Department of Political Science

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Mailing Address
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Department Chair:
Greg Vonnahme

Administrative Assistant:
Nathan Milburn

Emeriti Faculty:
Robert Evanson, Robert E. Gamer, Dale A. Neuman, Max Skidmore

Curators' Professor:
Max J. Skidmore (Graduate Advisor)

Professor:
Beth Vonnahme

Associate Professors:
Debra Leiter, Mona Lyne, Greg Vonnahme, Benjamin Woodson

Assistant Professors:
Rebecca Best

Adjunct Faculty:
David Sprick, Dan Stroud

Department Description
The Department of Political Science offers programs of study that lead to the Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts degrees. The undergraduate major in Political Science equips students with the analytic, writing, and presentation skills to acquire, create and convey knowledge of the political and social environment. After completing two core introductory courses, students have complete flexibility in the substantive emphasis of their coursework. Some students focus on one of the main sub-disciplines of American politics, comparative politics, international relations and political theory, while others take a broad array of courses across these sub-disciplines. The political science minor is completely flexible with regard to substantive emphasis and requires only the completion of 18 credit hours of political science courses. With the international studies minor, students explore contemporary global issues, politics, and cultures from a multitude of perspectives.

Undergraduate Admissions
Students planning to major or minor in political science should declare their choice officially by filling out a Declaration of Major form (http://www.umkc.edu/registrar/forms/declaration-of-major.pdf), and consult the Department Chair for a signature and program advice as early as possible.

Career Implications of the Bachelor's Degree
Political science, in addition to serving as an excellent core discipline for a liberal arts education, may also serve as vocational and professional preparation for students with interests in the following areas:

- Law school and legal careers
- Electoral politics
- Government service
- Not-for-profit and public-interest organizations
- Business and finance
• Teaching and research
• Public and private political research and consulting services
• Electronic and print journalism
• International careers and non-governmental organizations

Department Activities

Advising
Undergraduates with questions about fulfilling Political Science requirements should meet with the Political Science advisor.

Honor Society
UMKC has an active chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha, the national political science honor society. Each year Pi Sigma Alpha seeks to recognize the best students in political science in order to -- according to its national constitution -- "stimulate productive scholarship and intelligent interest in the subject of government." The local Pi Sigma Alpha chapter regularly presents films and speakers, information sessions for law school and graduate school, and sponsors the department monthly informal discussion group known as the Lunch Bunch. Open to all students, the Lunch Bunch provides an informal environment for enjoying a pizza lunch and discussing current events among faculty and students.

Internships and Study Abroad
The department has an active internship program. Information on local, regional, national and international programs of interest to undergraduates in political science is posted on departmental bulletin boards and is available in the main office. Credit is given for successful completion of internship programs approved by the department. Further information regarding internship opportunities and requirements can be found at http://cas.umkc.edu/politicalscience/internships.asp.

UMKC has a large study abroad program, and the department strongly encourages students to participate in approved programs. Credit toward the degree can be earned for approved courses and competitive scholarships are available. For more information see http://info.umkc.edu/international/.

Research
Students are encouraged to participate in faculty research and/or to develop their own research project in conjunction with the undergraduate research program, UMKC SEARCH and SUROP (http://www.umkc.edu/searchsite/). Faculty invitation is required to assist with faculty research and course credit is available. Students who wish to develop their own research project should select a faculty mentor and develop a proposal in conjunction with the mentor. Successful proposals can receive up to $1250 to support student independent research through SEARCH and SUROP.

Independent Study
Independent study in the form of tutorials is available in two courses: POL-SCI 497 and POL-SCI 498 (depending on student qualifications). In either case, without exception, the student must propose a topic for study, have the approval of the advisor and have the written consent of the instructor with whom the tutorial is to be taken before registration for the course. UMKC Honors Program participants may take any course in the department for honors credit by making special arrangements with the instructor at the beginning of the semester.

Political Science Scholarships
The department awards six scholarships each year to outstanding sophomores and juniors. The Ruth L. Gant Memorial Scholarship, the Sallie Millard and Cornelius Roach, Sr. Scholarship, the Dan Bishop Scholarship in Public Policy, Delia Wong Stephens Scholarship, the Pat Gray Memorial Scholarship, and the David N. Atkinson Scholarship in Political Science are awarded specifically to political science majors and can provide from $500 to $4000 to exceptional students. Political Science students are also eligible for College of Arts and Sciences general scholarships.

Faculty
Rebecca Best1,2; assistant professor of political science; B.A. (East Carolina University); M.A., Ph.D. (University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill).

Robert K. Evanson; associate professor emeritus of political science; B.A. (University of Illinois-Urbana); M.A., Ph.D. (University of Wisconsin-Madison).

Robert E. Gamer; professor emeritus of political science; B.A. (Monmouth College); Ph.D. (Brown University).

Debra Leiter1,2; associate professor of political science; B.A. (University of California - San Diego); M.A., Ph.D. (University of California - Davis).

Mona Lyne; associate professor of political science; B.S. (University of California - Berkeley); M.A. (Monterey Institute of International Studies); Ph.D. (University of California - San Diego).

Dale Allen Neuman; professor emeritus of political science; A.B. (Kenyon College); Ph.D. (Northwestern University).

Max J. Skidmore; curators’ professor emeritus of political science; B.S., B.S. Ed. (Southwest Missouri State); M.Ed. (University of Missouri-Columbia); Ph.D. (University of Minnesota).

Elizabeth Vonnahme1,2; chair and professor of political science; B.A. (Angelo State University); M.A., Ph.D. (Rice University).
Greg Vonnahme^{1,2}; associate professor of political science; B.S. (University of Iowa); M.A., Ph.D. (Rice University).

Benjamin Woodson^{1,2}; associate professor of political science; B.S. (Indiana University); M.A., Ph.D. (Stony Brook University).

1 Members of UMKC Graduate Faculty
2 Members of UMKC Doctoral Faculty

Undergraduate Degrees:

- Bachelor of Arts: Political Science ([link](http://catalog.umkc.edu/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/academic-departments-programs/political-science/bachelor-of-arts-political-science/))
- Minor in International Studies ([link](http://catalog.umkc.edu/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/academic-departments-programs/political-science/minor-international-studies/))
- Minor in Political Science ([link](http://catalog.umkc.edu/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/academic-departments-programs/political-science/minor-political-science/))
- Teacher Certification in Social Studies ([link](http://catalog.umkc.edu/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/academic-departments-programs/political-science/teacher-certification-social-studies/))

Courses

POL-SCI 210 American Government Credits: 3
American government and politics, with special reference to the U.S. Constitution. This course meets the state requirement for study of the U.S. and Missouri Constitutions.

POL-SCI 220 Introduction to Comparative Politics Credits: 3
Introduces students to general concepts of political authority and systematically analyzes the causes and consequences of variation in political institutions, processes and policies across countries, illustrating concepts and themes with case studies of major European and Asian countries.

POL-SCI 221 Introduction to Comparative Politics and Research Credits: 3
This course introduces students to general concepts of political authority, and systematically analyzes the causes and consequences of variation in political institutions, processes and policies across countries. This course also introduces students to research in comparative politics, with students developing an independent research project.

POL-SCI 230 International Relations Credits: 3
An analysis of relations among nations, with emphasis on structures of international power, causes of war, and approaches to peace.

POL-SCI 301 Western Political Philosophy Credits: 3
An examination of the major theories of politics from Plato to today.

POL-SCI 303 Political Behavior Credits: 3
This course will survey research on conventional and unconventional forms of mass political behavior. Topics to be discussed include campaign participation, voting behavior, public opinion, the media, and participation in protests and revolutions. This course will also cover the methodological approaches to the study of political behavior.

POL-SCI 304 Politics of Developing Countries Credits: 3
The course examines the key arguments that have been advanced to account for differences across countries in rates and levels of economic and political development.

POL-SCI 308 Parties and Interest Groups Credits: 3
Introduction to parties and interest groups in the United States and their important role in the political process. Topics include the formation, organization, activities, and impact of political parties and interest groups in American politics.

POL-SCI 309 Public Opinion Credits: 3
Explores public opinion in the United States, surveying theories and empirical research on the measurement, formation, and distribution of public opinion.
POL-SCI 313 Politics In The American States
Credits: 3
A study of the structures, functions, and politics of the institutions of American state governments and an assessment of their role in the federal system. This course is particularly interested in the extent to which political economy and political culture, broadly defined, influence public policy within the states.

POL-SCI 316 Terrorism And Political Violence
Credits: 3
This course explores terrorism and armed struggle from theoretical and historical perspectives, and analyzes a number of violent movements with nationalist, ideological, and religious motivations.

POL-SCI 318 Political Psychology
Credits: 3
The field of political psychology is an interdisciplinary field that draws on both psychology and political science to address topics in the political world. This course will focus on a variety of topics including inter-group conflict, stereotyping and prejudice, political socialization, attitude formation and change, political communication, decision heuristics and biases, public opinion, and the future of political psychology.

POL-SCI 319 Campaigns And Elections
Credits: 3
This course will examine the role of campaigns in determining the outcome of both congressional and presidential elections and the way that electoral rules structure both campaign strategies and electoral outcomes. This course focuses on topics such as the role of the media, campaign advertising, campaign financing, public opinion, registration requirements, and the role of interest groups.

POL-SCI 336 American Foreign Policy
Credits: 3
Understanding the contemporary debate over American foreign policy in terms of the premises and perspectives of several competing schools of thought.

POL-SCI 345 Women and Politics
Credits: 3
This course investigates the role that women play in the political realm and how political institutions, laws, and norms shape women’s experience in politics as citizens, activists, candidates and political leaders, plus the causes and consequences of women’s participation and barriers to same.

POL-SCI 348 Constitutional Law: The Federal System
Credits: 3
A study of the president, congress and state governments from the perspective of the Constitution, emphasizing powers and limitations on the exercise of authority.

POL-SCI 349 Constitutional Law: Civil Liberties
Credits: 3
A study of civil liberties in American society, emphasizing factors and forces that restrict or enlarge their scope, as understood through constitutional interpretation.

POL-SCI 357 Western European Politics
Credits: 3
This course explores democratic representation and political institutions in Western Europe.

POL-SCI 360 Labor, Politics and Society
Credits: 3
This course explores many aspects of unions and the labor movement in society and the vital role organized labor plays as a pillar of democratic society. Unions impact the economy, growth, and the distribution of wealth, and the impact racial and gender equality, social security health and job safety, energy and the environment, and even foreign relations. As a social movement, labor has had a major impact on American history. This course covers these topics from a labor perspective. It examines current obstacles for union organizing, recent union campaigns, labor’s political role, and the relationship between labor and the media. This course is part of the Certificate Program in Labor Studies and is offered on the University of Missouri Interactive Video Network at UMKC, UMSL, and UMC.

POL-SCI 362 Latin America and International Relations
Credits: 3
This course will survey the relations between Latin American states and between Latin America and the world. Taking the Latin American states as the key actors, we examine the history of US-Latin American relations, including current issues such as drug trafficking, immigration and terrorism. We will also study the region as a player on the international stage, examining Latin America’s changing role in the world arena related to trade, development, and the environment. Finally we examine the emergence of new leadership in Latin America.

POL-SCI 363 Immigration Politics and Policy: The United States in Cross-National Perspective
Credits: 3
This course introduces issues of immigration in the industrialized world, including historical patterns, current features of immigration in the US and Europe, policies on legal and unauthorized migration, attitudes on assimilation of immigrants and what constitutes an effective immigration policy.

POL-SCI 365WI Congress and Parliaments
Credits: 3
The objective of this course is to examine the election and behavior of legislators and legislatures in the United States compared to other countries’ political systems, especially how these differences affect representation and policy making. Students will write and think critically about how structures of legislatures affect political outcomes.

POL-SCI 366 British Politics
Credits: 3
This course focuses on the contemporary politics of the United Kingdom, particularly elections, institutions, and political parties.

POL-SCI 367 International Political Economy
Credits: 3
This course examines major schools of thought and contemporary research in international political economy, as well as the study of the interactions of politics with economics, governments, and markets.
POL-SCI 370 Labor Law
Credits: 3
In this course, participants will examine the role of government in the regulation of labor-management relations in the United States. While the focus of the course will be on federal laws regulating private sector labor relations, parallel issues addressed in the Railway Labor Act and state public sector labor relations law will also be covered. Specific topics include the legal framework for the organization of workers, definition of prohibited or unfair labor practices of employers and unions, legal regulation of the collective bargaining process, regulation of the use of economic weapons in labor disputes, enforcement of collective bargaining agreements and the regulation of internal trade union activities.

POL-SCI 380 Political Science And Politics Credits: 1-6
Offered as a special course in the individual faculty member’s area of research specialization. The course may be repeated for credit when the topic varies. The topic and instructor will be announced in advance.

POL-SCI 401 Legitimacy, Power, and the Survival of Political Systems
Credits: 3
This course examines what allows political systems to survive, exert power, and maintain control over their population. It focuses on the concept of legitimacy – i.e. whether people believe a government has the right to make decisions that are binding on the mass public. The course covers how political systems and institutions develop legitimacy, how that legitimacy helps maintain control of the mass public, and why people sometimes choose to willingly follow commands issued by political authorities and other times choose to resist or rebel.

POL-SCI 404 Conflict Resolution
Credits: 3
This course examines theories of peace and conflict resolution in the international system. Students will assess the challenges to conflict resolution, international cooperation, and peace as well as the means through which states and non-state actors overcome those challenges. Students will critically evaluate theories of conflict resolution and peace, while learning to apply those theories to current events.

POL-SCI 408 Judicial Politics
Credits: 3
An examination of the judiciary in the American political process, emphasizing the role of judges, lawyers and the Supreme Court.

POL-SCI 425WI Seminar in Comparative Politics Credits: 3
A survey of the major research in comparative politics including state building, nationalism, democracy, nondemocratic regimes, economic development, and political violence. This course satisfies the College of Arts and Sciences Writing Intensive requirement.

Prerequisites: POL-SCI 220 or POL-SCI 221.

POL-SCI 452 Concepts in International Relations
Credits: 3
This course exposes advanced undergraduate students to major conceptual and theoretical approaches to international relations. Recommended preparation: Prior course in international relations, politics, economics, or history.

POL-SCI 480 Government And Politics Credits: 1-6
This variable credit course will explore different contemporary issues and problems related to government and politics. Credit may apply to the major but will not satisfy any of the four subfields distribution requirements.

POL-SCI 491 Internship Credits: 1-6
With the written consent of the department chairman, students may participate in structured internship programs approved by the department for a maximum of six hours.

POL-SCI 493 Study Abroad Credits: 1-6
With prior approval from the department advisor, students may complete coursework at an approved foreign university and receive up to 6 hours of political science credit.

POL-SCI 497 Political Science Tutorial Credits: 2
Senior political science majors may apply to do independent study under a selected professor. Must have written consent of the professor prior to registration. Only one tutorial will count toward the major.

POL-SCI 498 Honors Tutorial Credits: 1-3
Senior political science majors with a grade point average of 3.4 or above in political science may apply to do independent study under a selected professor. Must have written consent of professor prior to registration. Only one tutorial will count toward the major.

POL-SCI 5501 Seminar in American Government Credits: 3
A seminar involving intense examination of the foundations, development, and structure of American national government through study of a broad range of classic materials and current research findings; course will prepare a political science graduate student to teach an introductory college course in American government.

Prerequisites: Graduate Standing.

POL-SCI 5506 Research Design and Analysis Credits: 3
This course focuses on methods of data gathering, management, and analysis used in political science research. Students gain an understanding of different types of data including surveys, experiments, and archival records. The curriculum will also include ways that these data are managed and analyzed, and how the results are presented in a useful manner.

POL-SCI 5513 Seminar in Comparative Politics Credits: 3
A survey of the major research in comparative politics including state building, democracy, economic development, and political violence.
POL-SCI 5522 Seminar In The Presidency Credits: 3
Critical examination of the American presidency, with in-depth research into selected themes and presidents.
**Prerequisites:** POL-SCI 406.

POL-SCI 5530 Seminar in International Relations Credits: 3
This course examines major schools of thought and contemporary research in international relations. Topics discussed include international systems, the causes of war and peace, collective security, and international political economy.

POL-SCI 5541 American Political Thought Credits: 3
This course will focus on intellectual reactions to the major periods in American history (the movement for independence, the writing of the constitution, the Jacksonian period, the civil war debate, the growth of big business, the rise of the positive state and contemporary America). Contemporary theorists will be included along with Jefferson, Madison, Hamilton and Marshall.

POL-SCI 5570 The Politics Of Social Security Credits: 3
This course will concentrate upon the principles of social insurance in general, and of the American Social Security system in particular. It will consider the system in relation to the history and traditions of American society. It will analyze popular misconceptions and will pay special attention to the political, economic, and demographic issues relevant to Social Security's current operation and to the program's future.

POL-SCI 5575 Political Ideologies Credits: 3
Consideration of political ideologies and their effects, with in-depth research into selected topics.

POL-SCI 5580 Government And Politics Seminar Credits: 3
Offered as a special seminar in the individual faculty member's area of research specialization. The seminar may be repeated for credit when the topic varies. The topic and instructor will be announced in advance.

POL-SCI 5590 Directed Studies And Research Credits: 1-6
Under the direction of the instructor, students in this course will produce a major research paper: a self-contained thesis chapter, an article for publication or the equivalent. May be repeated for credit.

POL-SCI 5599 Thesis Credits: 1-6
Directed specialized research.

POL-SCI 5688 Doctoral Research Seminar Credits: 3
Students will produce a major research paper under the direction of the instructor. The research project will consist of a self-contained chapter of the dissertation or a work of publishable quality. May be repeated for credit.

POL-SCI 5697 Doctoral-Level Independent Readings Credits: 3
Individual readings under the supervision of members of the Political Science Graduate or Doctoral Faculty in the specified topic or topics. May be repeated. May not be taken during an academic year in which a graduate course or seminar is offered on the topic.

POL-SCI 5699 Research And Dissertation Credits: 1-12
Directed specialized research.

POL-SCI 5899 Required Graduate Enrollment Credit: 1