic of China. It focuses mainly on politics after 1949, though in it we also explore the Chinese revolution and the manner in which Maoist revolutionary practices shaped the post-1949 party-state. Among the topics we look at are the influence and transformation of traditional political ideals and institutions in the PRC; charismatic leadership and its effects on the Chinese Communist Party; intra-elite and grassroots political competition and conflict; Chinese approaches to development; political participation under authoritarian rule; social organizing and protest; the politics of religion and of the environment; and how economic liberalization has affected the authority and governance strategies of the CCP. Students will come away with an understanding of how PRC politics work (or don’t), and how ordinary people in a non-Western, non-democratic system engage and evade the state in the pursuit of their political interests. (No prerequisite)
PSC 324 — Politics & Foreign Policy of Russia and the Former USSR
Dr. Douglas Blum — T,R 4:00-5:15pm
This course is intended to provide students with a solid grounding in the politics and foreign policies of the former Soviet Union. The primary emphasis will be on Russia, although we will also examine Ukraine, Central Asia and the Caspian Basin. The approach is historical and analytical, and students will be required to read and think rather than simply memorize and regurgitate. We begin with a brief overview of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and the legacies of the Soviet period, as well as why the entire system ultimately collapsed. We then analyze the post-Soviet period, focusing on “Putinism” in various areas of Russian life. We conclude by comparing transitions and geopolitical contests across post-Soviet space, and asking what the foreseeable future portends – as well as how the US should respond.

(No prerequisite.)

PSC 342 — Modern Political Theory
Dr. Mary Bellhouse — T,R 1:00-2:15pm
Are there any natural, unchanging standards of justice and morality? Under what conditions are human beings free? Do human beings have ‘rights’ by nature, as is assumed in contemporary human rights claims? Do owners of private property have a right to do whatever they want with their private property, without the consent of others? What is human life like under conditions of anarchy? Why have government at all? What should government do? What kinds of people should rule, and why? Is democracy the best form of government? What happens to human freedom and human life under conditions of capitalism? Does Marx’s critique of capitalism help us to understand our contemporary condition? Is it enough to be merely “tolerant” toward one’s fellow citizens, or is more civic engagement needed? What does modern philosophy have to do with white supremacy and racial domination in the modern world? In this course we’ll examine the philosophic foundations of these questions and the issues they raise by engaging in careful reading and critical discussion of original texts by four key thinkers: Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Marx. No special background is needed to do well in this course. (No prerequisite. Fulfills Philosophy Core requirement)

PSC 382 — Politics and Culture (A Course on The 1960s in America)
Dr. Mary Bellhouse — M 2:30-5:00pm
This course is about the 1960s in America, a turbulent and fascinating time! The main topics include the Civil Rights movement (the Freedom Riders, Martin Luther King, the Black Power Movement, Malcolm X, the Black Panthers); the economy; the American war in Vietnam; the anti-War movement; and the Counterculture. We look closely at the kinds of decision-making that led to the escalation of the American War in Vietnam and to the defeat of the US in that war. We turn to different genres (movies, short stories, letters) to help us reflect on what the Vietnam War was like for American soldiers and civilians and for Vietnamese soldiers and civilians. Depending on your interest, we may look at how the late 1960s brought the beginnings of “second-wave” feminism, the gay rights movement, and the environmental movement. We will watch superb documentary films and listen to music at each class. Although our class meetings are long (there is a required mov-}

(No prerequisite. Fulfills Political Theory requirement.)
PSC 416 — Race and Politics in the Americas
Dr. Anthony Affigne — T,R 1:00-2:15pm
Have you wondered why the United States continues to experience racial tensions and political conflict, around questions of race relations and racial equality? This course will help you understand some of the most important issues in American politics today. Race and Politics in the Americas is an advanced course about the complex racial politics of North America, the Caribbean, Central America and South America. After completing this course you will understand much more about the foundations and nature of contemporary racial politics, in the United States and elsewhere in the American hemisphere. In particular, you will learn about the political constraints and opportunities facing the region’s Native American-, African-, Latino, and Asian-descent communities. For political science majors, PSC 416 can be used to satisfy either the American politics or the comparative politics field requirement. For students minoring in Black studies, BLS 416 is an option in the thematic field of “Social and Structural Analysis.” To accommodate diverse personal learning styles, academic schedules, and outside commitments, this course offers three different options for assessment and grading: take-home final; unit essays; final presentation. Attendance is mandatory.

(No prerequisite. Fulfills American Politics or Comparative Government and Politics requirement.)

PSC 470 001 — Critical Feminisms
Dr. Julia Jordan-Zachery - T,R 2:30-3:45pm
This course is an introduction to critical thinking on the intersection of race and gender and other components of social identity from an interdisciplinary perspective. It addresses and responds to the unique challenges of the inter-relationships and intra-relationships of women of color with feminism and political practices. Over the course of the semester, we will explore the complexity of Arab women, Black women, Chicana/Latina Women, and Asian American/Pacific Islander women by exploring their knowledge production, creative expressions, experiences of oppression and their resistance. We will investigate questions of identity and belonging in relation to topics such as the politics of reproduction, the family and the state, colonialism, sexuality, and citizenship. Over the course of the semester, we will discuss why we study “theory” and explore the relation between critical feminist theories and political praxis.

(No prerequisite.)