

Learning Objectives for Four Recommended Pathway Courses in Political Science

Introduction to American Government

Objectives:

- To advance students' understanding of the essential elements of the US political system, including its Constitutional system, political processes, governmental institutions, and political culture(s).
- To advance students' understanding of how political power operates in the US. Students will be able to explain political outcomes from a variety of different perspectives on US politics and evaluate critically the political institutions and processes of democracy in the US.
- To promote students' ability to think critically about different perspectives and ideologies on US politics among the public, political parties, and scholars.
- To promote students' ability to engage political debates effectively orally and in writing. Students will learn how to write and speak about important issues in US politics coherently and knowledgeably.

Introduction to Political Science

Objectives:

- Help students understand the fundamental terms, concepts in the discipline of political science; help students learn how to relate these terms to our political society and to interpret political events, both domestically and globally.
- Help students understand the nature of power, authority, and legitimacy, their acquisition, operation and impact upon the society; to introduce students to the major factors that determine political outcomes.
- Help students critically interpret and assess information regarding a variety of political ideologies, constitutional orderings and institutional arrangements.
- Enable students to know where and how to identify primary sources for political information and analysis and evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically;
- Enable students to produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments about politics using evidence to support conclusions in critical and coherent way.

Urban Politics

Objectives:

- Help students understand the governance of US cities and their historical development of governmental structures, political parties, machine politics and reform movements; help students understand community institutions, the role of advocacy groups, ethnic organizations, business, labor, and other interest and activist groups; the local political economy, and the role of government in local affairs.

- Help students understand the nature of the process of policy-making within US cities and local communities and the opportunities for political participation at the city, state and community level, the relationships between city governments and state and national level institutions within the context of the American federal system.
- Develop the ability to understand how power differentially affects people in urban communities and to engage in key contemporary debates that shape the future of U.S. cities.
- Help students understand the impact of globalization on politics and policy-making in US cities and suburbs.
- Students should learn and develop the ability to apply some key theories to political issues in urban settings.

Global Issues/Issues in International Relations

Objectives:

- Help students understand and analyze global challenges whose sources, impacts, and solutions extend beyond the borders of any one country, such as globalization and development, global financial crisis, human rights, international security and terrorism, poverty and hunger, global pandemics, population and migration, transnational organized crime, and environmental issues.
- Help students identify the different actors and regimes of international politics (nation-states, IGOs, NGOs, MNCs, Global Civil Society, Transnational and supranational entities) in respective global issue areas and their activities.
- Help students evaluate major threats arising from global issues to peace, welfare and stability in the world today, find out the underlying reasons for a lack of resolution, and think creatively and critically for solutions to global challenges at normative, institutional, and policy levels.
- Students will be able to apply class material, terminology, theories, and concepts to current events and specific cases.