

Political Science

Overview

We offer a variety of courses, including Introduction to Government: United States, Introduction to Government: California, Constitutional Rights, Comparative Politics, Introduction to International Relations, Introduction to Political Theory, and Women and Politics from a Global Perspective. ARC's political science courses are typically both UC and CSU transferable. In addition, we offer an Associate's degree and Associate's for Transfer degree.

Roadmaps

Road maps lay out all of the courses you need to take for a given degree or certificate.

[Get a Road map! Explore Ways to Complete These Programs \(/academics/arc-program-road-maps\)](#)

Department Chair [Cynthia Unmack \(/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/cynthia-unmack\)](#)

HomeBase [Language and People \(/academics/homebases/language-and-people\)](#)

Division [Behavioral & Social Sciences Division Office \(/academics/bss-division-office\)](#)

Phone (916) 484-8283

Associate Degrees for Transfer

A.A.-T. in Political Science

The Associate in Arts degree in Political Science for Transfer provides a clearly articulated curricular track for students who wish to transfer to a CSU campus, while also serving the diverse needs of students interested in the breadth and depth of the field of Political Science. Additionally, this degree exposes students to the core principles and practices of the field in order to build a foundation for their future personal, academic, or vocational paths.

The Associate in Arts degree in Political Science for Transfer provides students with a major that fulfills the general requirements of the California State University for transfer. Students with this degree will receive priority admission with junior status to the California State University system. The Associate in Arts degree in Political Science for Transfer (AA-T) may be obtained by the completion of 60 transferable, semester units with a minimum 2.0 GPA, including (a) the major or area of emphasis described in the Required Program outlined below (earning a C or better in these courses) and (b) either the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) or the California State University General Education-Breadth Requirements.

Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

Degree Requirements

COURSE CODE	COURSE TITLE	UNITS
POLS 301	Introduction to Government: United States (3)	3
or POLS 481	Introduction to Government: United States - Honors (3)	
A minimum of 9 units from the following:		9
POLS 302	Comparative Politics (3)	
POLS 310	Introduction to International Relations (3)	
POLS 320	Introduction to Political Theory (3)	
STAT 300	Introduction to Probability and Statistics (4)	
A minimum of 6 units from the following:		6
IS 310	Peace and Conflict (3)	
IS 312	Current Global Development Issues (3)	
POLS 304	Introduction to Government: California (3)	
POLS 330	Constitutional Rights (3)	
POLS 342	Women and Politics from a Global Perspective (3)	
Total Units:		18

The Associate in Arts in Political Science for Transfer (AA-T) degree may be obtained by completion of 60 transferable, semester units with a minimum 2.0 GPA, including (a) the major or area of emphasis described in the Required Program, and (b) either the Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC) or the California State University General Education-Breadth Requirements.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this program, the student will be able to:

- describe the fundamentals of political science and governance.
- compare and contrast contemporary comparative systems and governance.
- evaluate the relationship between the governing process and public policy.
- examine how citizen and interest group participation influence political systems.
- analyze the role of culture and its influence on politics.
- assess how the design of political institutions and processes affect policy and stability.
- analyze politics and diplomacy in the international system.
- apply basic research methods to political science.
- analyze political and public policy making processes, and relate these to current issues and problems, for evaluating political events and their role in the political system.
- compare and contrast various theories of justice and the just state.
- evaluate various theories of the purpose of government and apply to a critical analysis of current political events.

Career Information

Career opportunities in political science include, but are not limited to, advocate/organizer, campaign worker, diplomat, educator/teacher, events planner, foreign affairs specialist, lawyer, legislative aide (state and federal), lobbyist, political consultant, and public relations specialist.

Associate Degrees

A.A. in Political Science

This degree provides a comprehensive introduction to the field of political science. It stresses the systematic study of politics, political institutions and governmental processes, state and local government, public policy, foreign policy, international relations, comparative politics, and political theory.

Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

Degree Requirements

COURSE CODE	COURSE TITLE	UNITS
POLS 301	Introduction to Government: United States (3)	3
or POLS 481	Introduction to Government: United States - Honors (3)	
POLS 302	Comparative Politics	3
POLS 310	Introduction to International Relations (3)	3
or POLS 480	Introduction to International Relations - Honors (3)	
POLS 320	Introduction to Political Theory	3
A minimum of 6 units from the following:		6
HIST 483	History of the United States - Honors (3)	
or HIST 310	History of the United States (3)	
HIST 484	History of the United States - Honors (3)	
or HIST 311	History of the United States (3)	
IS 301	Introduction to Global Studies (3)	
IS 302	Issues in Global Studies (3)	
POLS 304	Introduction to Government: California (3)	
POLS 330	Constitutional Rights (3)	
POLS 342	Women and Politics from a Global Perspective (3)	
Total Units:		18

The Political Science Associate in Arts (A.A.) degree may be obtained by completion of the required program, plus general education requirements, plus sufficient electives to meet a 60-unit total. See ARC graduation requirements.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this program, the student will be able to:

- describe the fundamentals of political science and governance.
- compare and contrast contemporary comparative systems and governance.
- evaluate the relationship between the governing process and public policy.
- examine how citizen and interest group participation influence political systems.
- analyze the role of culture and its influence on politics.
- assess how the design of political institutions and processes affect policy and stability.
- analyze politics and diplomacy in the international system.
- apply basic research methods to political science.
- analyze political and public policy making processes, and relate these to current issues and problems, for evaluating political events and their role in the political system.
- compare and contrast various theories of justice and the just state.
- evaluate various theories of the purpose of government and apply to a critical analysis of current political events.

Career Information

This degree is designed to facilitate successful transfer to four-year institutions. Career opportunities in political science include, but are not limited to, advocate/organizer, campaign worker, diplomat, educator/teacher, events planner, foreign affairs specialist, lawyer, legislative aide (state and federal), lobbyist, political consultant, and public relations specialist.

Political Science (POLS) Courses

POLS 301 Introduction to Government: United States

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Advisory:	Eligible for ENGRD 310 or ENGRD 312 AND ENGWR 300; OR ESLR 340 AND ESLW 340
Transferable:	CSU; UC
General Education:	AA/AS Area V(a); CSU Area D8; CSU Area F2; CSU Area F3; IGETC Area 4H
C-ID:	C-ID POLS 110
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course analyzes the U.S. government's historic origins, philosophical and theoretical justification, federal structure, and constitutional structures. The course studies the rights and liberties of individuals as articulated in the U.S. Constitution and federal court decisions. Further, it examines and describes the procedural aspects of the U.S. and California political systems including amending the U.S. and California constitutions, holding elections, campaigning, legislating, executing and adjudicating law. The course examines individual and group political behavior in voting, interest groups, political parties, and the media. It provides an analysis of contemporary problems and

issues and looks at factors that shape politics and policy-making including diversity, political culture, political socialization, political ideologies, and public opinion. Finally, it also describes California state and local governments' constitutional base, structures and functions, political process, problems and issues, and federal-state relations. This course is not open to students who have completed POLS 481.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- describe the nature of government and its theoretical foundations and functions.
- relate American political thought, the Constitution, and governing institutions to one another.
- identify and explain the structures and functions of the United States and California governments prescribed by their respective constitutions.
- compare and contrast the federal, state and local governments with respect to their political foundations, functions, and contemporary problems.
- explain the civil liberties and civil rights of individuals as articulated in the United States Constitution and federal court decisions.
- identify and evaluate political processes within the United States and California, including the development of political ideologies, voting behavior and other forms of political participation.
- evaluate the relationship between the governing process and public policy at both the state and federal level.
- discuss and analyze contemporary political issues and operations in the United States and California.
- analyze the role of culture, diversity, and ideology in shaping public opinion and public policy in the United States and California.

POLS 302 Comparative Politics

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Advisory:	Eligible for ENGRD 310 or ENGRD 312 AND ENGWR 300; OR ESLR 340 AND ESLW 340.
Transferable:	CSU; UC
General Education:	AA/AS Area V(b); CSU Area D8; IGETC Area 4H
C-ID:	C-ID POLS 130
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course is a comparative study and analysis of political systems, ideologies, institutions, policies, cultures, histories, and the development of government within various countries. It emphasizes the cultural and social dimensions of political behavior and attitudes in connection with governmental and political practices typical of particular geographical regions. It also covers an examination of selected developed and lesser developed nation-states from a global perspective.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- compare and contrast different political systems, regimes, and ideologies.
- evaluate patterns of political behavior and policy choice.
- assess how regime type and the design of political institutions and processes affect policy, economic development, and political stability.
- examine how citizen and interest group participation influence political systems.
- analyze the role of political culture and its influence on political institutions and political behavior.
- explain the origins of the modern state and evaluate characteristics necessary for state formation.
- identify different relationships between states and markets.
- construct questions, theories, and hypotheses of political behavior.
- assess the impact of the relationship between states and markets on economic development.

POLS 304 Introduction to Government: California

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Advisory:	Eligible for ENGRD 310 or ENGRD 312 AND ENGWR 300; OR ESLR 340 AND ESLW 340
Transferable:	CSU; UC
General Education:	AA/AS Area V(a); CSU Area D8; CSU Area F3; IGETC Area 4H
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course covers the essential organization, institutions, and processes of California state and local government. It fulfills the California State University requirement for state and local government, but not the requirement for the U.S. Constitution.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- assess the relationship between citizens and the state of California with emphasis on the impacts of cultural, economic, political, and social diversity
- compare and contrast the structure of California government and the federal model
- describe the various institutions of California government and how each functions in the policymaking process
- analyze the effects of structural differences between the federal model and the structure of California government institutions on the policy making process and political behavior
- examine public financing in California and analyze the interconnectedness of federal, state, and local budgets
- compare and contrast the California and U.S. Constitutions and the effect of these differences on policy making, civil rights and liberties, and political behavior
- analyze public opinion and the political behavior of California citizens

POLS 310 Introduction to International Relations

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Advisory:	Eligible for ENGRD 310 or ENGRD 312 AND ENGWR 300, OR ESLR 340 AND ESLW 340.
Transferable:	CSU; UC
General Education:	AA/AS Area V(b); CSU Area D8; IGETC Area 4H
C-ID:	C-ID POLS 140
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course introduces the academic field of International Relations. It surveys global issues as they relate to theories of international relations, the nation-state system, the role of state and nonstate actors, globalization, armed conflict and its causes, international law and conflict resolution, and international political economy. It emphasizes comparing global perspectives among developed and developing nations. This course is not open to students who have completed POLS 480.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- explain the field of international relations and methods associated with research in the field.
- compare and contrast different theoretical approaches to the study of international relations and the roles they play in understanding the international system.
- analyze the evolution of the nation-state system and issues associated with nation-state actors in the international system.
- identify the global south, its experiences, challenges, and responses to world powers.
- analyze the causes and trends of armed conflicts, their resolution, and the causes of international conflict in the 20th Century and 21st Century.
- assess the potential for international law and its use for preservation of world peace and stability.
- critique contending international political economic theories in a changing global economy.
- define key terms used in the study of International Relations.
- research topics related to International Relations issues and principles while demonstrating critical thinking.

POLS 320 Introduction to Political Theory

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Advisory:	Eligible for ENGRD 310 or ENGRD 312 AND ENGWR 300; OR ESLR 340 AND ESLW 340.
Transferable:	CSU; UC
General Education:	AA/AS Area V(b); CSU Area D8; IGETC Area 4H
C-ID:	C-ID POLS 120
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course is a survey of the ideas that have shaped Western political development, covering important thinkers from the ancient, medieval, and modern periods. Topics include theories of just and unjust societies, social contract theory, justifications for government authority, and the rights of citizens versus the responsibilities of citizenship.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- explain arguments made by political philosophers from different periods of history
- assess the historical development of ideas regarding just and unjust regimes, government authority, the ends of civil society and the rights and responsibilities of citizens
- critique arguments made by political philosophers from different periods of history
- compare and contrast various conceptions of just and unjust regimes, justifications for government authority, the ends of civil society, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens
- construct theoretical insights into the current problems facing governments and societies

POLS 330 Constitutional Rights

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Advisory:	Eligible for ENGRD 310 or ENGRD 312 AND ENGWR 300; OR ESLR 340 AND ESLW 340.
Transferable:	CSU; UC
General Education:	AA/AS Area V(b); CSU Area D8
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course is a survey of American constitutional rights and civil liberties. Emphasis is placed on analysis of U.S. Supreme Court decisions and related materials dealing with issues arising under the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- analyze the philosophical bases for constitutional protection of certain human rights
- compare and contrast various approaches to judicial interpretation of the U.S. Constitution
- evaluate the current status of constitutional rights as reflected in United States Supreme Court decisions interpreting the Fourteenth Amendment and U.S. law
- evaluate the current status of constitutional liberties as reflected in U.S. Supreme Court decisions interpreting the Bill of Rights and U.S. law

POLS 342 Women and Politics from a Global Perspective

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Advisory:	Eligible for ENGRD 310 or ENGRD 312 AND ENGWR 300; OR ESLR 340 AND ESLW 340
Transferable:	CSU; UC
General Education:	AA/AS Area V(b); CSU Area D4; CSU Area D8; IGETC Area 4D; IGETC Area 4H
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course examines the impact of politics on women's lives and women's impact on politics from a global perspective. It explores past and current influences on the political and legal status of women as well as women's participation in the political process throughout the world.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- assess the impact women have had on political institutions, social movements, interest groups, and revolutions.
- evaluate the impact that public policy has on women's lives.
- explain the importance of studying the roles of women in politics globally.
- identify similarities and differences in women's reasons for political organizing, as well as their choice of tactics and methods.
- construct questions, theories, and hypotheses related to the impact of women on politics.
- explain the rationale for state public policies regarding women.
- analyze the current status of women in the developing world.
- compare the different issues that impact women in the developing world to those in the advanced industrial world.

POLS 480 Introduction to International Relations - Honors

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	Placement into ENGWR 480 through the assessment process.
Advisory:	ENGWR 300 or 480
Transferable:	CSU; UC
General Education:	AA/AS Area V(b); CSU Area D; IGETC Area 4
C-ID:	C-ID POLS 140
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course examines global issues as they relate to theories of international relations, the nation-state system, the role of state and non-state actors, globalization, armed conflict and its causes, international law and conflict resolution, and international political economy. Emphasis is placed on the comparison of global perspectives among developed and developing nations. This seminar-style honors course approaches the topical material through class discussion which encourages problem-solving techniques focusing on current international relations issues. This course is not open to students who have completed POLS 310.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- explain the field of international relations and methods associated with research in the field.
- compare and contrast different theoretical approaches to the study of international relations and the roles they play in understanding the international system.
- analyze the evolution of the nation-state system and issues associated with nation-state actors in the international system.
- identify the developing world, its experiences, and challenges.
- analyze the causes and trends of armed conflicts, their resolution, and the causes of international conflict in the 20th Century and 21st Century.
- assess the potential for international law and its use for preservation of world peace and stability.
- critique contending international political economic theories in a changing global economy.
- define and compare key terms used in the study of International Relations.
- analyze complex readings and processes as they apply to contemporary issues in International Relations.
- hypothesize the conditions under which various international relations outcomes are likely to occur and provide theoretical explanations for said outcomes.

POLS 481 Introduction to Government: United States - Honors

Units:	3
Hours:	54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	Placement into ENGWR 300.
Transferable:	CSU; UC
General Education:	AA/AS Area V(a); CSU Area D8; CSU Area F2; CSU Area F3; IGETC Area 4H
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course analyzes the U.S. government's historic origins, philosophical and theoretical justification, constitutional structures and how these institutions work. It examines and describes the procedural aspects of the political system including holding elections, campaigning, voting, lobbying, legislating, executing and adjudicating law. It provides an analysis of contemporary problems and issues. It also describes California state and local governments' constitutional base, structures and functions, political process, problems and issues. Conducted in a seminar format, this course emphasizes participatory classroom styles of learning and the material used is more substantial and sophisticated. In addition, there are extensive research projects on American institutions, political processes, and political behavior designed to challenge and motivate. This course is not open to students who have completed POLS 301.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- describe the nature of government and its theoretical foundations and functions.
- relate American political thought, the Constitution, and governing institutions to one another.
- identify and explain the structures and functions of the United States and California governments prescribed by their respective constitutions.
- compare and contrast the federal, state and local governments with respect to their political foundations, functions, and contemporary problems.
- explain the civil liberties and civil rights of individuals as articulated in the United States Constitution and federal court decisions.
- identify and evaluate political processes within the United States and California, including the development of political ideologies, voting behavior and other forms of political participation.
- evaluate the relationship between the governing process and public policy at both the state and federal level.
- discuss and analyze contemporary political issues and operations in the United States and California.
- analyze the role of culture, diversity, and ideology in shaping public opinion and public policy in the United States and California.
- analyze complex readings and processes as they apply to contemporary issues in American Politics.
- hypothesize the conditions under which various political outcomes are likely to occur and provide theoretical explanations for said outcomes.

POLS 494 Topics in Political Science

Units:	0.5 - 4
Hours:	9 - 54 hours LEC
Prerequisite:	None.
Advisory:	ENGRD 116, ESLR 320, and ESLW 320, or placement through the assessment process.; ENGWR 102 or 103, and ENGRD 116 with a grade of "C" or better; OR ESLR 320 and ESLW 320 with a grade of "C" or better; OR placement through assessment process.
Transferable:	CSU
Catalog Date:	January 1, 2021

This course provides the opportunity for concentrated study of specialized topics in Political Science. Each offering focuses on a discrete aspect of the Political Science discipline. Refer to class schedule for class topic. Individual field trips may be required.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- identify and explain key political processes covered in the course
- assess the relationship between individuals, governmental actors, and the topic covered
- evaluate the the relationship between the governing process and the topic covered
- analyze the impact of the topic covered on the political system under analysis

POLS 495 Independent Studies in Political Science

Units: 1 - 3
Hours: 54 - 162 hours LAB
Prerequisite: None.
Transferable: CSU
Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

Independent Study is an opportunity for the student to extend classroom experience in this subject, while working independently of a formal classroom situation. Independent study is an extension of work offered in a specific class in the college catalog. To be eligible for independent study, students must have completed the basic regular catalog course at American River College. They must also discuss the study with a professor in this subject and secure approval. Only one independent study for each catalog course will be allowed.

POLS 499 Experimental Offering in Political Science

Units: 0.5 - 4
Prerequisite: None.
Transferable: CSU
Catalog Date: January 1, 2021

Faculty

[Kenneth Baxter \(/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/kenneth-baxter\)](/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/kenneth-baxter)

Adjunct Professor

Office: ARC Main

Email: BaxterK@arc.losrios.edu (<mailto:BaxterK@arc.losrios.edu>)

[Betty Chan \(/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/betty-chan\)](/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/betty-chan)

Adjunct Professor

Office: ARC Main

Email: chanb@arc.losrios.edu (<mailto:chanb@arc.losrios.edu>)

Phone: (916) 286-3691 ext. 12376

[Kathleen Collihan \(/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/kathleen-collihan\)](/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/kathleen-collihan)

Professor

Office: ARC Main, Davies Hall, D353

Email: CollihK@arc.losrios.edu (<mailto:CollihK@arc.losrios.edu>)

Phone: (916) 484-8419

[Rebecca Herzog \(/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/rebecca-herzog\)](/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/rebecca-herzog)

Adjunct Professor

Office: ARC Main

Email: HerzogR@arc.losrios.edu (<mailto:HerzogR@arc.losrios.edu>)

Phone: (916) 286-3691 ext. 12337

[Tamir Sukkary \(/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/tamir-sukkary\)](/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/tamir-sukkary)

Adjunct Professor

Office: ARC Main

Email: sukkart@arc.losrios.edu (<mailto:sukkart@arc.losrios.edu>)

Phone: (916) 286-3691 ext. 12469

[Tressa Tabares \(/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/tressa-tabares\)](/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/tressa-tabares)

Professor

Office: ARC Main, Davies Hall, D303

Email: TabareT@arc.losrios.edu (<mailto:TabareT@arc.losrios.edu>)

Phone: (916) 484-8190

[Cynthia Unmack \(/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/cynthia-unmack\)](/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/cynthia-unmack)

[Jason Vitaich \(/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/jason-vitaich\)](/about-us/contact-us/faculty-and-staff-directory/jason-vitaich)

Professor

Office: ARC Main, Davies Hall, D309

Email: [UnmackC@arc.losrios.edu \(mailto:UnmackC@arc.losrios.edu\)](mailto:UnmackC@arc.losrios.edu)

Phone: (916) 484-8467

[staff-directory/jason-vitaich](#)

Adjunct Professor

Office: ARC Main

Email: [VitaicJ@arc.losrios.edu \(mailto:VitaicJ@arc.losrios.edu\)](mailto:VitaicJ@arc.losrios.edu)