

# POLITICAL SCIENCE

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Department Administrator: Taylor Doran

## The Department of Political Science

Political Science explores questions about power: what it is, where it comes from, who exercises it, how it is used and legitimized. Concretely, political scientists study the processes, policies and institutions of different political systems as well as critical issues such as health care policy, civil rights, the origins of wars, the paths toward peace, the nature of democracy, the causes of authoritarianism, the meaning of justice, and the genesis of terrorism.

### Mission

In accordance with the mission of Barnard College, the political science department aims to create a community of teachers and students committed to intellectual discovery, rigorous analysis, and independent thought. The department's courses emphasize reflection, discussion, deliberation and intensive interactions between faculty members and students. The Barnard political science department strives to help students think clearly and methodically about the questions and issues that make up political science, equip them with the intellectual and presentational skills necessary to understand and address practical political issues as well as prepare them for a wide range of careers in federal, state and local governments; law; business; international organizations; nonprofit associations and organizations; campaign management and polling; journalism; pre-collegiate education; electoral politics; research and university and college teaching. The department recognizes four subfields of the discipline:

**Political Theory:** the study of the conceptual foundations of political systems and behavior.

- Student learning outcome: after completing one or more courses in Political Theory students should have a familiarity with some of the key concepts, theories and debates that have defined thinking about politics over time.

**American Government and Politics:** the study of all aspects of the American political system, including its development, institutions, procedures, and actors.

- Student learning outcome: after completing one or more courses in American Government and Politics students should understand the basic structure of the American political system and how some of its institutions, procedures, and actors function.

**Comparative Politics:** the study of the political systems of other countries and regions, including the use of comparisons across cases in order to gain a broader and deeper understanding of events, institutions, and processes.

- Student learning outcome: after completing one or more courses in Comparative Politics students should have a familiarity with the political systems of other countries and regions, and be able to use comparisons across cases in order to gain a broader and deeper understanding of political events, institutions, and processes.

**International Relations:** the study of all aspects of the international political system, including its development, institutions, procedures, and actors.

- Student learning outcome: after completing one or more courses in International Relations students should understand the basic structure of the international political system and how some of its institutions, procedures, and actors function.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the Barnard Political Science major, students should be able to:

- Analyze, speak and write about the subject matter and major theories of at least three of the four subfields of political science;
- Apply social scientific reasoning and theories to the analysis of a wide range of political issues and problems;
- Generate and test hypotheses about political processes, relationships and institutions or engage in conceptual analysis and interpretation of political ideas, arguments, and phenomena;
- Complete independent research projects in political science, particularly via the capstone senior project.

## Five-Year Bachelors/Master of Arts Programs

Students interested in public careers should consider the five-year joint-degree programs at Columbia University's School of International & Public Affairs (SIPA).

- The SIPA programs include the Graduate Program in Public Policy & Administration (MPA) and the Master of International Affairs Program (MIA). For information, please contact the Associate Department Chair.

**Chair:** Michael Miller

**Professors:** Severine Autesserre, Sheri E. Berman, Alexander A. Cooley, Paula A. Franzese (Visiting), Xiaobo Lu, Kimberly Marten

**Associate Professors:** Ayten Gündoğdu, Michael G. Miller, Eduardo Moncada (Tow Associate Professor of Political Science)

**Assistant Professors:** Alyssa Battistoni, Katherine Krimmel

Other Officers of the University Offering Courses in Political Science:  
[Columbia Political Science Faculty](#)

## Requirements for the Major

A total of ten courses are necessary to complete the Political Science major:

- Three introductory lecture courses at the 1000-level or 3000-level from different subfields,
- Five elective courses,
- Two colloquia, taken in your final two semesters at Barnard

The department recognizes four subfields of the discipline:

- American Government and Politics: the study of all aspects of the American political system, including its development, institutions, procedures, and actors.
- Comparative Politics: the study of the political systems of other countries and regions, including the use of comparisons across

cases in order to gain a broader and deeper understanding of events, institutions, and processes.

- International Relations: the study of all aspects of the international political system, including its development, institutions, procedures, and actors.
- Political Theory: the study of the conceptual foundations of political systems and behavior.

The two colloquia must be taken with faculty at Barnard College. Many of the lecture courses may be taken with faculty at Columbia College, if these courses are cross-listed. Various study-abroad options and summer courses also may meet your specialized interests, but these require

1. prior consultation with your major adviser, as well as
2. prior approval by the Associate Departmental Chair and
3. subsequent approval by the Associate Department Chair once you apply to transfer the credit to Barnard (use the Course Approval Request Form for steps 2 and 3).

Students interested in the **Sciences Po–Barnard five-year joint-degree program** are encouraged to meet with the Dean for Study-Abroad, also regarding the political science aspects of this BA/MA program. The requirements are at the end of this page.

### Introductory-level Lecture Course Requirement (three lecture courses)

The political science department requires all students to take at least one introductory 1000- or 3000-level lecture course in three of the four subfields of political science (listed above). These courses are designed to provide an introduction to the main subject matter and major theories of each subfield. To count for introductory course credit, these courses **MUST** be taken with Barnard faculty. Intro courses taken at Columbia will count toward your elective requirements only.

These courses also serve to familiarize students with the analytic approaches that political scientists use. After taking lecture courses in the relevant subfields, students are eligible to take the two required colloquium courses.

### Advanced Placement Credit

A student granted Advanced Placement (AP) credit by the College in either American Politics or Comparative Politics with an exam score of 5 will have fulfilled the prerequisite for courses that require the prior completion of POLS UN1201 INTRO TO AMERICAN POLITICS or POLS UN1501 INTRO TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS, respectively. If the student wants to take the introductory American Politics or Comparative Politics course, she may do so, but she will forfeit her corresponding AP credit.

AP credit does **not** count toward the number of courses required for the major or minor, i.e. the student still needs to complete the ten courses for the major or the five for the minor.

### Electives Requirement (five additional courses)

All political science courses emphasize social scientific reasoning and theory application. In addition, political science majors chose five electives (normally at the 3000- or 4000-level). These courses are designed to deepen and expand students' knowledge base and encourage them to apply social scientific reasoning and theories to the analysis of a broad range of political issues and problems.

### What fulfills the Five-Course Electives requirement

1. All courses offered at Barnard or Columbia in political science listed in the Barnard Course Catalogue, including introductory lecture courses and colloquia, satisfy elective course requirements.
2. The Independent Study Option POLS BC3799 INDEPENDENT STUDY. Students who wish to do an independent study project (ISP) should first speak to a political science faculty member willing to sponsor it. Credit is given for an academic research paper written in conjunction with an internship, but no academic credit is given for an internship or job experience. The student must then apply to the Committee on Programs and Academic Standing (CPAS), which must approve all Independent Study requests. Once the request is granted, the Registrar creates a section and assigns a call number, and the student is notified of the call number so she can enter the course on her program. (Each instructor has a separate section and call number. Each instructor is limited to sponsoring one independent study per semester.) Students will consult with the sponsoring instructor as to workload and points of credit for the independent study course. Independent study counts as a course for the purpose of the nine-course requirement, provided the project is approved for 3 or 4 points. A project taken for 1 or 2 points does not count as a course toward the major, the minor, or the concentration requirement.
3. With pre-approval, first from the individual Major Advisor and then from the Associate Department Chair, a student may substitute a course in another department for one of the four elective courses. This course cannot be an introductory course and it must have significant political science content (use the Course Approval Request Form). Approval after the fact will not be granted.
4. Six of the courses for the major must be taken from courses listed in the political science section of the Barnard Course Catalogue. Within the three-course limit of courses taken elsewhere, the following caps traditionally apply: three transfer courses; two Reid Hall courses; two study-abroad courses; one summer session course. On rare occasions the Associate Department Chair may grant an exception (use the Course Approval Request Form).

### What does not fulfill the Five-Course Electives requirements

The Independent Study Option POLS BC3799 INDEPENDENT STUDY does not satisfy the course requirement if the project is for 1 or 2 points.

College-granted AP credit for American Politics or Comparative Politics does not count as major course credit. (See Advanced Placement Credit, above.)

Courses taken at other colleges, in summer sessions, or abroad, which are not equivalent in rigor and workload to Barnard courses, as determined by the Associate Department Chair, in consultation with other faculty of the department, will not count toward the major or minor requirements.

### Colloquium Requirement ( two one-semester courses )

Although all political science courses teach students to generate and test hypotheses about political processes, relationships and institutions and/or engage in conceptual analysis and interpretation of political ideas, arguments and phenomena, students are encouraged to do this at a higher level in their two required colloquia. These colloquia feature intensive, small group discussions and a major research project, and provide students with an opportunity to work more independently than they probably have in previous courses.

The colloquium format involves weekly discussion of readings, and development of research skills through completion of a major research

project. Admission is limited to sixteen students. Students must have completed any required pre-requisite courses. Columbia seminars do not fulfill this requirement.

Your two capstone colloquia MUST be taken during your final two semesters at Barnard. Colloquia courses taken before your final two semesters will count toward your elective credits.

## Requirements for the Combined Major

A student doing a combined major in [Human Rights](#) and Political Science must complete the full ten-course requirements for the Political Science major in addition to Human Rights courses. Both departments must agree on the potential departmental honors nomination.

A student doing a combined major in [Jewish Studies](#) and Political Science must complete the full ten-course requirements for the Political Science major in addition to Jewish Studies courses. Both departments must agree on the senior requirement grade and the potential departmental honors nomination.

A student doing a combined major in [Women's Studies](#) and Political Science must complete the full ten-course requirements for the Political Science major in addition to Women's Studies courses. She must consult both thesis advisors (=sponsors) on a regular basis throughout the colloquium and the completed thesis must integrate the two fields of inquiry. Both departments must agree on the senior requirement grade and the potential departmental honors nomination.

Any other combined major (for example, Art History-Political Science), or a special major, requires a petition to the Committee on Programs and Academic Standing (CPAS) and the approval of the Chairs of the sponsoring departments. (For Political Science, obtain the approval of the [Department Chair](#).) Obtain forms and instructions from the Class Dean in the Dean of Studies Office. The student will be required to take a minimum of seven political science courses of at least three points each, including two lecture courses and three colloquia, to be selected in consultation with the Departmental Representative. The student is expected to take a third colloquium. She must consult both essay advisors (=sponsors) on a regular basis throughout the colloquium, assuring integration of the two fields of inquiry. Both departments must agree on the senior requirement grade and the potential departmental honors nomination.

## Requirements for the Double Major with One Integrating Senior Essay

The student is required to complete the coursework for each major with no overlapping courses, but will undertake only one integrating senior requirement project with two thesis advisors (=sponsors), one from each of the two departments. The student must consult both advisors on a regular basis throughout the colloquium and the completed thesis must integrate the two fields of inquiry. Both departments must agree on the senior requirement grade and the potential departmental honors nomination.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SCIENCES PO – BARNARD BA/MA EXCHANGE PROGRAM

In order to complete the Sciences Po – Barnard five-year Bachelor/Master of Arts requirements, the Barnard political science major should:

- Complete all her major requirements at Barnard, including two of three required colloquia;
- Fulfill her senior thesis requirement by choosing one of the following two options:

Option 1: Complete a third colloquium while at Barnard.

Option 2: When at Sciences Po, the student takes a personal one-semester tutorial with a Sciences Po professor assigned according to the student's interest. The tutorial must focus on advice on bibliographical search, research strategy, methodological issues, and writing on a given topic, in order to help the student write a research paper equivalent to a Barnard senior project in political science. The research paper should meet the following criteria:

- It should be a minimum of 30-40 pages double-spaced;
- It should be a coherent piece of analytical writing;
- It should embody the answer to some question about the operation of certain aspects of political or governmental institutions or processes, broadly conceived;
- It should be based on original research conducted by the student;
- It should be theoretically informed. It should be a social science paper, and not a policy one;
- The student should use, at least, secondary sources.

## Requirements for the Minor

A total of five courses are necessary to complete a minor. Four of these courses must be taken from courses listed in the Political Science section of the Barnard Course Catalogue. Only one political science course taken in a summer session, study-abroad program, Reid Hall Program, or another undergraduate college may be used to satisfy the five-course requirement for the minor, with the approval of the Associate Department Chair.

## Faculty and Staff members designated to answer questions:

Michael Miller, Department Chair, [mgmiller@barnard.edu](mailto:mgmiller@barnard.edu)

Xiaobo Lu, Professor and Associate Department Chair, [xl29@columbia.edu](mailto:xl29@columbia.edu)

Taylor Doran, Department Administrator, (x 4-8422), [polisci@barnard.edu](mailto:polisci@barnard.edu)

## Introductory Courses

Three introductory-level lecture courses, each from a different subfield, are required of all Barnard majors and concentrators. These courses are designed to provide an introduction to the main subject matter and major theories of each subfield. Any lecture course at the 1000-level that is listed in this section fulfills this requirement. In addition, selected lecture courses at the 3000-level may be substituted for a 1000-level course in the same subfield. [A list of appropriate Barnard and Columbia 3000-level political science lecture courses is on-line.](#)

The subfields of all Barnard courses are listed. These are:

- **Political Theory:** the study of the conceptual foundations of political systems and behavior.
- **American Government and Politics:** the study of all aspects of the American political system, including its development, institutions, procedures, and actors.
- **Comparative Politics:** the study of the political systems of other countries and regions, including the use of comparisons across cases in order to gain a broader and deeper understanding of events, institutions, and processes.
- **International Relations:** the study of all aspects of the international political system, including its development, institutions, procedures, and actors.

## Advanced Placement Credit

A student granted Advanced Placement (AP) credit by the College in either American Politics or Comparative Politics with an exam score of 5 will have fulfilled the prerequisite for courses that require the prior completion of POLS BC 1201 or V 1501, respectively. If the student wants to take the introductory American Politics or Comparative Politics course, she may do so, but she will forfeit her corresponding AP credit. AP credit does **not** count toward the number of courses required for the major or minor, i.e. the student still needs to complete the ten courses for the major or the five for the minor.

## Introductory Courses

### POLS UN1101 POLITICAL THEORY I. 4.00 points.

This course considers key questions at the foundation of political thought. What is justice? How do we justify the coercive power of states? Do we have an obligation to obey the government? Who should make and enforce the law? What basic rights and liberties should governments protect? How should our economic system produce and divide wealth and material resources? What are the claims of excluded or marginalized groups and how can these claims be addressed? We explore these questions through the works of several classical and contemporary political thinkers. A major goal of the course is to practice the skills needed to understand a political thinker's arguments and to construct one's own

### POLS UN1201 INTRO TO AMERICAN POLITICS. 4.00 points.

Lecture and discussion. Dynamics of political institutions and processes, chiefly of the national government. Emphasis on the actual exercise of political power by interest groups, elites, political parties, and public opinion

Spring 2025: POLS UN1201

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 1201	001/13392	M W 8:40am - 9:55am 207 Mathematics Building	Michael Pomirchy	4.00	104/150

### POLS UN1501 INTRO TO COMPARATIVE POLITICS. 4.00 points.

This course provides a broad overview of the comparative politics subfield by focusing on important substantive questions about the world today. The course is organized around four questions. First, why can only some people depend upon the state to enforce order? Second, how can we account for the differences between autocracies and democracies? Third, what different institutional forms does democratic government take? Finally, are some institutions more likely than others to produce desirable social outcomes such as accountability, redistribution, and political stability?

Spring 2025: POLS UN1501

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 1501	001/13344	T Th 8:40am - 9:55am 207 Mathematics Building	Benjamin McClelland	4.00	149/150

### POLS UN1601 INTERNATIONAL POLITICS. 4.00 points.

This introductory course surveys key topics in the study of international politics, including the causes of war and peace; the efficacy of international law and human rights; the origins of international development and underdevelopment; the politics of global environmental protection; and the future of US-China relations. Throughout the course, we will focus on the interests of the many actors of world politics, including states, politicians, firms, bureaucracies, international organizations, and nongovernmental organizations; the interactions between them; and the institutions in which they operate. By the end of the semester, students will be better equipped to systematically study international relations and make informed contributions to critical policy debates

Spring 2025: POLS UN1601

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 1601	001/13377	T Th 6:10pm - 7:25pm 301 Uris Hall	Jayne Schlesinger	4.00	233/240

## Lecture Courses

### POLS BC3025 American Political Parties. 3 points.

Political parties have evoked widespread scorn in the U.S. since the founding era; and yet, they arose almost immediately and have endured for over two centuries. In this course, we will examine why parties formed despite the Founders' disdain for them. (In 1789, Thomas Jefferson wrote, "If I could not go to heaven but with a party, I would not go at all." In 1800, he won the presidency as a candidate of a major party.) We will dig into scholarly debates about what exactly parties are, what purpose they serve, and how and why they have changed over time as organizations, in the electorate, and in government.

Topics will include the presidential nomination process from the founding through the much-discussed 2016 primary election season, the life cycle of third parties, and the relationship between political parties and interest groups. Students will learn what is and is not unique about the current historical moment, and how history might shape our expectations of parties moving forward.

Throughout the course, we will pay particularly close attention to the roots of contemporary party polarization, and the implications of this phenomenon for representation and governance. In 1950, the American Political Science Association released a report criticizing the two major parties for excessive similarity; today, party polarization evokes widespread concern. Is there an ideal level of party difference? How much is too much? We will address these difficult questions, among others, in this broad survey of American political parties.

#### Fall 2025: POLS BC3025

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 3025	001/00647	M W 10:10am - 11:25am 202 Barnard Hall	Katherine Krimmel	3	0/25

### POLS BC3031 THE AMERICAN PRESIDENCY. 3.00 points.

This course explores the role of the presidency in U.S. politics. Presidents have long been at the center of politics, yet the nature of the presidency has changed dramatically over time. The first part of the course will examine these long-run changes. It begins with debates over the form of the presidency at the U.S.'s founding and examines how the institution has been altered – and with what effects – at key historical moments. Having gained foundational historical knowledge during the first part of the course, the course's second part will focus on various theories of the presidency. These theories primarily address, in various ways, one primary question: which factors best explain presidential "success"? By the end of the course, students should be able to systematically assess contemporary presidential politics using various scholarly theories and by putting the president's actions into a broader historical context. The course, occurring during the 2020 presidential primaries, will also include "sidebars" in which we will discuss the election

### POLS BC3254 FIRST AMENDMENT VALUES. 3.00 points.

Prerequisites: POLS W1201 or an equivalent. Not an introductory course. Not open to students who have taken the colloquium POLS BC3302.

Enrollment limited to 25 students; L-course sign-up.

Prerequisites: POLS W1201 or an equivalent. Not an introductory course. Not open to students who have taken the colloquium POLS BC3302.

Examines the first amendment rights of speech, press, religion and assembly. In-depth analysis of landmark Supreme Court rulings provides the basis for exploring theoretical antecedents as well as contemporary applications of such doctrines as freedom of association, libel, symbolic speech, obscenity, hate speech, political speech, commercial speech, freedom of the press and religion. (Cross-listed by the American Studies Program.)

#### Spring 2025: POLS BC3254

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 3254	001/00329	M 4:10pm - 6:00pm 323 Milbank Hall	Paula Franzese	3.00	59/60

### POLS BC3402 The Comparative Politics of Gender Inequality. 3 points.

BC: Fulfillment of General Education Requirement: Social Analysis (SOC I).

Prerequisites: **Not an introductory-level course.** Not open to students who have taken the colloquium POLS BC 3507. Enrollment limited to 20 students; L-course sign-up through eBear. [Barnard syllabus.](#)

Uses major analytical perspectives in comparative politics to understand the persistence of gender inequality in advanced industrial states. Topics include: political representation and participation; political economy and capitalism; the historical development of welfare states; electoral systems, electoral quotas; the role of supranational and international organizations; and social policy.

### POLS BC3521 CIVIL RIGHTS #CIVIL LIBERTIES. 3.00 points.

Prerequisites: POLS W1201 or the equivalent. Not an introductory-level course. Not open to students who have taken the colloquium POLS BC3326. Enrollment limited to 25 students; L-course sign-up through eBear. [Barnard syllabus.](#) Explores seminal caselaw to inform contemporary civil rights and civil liberties jurisprudence and policy. Specifically, the readings examine historical and contemporary first amendment values, including freedom of speech and the press, economic liberties, takings law, discrimination based on race, gender, class and sexual preference, affirmative action, the right to privacy, reproductive freedom, the right to die, criminal procedure and adjudication, the rights of the criminally accused post-9/11 and the death penalty. (Cross-listed by the American Studies and Human Rights Programs.)

#### Fall 2025: POLS BC3521

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 3521	001/00008	M 4:10pm - 6:00pm 418 Barnard Hall	Paula Franzese	3.00	0/55

**POLS BC3601 INTL LAW # U.N. IN PRACTICE. 4.00 points.****POLS UN3213 AMERICAN URBAN POLITICS. 3.00 points.**

This course examines the pattern of political development in urban America, as the country's population has grown in urbanized locations. It explores the process by which cities and suburbs are governed, how immigrants and migrants are incorporated, and how people of different races and ethnicities interact in urbanized settings as well as the institutional relations of cities and suburbs with other jurisdictions of government. The course focuses both on the historical as well as the theoretical understandings of politics in urban areas

Spring 2025: POLS UN3213

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 3213	001/13394	M W 6:10pm - 7:25pm 329 Pupin Laboratories	Carlos Vargas- Ramos	3.00	55/90

**POLS UN3250 VOTING # POLITICAL BEHAVIOR. 3.00 points.**

Spring 2025: POLS UN3250

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 3250	001/00891	T Th 5:40pm - 6:55pm LI002 Milstein Center	Michael Miller	3.00	82/100

**POLS UN3290 VOTING AND AMERICAN POLITICS. 3.00 points.**

Elections and public opinion; history of U.S. electoral politics; the problem of voter participation; partisanship and voting; accounting for voting decisions; explaining and forecasting election outcomes; elections and divided government; money and elections; electoral politics and representative democracy.

**POLS UN3401 DEMOCRACY # DICTATORSHIP IN EUROPE. 4.00 points.**

This course will examine the development of democracies and dictatorships in Europe from the French Revolution to the present day. It will analyze the nature and dynamics of European political history and use the European experience as a foundation upon which to build a broader understanding of how different types of political regimes emerge, function and are sustained over time. Prior knowledge of European history and comparative politics is welcome, but not presumed

**POLS UN3560 PLCS URBAN DEV LATIN AMERICA. 3.00 points.**

What shapes the ways cities develop politically and socioeconomically? Why do some cities become seeming "models" of urban governance whereas others struggle with perpetual corruption, inequality, and crime and violence? How do formal and informal political and social institutions interact to shape patterns of urban development? How do relations between cities and other levels of the state, including regional and national governments, impact local democracy and development? Are impoverished urban peripheries fertile grounds for political revolution? These are some of the questions that we will tackle in this course through a focus on urban politics and development in Latin America. Perceptions among both scholars and policymakers regarding Latin America's urbanization are polarized. Some see the region's development including innovative forms of governance, like participatory budgeting, social urbanism through participatory planning, and community policing. Others view the swift and unprecedented pace of clientelism, and violence. Our task this semester is to mediate between these two perspectives as we explore and analyze urban politics and development in the region.

**POLS UN3565 DRUGS # POLITICS IN AMERICAS. 4.00 points.**

A major challenge for governments across the Western Hemisphere is the complex relationship between illicit drugs, violence, and politics. We can see this relationship operating at multiple levels, from everyday politics in gang-controlled neighborhoods to the global arenas where governments debate and craft international drug policy. These links also reach back in history to global wars of empire and colonial rule, race relations during and following the collapse of the institution of slavery, and contemporary drug wars being waged across the Western Hemisphere and other parts of the world. Today, the dynamics and consequences of the politics of illicit drugs touch all our lives in different ways, including individual and family struggles with substance abuse, everyday encounters with militarized police, and the strains on democracy and citizenship, among many others. This course will examine some of these dynamics and consequences with a theoretical and empirical focus mainly on Latin America and the United States. Throughout our time together we will connect these pressing issues to broader theories, concepts and empirical findings in political science. The course is divided into several individual modules (denoted below with the headings A – G) under three overarching themes for this semester. 1. Politics of Drugs in a Historical Perspective: The first theme is a broad historical overview of the political origins of illicit drugs and the global drug regime. Some of the main questions we will tackle are: When and why did states label drugs as illicit? How did domestic and global politics come together to shape the global drug regime and the "war on drugs?" What role did race and gender play in the early social construction of illicit drugs? 2. Illicit Drugs, Politics and Governance: The second theme focuses on contemporary linkages between illicit drugs, violence, and politics. Here we will examine the conditions under which illicit drug markets are either violent or (relatively) peaceful. We will tackle questions like: Do states always seek to dismantle drug markets? What is the relationship between illicit drugs and electoral politics? What role do illicit drugs play in governance by armed non-state actors? Are states and criminal actors involved in the drug trade always at "war" with each other? 3. Democracy, Citizenship, and the War on Drugs: The third and final theme centers on the political consequences of the war on drugs for questions of democracy and citizenship in the Western Hemisphere. Some of the questions that will help us make sense of these consequences are: How does the war on drugs impact democracy and citizenship? What is the political economy of imprisonment? And in what ways do imprisonment and police-citizen interactions – stemming from the war on drugs – shape individual and collective political behavior and political subjectivity?

Fall 2025: POLS UN3565

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 3565	001/00688	M W 10:10am - 11:25am LI002 Milstein Center	Eduardo Moncada	4.00	0/80

**POLS UN3604 War, Peace, and International Interventions in Africa. 4 points.**

This course analyzes the causes of violence in wars and examines the debates around emergency aid, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. In addition, it focuses on recent conflict situations in Africa – especially Congo, Sudan, and Rwanda – as a background against which to understand the distinct dynamics of violence, peace, and international interventions in civil and international conflicts.

**POLS UN3706 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH METHODS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE. 4.00 points.**

Prerequisites: At least sophomore standing recommended. Corequisites: Computer Lab: TBD (50 minutes per week). Enrollment limited to 40 students: "L" sign-up through eBear. Not an introductory-level course. Barnard syllabus. The course introduces students to the systematic study of political phenomena. Students will learn how to develop research questions and executable research designs. Then, taking an applied approach, students learn basic statistical and case study techniques for evaluating evidence and making empirical claims. No prior experience with statistics is assumed

**POLS GU4428 EUROPEAN POLITICL DEVELOPMENT. 4.00 points.**

Prerequisites: Course in European history or political science or relevant comparative politics courses.

Prerequisites: Course in European history or political science or relevant comparative politics courses. This is an upper-level course in European political development. It is designed for undergraduates who already have some exposure to European history and politics and graduate students. The course will analyze important theoretical works, and debates about, the evolution of European political systems and institutions since the Second World War and place the European experience in comparative perspective

**POLS GU4875 Russia and the West. 4 points.**

Exploration of Russia's ambiguous relationship with the Western world. Cultural, philosophical, and historical explanations will be examined alongside theories of domestic political economy and international relations, to gain an understanding of current events. Select cases from the Tsarist, Soviet, and recent periods will be compared and contrasted, to see if patterns emerge.

**Colloquia**

**POLS BC3019 AMERICAN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT. 4.00 points.**

Prerequisites: (POLS UN1201)

Prerequisites: (POLS UN1201) In this survey of American political development, we will discuss how and why major institutions and policies emerged, why they took certain forms, when and why they have changed over time, and what kinds of factors limit change. We will also discuss how policies, in turn, shape citizens and institutions

Fall 2025: POLS BC3019

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 3019	001/00646	M 2:10pm - 4:00pm 119 Milstein Center	Katherine Krimmel	4.00	0/12

**POLS BC3026 Gun Politics in the United States. 4 points.**

Prerequisites: (pols un1201) or approved substitute for 1201

This course examines the politics of guns from a number of different angles. We will critically assess the multitude of direct and indirect explanations of gun control politics that have been offered by scholars and informed observers, including those related to interest groups, political parties, and mass political behavior.

**POLS BC3055 \* Colloquium on Political Violence and Terrorism. 4 points. Not offered during 2023-2024 academic year.**

Prerequisites: POLS V1501 or POLS V1601 or the equivalent. Admission by application through the Barnard department only. Enrollment limited to 16 students. Barnard syllabus.

What causes political violence and terrorism? How should we define "terrorism"—is it true, as the old saw goes, that one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter? What is the role of religious belief, as opposed to more immediate political goals, in fomenting terrorist action? Are al Qaeda and those linked to it different from terrorists we've seen in various places around the world in the past, or does all terrorism and political violence stem from the same variety of goals and purposes? Can governments take effective action to prevent or counter terrorism, or are we all doomed to live in insecurity? What is the proper balance between protection against terrorism and protection of civil liberties? This course examines these questions through weekly assigned readings, analysis and discussion.

**POLS BC3118 COLL:PROBLMS IN INTNL SECURITY. 4.00 points.**

Prerequisites: POLS V1501 or POLS V1601 or the equivalent. Admission by application through the Barnard department only. Enrollment limited to 16 students. Barnard syllabus.

Prerequisites: POLS V1501 or POLS V1601 or the equivalent. Admission by application through the Barnard department only. Enrollment limited to 16 students. Barnard syllabus. Examination of causes and consequences of major current problems in international security. Topics will focus on state power dynamics: the rise of China and the reemergence of the Russian military, challenges facing NATO with the rise of populism and authoritarianism in the West, nuclear deterrence and proliferation, cyber conflict and information war, and chemical and biological weapons

Spring 2025: POLS BC3118

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 3118	001/00321	T 10:10am - 12:00pm 913 Milstein Center	Kimberly Marten	4.00	9/12

**POLS BC3325 COLL:PLTCS OF BAD BEHAVIOR. 4.00 points.**

This course explores the politics of what happens when people, institutions, or states deviate from expected behavior. The course will span all subfields of political science, engaging issues such as lies, scandal, money laundering, corruption, campaign finance, election fraud, racism, and incarceration

**POLS BC3334 COLL: AMERICAN ELECTIONS. 4.00 points.**

Prerequisites: POLS V 1201 or equivalent American Politics course. POLS V 3222 or equivalent Research Methods course is recommended. Admission by application through the Barnard department only. Enrollment limited to 16 students. The purpose of this course is to examine how political science can inform the real-world campaign environment, improving our understanding of strategy and outcomes in American elections

**POLS BC3337 REFORMNG AMERICAN ELECTNS. 3.00 points.**

Prerequisites: POLS 1201 or an equivalent intro-level course in American Politics.

Prerequisites: POLS 1201 or an equivalent intro-level course in American Politics. The purpose of this course is to examine problems in American democracy, and to critically evaluate proposals for reform. We will examine the manner in which political science has engaged real-world problems in election systems and administration, campaign finance, and fraud

**POLS BC3410 COLLOQUIUM ON HUMAN RIGHTS IN A DIVERSE WORLD. 4.00 points.**

Prerequisites: POLS V1013 or W3001 or the [equivalent](#). [Admission by application](#) through the Barnard department only. Enrollment limited to 16 students. [Barnard syllabus](#).

Examination of human rights within the context of international migration. The course covers topics such as citizenship, state sovereignty, border control, asylum-seekers, refugees, and undocumented immigrants. (Cross-listed by the Human Rights Program.)

Fall 2025: POLS BC3410

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 3410	001/00853	T 11:00am - 12:50pm 119 Milstein Center	Ayten Gundogdu	4.00	0/12

**POLS BC3411 \*Colloquium on Building Peace. 4 points.**

Prerequisites: POLS 1601 (Intro to International Politics) or equivalent. [Admission by application](#) through the Barnard department only. Enrollment limited to 16 students.

How can we build peace in the aftermath of extensive violence? How can international actors help in this process? This colloquium focuses on international peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding efforts in recent conflicts. It covers general concepts, theories, and debates, as well as specific cases of peacebuilding successes and failures. Cross-listed with Human Rights.

**POLS BC3435 COLL: LAW AND VIOLENCE. 4.00 points.**

Prerequisites: Admission by application through the Barnard Political Science Department only. Enrollment limited to 16 students. Requires POLS 1011 (Political Theory) or equivalent. This colloquium examines how the law can participate in the justification of various forms of violence, exclusion, and inequality. It focuses on the power of law to determine which subjects get recognized as persons entitled to rights. Possible topics include slavery, migration, gender, sexual orientation, disability, homelessness, and nonhuman animals

Fall 2025: POLS BC3435

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 3435	001/00253	W 11:00am - 12:50pm Room TBA	Ayten Gundogdu	4.00	0/12

**POLS BC3445 COLL: GENDER # PUBLIC POLICY. 4.00 points.**

In this course, we will examine how notions of sex and gender have shaped public policies, and how public policies have affected the social, economic, and political citizenship of men and women in the United States over time

Spring 2025: POLS BC3445

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 3445	001/00358	M 2:10pm - 4:00pm 913 Milstein Center	Katherine Krimmel	4.00	8/12

**POLS BC3451 COLLOQUIUM ON ECONOMIC INEQUALITY IN THE UNITED STATES. 4.00 points.**

In recent decades, economic inequality in the United States has soared to levels not seen for nearly a century. Wages for workers have stagnated, while the proportion of wealth concentrated among the most well-off Americans has steadily increased. These trends may have dire consequences for the state of representative democracy in the United States, as they endow a relatively small number of citizens with a disproportionate amount of resources to deploy politically. The result is a political system that often responds to the preferences of the wealthiest Americans, while frequently ignoring the views of most ordinary citizens. This course, in diverse ways, explores the political causes and consequences of rising inequality, especially with regards to who has political power. We will begin by examining the contours of inequality in the U.S. while also exploring the various ways that power manifests itself in politics. We'll then explore the relationship between wealth and public policy outcomes in the United States, along with the ways that the very wealthiest Americans – both individually and collectively – work to advance their policy views. Beyond just examining national-level politics, we will also discuss inequality and power on the state- and local-levels. We'll then explore how political and economic inequality are interrelated with race and social class, and how all of this connects to the rise of Donald Trump. Finally, we will assess potential remedies to political and economic inequality

**POLS BC3540 COLL:CONSTRUCTNG STATES NATIONS. 4 points.**

Prerequisites: POLS V1501 or the equivalent. [Admission by application](#) through the Barnard department only. Enrollment limited to 16 students. Prerequisites: POLS V1501 or the equivalent. Admission by application through the Barnard department only. Enrollment limited to 16 students. The course will examine the development of, and relationship among, the three constituent features of the modern political world: states, nations and democracy. The course will analyze both historical and contemporary cases, tracing how causal processes unfold over time and space and what past conditions and experiences lie behind today's political dynamics and problems.

**POLS BC3500 COLL:POLIT ECON:CORRPTN/CONTRL. 4.00 points.**

Prerequisites: POLS V1501 or the equivalent. Admission by application through the Barnard department only. Enrollment limited to 16 students. Barnard syllabus. Comparative political economy course which addresses some important questions concerning corruption and its control: the concept, causes, patterns, consequences, and control of corruption. Introduces students to and engages them in several key social science debates on the causes and effects of political corruption

**POLS BC3501 COLL: URBAN VIOLENCE. 4.00 points.****POLS BC3505 COLL: MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK. 4.00 points.**

Beginning in the mid-1970s a democratic wave swept the globe. It started in Southern Europe, spread throughout Latin America, parts of East Asia and Africa, and engulfed the former Soviet bloc. In all, dozens of new democracies emerged during the late twentieth century and by the early 21st century there were more democracies in the world than there had ever been before. Over the last decade and a half, however, a democratic undertow has sent in. Many new democracies have slid back towards dictatorship and many old democracies have experienced significant problems as well. This colloquium will exam the literature on democratic consolidation and backsliding, providing students with an overview of the most important theories about what makes democracy work—or not



**POLS BC3512 Pandemics and Politics. 4.00 points.**

The COVID-19 crisis offers a rare and unique opportunity to social science students to study how governments respond and how people behave during the pandemic. In this class, we focus on the government responses to the COVID pandemic (along with some other major pandemics in history) and investigate the questions of why governments around the globe did what they did in response to the pandemic, and how some social, political, and economic factors affected the kind of responses and the effectiveness of such responses. In analyzing different factors, we will survey and learn from existing relevant theoretical frameworks in social sciences particularly political science. We will cover a wide range of topics that are also major topics in political science such as federalism, authoritarianism, leadership, and trust in government. By examining this important contemporary global crisis from political science perspectives, students can learn about broader theories in social sciences in general and political science in particular. Another goal of this course is for students to learn how to make social science inquiry and analysis with comparative methods. Through the readings, class discussions, research, and writing of a research paper, students will be exposed to various ways to conduct research and making analysis which will be realized in a research paper

**POLS BC3543 COLL:NON-STATE GOV CRIME/WAR. 4.00 points.**

Prerequisites: (POLS UN1501)

Prerequisites: (POLS UN1501) The conventional wisdom is that crime and civil war are linked to disorder. But these are far from disorderly and ungoverned spaces. Unpacking these settings reveals complex forms of non-state governance constructed by a range of actors, including rebel and guerillas, gangs, vigilantes, and protection rackets – sometimes facilitated by the state

**POLS BC3555 COLLOQUIUM: POLITICAL BEHAVIOR. 4.00 points.**

**Not offered during 2023-2024 academic year.**

This course explores how and why people take action in the political sphere. We will pay particular attention to questions such as why people vote, form interest groups, and/or contribute money to candidates. We will also study the origins of partisanship, polarization, opinion, and political ideology. Finally, we will cover topics in "elite" behavior, examining candidates, lawmakers, and party officials

**POLS BC3801 COLL:POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT. 4.00 points.**

Prerequisites: V 1501 or equivalent Description: The semester-long course aims to study political and social factors behind economic development and exam empirical cases of the success and failure in economic growth in order to understand the key features of the development processes. In the last two centuries, some countries successfully achieved economic growth and development, while other failed to do so. Even in the post-WWII period, the world has witnessed the rise and decline of economies around the world. Why do nations succeed or fail in economic development? How do political institutions affect economic outcomes? What are the ways in which state and market interact and influence each other? Can democracy be considered a cause of development, an outgrowth of development, or neither and to which extent? How do external factors such as foreign aid encourage or discourage development? We will try to examine these questions by taking a historical-institutional and comparative approach and take a critical look at the role of political and other institutions by applying theoretical guidelines and empirical cases. We will explore competing explanations for the successes and failures of economic development in the world. Objective:1. Understand some important concepts and theories within the fields of comparative politics and political economy. To explore the interconnections between politics, economy, and society in the context of development policy and practice.2. Develop basic analytic skills to explore various factors that shape political, economic, and social development and underdevelopment in the world;3. Understand some country specific political economy processes and how these processes prove or disprove certain theories and policies

Spring 2025: POLS BC3801

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
POLS 3801	001/00369	W 4:10pm - 6:00pm 306 Milbank Hall	Xiaobo Lu	4.00	11/12

**POLS BC3810 \*Colloquium on Aid, Politics & Violence in Africa. 4 points.**

Prerequisites: POLS V1601 or the equivalent. Admission by application through the Barnard department only. Enrollment limited to 16 students. Barnard syllabus.

Explores the concepts, theoretical traditions and debates around development and humanitarian aid, focusing on the relationships between aid, politics, and violence. It looks at the political and military impacts of aid, the linkage between humanitarian aid and conflict resolution, and aid's contribution to perpetuating subtle forms of domination. (Cross-listed by the Africana Studies and the Human Rights Programs.)

**POLS BC3812 \* Colloquium on State Failure, Warlords, and Pirates. 4 points.**

**Not offered during 2023-2024 academic year.**

Prerequisites: POLS V1501 or POLS V1601 or the equivalent. Admission by application through the Barnard department only. Enrollment limited to 16 students. Barnard syllabus.

What are sovereign states, why do they fail, does their failure matter, and can the international community help? This course examines these questions using social science theories and historical case studies. It focuses on the political economy and security consequences of two current forms of state failure: warlordism and piracy.

**POLS BC3816 COVID-19 and International Relations. 4.00 points.**

Welcome to "International Relations of COVID-19." The onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic has sent political shockwaves around the world, affecting almost every aspect of international political life. From how countries cooperate with one another to redefining what constitutes national security, to recasting pressures for globalization and de-globalization, the world as we knew it prior to February 2020 appears to be dramatically changing. At the same time, scholars and policymakers are increasingly divided about how to understand and respond to many of these challenges. Is the COVID era truly new or will it actually accelerate recent trends in international politics and global governance? What are the similarities between this pandemic and previous global health crises and what lessons should we draw for managing international order? What are the implications for US leadership, and broad perceptions about the erosion of the US-led liberal world order, and how have strategic competitors like China dealt with the crisis globally? Finally, what are the tools, resources and networks available to researchers and policy makers interested in making more evidence-based assessments about international public policy? What are the challenges? The intensive nature of this colloquium is reflected in two ways- preparation and focus. First, the course carries a substantial reading load designed to inform and prepare students for each course session. These assignments will mostly be academic readings, but may also include podcasts, news articles, and digital archival materials. New materials and resources dealing with the course topic are added daily and may be added to the syllabus, so please check the Courseworks syllabus before each meeting for the current assignments. Importantly, our class lectures, group activities and individual assignments will build upon, not review, the assigned materials for the session. Second, the remote nature of the course will require active listening and focus. Each session typically will be split into 2 segments, roughly of 55-60 minutes each. Many of these segments will feature guest lecturers or experts who will give 25-30 mins presentations on their topic and then field questions. During our limited time for Q#A students should ask single, concise questions

## Cross-Listed Courses

NOTE: All 3000 or 4000-level POLS courses taken at Barnard or Columbia are approved as Political Science electives. Below is a list of cross-listed courses from other departments.

**HRTS BC1025 HUM RGTS IN THEORY# PRACTICE. 3.00 points.**

Provides a broad overview of the rapidly expanding field of human rights. Lectures on the philosophical, historical, legal and institutional foundations are interspersed with weekly presentations by frontline advocates from the U.S. and overseas

## Spring 2025: HRTS BC1025

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
HRTS 1025	001/00158	T Th 4:10pm - 5:25pm LI003 Barnard Hall	Widney Brown	3.00	61/60

## Fall 2025: HRTS BC1025

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
HRTS 1025	001/00011	T Th 11:40am - 12:55pm 152 Horace Mann Hall	Widney Brown	3.00	0/40

**HRTS BC3061 INTERNATIONAL LAW & THE UNITED NATIONS IN PRACTICE. 4 points.****HRTS UN3001 INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS. 3.00 points.**

Evolution of the theory and content of human rights; the ideology and impact of human rights movements; national and international human rights law and institutions; their application with attention to universality within states, including the U.S. and internationally

## Fall 2025: HRTS UN3001

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
HRTS 3001	001/10242	M W 2:40pm - 3:55pm Room TBA	Andrew Nathan	3.00	0/150

**MDES UN3260 RETHINKING MIDDLE EAST POLITCS. 4.00 points.**

CC/GS/SEAS: Partial Fulfillment of Global Core Requirement

This course examines a set of questions that have shaped the study of the politics of the modern Middle East. It looks at the main ways those questions have been answered, exploring debates both in Western academic scholarship and among scholars and intellectuals in the region itself. For each question, the course offers new ways of thinking about the issue or ways of framing it in different terms. The topics covered in the course include: the kinds of modern state that emerged in the Middle East and the ways its forms of power and authority were shaped; the birth of economic development as a way of describing the function and measuring the success of the state, and the changing metrics of this success; the influence of oil on the politics of the region; the nature and role of Islamic political movements; the transformation of the countryside and the city and the role of rural populations and of urban protest in modern politics; and the politics of armed force and political violence in the region, and the ways in which this has been understood. The focus of the course will be on the politics of the twentieth century, but many topics will be traced back into developments that occurred in earlier periods, and several will be explored up to the present. The course is divided into four parts, each ending with a paper or exam in which participants are asked to analyze the material covered. Each part of the course has a geographical focus on a country or group of countries and a thematic focus on a particular set of questions of historical and political analysis

## Spring 2025: MDES UN3260

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
MDES 3260	001/11293	M W 10:10am - 11:25am Cin Alfred Lerner Hall	Timothy Mitchell	4.00	111/120

**URBS V3833 New York City: Politics and Governing. 4 points.**

This course will examine through readings, class discussions, and in class debate, the complex politics and governing of New York City- the key political institutions, and who holds urban political power, voting and elections, and the changing roles of the electorate will be covered.

We will examine the structure or New York City government and how the New York City Budget is developed and adopted; the interplay between Mayoral and City council powers, the city charter, the process of governing and the role of political parties, special interest groups, lobbyists and labor unions. We will look back in the City's political history and consider that time in the mid 1970's when New York City suffered a major fiscal crisis and was close to financial bankruptcy. In this context, New York City's relationships with the state and federal governments will also be covered.