

# DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS, LAW & SOCIETY

The Department of Politics, Law, and Society offer a variety of courses and programs to help students understand complex political and social problems, and the functioning of political, legal, and social institutions, so that students can develop their abilities to make a positive difference in the world. There are programs in Political Science, Legal Studies, Sociology and Anthropology.

## Politics and Law Programs Sociology and Anthropology Programs

### Faculty

#### Politics, Law and Society Department Chair

John Dietrich

#### Professor

Andrea Boggio

#### Professor

Michael Bryant

#### Professor

John Dietrick

#### Professor

Judith McDonnell

#### Professor

Alex Perullo

#### Associate Professor

Katayoun Alidadi

#### Associate Professor

Nicole Freiner

#### Associate Professor

Richard Holtzman

#### Assistant Professor

Jocelyn Bell

#### Assistant Professor

Tristan Hightower

#### Senior Lecturer

Ronald Washburn

#### Lecturer

Ilisabeth Smith Bornstein

#### Lecturer

Mary Anne Clarke

#### Lecturer

Holly Dygert

#### Lecturer

Amanda L. C. Fontaine

#### Lecturer

Kristin Taylor-Costello

### Legal Studies Courses

#### LGLS 211. The Legal Environment of Business. 3 Credit Hours.

This course emphasizes the nature of legal systems and processes. Topics include agency, contracts, the Uniform Commercial Code, debtor-creditor relationships, government regulation of business, and business structure (selection of a business entity).

Prerequisites: Sophomore standing

Session Cycle: Fall, Spring

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

#### LGLS 230. Introduction to the U.S. Legal System. 3 Credit Hours.

This introductory law course provides an overview of the U.S. legal system. The course introduces students to various areas of law including the sources of law and the court system, constitutional law, civil law and procedure, criminal law and procedure, and the regulatory state.

The course also explores the connection of the U.S. legal system with the international legal system and the legal systems of other countries. Students will acquire foundational understanding of the ways in which the U.S. legal system operates and enhance their ability to analyze and resolve problems.

Session Cycle: Fall, Spring

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

#### LGLS 320. Global Legal Traditions. 3 Credit Hours.

This course introduces students to the comparative study of law. Students learn how laws differ from the across countries. The course places national laws in the broader context of major legal traditions, including common law, which has been the most influential in shaping American law. Each tradition is examined in terms of its institutions and substantive law, its founding concepts and methods, its attitude towards the concept of change and its teaching on relations with other traditions and peoples.

Prerequisites: LGLS 211 or LGLS 230, Sophomore Standing

Session Cycle: Fall

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

#### LGLS 330. Criminal Law and Procedure. 3 Credit Hours.

This course focuses on criminal law and procedure. Students learn about the foundations of criminal responsibility, the definition of common crimes, and criminal procedural requirements. The objectives of this course are to learn the substantive and procedural criminal procedure, gain knowledge of constitutional rights in the context of criminal law and procedure, and gain an understanding of the moral, philosophical, and public policy considerations in the use of criminal sanctions. Substantive law topics include how guilt is established, justification of punishment, defining criminal conduct, inchoate crimes. Procedural law topics include right to counsel, search warrant and permissible warrantless searches, jury selection, negotiated pleas, and the rules of evidence.

Prerequisites: LGLS 211 or LGLS 230

Session Cycle: Spring

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**LGLS 340. The Legal and Ethical Aspects of Generative Artificial Intelligence. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course explores the legal, ethical, and societal implications of artificial intelligence. Topics include data privacy, algorithmic bias, intellectual property, accountability, and the regulation of AI technologies. Students will examine real-world case studies and engage in critical discussions about responsible AI development and deployment. Emphasis is placed on understanding how laws and ethical frameworks apply to emerging AI systems across industries.

Prerequisites: LGLS 211 or LGLS 230 and Sophomore Standing  
Session Cycle: Every Spring Semester.

**LGLS 351. Civil Rights and Liberties. 3 Credit Hours.**

In this course students examine the legal principles and rules that define the nature and limits of American government and the rights of citizens under the Constitution. The course stresses analysis of Supreme Court decisions and their influence on American political and economic development.

Prerequisites: LGLS 211 or LGLS 230  
Session Cycle: Fall  
Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**LGLS 354. Communications Law. 3 Credit Hours.**

A study of the legal rights and privileges of communications media, this course emphasizes the following topics: written communications; the problems of right to know versus right of privacy; libel, defamation, copyright, and infringement; examination of regulatory agencies; and theories of the First Amendment.

Prerequisites: LGLS 211 or LGLS 230  
Session Cycle: Spring  
Yearly Cycle: Varies.

**LGLS 356. Law and the Digital World. 3 Credit Hours.**

The course provides an overview of legal and policy issues related to the impact of modern technology on society. Students are exposed to the key laws, regulations and cases relating to the digital world. The course is divided in four sections: a study of the infrastructure of the Internet and its regulation; the protection of individual rights in the cyberspace; the protection of society from cyber threats; and the regulation of private companies operating in the digital world. The course explores the legislative and technology landscape in this dynamic area and provides students with opportunities to discuss cutting-edge issues at the intersection of law, technology, and policy.

Session Cycle: Varies  
Yearly Cycle: Varies.

**LGLS 360. Law and Society. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course is an introduction to the field of law and society. Students examine the nature of law and what we can and cannot expect it to do for us; the manner in which law and legal categories shape society; the role of lawyers, judges and other legal actors in the legal system; the basic structure of the judiciary and how cases flow through the court system, and controversial legal issues in such areas as business, medicine, and gender. Emphasis is placed on issues that illustrate the interaction between law and social control and law and social change. The course draws from a variety of perspectives including sociology, political science, history and philosophy. A major goal of the course is to give students a practical foundation in the critical assessment of law and legal thinking as well as improving their ability to make arguments in writing and orally.

Session Cycle: Varies  
Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**LGLS 380. Sport and the Law. 3 Credit Hours.**

Sport acts as a prism on society. Sport can reflect and forecast changes in our society on local, regional, national and international levels. These changes and their interrelationship with Sport are studied in this class.

Prerequisites: LGLS 211  
Session Cycle: Spring  
Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**LGLS 381. International Law. 3 Credit Hours.**

International law encompasses the binding rules, norms and principles that govern the interaction among states. This course will introduce students to the basic concepts and problems of international law and of the international legal system, and will cover topics in this field such as the sources of international law, sovereignty, jurisdiction and responsibility of states, treaty law, non-intervention principles, the relationship between international law and national law, dispute resolution and international litigation. It will also address newer themes in international law such as the impact of international organizations and other "actors" in international law, international criminal law, the use of force and terrorism, and international environmental law.

Prerequisites: Sophomore standing  
Session Cycle: Fall  
Yearly Cycle: Varies.

**LGLS 382. Nonprofit Law and Governance. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course explores law, governance, and public policy issues surrounding the nonprofit segment of the US economy. Students will learn about the process of forming, maintaining, and governing a tax-exempt nonprofit organization. The course will examine the duties and liabilities of directors and officers, as well as other options to "do good" such as fiscal sponsorship.

Prerequisites: LGLS 211 or LGLS 230  
Session Cycle: Spring  
Yearly Cycle: Varies.

**LGLS 383. Health Law. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course investigates how law regulates health and affects the health care industry, health care practitioners, patients, scientists, and other stakeholders. Each semester the topics included in the syllabus vary depending on what is currently debated. A list of topics for a past semester includes infectious disease, privacy, quarantine, FDA regulation, clinical trials, direct-to-consumer advertisement, medical tourism, reproductive health, rationing, abortion, end of life, and others.

Prerequisites: Sophomore Standing  
Session Cycle: Varies  
Yearly Cycle: Varies.

**LGLS 386. History, Law, and the Holocaust. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course will explore in depth the Holocaust and its impact on the development of international law after 1945. Topics will include anti-Semitism, the rise of Hitler, the Final Solution, minority rights, domestic legal actions against perpetrators, the Nuremberg International Military Tribunal, Allied military courts, and subsequent national and international trials of accused Nazi war criminals. The course concludes with an examination of some of the leading post-Nuremberg topics in international human rights law today, including peremptory norms, transitional justice, hate speech prohibitions, and Holocaust denial. This is a cross-listed course with HIS 386.

Prerequisites: 200 level History course and sophomore standing  
Session Cycle: Varies  
Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**LGLS 411. Markets and the Law: The Uniform Commercial Code. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course provides an advanced look at some of the provisions of the Uniform Commercial Code. Topics include contracts, sales, negotiable instruments, and secured transactions. These topics are of particular concern to those who are interested in becoming accountants.

Prerequisites: Junior standing

Session Cycle: Fall

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**LGLS 412. Law of Financial Institutions. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course offers a study of the laws and regulations that govern U.S. financial institutions and the federal agencies that regulate those institutions. We analyze the creation and actions of the monetary system and capital markets. We examine the evolution of regulatory efforts and analyze current issues and challenges that face regulators and institutions going forward. In particular, we will examine the 2007-2008 meltdown of the mortgage, securities, banking and derivatives industries, and the federal actions (legislative and regulatory) undertaken in response to those crises, with a particular focus on the provisions of the Dodd Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010.

Prerequisites: Junior standing

Session Cycle: Spring

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**LGLS 413. Gender and the Law. 3 Credit Hours.**

Gender & the Law reviews the history and continuing social battles over gender and gender-relevant issues from a legal lens. Various examples serve as illustrations of how law and policies can and have been utilized to improve and to worsen social problems and discrimination in the United States and in selected foreign jurisdictions and regions. The class examines how, in the United States, law has affected social issues related to gender; sometimes creating the inequalities and inequities for marginalized sex and gender groups and sometimes as instrumental for breaking down barriers for women and transgender persons. The class covers women's rights movements in other regions of the world and the role of international law and women's movements. Policy issues can include voting rights; privacy; affirmative action; abortion; reproductive rights; dress codes; rape laws; domestic violence and human trafficking; and discrimination based on sex and sexual orientation.

Prerequisites: LGLS 230 or LGLS 211.

**LGLS 443. Legal Ethics. 3 Credit Hours.**

Thinking deeply about the nature of "the Good" is the starting point for investigating the purposes of law. To this end, Legal Ethics introduces the student to the leading ethical systems that have guided human thought about the Good. Using examples from both U.S. and international law, the course helps the student to integrate an understanding of ethical systems and theories of moral development into the study of law broadly considered. For qualified students, this course may be taken as a 500-level graduate content level course. Permission of the instructor is required.

Prerequisites: Sophomore standing and one 300-level Legal Studies course or permission of the instructor

Session Cycle: Spring

Yearly Cycle: Varies.

**LGLS 451. International Business Law. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course will address both the broader issues of government control of international business and the process of doing business overseas.

It will compare the unique culture and legal systems of the United States, Europe, Japan and the Middle East. In addition, the course will focus on the mechanics of doing business overseas under international agreements such as GATT, NAFTA and the European Union.

Prerequisites: LGLS 211 or permission of the instructor

Session Cycle: Fall, Spring

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**LGLS 490. Seminar in Politics and Law. 3 Credit Hours.**

This seminar serves as the interdisciplinary capstone course for students in the Politics and Law major. Structured as a series of discussions on pressing political and legal questions, the course emphasizes critical dialogue, collaborative inquiry, and reflection. Students will analyze complex problems and consider their ethical, institutional, and theoretical implications through rigorous analysis, presentations, and writing that demonstrate integrative thinking across the major. This course is cross-listed with POLS 490.

Prerequisites: Politics and Law major and senior standing

Session Cycle: Fall

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**LGLS 497. Directed Study in Legal Studies. 3 Credit Hours.**

Under faculty supervision, students pursue a well defined area of interest in legal studies.

Prerequisites: LGLS 211 or LGLS 220 and permission of the instructor.

**Political Science Courses****POLS 240. Contemporary Problems and Policy Responses. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course places students in a dynamic learning environment within which they learn by wrestling, individually and collectively, with a series of complex, real-world problems. Different problems are selected each semester. The common thread is that these are all intractable problems created or aggravated by human intervention. The problems affect people around the world, but not always in the same ways. Students undertake repeated work cycles to analyze complex problems and evaluate appropriate policy responses. With an emphasis on the "process" of tackling social problems rather than the "end product" of that process, the course engages students in an exploratory learning process to strengthen their problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and ethical reasoning.

**POLS 241. Introduction to International Politics. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course is an introduction to the field of international politics, also known as international relations. It focuses on a variety of interconnected topics, including the development of the nation-state system and political interactions among countries over issues of war and peace, human rights, and economic and environmental policies. We also explore the evolution and work of international institutions such as the United Nations and the World Bank, and non-governmental international organizations such as environmental and human rights groups.

Session Cycle: Fall, Spring

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**POLS 256. Introduction to U.S. Politics. 3 Credit Hours.**

This is an introductory course about the role of U.S. government and politics in American society. After tracing the development of the U.S. Constitution, the course surveys a range of topics including Congress, the presidency, the Supreme Court, federalism, political parties and elections, interest groups, civil liberties, and civil rights. Contemporary domestic policy debates are also covered.

Session Cycle: Fall, Spring

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**POLS 290. Honors Politics of the International System. 3 Credit Hours.**

This honors course explores the current international political system. It examines major historical developments that shaped the actors and power distribution of the current system. Next, it explores competing international relations theories that attempt to explain the main motivations and realities guiding the behavior of actors in the system. Then, it focuses on contemporary issues with global implications. Subsequently, it examines recent and future challenges faced by particular key actors in the system as they attempt to shape the global system of the future. It concludes by returning to the system level to consider the prospects for global cultural clashes or peace through globalization. Students receiving credit for POLS 241/GLOB 241, Introduction to Global Politics, cannot receive credit for this class.

Prerequisites: Honors Program

Session Cycle: Fall

Yearly Cycle: Alternate Years.

**POLS 291. Honors Contemporary U.S. Politics. 3 Credit Hours.**

This honors course covers the ideas and historical factors that shaped the formation and evolution of the U.S. political system. This course surveys a range of topics including Congress, the presidency, the Supreme Court, federalism, political parties, elections, interest groups, civil liberties, and civil rights. It also focuses on the governmental and non-governmental players in the policy making system and goes beyond book knowledge to examine contemporary U.S. politics. Students receiving credit for POLS 256, Introduction to U.S. Politics, cannot receive credit for this course.

Prerequisites: Honors program

Session Cycle: Fall

Yearly Cycle: Alternate Years.

**POLS 351. United States Foreign Policy. 3 Credit Hours.**

Students in this course survey the instruments, implementation and issues of U.S. foreign policy. Students will learn about America's rise to power and its current role in the world with a focus both on how foreign policy is made and Post WWII U.S. involvements overseas.

Prerequisites: GLOB 241/POLS 241 or POLS 256 or GLOB 290/POLS 290 or POLS 291

Session Cycle: Varies

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**POLS 353. Campaigns, Elections, and Voting in the U.S.. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course examines campaigns, elections, and voting in the United States. Topics include electoral competition, campaign organization and strategy, nominations and elections, voting behavior, and the influence of public opinion, interest groups, and the media on the electoral process. The course is offered in the fall semester of even-numbered years when congressional and/or presidential elections take place.

Prerequisites: POLS 241 or POLS 256 or POLS 290 or POLS 291

Session Cycle: Fall

Yearly Cycle: Alternate Years.

**POLS 354. The U.S. Congress. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course examines the U.S. Congress as a central institution in American government, exploring its structure, organization, and functions. Students will analyze congressional elections, including who runs for office, how campaigns unfold, and the factors influencing electoral success. The course will also cover the internal workings of Congress, including the differences between the House and Senate, the role of political parties, congressional committees, and the legislative process. Additionally, students will explore legislative behavior, the relationship between Congress and the executive and judicial branches, and how institutional norms and rules shape decision-making. The course will also examine its role in shaping public policy, including how legislative priorities are set and the factors that influence which issues gain traction. Core themes of democracy and representation will be emphasized throughout the course.

Prerequisites: POLS 256 or POLS 291 or POLS GLOB 241 or POLS GLOB 290

Session Cycle: Spring

Yearly Cycle: Alternate Year.

**POLS 356. The Presidency in Modern American Politics. 3 Credit Hours.**

The image of the presidency today as the centerpiece of the American political system is very different than the one originally outlined in the U.S. Constitution. What has brought about this change? How has this transformation impacted the separation of powers and the respective roles of Congress and the Supreme Court? What does the popular image of the president as "chief decider" signify for a democratic system of government? These questions and more guide this course's exploration of the presidency in modern American politics.

Prerequisites: GLOB 241/POLS 241 or POLS 256 or GLOB 290/POLS 290 or POLS 291.

**POLS 361. Comparative Politics. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course examines the key concepts, issues, and trends in comparative politics. Comparative politics focuses on the study of political organization and behavior using the method of comparison across time and between country cases. The course covers topics such as various types of political systems, political participation, economic development, and nationalist movements/identities. Types of countries covered include: established democracies, authoritarian regimes, communist, and developing countries.

Prerequisites: GLOB 241/POLS 241 or POLS 256 or GLOB 290/POLS 290 or POLS 291

Session Cycle: Varies

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**POLS 366. Politics of Asia. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course uses comparative methodology to analyze the government and domestic politics of India, China, and Japan. Students will be introduced to the political institutions and processes of the three countries, and explore the impact of history, cultural dynamics specific to Asia and South Asia, government structures and economic change on political processes. State-society relations are examined within the context of democratization, development, and citizen movements. Issues regarding cultural and scholarly lenses will be addressed through critical examination of relevant materials and theories discussed in class.

Prerequisites: GLOB 241/POLS 241 or POLS 256 or GLOB 290/POLS 290, or POLS 291

Session Cycle: Spring

Yearly Cycle: Varies.

**POLS 367. Global Environmental Sustainability and Policy. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course examines the intersection of global environmental sustainability issues, political policy, and the world economic issues. It focuses on different trajectories of environmental and ecological politics and thought, and on foundations for policy, with particular focus on climate change. The central premise is that deciding how to respond to climate change is a highly political process involving conflicts over competing values and interests, the growth of international institutions, and the link between climate change and the global economy.

Prerequisites: GLOB 241/POLS 241 or POLS 256 or GLOB 290/POLS 290 or POLS 291

Session Cycle: Fall

Yearly Cycle: Varies.

**POLS 440. Interest Groups and Lobbying. 3 Credit Hours.**

Are lobbyists skilled advocates or manipulative influencers? To explore answers to this question, we will examine the role of interest groups and their lobbyists in American politics, analyzing their organization, prominence, and influence. The course will cover campaign finance and the strategies interest groups use to shape policy by influencing those in office. Despite public criticism of special interests, these groups remain deeply embedded in the policy making process, particularly through lobbying efforts in Congress, the executive branch, and the judiciary. We will also examine social movements, exploring the conditions that lead to their emergence, the factors that shape their success or failure, and how they differ from organized interest groups in influencing public policy. By the end of the course, students will have developed a deeper understanding of advocacy, influence, and political representation in the United States.

Prerequisites: POLS 256 or POLS 291 or POLS GLOB 241 or POLS GLOB 290 or Permission of Instructor

Session Cycle: Alternate Fall Semesters.

**POLS 452. American Political Economy. 3 Credit Hours.**

What is the nature of the relationships that exist between government and business, politics and economy, power and money in the United States? And why do these relationships matter? In this course, we will use these questions as a starting-point from which to undertake a critical examination of these relationships as they exist today and to consider where they might be heading in the future, and to generate conclusions about their potential implications - political, economic, and social.

Prerequisites: GLOB 241/POLS 241 or POLS 256 or GLOB 290/POLS 290 or POLS 291

Session Cycle: Every Other Semester.

**POLS 462. International Security. 3 Credit Hours.**

In this course, students analyze the nature of the modern international system, and the resultant struggle for power, including power politics, balance of power, and war and peace. This course covers the bases and limitations of national power as well as international law, international organization and diplomacy. It applies enduring principles to modern issues and cases.

Prerequisites: GLOB 241/POLS 241 or POLS 256 or GLOB 290/POLS 290 or POLS 291

Session Cycle: Varies

Yearly Cycle: Alternate Years.

**POLS 463. Ethics in International Affairs. 3 Credit Hours.**

"All's fair in love and war" used to effectively summarize global politics, but in recent years, moral considerations have become major, but still controversial, components of many policy discussions. This course will examine issues such as the ethical constraints on the use of force, human rights norms, issues created by global inequality and by development programs, and ethical implications of the global economy and multinational corporations.

Prerequisites: GLOB 241/POLS 241 or POLS 256 or GLOB 290/POLS 290 or POLS 291

Session Cycle: Varies

Yearly Cycle: Alternate Years.

**POLS 464. Political Ideologies - Old and New. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course examines first the conflicting political philosophies of liberalism, conservatism, and Marxism which shaped the development of Western democracies and the former Communist countries, and then considers modern ideological debates over third world nationalism, environmentalism, and feminism.

Prerequisites: GLOB/POLS 241 or POLS 256 or GLOB 290/POLS 290 or POLS 291

Session Cycle: Spring

Yearly Cycle: Alternate Years.

**POLS 481. Politics of Development. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course examines the political, economic, and social structures of the broad array of countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East that make up the developing world. The major challenges faced by these countries and strategies adopted to address them will be identified and analyzed. A historical overview of the evolution of the developing world will explore the impact of colonialism and issues of post-colonialism.

Issues of gender, race, ethnicity, sustainable development and the environment will also be explored.

Prerequisites: GLOB 241/POLS 241 or POLS 256 or GLOB 290/POLS 290 or POLS 291

Session Cycle: Varies

Yearly Cycle: Alternate Years.

**POLS 483. Politics of International Economic Relations. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course focuses on the role of individual country governments, official international economic organizations, and globally-oriented non-governmental organizations (NGO's) in the international economic system. It examines conflict and cooperation among nations, as well as interactions between countries and international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization, as they engage in the management of trade, investment flows, exchange rates, debt, and the global environment. It also considers politics within individual countries as they affect that country's international economic policies, looking at governmental relations with business, labor associations and other non-governmental organizations as these impact on trade policies, exchange rates, and the regulation of multinational corporations' overseas operations.

Prerequisites: GLOB 241/POLS 241 or POLS 256 or GLOB 290/POLS 290 or POLS 291

Session Cycle: Fall

Yearly Cycle: Varies.

**POLS 490. Seminar in Politics and Law. 3 Credit Hours.**

This seminar serves as the interdisciplinary capstone course for students in the Politics and Law major. Structured as a series of discussions on pressing political and legal questions, the course emphasizes critical dialogue, collaborative inquiry, and reflection. Students will analyze complex problems and consider their ethical, institutional, and theoretical implications through rigorous analysis, presentations, and writing that demonstrate integrative thinking across the major. This course is cross-listed with LGLS 490.

Prerequisites: Politics and Law major and senior standing

Session Cycle: Fall

Yearly Cycle: Annual.

**POLS 497. Directed Study in Politics. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course is an opportunity for students to do independent, in-depth study or research for academic credit. The student works on an individual basis under the direction of a member of the political science faculty. The main requirement of the course is the development of a substantial paper or project.

Prerequisites: varies by topic.

**POLS ST302. Saving the World with Data. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course introduces the scope and methods of contemporary political science research, emphasizing a range of techniques to address complex policy issues at the national and global levels. Political scientists employ a diverse set of tools to collect, analyze, and visualize data. We will hone the skills necessary to conduct research through fieldwork, interviews, surveys, and statistical analysis. To accomplish this, you will engage innovative techniques utilizing statistical software and artificial intelligence (AI). Throughout the course, you will also cultivate an understanding of the ethics involved in research. The practical skills learned in this course are highly transferable and can be applied to various careers after college.

Prerequisites: POLS 256 or POLS 291 or POLS GLOB 241 or POLS GLOB 290 or Permission of Instructor, MATH 201 or Permission of Instructor and Sophomore Standing

Corequisites: Prerequisites may be taken as corequisites only with permission of instructor

Session Cycle: Alternate Spring Semesters.

**POLS ST400. Politics and Society of Modern Japan Confucian Culture to Animation Generation. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course is designed for upper level Politics and Law majors and minors and Global Studies majors as well as those interested in the dynamic political and social challenges being faced by Japan, the most important ally of the United States in the region. This course uses a comparative perspective to examine the history and present day manifestation of Confucian thought which are key in understanding the way that the Japanese government structures relationships with its citizens. Moreover, the course examines Japanese society and the many changes working to shift and sometimes undo ancient traditions in order to manage such problems as: Japan's shrinking population, economic stagnation, environmental catastrophe security threats from Japan's neighbors and the country's changing relationship with the United States.

Prerequisites: POLS 256 or POLS 291 or POLS/GLOB 241 or POLS/GLOB 290.

**Sociology and Anthropology Courses****SOAN 242. Principles of Anthropology. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course studies the consequences of globalization for human beings as they come to understand and value themselves, their relations to others, and their "place in the world." Students discuss a number of challenges to traditional concepts of "culture" important to understanding an anthropological approach to the concept of globalization. The course approaches "globalization," the movement of information, goods, services, capital and people throughout the global space, from a variety of perspectives, including discussion of global migration and diaspora and consideration of the globalization of media.

Session Cycle: Every Semester.

**SOAN 243. Honors: The Anthropology of Globalization. 3 Credit Hours.**

In this course, students interpret global transformations through studying anthropological texts and films that provide in-depth analysis of local-level instances of globalization. These ethnographic studies allow students to improve their specific knowledge of people and places throughout the world and also to develop more theoretically rigorous approaches toward explaining what is meant by the term globalization. To this end, students examine, among other themes, ethnicity to better comprehend issues of power, resources, and land in conflict situations; the movement of textiles to recognize post-Fordist social and economic practices; human trafficking to conceptualize commodification of the human body; and refugee migrations to understand transnationalism. In short, this course offers micro-level case studies, methods, and approaches toward learning about and explaining broad social and cultural processes.

Prerequisites: Honors Program

Session Cycle: Every Fall Semester.

**SOAN 251. Principles of Sociology. 3 Credit Hours.**

In this foundational course, students explore the major aspects of sociology as a discipline, such as classic and contemporary theories, research principles and methods, culture, and socialization. Through real-world examples and activities, students come face-to-face with pressing social issues, including various forms of inequality, and the challenges facing modern social institutions. Students will leave this course with a deeper understanding of, and appreciation for, how humans come together to form the structures and groups that shape day-to-day life.

Session Cycle: Every Semester.

**SOAN 253. Honors Sociology. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course is a more advanced introduction to sociology, students explore the major aspects of sociology as a discipline, such as classic and contemporary theories, research principles and methods, culture, and socialization. Through real-world examples and activities, students come face-to-face with pressing social issues, including various forms of inequality and the challenges facing modern social institutions. Students will leave this course with a deeper understanding of, and appreciation for, how humans come together to form the structures and groups that shape day-to-day life.

Prerequisites: Honors Program

Session Cycle: Every Spring Semester.

**SOAN 301. From Asylums to Zoloft: The Sociology of Mental Health. 3 Credit Hours.**

We often think of mental health and illness as personal experiences that affect an individual and require individual resolution (e.g., therapy, medication, etc.). However, there are social dimensions to mental health that warrant exploration as well, such as: How have definitions and treatments of mental illness changed over time and across cultures? How do sociodemographic differences (e.g., gender, race, socioeconomic status) inform how people experience mental healthcare, both historically and in modern times? What effects do recent events and trends, like COVID-19 and social media use, have on people's mental wellbeing? To begin addressing these and other sociological questions, students will review of-the-moment research, engage in critical discussions, and reflect on their own views regarding mental health; participation in this course will culminate with an experiential "deep dive" into a current mental health-related issue.

Prerequisites: One of SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, SOAN 253  
Session Cycle: Varies.

**SOAN 302. Global Perspectives on Community Development. 3 Credit Hours.**

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are just one example in a long history of global collaboration aimed to improve the lives of the world's most marginalized communities. This course examines this global development project from an anthropological, people-centered lens. It focuses on three aspects of the project. First, it evaluates the achievements and shortcomings of the project from the perspectives of the everyday people they are intended to serve. Second, it examines how everyday people have challenged and redefined development. And third, it examines models for working in partnership and solidarity with people as they seek to improve their lives.

Prerequisites: One of SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, SOAN 253 or ECO 367 or by permission  
Session Cycle: Every Fall Semester.

**SOAN 303. Global Policy Challenges. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course explores contemporary global policy issues—such as inequality, migration, public health, and climate justice—through anthropological and sociological lenses, emphasizing how local experiences and cultural contexts shape and are shaped by global forces. For six weeks during the semester, students study case studies, ethnographies, and theoretical frameworks to understand global issues within a specific country. The course culminates in a faculty-led study abroad experience.

Prerequisites: Sophomore Standing  
Session Cycle: Every Spring Semester.

**SOAN 351. Social Problems Social Solutions. 3 Credit Hours.**

An exploration of major contemporary social problems, examining the key explanations for them. These explanations are used to assess the likely success of current and proposed social solutions. Key problems studied include inequalities linked to race, ethnicity, gender, immigration status, education, age, and criminal justice—as well as overpopulation and environmental degradation. U.S. problems and their possible solutions are illuminated with cross national comparisons.

Prerequisites: One of SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, SOAN 253.

**SOAN 355. Social Determinants of Health. 3 Credit Hours.**

Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) are conditions, forces, and systems that influence health outcomes. Structural determinants include economic and social policies that impact food security and early childhood development; governing processes that influence the funding and support for equitable education and fair housing; legal policies that shape access to medical resources and safe working conditions; and forms of discrimination that unjustly favor some populations over others. In this course, we examine SDOH in different global contexts and draw on the field of medical anthropology to explore policies and approaches to solving public health issues. During the semester, we learn broadly about human behavior and health through drawing on an interdisciplinary source of readings, films, and ethnographies. Students work on both comprehending the sources of health problems and designing solutions that can foster more equitable health outcomes.

Session Cycle: Every Spring Semester.

**SOAN 356. Sociology of Family. 3 Credit Hours.**

The central goal of this course is to lead students to a deeper understanding of the ways in which American families are changing. Through an examination of the family in sociological and historical perspectives, students gain insight into the mythology of the "traditional American family" and its formation. We discuss the diversity of current family forms and the ways in which the family is tied into the larger structure of society. The course also examines hooking up, partnering, parenting, the division of household labor, and divorce.

Prerequisites: One of SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, SOAN 253  
Session Cycle: Every Fall Semester.

**SOAN 360. Sociology of Sport. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course provides an overview of the discipline of sociology of sport. The course focuses on the global aspects of sport, with an emphasis on the relationship between sport and race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and national identity. It provides students with the theories, concepts and perspectives that allow them to better understand the relationships between sport, society and culture.

Prerequisites: One from SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, or SOAN 253  
Session Cycle: Every Spring Semester.

**SOAN 370. Crime and Justice. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course applies sociological theory and research to the study of crime and justice. Students engage in policy discussions and projects focused on the philosophy and practice of how societies address major issues of crime and justice (e.g., in education, immigration, drug control, and other areas). Students will learn not only about the criminal justice system but also about the role that multiple social institutions - like family, the market, social media, etc. - play in a sociology of crime and justice.

Prerequisites: One of SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, SOAN 253  
Session Cycle: Every Fall Semester.

**SOAN 389. Fieldwork in Local Communities. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course introduces students to mixed methods research through a hands-on, fieldwork-centered approach. Students learn to design and carry out projects that integrate qualitative techniques—such as interviews, participant observation, focus groups, and qualitative coding—with quantitative tools including descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and data visualization. The course emphasizes how combining ethnographic insights with numerical data produces more comprehensive understandings of culture, everyday life, and broader social patterns. Particular emphasis is placed on conducting research in collaboration with communities and ensuring that projects are responsive to community perspectives and priorities. By the end of the course, students are equipped with the skills and confidence to conduct research that is both methodologically rigorous and meaningfully engaged with the communities they study.

**SOAN 390. Exploring Culture through Photographs, Maps, and Media. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course introduces students to visual anthropology, focusing on the use of visual media to study and represent culture, society, and human behavior. Students will explore research methods such as photovoice, auto-photography, photoelicitation, photojournalism, and GIS mapping. Through hands-on assignments and weekly readings, they will learn to document, analyze, and communicate anthropological insights using visual data. The course also addresses the ethical challenges of using visual media in research, with attention to issues of representation, authenticity, and manipulation, including the use of AI-generated images and deepfakes. Students will develop the ability to critically assess visual content and apply visual methods to complex social and cultural problems.

Prerequisites: Sophomore Standing

Session Cycle: Alternate Spring Semesters.

**SOAN 401. Health and Wellbeing in Global Perspective. 3 Credit Hours.**

What does it mean to be “healthy” in a world shaped by social media, stress, unequal access to care, and global health crises? This course explores health and wellbeing beyond medicine, examining how culture, history, politics, and biology shape wellness, illness, and care. Drawing on anthropology and public health, students investigate how physical health, social connection, meaningful work, caregiving, and spiritual beliefs influence wellbeing across childhood, adulthood, and later life. Through ethnographic research, historical case studies, and public health research, students trace changing approaches to healing—from traditional medical practices to contemporary debates about mental health, chronic illness, and global health interventions—highlighting the ways health and wellbeing matter in everyday life and across societies.

Prerequisites: ANTH242, ANTH243, SOC251, SOC253, SOAN242, SOAN243, SOAN251, or SOAN253 and Sophomore Standing

Session Cycle: Alternate Fall Semesters.

**SOAN 451. From the Cradle to the Grave: Society and Population Health. 3 Credit Hours.**

What exactly is a “population?” How do we tell how a “population” is faring? What kinds of challenges do modern “populations” face? In this course, we will begin to answer these questions as we investigate human groups, particularly the U.S. population. Using key metrics and concepts from demography to build a foundation for inquiry, this course then explores in depth three factors popularly used to gauge population health: fertility, morbidity, and mortality. Through examining rigorous academic research and real-world journalism, students will confront and consider issues related to childbirth, including the politicization of pregnancy and the challenges of family life; sickness, including modern threats to human health (e.g., the opioid epidemic, COVID-19 pandemic, etc.); and death, including both causes and cultural anxieties about end-of-life and what comes next.

Prerequisites: One from SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, SOAN 253.

**SOAN 452. Jobs, Gigs, and Hustles: The Sociology of Work. 3 Credit Hours.**

From Uber drivers to TikTok creators, from freelance coders to AI-powered customer service bots—work today looks nothing like it did a generation ago. This course explores how technology, algorithms, and family life are reshaping labor, identity, and inequality. Students will examine the rise of gig work, the impact of artificial intelligence on employment, and the social consequences of working without traditional protections or permanence. In this course we’ll ask: What does it mean to “have a job” in the 21st century? Who benefits—and who gets left behind?.

Prerequisites: One from SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, SOAN 253

Session Cycle: Alternate Spring Semesters.

**SOAN 453. Race and Ethnicity. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course examines and uses theories to understand the treatment and life chances of racial and ethnic subpopulations, with an emphasis on U.S. society. Students explore the many ways stereotypes, prejudice, racism, and privilege become part of our everyday interaction and reinforce institutional discrimination.

Prerequisites: One from SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, SOAN 253

Session Cycle: Every Spring Semester.

**SOAN 454. Social Theory: The Study of Isms and Phobias. 3 Credit Hours.**

This seminar is first and foremost a study of classical and contemporary social theory. It also examines the ways in which a variety of these theories, both classical and contemporary, view and explain social inequalities. More specifically, we will use theories, theorists, and concepts from theories to help us better understand “isms and phobias” including racism, sexism, classism, heterosexism, homophobia, transphobia, ethnocentrism and xenophobia.

Prerequisites: One from SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, SOAN 253

Session Cycle: Every Fall Semester.

**SOAN 455. Urban Realities: Exploring the City Through Sociology. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course invites students to critically explore the urban landscape through the dual lenses of sociological theory and immersive experience. Blending traditional fieldwork with cutting-edge virtual reality (VR) technology, students will investigate how cities shape — and are shaped by — social forces such as protest, gentrification, street art, and identity. This is a hands-on, course designed for students who want to move beyond the classroom and into the city — both physically and virtually — to understand the complex dynamics of urban life.

Prerequisites: One from SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, SOAN 253.

**SOAN 456. The Human Spark: How Innovation and Creativity Shape Society. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course takes a sociological perspective on creativity and innovation exploring the sociological context of each. Combining readings and lectures, class activities and a community engaged project, students will learn about the social context of creativity and innovation, and they will also understand more deeply their own creative processes and strengthen these processes.

Prerequisites: One from SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, SOAN 253.

**SOAN 491. Sociology and Anthropology Capstone. 3 Credit Hours.**

Designed for student majoring in Sociology and Anthropology, this senior-level capstone seminar asks students to explore, either as an individual directed-study or as part of a weekly seminar, some aspect of an important social issue as it relates to the operation of a social institution.

Prerequisites: One from SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, SOAN 253 and Junior standing

Session Cycle: Every Spring Semester.

**SOAN 497. Directed Study in Sociology and Anthropology. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course is an opportunity for students to do independent, in-depth study or research for academic credit. The student works on an individual basis under the direction of a member of the sociology faculty. The main requirement of the course is the development of a substantial paper or project.

Prerequisites: One from SOAN 242, SOAN 243, SOAN 251, SOAN 253.