

# Political Science

## Course Description

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All political thought thrives on debate. Modern political issues are rarely one-sided and the examination of multiple viewpoints enhances understanding and critical thinking. The incorporation of the history surrounding current political issues also promotes deeper understanding of the reasons why people hold particular views. An understanding of the American political system, with emphasis on the origins and evolution of rights and civil liberties, will help enhance our participatory democracy by empowering students with the knowledge of how the system works and how it can be changed. Gaining a better understanding of the U.S. in the global context is another goal of this political science elective course.

The course outline is divided into three major topics:

- Political Science Concepts
- The Evolution of American Rights and Civil Liberties
- International Politics and Current Political Issues

# Political Science

## Course Outline and Topics

### Political Science Concepts

**Unit One: Introduction to Political Science** (*Suggested time frame: four weeks*)

#### **I. Background**

- A. Defining political science
- B. Legitimacy, sovereignty, and authority
  - 1. Historical examples of these concepts
  - 2. Current examples of these concepts

#### **II. Theories on the State**

- A. Classic Theories
  - 1. Plato
  - 2. Aristotle
  - 3. Machiavelli and Renaissance thought
  - 4. Social Contract Theory
    - a. State of nature
    - b. Locke, Hobbes, Rousseau
  - 5. Edmund Burke's Response
- B. Marxist Theory
- C. Institutional Theory

#### **III. Political Systems**

- A. Democratic
  - 1. Republican/indirect democracy
    - a. presidential
    - b. parliamentary
  - 2. Direct democracy
  - 3. Constitutional monarchy
- B. Autocratic
  - 1. National-leader type dictatorships
    - a. Nazism
    - b. Fascism
  - 2. Political-party type dictatorships
    - a. Communist dictatorships

- b. Stalin and Castro
- 3. Absolute monarchs

#### **IV. Political Ideologies**

- A. Liberalism
- B. Conservatism
- C. Socialism
- D. Anarchism

### **Unit Two: Introduction to the American Political System** (Suggested time frame: three weeks)

#### **I. History of the Bill of Rights**

- A. The nature of government as a protector of rights
  - 1. rights
  - 2. liberties
  - 3. social contract
  - 4. democracy
- B. Federalist vs. Anti-Federalist debates
  - 1. Federalism
  - 2. Constitution
  - 3. federalist
  - 4. anti-federalist
  - 5. James Madison
  - 6. Alexander Hamilton
  - 7. Patrick Henry
- C. Overview of the amendments

#### **II. Liberal vs. Conservative**

- A. Strict versus loose interpretation of the Constitution
- B. Democrats versus Republicans
  - 1. liberal
  - 2. conservative
  - 3. moderate
  - 4. left-wing
  - 5. right-wing
  - 6. reactionary
  - 7. third party
- C. Modern issues which illustrate party differences
  - 1. Litmus test

2. Divisive issues
  3. Single-issue voters
  4. Split-ticketing
- D. Modern political figures as examples of party affiliation

### **Unit Three: Citizens and Groups in the Political Process**

*(Suggested time frame: two weeks)*

#### **I. Role of Public Opinion**

##### A. Political Socialization

1. Family
2. Education
3. Employment
4. Regional influences
5. Economic influences

##### B. Mass Media

1. Television
2. Radio
3. Newspapers
4. Internet

##### C. Measurement of Public Opinion

1. Polls
2. Samples

#### **II. Elections and Electoral Behavior**

##### A. Selection of Candidates

1. Caucuses
2. Nominating conventions
3. Primaries

##### B. Campaigning

1. Presidential electoral vote process
2. Campaign Finance
3. Political Action Committees (PACs)
4. Federal Election Commission
5. Interest Groups
6. Televised Debates

- D. Voting
  - 1. Voter Registration
  - 2. Voter Turnout

## **The Evolution of American Rights and Civil Liberties**

### **Unit Four: The First Amendment** (*Suggested time frame: six weeks*)

#### **I. Freedom of Speech**

- A. English basis of free speech
  - 1. Licensing Act of 1662
  - 2. John Lilburne
- B. Colonial experience with free speech
  - 1. Libel
  - 2. Slander
  - 8. Sedition
  - 9. John Peter Zenger
- C. Early free speech provisions in state constitutions
- D. Expanding the right of free speech to the states
  - 1. Selective incorporation
- E. Case law surrounding issues in free speech
  - Terms:*
    - 1. Freedom of speech
    - 2. Freedom of expression
    - 3. Defamatory Speech
    - 4. Symbolic Speech
    - 5. Clear and Present Danger
    - 6. Fighting Words
    - 7. Obscenity
    - 8. Advocacy
    - 9. Freedom of Association
  - Cases:*
    - 1. TX v. Johnson
    - 2. Feiner v. NY
    - 3. Tinker v. DesMoines
    - 4. Chaplinsky v. NH
    - 5. Gitlow v. NY
    - 6. Edwards v. SC
    - 7. Schenk v. US
    - 8. Dennis v. US

- 9. Brandenburg v. OH
- F. Modern issues in free speech and expression
- G. Process by which cases reach the Supreme Court
  - 1. Original Jurisdiction
  - 2. Appellate Jurisdiction
  - 3. Appeal
  - 4. Plaintiff
  - 5. Prosecution
  - 6 Defense

## II. Freedom of Religion

- A. English basis for freedom of religion
- B. Colonial experience with freedom of religion
  - 1. Puritans and Massachusetts Bay Colony
  - 2. Pennsylvania and Maryland
  - 3. Roger Williams and Rhode Island
  - 4. Anne Hutchinson
- C. Early state experiences with freedom of religion
  - 1. church and state
  - 2. 1786 Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom
- D. Case law surrounding freedom of religion
  - Terms:*
    - 1. Establishment Clause
    - 2. Free Exercise Clause
    - 3. Scopes Trial
    - 4. Wall of Separation
    - 5. Hugo Black
    - 6. William Rehnquist
    - 7. Conscientious Objectors
    - 8. *Lemon* test
  - Cases:*
    - 10. *Everson v. Ewing*
    - 11. *Wallace v. Jaffree*
    - 12. *Lemon v. Kurtzman*
    - 13. *WI v. Yoder*
    - 14. *Abindgton v. Schempp*
- E. Modern political issues about freedom of religion

## III. Freedom of the Press

- A. History of the evolution of freedom of the press
  - 1. Libel
  - 2. Prior Restraint

3. Censorship
4. Pentagon Papers
- B. Case law surrounding freedom of the press
  - Cases:*
  - 1. *NY Times v. US*
  - 2. *Stevens v. NY Times*
  - 3. *Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier*
- C. Modern political issues about freedom of the press

**Unit Five: The Second Amendment** (*Suggested time frame: two weeks*)

**I. The Revolutionary War experience**

- A. Militia
- B. National Guard
- C. Minutemen

**II. Case law surrounding the evolution of the Second Amendment**

- A. *Presser v. IL*
- B. *US v. Miller*

**III. Differing interpretations of the meaning of the words in the Second amendment**

**IV. Modern issues about the right to bear arms**

- A. Gun show loophole
- B. Trigger locks
- C. Brady Bill
- D. Gun control

**V. Supreme Court opinions about the Second Amendment**

- A. majority opinion
- B. dissenting opinion
- C. concurring opinion

**Unit Six: The Fourth Amendment** (*Suggested time frame: three weeks*)

**I. English Origins of search and seizure**

- A. General Warrant
- B. Writ of Assistance

**II. Colonial experience with search and seizure**

**III. Scope of the Fourth Amendment**

- A. Papers and Effects
- B. Warrant
- C. Probable Cause
- D. Reasonable expectation of privacy
- E. Arrest Warrant
- F. No-knock Warrant,
- G. Eavesdropping
- H. Warrant
- I. Contraband

**IV. Application of the Fourth Amendment**

- A. Schools
- B. Private employers
- C. Reasonable suspicion

**V. Exceptions to the warrant requirement**

- A. Stop and frisk
- B. Terry stop
- C. Elephant in a Matchbox
- D. Fruit of a Poisonous Tree
- E. Carroll Doctrine
- F. Search pursuant to a lawful arrest
- G. Hot Pursuit
- H. Plain View
- I. Good Faith
- J. Exclusionary Rule
- K. Exigent Circumstances
- L. Consent



## **VI. Fourth Amendment Case History**

- A. *Terry v. OH*
- B. *Mapp v. OH*
- C. *NJ v. TLO*
- D. *Mincey v. AZ*

## **VII. Application of Fourth Amendment to current political issues**

### **Unit Seven: The Fifth and Sixth Amendments** (*Suggested time frame: four weeks*)

#### **I. The Fifth Amendment**

- A. English Origins of the rights
- B. Colonial experience with the rights
- C. Evolution of the protection against self-incrimination
- D. Fifth Amendment due process rights
  - 1. Due Process
  - 2. Capital Crimes
  - 3. Grand Jury
  - 4. Double Jeopardy
  - 5. Self-Incrimination
  - 6. Eminent Domain
  - 7. Indictment
  - 8. Subpoena
  - 9. Confession
  - 10. Coercion
- E. Case History of the Fifth Amendment
  - 1. *Miranda v. AZ*
  - 2. *Brown v. MI*

#### **II. The Sixth Amendment**

- A. English and Colonial experience with trial rights
  - 1. Speedy Trial
  - 2. Public Trial
  - 3. Trial Jury
- B. Evolution of the rights of trial
- C. Sixth Amendment Due Process Rights
  - 1. Confrontation
  - 2. Adversarial Process
  - 3. Compulsory Process

4. Right to Counsel
- D. Modern application of rights
  1. Presentment
  2. Mistrial
  3. Hung Jury
  4. Plea Bargaining
  5. Guilt
  6. Innocence
  7. No Contest
  8. Booking
  9. Public defender
  10. *Gideon v. Wainwright*

**Unit Eight: The Eighth Amendment** (*Suggested time frame: three weeks*)

**I. English origins of cruel and unusual punishment/excessive bails and fines**

- A. Magna Carta
- B. Darnel's Case
- C. Jenkes's Case
- D. Petition of Right
- E. Habeas Corpus
- F. English Bill of Rights
- G. Capital Punishment
- H. Bail

**II. Case history of the death penalty**

- A. *Furman v. GA*
- B. *Gregg v. GA*

**III. Application of the death penalty**

- A. Moratorium
- B. Juvenile Justice

**Unit Eight: The Fourteenth Amendment** (*Suggested time frame: three weeks*)

**I. History of the Fourteenth Amendment**

- A. Civil War Amendments
- B. freedmen
- C. due process
- D. narrow interpretation

**II. Components of the Amendment**

- A. Citizenship
- B. due process
- C. equal protection
- D. state incorporation

**III. Case History**

- A. *Plessy v. Ferguson*
- B. *Korematsu v. US*
- C. *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*

**IV. Current Applications**

- A. Naturalization
- B. Immigration and Naturalization Services
- C. Immigration
- D. selective incorporation
- E. full faith and credit
- F. privileges and immunities
- G. civil rights
- H. Equal Rights Amendment

## International Politics and Current Political Issues

### **Unit Nine: International Politics and Current Political Issues**

*(Suggested time frame: six weeks)*

#### **I. History of US Foreign Policy**

- A. Policy of Isolation/Washington's Farewell Address
- B. Monroe Doctrine
- C. Manifest Destiny
- D. Turn to Imperialism
  - 1. industrial revolution
  - 2. close of the frontier
  - 3. examples of European nations
  - 4. American nationalism
  - 5. jingoism
  - 6. Panama Canal
  - 7. Spanish-American War
  - 8. World War I
- E. Return to isolationism

#### **II. World War II and The Politics of the Cold War**

- A. Superpowers
- B. Balance of Power
- B. Containment
  - 1. Truman Doctrine
  - 2. Marshall Plan
- F. Collective Security
- G. Detente

#### **III. International Organizations and Treaties**

- A. League of Nations
- B. United Nations
- C. Regional Alliances
  - 1. OAS (1948- )
  - 2. NATO (1949- )
  - 3. SEATO (1954-1977)
  - 4. Warsaw Pact (1955-1991)
  - 5. CENTO (1959-1979)
- D. Arms Reduction Treaties
  - 1. Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

- 2. Strategic Arms Limitations Talks (SALT)
- 3. Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START)
- E. International Law
  - 1. Geneva Conventions on Treatment of Prisoners of War
  - 2. Geneva Convention on Treatment of Civilians
  - 3. Helsinki Accords
- F. International Courts
  - 1. Permanent Court of International Justice (1922)
  - 2. The International Court of Justice (1946)
- G. International Monetary Fund (1945)
- H. G-8 Summit

#### **IV. Post Cold War Politics and the Global Context**

- A. European Union
  - 1. European Economic Community
  - 2. the Euro
- B. Nationalism
- C. Terrorism
- D. US Hegemony
- E. The Developing World
- F. Geopolitics
  - 1. Middle East
  - 2. OPEC

#### **V. Current Political Issues**

- A. Local and state issues and events
- B. National issues and events
- C. International issues and events