DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

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Mailing Address
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Department of Political Science
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Department Chair:
Greg Vonnahme

Administrative Assistant:

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

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

Associate Professors:
Mona Lyne, Beth Vonnahme (Chair), Greg Vonnahme

Assistant Professors:
Rebecca Best, Debra Leiter, Benjamin Woodson

Adjunct Faculty:
David Brichoux, 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.

The Master of Arts degree provides students with analytic, quantitative and presentation skills to critically assess debates and arguments in the political science literature. After completing three core seminars in American politics, comparative politics and international relations, students have considerable flexibility in developing their program of study. The degree can be completed with a thesis or a non-thesis option.

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
Department of Political Science

- 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. Graduate students are advised by the Graduate Director.

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 Best
Contact Information (https://cf1.umkc.edu/intapps/lookup/?LastName=best); assistant professor of political science; B.A. (East Carolina University); M.A., Ph.D. (University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill).

Robert K. Evanson
Contact Information (https://cf1.umkc.edu/intapps/lookup/?LastName=evanson); associate professor emeritus of political science; B.A. (University of Illinois-Urbana); M.A., Ph.D. (University of Wisconsin-Madison).

Robert E. Gamer
Contact Information (https://cf1.umkc.edu/intapps/lookup/?LastName=gamer); professor emeritus of political science; B.A. (Monmouth College); Ph.D. (Brown University).

Debra Leiter
Contact Information (https://cf1.umkc.edu/intapps/lookup/?LastName=leiter); associate professor of political science; B.A. (University of California - San Diego); M.A., Ph.D. (University of California - Davis).

Mona Lyne
Contact Information; 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  Contact Information (https://cf1.umkc.edu/intapps/lookup/?LastName=neuman); professor emeritus of political science; A.B. (Kenyon College); Ph.D. (Northwestern University).

Max J. Skidmore  Contact Information (https://cf1.umkc.edu/intapps/lookup/?LastName=skidmore); curators’ professor 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 Contact Information (https://cf1.umkc.edu/intapps/lookup/?LastName=vonnahme); chair and associate professor of political science; B.A. (Angelo State University); M.A., Ph.D. (Rice University).

Greg Vonnahme1,2 Contact Information (https://cf1.umkc.edu/intapps/lookup/?LastName=vonnahme); assistant professor of political science; B.S. (University of Iowa); M.A., Ph.D. (Rice University).

Benjamin Woodson1,2 Contact Information (https://cf1.umkc.edu/intapps/lookup/?LastName=woodson); associate professor of political science; B.S. (Indiana University); M.A., Ph.D. (Stony Brook University).

Members of UMKC Graduate Faculty

Members of UMKC Doctoral Faculty

Undergraduate Degrees:

Undergraduate Degrees:

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

Graduate Degrees:

Graduate Degrees:

- JD / MA in Political Science Dual Degree Program
- Interdisciplinary Ph.D. (http://catalog.umkc.edu/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/academic-departments-programs/political-science/interdisciplinary-phd)

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 210 - MOTR POSC 101: American Government

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 220 - MOTR POSC 202: Introduction to Comparative Politic

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 230 - MOTR POSC 201: International Relations
In this course we will focus on the major periods in Latin American political history since the Great Depression. This includes the post-War period of optimism in which democratic governments promoted rapid economic development, the period of pessimism and authoritarianism from the 1960s to the 1980s, and a new democratic renewal beginning in the 1990s. We will examine the consolidating democracies that emerged in the 1990s in Latin America.

We will also examine case studies of recently failed democracy, Venezuela, and ask why this democracy failed. We will also consider how mass political behavior and individual relations combine to shape outcomes such as political attitudes, voter turnout, and election outcomes. This course will also cover the methodological approaches to the study of political behavior.

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.

This course explores the consolidation of democracy in Latin America and the factors that led to the recent failure of democracy in Venezuela.
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 we 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 364 Designing American Elections Credits: 3
This course examines the role of elections in American politics. Topics include voter registration, campaign finance, redistricting, the electoral college, and primary elections. We will also evaluate how different electoral rules affect political outcomes such as voter turnout, participation, and representation.

POL-SCI 365 Congress and Parliaments Credits: 3
The objective of this course is to compare the American Congress to parliaments and legislatures in other countries. The course will examine how elections and institutions affect the behavior of legislators and the policy-making process in many countries.

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.

Prerequisites: Successful completion of the RooWriter.

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 369 Politics Of The Middle East Credits: 3
The course is designed to provide students with a working knowledge of political systems and major political issues in the Middle East and North Africa. Topics to be covered in the course include the question of Middle east exceptionalism, democratization, the effect of religion and identity, political economy of the Middle East, the Arab-Israeli conflict, political violence, and the Arab Spring.

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 403 Political Ideology Credits: 3
A critical examination of contemporary political ideologies including democratic and authoritarian theories.

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

POL-SCI 406 Presidential Politics Credits: 3
This course will examine the American presidency as an institution, and will analyze its role in the American political system. It will also consider the administrations of the various presidents.

POL-SCI 407 Congressional Politics Credits: 3
Focus on the U.S. Congress and its role in the political process, surveying theories and empirical research on congressional campaigns, internal procedures, and the relationship between Congress and the other branches of government.

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 425 Seminar in Comparative Politics Credits: 3
A survey of the major research in comparative politics including state building, democracy, economic development, and political violence.

Prerequisites: POL-SCI 220.
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; Successful completion of the RooWriter.

POL-SCI 427 Presidential Power: foundations, Growth, Issues Credits: 3
An intense examination of the growth of presidential power, from its constitutional foundations; the necessity of a strong presidency, but the potential for abuse. Appropriate for the general student, as well as for majors in political science.

POL-SCI 435 Politics Of The Environment Credits: 3
A survey of the political aspects of environmental issues. The course poses the problems of environmental damage and examines actual and proposed policies aimed at addressing them. Also offered through the PACE program.

POL-SCI 440 Contemporary Political Thought Credits: 3
Political philosophy from Nietzsche to today.

POL-SCI 442 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 Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Hamilton, Marshall, etc.

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: 3
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 5505 Scope And Methods Of Political Science Credits: 3
This seminar surveys the various descriptive and quantitative approaches to the study of politics, government and public policy. It covers the methods used in various sub-disciplines and the models employed in political analysis.

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 5521 Judicial Politics Credits: 3
This course addresses broad trends of current research in the area of the judicial process based on empirical studies and the various methodological tools currently used by researchers. Case studies may be used to illustrate in depth the institutional aspects of the judicial process. Biographies may also be used to emphasize the personal and environmental factors which affect judicial decision making.
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 5524 Urban Politics Credits: 3
A seminar on politics and government in urban areas with special attention to community leadership, power structures, interest group and party activity, political behavior, and movements toward local government reform.

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 5542 Constitutional Interpretation Credits: 3
This course will provide an in-depth treatment of selected areas of constitutional development, related to various aspects of public policy developed under the Constitution through judicial interpretation, including federalism, equality, fundamental rights and freedom of expression.

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 5697A Doctoral-Level Ir: American National Politics And Institutions Credits: 3
POL-SCI 5697I Doctoral-Level Ir: International Politics And Processes Credits: 3
POL-SCI 5697L Doctoral-Level Ir: Public Law Credits: 3
POL-SCI 5697O Doctoral-Level Ir: Public Opinion And Voter Behavior Credits: 3
POL-SCI 5697R Doctoral-Level Ir: Research Methods Credits: 3
POL-SCI 5697T Doctoral-Level Ir: Political Theory Credits: 3
POL-SCI 5697U Doctoral-Level Ir: Urban And State Politics Credits: 3
POL-SCI 5699 Research And Dissertation Credits: 1-12
Directed specialized research.

POL-SCI 5899 Required Graduate Enrollment Credit: 1