

Department of Political Science

Professor: Daniel J. Mahoney (Augustine Chair in Distinguished Scholarship); *Associate Professors:* Bernard J. Dobski, Jeremy Geddert, Geoffrey Vaughan (chairperson), Gregory Weiner; *Lecturer:* Mary Beth Burke.

MISSION STATEMENT

The major is designed to provide a comprehensive grounding in the fundamental principles and problems of a science whose relevance to contemporary life is immediate, yet whose tradition is venerable. Its concern is to help students become liberally educated men and women, rather than narrowly trained functionaries. Nevertheless, it prepares students in more than a general way for successful work in such fields as government service, international affairs, graduate study, journalism, law, teaching, publishing and business. The political science program consists of basic courses, open to all students, and advanced courses for all students except first-year students.

The basic Political Science courses are:

POL 110	Political Issues: The Quest for Justice
POL 201	American Government
POL 203	Modern States
POL 205	Political Philosophy
POL 207	Peace and War

Selections from these basic courses may be counted toward Core requirements in “Person and Society” and “The Great Conversation” as well as credit in a Political Science major or minor. The courses cover the major fields in Political Science, namely:

- American National Government—the constitutional founding, institutions and parties, constitutional law, civil rights, and political thought in the U.S.
- American Public Policy and Administration—political economy, urban politics, and democratic leadership.
- Major Foreign States—the institutions, practices, and traditions of European, Latin American, Asian, and African States.
- Political Philosophy—reflection on political life from Plato and Aristotle to Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx, and Nietzsche.
- International Politics—relations of peace and war among states, American foreign policy, and diplomacy.

Students are urged to plan a program of study by selecting from among major and elective courses those appropriate to their personal interests and objectives

MAJOR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE (11)

Required Courses

- Four intermediate courses, normally taken sophomore year
 - POL 201 American Government
 - POL 203 Modern States
 - POL 205 Political Philosophy
 - POL 207 Peace and War
- One course from three of the following five areas (3):
 - POL 310–319 American National Government
 - POL 320–329 American Public Policy
 - POL 330–349 Major Foreign States
 - POL 350–359 Political Philosophy
 - POL 370–379 International Politics
- Three courses from the rest of the departmental offerings at the introductory and upper levels (3)

- POL 409 Research Seminar. To be taken in the fall of senior year.

NOTE: All first-year students who think they may major in Political Science or who have an interest in politics are urged to take POL 110 Political Issues: The Quest for Justice or any of the required intermediate courses listed above.

Recommended Four-Year Plan for the major in POLITICAL SCIENCE

The following is a suggested plan for Political Science majors. For instance, students who are interested in the study of politics are encouraged to take our introductory course (POL 110: Quest for Justice) as early as they can. But that course need not be taken first. Nor is it required for the major. However, all students who plan to major in Political Science should take the intermediate 200-level courses either before or in conjunction with relevant upper division offerings. Both the major and its requirements are flexible enough to accommodate study abroad and students can successfully complete the major with the latest starting point being spring of sophomore year.

First Year

Fall	Spring
POL 110: Quest for Justice OR any of our intermediate offerings (POL 201: American Government, POL 203: Modern States, POL 205: Intro to Political Philosophy, and POL 207: Peace & War)	POL 110: Quest for Justice OR any of our intermediate offerings (POL 201: American Government, POL 203: Modern States, POL 205: Intro to Political Philosophy, and POL 207: Peace & War)

Sophomore Year

Fall	Spring
POL 110: Quest for Justice OR any of our intermediate offerings (POL 201: American Government, POL 203: Modern States, POL 205: Intro to Political Philosophy, and POL 207: Peace & War)	POL 110: Quest for Justice OR any of our intermediate offerings (POL 201: American Government, POL 203: Modern States, POL 205: Intro to Political Philosophy, and POL 207: Peace & War)
A student with sufficient experience in the major and relevant 200-level courses could consider 300-level offerings.	A student with sufficient experience in the major and relevant 200-level courses could consider 300-level offerings.

Junior Year

Fall	Spring
Students with sufficient experience in the major and relevant 200-level courses should address our 300-level offerings.	Students with sufficient experience in the major and relevant 200-level courses should address our 300-level offerings.
Elective 300+-level (Fall or Spring)	Elective 300+-level (Fall or Spring)

Senior Year

Fall	Spring
POL 409: Senior Seminar (Always in the Fall, Wednesdays 2:30-5:00)	Elective 300+-level (Fall or Spring)

DOUBLE COUNTS IN THE CORE FOR POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJORS

Great Conversation POL 110 or POL 201 or POL 205
Person and Society POL 203 or POL 207
Global Awareness POL 345

ADVISING TIPS FOR THE MAJOR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

- Although 11 courses are required for the major, students can take up to 14 Political Science classes.
- Students are encouraged to explore the major by taking POL 110 as early as possible, though it is not a required class.
- 200-level courses (POL 201, 203, 205, 207) do not have prerequisites. Majors must take these 200-level intermediate courses before or in conjunction with relevant 300-level offerings and are thus usually taken during Freshman and Sophomore years. There is no prescribed order in which the 200-level offerings need to be taken.
- More than one 200-level course can be taken at the same time.

- As a general practice, all 200-level intermediate courses are offered every semester.
- POL 350 and POL 358 count towards the minor in Core Texts and Enduring Questions (CTEQ).
- The special topics course (POL 399ST) can, depending on its theme and content, fulfill any of our upper division course requirements. Students should consult with the Department chair.
- Students thinking about pursuing a career in the law may want to consider minoring in Law, Ethics, and Constitutional Studies (LEX), an interdisciplinary minor between Philosophy and Political Science. As a general practice, the four required courses of this seven course minor are offered every year.
- The Senior Seminar (POL 409) is only offered during the Fall and only on Wednesdays from 2:30-5:00.
- The Department does not accept on-line classes for credit. Nor does it grant credit to classes taken in the CCE.
- To maintain the academic integrity of the major, transfer courses are approved under strict conditions. Students should consult with the department chair before registering for courses outside the day school of Assumption College.

TO WHAT CAREERS DOES A MAJOR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE LEAD?

An education in Political Science affords students the skills, training, and intellectual disposition to pursue effectively a variety of fulfilling vocations. Recent Political Science graduates have begun their careers in the State Department, the FBI, and the White House, as well as in posts throughout our national, state, and local governments. In addition to public service, our graduates also pursue careers in international affairs, graduate study, journalism, media, law, teaching, publishing, and business. The Political Science program consists of basic courses, open to all students, and advanced courses for all students except first-year students.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

POLITICAL SCIENCE (POL)

POL 110 POLITICAL ISSUES: THE QUEST FOR JUSTICE

This beginner's course in political science provides an introduction to politics through a critical examination of a full range of political issues and of classic and contemporary texts that illuminate the ongoing human—and American—“quest for justice.” Classic works of political reflection, political literature, speeches and writings by statesmen, as well as contemporary American political debates on domestic and foreign policy will be analyzed to put the “issues” of politics in a broader and deeper perspective. Counts towards “The Great Conversation” in the Core Curriculum. (Fall, Spring)

Staff/Three credits

POL 201 AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

This course is an introduction to the principles, institutions, and processes of American government. It focuses on our political principles, such as liberty, democracy, and equality, especially as reflected in our government institutions—Congress and the Executive and Judiciary branches—and in our extra-governmental institutions, such as political parties and interest groups. Consideration will also be given to major contemporary issues—free speech, racial and sexual equality, privacy—as expressions of debates over our principles. Open to all students, this course counts towards “The Great Conversation” in the Core Curriculum. (Fall, Spring)

Weiner/Three credits

POL 203 MODERN STATES

A comparative analysis of major types of ancient and modern political systems, with an emphasis on the Western European liberal democracies of Great Britain and France and on the 20th century experience of totalitarian despotism. Open to all students, this course counts as social science in “Person and Society” in the Core Curriculum. (Fall, Spring)

Mahoney/Three credits

POL 205 POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

This course is an introduction to the nature and place of political philosophy in the political thought and life of Western Civilization. It examines the basic principles of political philosophy according to thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, St. Augustine, Machiavelli, and Marx. Open to all students, this course counts towards “The Great Conversation” in the Core Curriculum. (Fall, Spring)

Vaughan/Three credits

POL 207 PEACE AND WAR

This course examines the role of war in human affairs, especially during the 20th century of “total war,” and at the outset of the 21st century. It considers why no enduring peace was achieved after the two world wars, the characteristics of international politics since the end of the Cold War, and the instruments for maintaining or restoring peace. Major interpretations of world politics are evaluated. Open to all students, this course counts as social science in “Person and Society” in the Core Curriculum (Fall, Spring)

Dobski, Mahoney/*Three credits*

POL 311 AMERICAN POLITICAL THOUGHT

American political conditions and institutions have occasioned unique contributions to the history of political thought. This course will explore them. It begins with the theoretical foundations of the American republic; proceeds to cover the political theory of the Constitution and the great clashes about the nature of the union that culminated in the Civil War and the concepts of freedom that blossomed in its aftermath; and finally, explores the ideas unleashed by the emerging conditions of the 20th century, including industrialism, American power and civil rights, through the lenses of both progressive and conservative thought.

Weiner/*Three credits*

POL 312 THE AMERICAN FOUNDING

An investigation into the fundamental principles that informed the founding of the American political order and have subsequently oriented the American way of life. In seeking to understand those principles, we also examine the political and philosophical tradition that preceded the founding. (Fall)

Weiner/*Three credits*

POL 315 THE JUDICIARY

This course explores the U.S. judiciary as an institutional force in American politics. Beginning with the foundations of the judiciary and continuing through its prominent position in the interpretation and sometimes formation of policy and law today, the course considers the place courts do and should occupy in the constitutional scheme, how effective they are in producing social change, why their role has changed and how other branches of government react to them. Students will consider major Supreme Court cases and political controversies that illustrate the effect of the federal judiciary on American government.

Weiner/*Three credits*

POL 316 CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

The role of the Supreme Court in the American political system. Constitutional powers and limitations, with primary emphasis on judicial interpretations of the 1st and 14th amendments.

Weiner/*Three credits*

POL 321 PUBLIC POLICY

This course examines selected major contemporary national problems of the U.S. and the federal policies designed to deal with them. Particular problems considered might include poverty, welfare, the economy, education, health, transportation, consumer protection, environmental protection, and energy. It considers the interaction between parts of the government and between government and interest groups, in formulating and executing public policy. It evaluates the thinking of those who have advocated and opposed the expansion of government responsibility for a large range of social action.

Geddert/*Three credits*

POL 322 POLITICAL ECONOMY

The purpose of this course is to clarify the tradition of political economy, to understand its foundations and historical permutations, and to study its relationship and pertinence to pressing public policy concerns of our time. The relationship between “political” and “economic” phenomena and analysis will be investigated. The course focuses on the origins of political economy in moral and political reflection rather than in abstract “scientific” considerations. Authors to be studied include Smith, Marx, Keynes, de Jouvenel, Hayek, and Berger. (Fall)

Staff/*Three credits*

POL 323 POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

This course is intended as an introduction to the study of democratic statesmanship, or political leadership in a democratic regime. The primary emphasis will be on the study of the rhetoric and actions of leading American presidents, as well as leading figures from antiquity and from modern Britain and France.

Mahoney/*Three credits*

POL 338 NATIONALISM & FASCISM

This course has as its focus the nation, as a unique form of political organization, and nationalism as the unique movement which gives that form its primary expression. Distinctions will be drawn between moderate and patriotic forms of nationalism and that extreme form known as fascism. It will analyze the rise of major manifestations of nationalism in the 19th and 20th centuries as well as the 21st century challenges posed to the sovereignty of the nation by multinational corporations, intergovernmental organizations, terrorism, transnational bodies (the EU), and even individuals.

Dobski/*Three credits*

POL 345 POLITICAL MASS MURDER

Scholars who have studied the 20th century say that far more people were killed by their own governments during this time than by foreign enemies in wars. This course examines this phenomenon and compares selected major cases of political mass murder, including the Jewish holocaust, great state induced famines under Stalin and Mao, the killing fields of Cambodia, genocide in Rwanda and Sudan and ethnic cleansing in Bosnia. It considers how outside powers, especially the U.S. and U.N, have responded, when they intervene and how effectively; when and why they refrain from acting; and whether moral principles or international law permit or oblige states to intervene. (Fall)

Dobski, Mahoney/*Three credits*.

POL 350 REPUBLICANISM ANCIENT AND MODERN

Is it possible for a political community to combine the rule of wisdom and virtue with popular consent? Can such a regime satisfy the need for both stability and energy? To understand why and how republics ancient and modern answered these questions, as well as why some republics succeeded and others failed, students will explore the theoretical and historical texts that illustrate the evolution of this political form. Rising above any particular party, policy, or platform, this course will distinguish the ancient effort to secure ordered liberty from its medieval and modern counterparts, throwing into specific relief the character of our own republican democracy and the challenges facing its success. Fulfills a "Great Conversation" requirement in the Core curriculum.

Dobski, Mahoney/*Three credits*

POL 351 CLASSICAL POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Study of the origin and principles of political philosophy in the works of Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides, Plato, Xenophon, and Aristotle. Relevant works by Roman-era philosophers and historians (Cicero, Plutarch, Seneca, Sallust, Tacitus and Livy) may also be studied.

Dobski/*Three credits*

POL 352 EARLY MODERN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY: MAKING NATURAL RIGHTS

This course will explore the major philosophers of the period, from Machiavelli to Rousseau. These figures made the modern world through their claim that each individual is best positioned to know what is right for that person. This is the origin of natural rights.

Vaughan/*Three credits*

POL 353 IDEOLOGY AND REVOLUTION

A study of modern revolutions and their connection to "ideologies" which promise a fundamental transformation of political life. We examine the political history of the French and Soviet Revolutions to understand the originality of ideological revolution as distinct from traditional political revolutions which have had more limited aims. The course also compares totalitarian tyrannies with traditional forms of dictatorship. The anti-totalitarian Revolutions of 1989 in Eastern Europe are also considered.

Mahoney/*Three credits*

POL 355 LATE MODERN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

A study of political theories from Rousseau, Marx, Nietzsche, and Heidegger which have presented themselves as critical alternatives to early modern, medieval, and classical political philosophy. (Fall)

Vaughan/*Three credits*

POL 358 TOCQUEVILLE & DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA

Democracy in America (1835, 1840) is arguably the first and greatest philosophical reflection on modern democracy and the greatest guide to American laws, institutions, and mores yet written. Tocqueville, a distinguished French aristocrat and political thinker, wrote sympathetically about the American experiment in republican self-government while highlighting tensions between liberty and equality, religion and individualism, local self-government and centralized administration. He praised active citizenship and warned against pantheism, civic apathy, and soft or tutelary despotism. He wrote poignantly on the three races in America and opposed the evils of racism and slavery. He taught that to love democracy well it is necessary to love it moderately--and thus to be aware of its considerable strengths as well as the myriad threats it posed to liberty and human dignity. We will read both volumes of this great classic and some selected letters from Tocqueville that clarify its intent.

(Spring)

Mahoney/*Three Credits*

POL 359 MEDIEVAL POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

This course will explore political thought from the fall of the Roman Empire to the beginning of the modern nation-state in the Treaty of Westphalia. Prominent topics will include the pre-modern origins of natural rights, the relationship between rights and responsibilities, and the relationship between church (or mosque) and state.

Geddert/*Three Credits*

POL 371 FOREIGN POLICY AND DIPLOMACY

This course examines the making and character of the foreign policies of major states in the world today. This study is made against a background consideration of Thucydides' interpretation of relations between states, the nature and development of diplomatic practice, and the impact of modern Western civilization on the contemporary world.

Mahoney/*Three credits*

POL 372 AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY

A study of the policy of the United States regarding important areas and problems in the contemporary world, and the development of the American involvement in foreign affairs from the Roosevelt-Truman era of World War II to the present time. Legalist, moralist, realist and revisionist interpretations of American foreign policy are evaluated.

Dobski/*Three Credits*

POL 375 THE STUDY OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

This course will analyze the variety of approaches to the study of international politics. Different methodological approaches, drawing on political philosophy, political history, and the social sciences, will be considered. Principal emphasis will be placed on the ethical dimensions of international relations. Prominent analysts and philosophers of international relations, such as Thucydides, Machiavelli, Waltz, and Aron will be analyzed. (Spring)

Geddert, Mahoney/*Three credits*

POL 376 TERRORISM AND THE MODERN WORLD

An introduction to modern-day terrorism and the challenges it poses to contemporary political life. This course distinguishes three ways in which terrorism manifests itself in the modern world, capturing the difference between those who see terror as an end in itself, those who use terror as an instrument to achieve political goals, and those who understand terrorism to serve "otherworldly", or non-political, ends. Students will examine how these manifestations of modern terrorism vary from each other in their origins, historical development, the justifications they employ, the goals they pursue, and the tactics, targets and technologies that they use.

Dobski/*Three credits*

POL 377 THE POLITICS OF JUST WARS

Are "just wars" possible? This class examines reflections on just war thinking at the core of the political, military, religious and philosophic traditions within Western civilization, and how they apply to contemporary reflections on human rights and international law. It begins with military justifications from classical antiquity, moving to the origins of just war theorizing in the early Church, Judaism and Islam. It then weighs the most serious criticisms of the moral and political teachings of the classical and Christian world posed by the "Catholic New Left," feminist political theory, Islamist terrorism, and the allure of a world without borders.

Dobski, Geddert/*Three credits*

POL 381 SHAKESPEARE'S POLITICS

Perhaps transcending the distinction between philosopher and poet, Shakespeare has given the world dramatic portrayals of the most enduring human problems. This course focuses on one of those problems through a careful reading of some of Shakespeare's British histories. To be more precise, it explores Shakespeare's portrait of Britain's development from a tribal kingship under the political and spiritual influence of "Rome" into a constitutional monarchy whose separation of church from state prepared the way for its modern republican character.

Dobski/*Three credits*

POL 382 POLITICS AND LITERATURE

Literature, such as the epic, the novel, or tragic or comic drama, has always been central to the entertainment and self-understanding of a democratic people. This course studies a series of writers who illuminate the nature of democracy and tyranny in the modern world.

Mahoney/*Three credits*

POL 399 SPECIAL TOPIC: THEOLOGY OF THE AMERICAN FOUNDING

Americans often say we prefer to keep politics out of the pulpit and the pulpit out of politics. But early in American history, the two nourished each other, so much so that it is difficult to imagine an American republic emerging without political theology. This course examines those strains in early American thought from the Puritan landing in America through the Civil War, including early colonial documents like the Mayflower Compact, the sermons that fired the American Revolution, and the spiritual chords of Lincoln's Second Inaugural. This political theology established a tradition whose influence on our constitutional culture—ranging from the civil rights movement of the 1960s to the evangelical movement today—endures.

(Spring)

Weiner/*Three Credits*

POL 400 INDEPENDENT STUDY

Open to highly qualified Junior and Senior Political Science majors. Permission of the Chairperson is required.

Staff/*Three credits*

POL 409 RESEARCH SEMINAR: POLITICAL THEORY AND POLITICAL PRACTICE IN THE TWENTIETH AND TWENTY-FIRST CENTURIES

For the fall 2018 seminar, we will study five recent or contemporary distinguished political philosophers (Hannah Arendt, Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, Pierre Manent and Roger Scruton) whose philosophical reflection has illumined the nature of political liberty and ideological despotism, the character of citizenship and statesmanship, the nature of liberal education, and the variety of political regimes and forms. The senior seminar will explore the multiple ways in which political philosophy in the most capacious sense of the term illumines the structure of moral and political action and thus of decent politics in the modern world. (Fall)

Mahoney/*Three Credits*