

POLITICS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Departmental Guidelines

Mission Statement

The Department of Politics and Public Affairs seeks to help our students develop the analytic tools, communication skills, and knowledge base to be active citizens and life-long learners better equipped to understand, navigate, and influence the political world. We aim to do so squarely within the liberal arts tradition, drawing on resources available across the college as well as beyond our campus to foster reflection as well as action. Accordingly, we conceive the study of politics and public affairs broadly, encompassing timeless normative questions about the role of politics in society as well as the latest means for crafting and evaluating the efficacy of policy. To best achieve our goals, we value ideological, theoretical, and methodological diversity. Our curriculum offers diverse paths for investigating and analyzing politics and public affairs, yet our courses share in common the exploration of institutional arrangements, pathways of political influence, the importance of ideas and norms in politics, and patterns of policymaker responsiveness to political and social inputs.

Goals

Upon completion of the major, we expect PPA students to:

- Be able to construct lucid and coherent written arguments about political questions or issues which mobilize appropriate forms of evidence (normative and/or empirical) and include cogent, meaningful counterarguments (which demonstrate an ability to consider a political question from one or more sides).
- Be able to speak knowledgeably and effectively about multiple, often intersecting, contemporary political questions or issues.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the interconnections between key political institutions (domestically and internationally) as well as various pathways of political influence (e.g., media, law, religion, etc.).
- Understand the benefits and limitations of a variety of analytic tools used by those who study politics to assess claims, including normative analysis, case studies, quantitative analysis of aggregate data, survey research, experimental research designs, counterfactual analysis, cost-benefit analysis, and game theory.
- Conduct independent research on political issues or questions and produce cogent analyses that reflects critical thinking and analytic rigor.

Faculty

Professor Andrew Z. Katz, Chair

Associate Professors Katy Crossley-Frolick, Malliga Och, Heather Pool;
Assistant Professors Anthony Ives, Andrew McWard; Distinguished
Visiting Fellow Scott Smitson

Academic Administrative Assistant

Jennifer Rumbaugh

View faculty profiles and contact information (<https://denison.edu/academics/political-science/contacts/>)

Politics and Public Affairs Major Requirements

Majors must complete:

A total of seven courses in Politics and Public Affairs, consisting of:

- three introductory level courses:
 - PPA 102 - Introduction to Policymaking in Democracies
 - PPA 122 - Introduction to Global Governance
 - PPA 132 - Introduction to Theorizing About Political Life: Normative Issues Common to Democratic Systems
- PPA 201 - Sophomore Seminar
- two upper-level departmental electives
- PPA 491 - Senior Seminar

In addition, all majors must fulfill the following requirements:

- Complete a Major Proposal, a Curriculum Plan, and declare a Track of Study by the end of Sophomore Seminar. Politics and Public Affairs defines three possible Tracks of Study:
 - International Affairs

How are actors in the global domain constrained, driven, or impeded in the international system absent a central authority? To what extent does the international system reflect what Hedley Bull (1977) referred to as an "anarchical society," and to what degree does collective international governance emerge as a result?

- Policy Analysis

Emphasizes the evaluation of public policy and explores the conditions under which the exercise of political power is most likely to be successful. This track provides a foundation for the evaluation of the efficacy of policy.

- Government and Legal Affairs

How does the structure of government shape the interactions of individuals and institutions? How does debate over public affairs, legal arguments, and/or the political process, generate policy outcomes?

Students may also propose their own Track during Sophomore Seminar, subject to departmental approval.

- Complete three cognate courses from outside the PPA department geared toward the emphasis of your Track as indicated on your Curriculum Plan:
 - International Affairs
 - One additional language course beyond Denison's foreign language requirement.
 - Two additional cognate courses on their "theme" of emphasis (one of these may be a foreign language course).
 - Policy Analysis
 - 3 additional courses focusing on the analysis of empirical data
 - Government and Legal Affairs
 - 3 cognate courses reflecting the area of emphasis established in Major Proposal
- Participate in an off-campus experience confirmed by the end of Sophomore Seminar;

- Semester (or summer) enrollment in a Denison-approved Off-Campus Study program;
- An off-campus internship that advances/enhances the coursework for your selected Track;
- Participation in Moot Court, Model UN, or similar co-curricular activities which augments the focus of your Track of study.
- Complete one statistics course from an approved list of classes available from the PPA office, recommended to be fulfilled by the end of sophomore year.

Additional Items of Note:

Cognate courses may also fulfill GE requirements.

No more than two cognate courses can come from a single department or program. Two need to be courses above the introductory level (199).

Because off-campus study is an integral part of the PPA major, courses taken off-campus cannot be brought in to replace any of the seven required PPA courses; however, one course from an off-campus program may fulfill a cognate course requirement.

Politics and Public Affairs Minor

Minors in PPA would complete six courses: the three introductory courses; the sophomore seminar; and two upper-division electives in PPA. Minors would not declare a track of emphasis nor would an off-campus experience be required.

Courses

PPA 101 - Selected Topics in American Politics (4 Credit Hours)

This course provides a venue in which to explore topics in American Politics at the introductory level. Topics will vary according to the needs and interests of the teaching faculty offering the course. In some cases, this course may be repeated for credit.

PPA 102 - Introduction to Policymaking in Democracies (4 Credit Hours)

This course will introduce students to the politics of democratic states. Among the states considered in this course are: the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. Much of the course will focus upon politics and policies in individual countries, however, the course will also seek to compare political phenomena across states and look at some conceptual and theoretical issues that these systems have in common.

PPA 111 - Special Topics in Comparative Politics (4 Credit Hours)

This course provides a venue in which to explore topics in Comparative Politics at the introductory level. Topics will vary according to the needs and interests of the teaching faculty offering the course. In some cases, this course may be repeated for credit.

PPA 121 - Selected Topics in International Politics (4 Credit Hours)

This course provides a venue in which to explore topics in International Politics at the introductory level. Topics will vary according to the needs and interests of the teaching faculty offering the course. In some cases, this course may be repeated for credit.

PPA 122 - Introduction to Global Governance (4 Credit Hours)

This course provides an introduction to both the language used to describe international politics and the ways relationships between actors on the world stage may be analyzed. Relying on history and contemporary events to illuminate key concepts, we cover the causes of war and peace, the role of economics in international affairs and the place of morality in statecraft. This course is recommended as preparation for advanced study in the areas of international relations and foreign policy.

PPA 131 - Selected Topics in Political Theory (4 Credit Hours)

This course provides a venue in which to explore topics in Political Theory at the introductory level. Topics will vary according to the needs and interests of the teaching faculty offering the course in some cases, this course may be repeated for credit.

PPA 132 - Introduction to Theorizing About Political Life: Normative Issues Common to Democratic Systems (4 Credit Hours)

An introduction to the art and science of political philosophy. This class teaches the skills of making normative arguments in the context of understanding politics as purposive behavior. What should be the means and ends of government? What kind of government should we create, and how will power be distributed? How should we prioritize our commitments to ideas like order, justice, liberty, and equality? What role do our material realities, our economies and our culture play in the formation of our identities and our commitments? This course will link normative arguments to contemporary political and policy debates about the state and governing, rights, obligations, diversity and multiculturalism.

PPA 199 - Introductory Topics in Politics and Public Affairs (1-4 Credit Hours)

A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

PPA 201 - Sophomore Seminar (4 Credit Hours)

All PPA majors are required to complete Sophomore Seminar in the spring of their sophomore year. Sophomore Seminar will serve three purposes. First, Sophomore Seminar will provide students with an opportunity to integrate their learning experiences in our three introductory courses. Second, students will gain an understanding of how to conduct research and evaluate political and policy issues through a series of shorter assignments culminating in completion of a substantial policy analysis paper. Third, over the course of the semester, students will develop a coherent plan for an established track of study within PPA which identifies relevant cognate courses or proposes and develops an individualized track of study.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 102, 122, and 132, or consent of instructor.

PPA 299 - Intermediate Topics in Politics and Public Affairs (1-4 Credit Hours)

A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

PPA 306 - The American Presidency (4 Credit Hours)

This course focuses on the history of the presidency with particular attention to the origins, development, and exercise of executive powers. We also examine writings on the character, policies, reputation, and rhetoric of individual presidents; presidential management of the executive branch; and presidential leadership of Congress.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201, or consent of instructor.

PPA 307 - The Politics of Congress (4 Credit Hours)

The U.S. Congress is often considered the "First Branch" of the federal government, and by its construction is easily the most complex. In this course we will consider the politics that underlie the development and operation of the contemporary Congress, detail the legislative process and its organization. We will consider how various institutions such as parties, committees, and procedures help legislators reach their goals and help solve problems such as collective action, voting cycles, and ambition. While we begin by looking at Congress at its inception and the electoral goals of members, the course will quickly move to the development of these institutions and in the early Twentieth Century (pre-1974) and their use today. Over the course of the semester, we will apply our institutional study of Congress to current events and through a multi-week simulation of the legislative process. Since many of the readings make use of existing quantitative data and existing research prior experience with this type of material is recommended.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 309 - Campaigns and Elections (4 Credit Hours)

This course examines the structure, strategy, and influence of federal campaigns and elections in the United States. With a focus on both Congressional and Presidential campaign contests the course explores topics such as primary and nominating politics, the role of money in elections, candidate selection, incumbency advantage, the influence of elections on voting behavior, campaign strategy, advertising, and election reform. Throughout the course we will apply the readings to analyze the current election cycle, historical trends, and election forecasting. In addition, students will participate in a simulated campaign exercise. By the end of the semester students will complete a research paper investigating data related to congressional campaigns centered on questions raised by one or more of the topics covered in class.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201, or consent of instructor.

PPA 314 - Foreign Policy Formulation (4 Credit Hours)

Foreign policy formulation is concerned with how internal factors shape a state's policy toward the outside world. Traditionally, foreign policy analysts considered the state as a unitary actor. Today, we are more appreciative of the multiple domestic inputs in foreign policy making, and more sophisticated in the use of analytic tools to facilitate our understanding of the foreign policy formulation process. The class is structured around four distinct "sources" of US foreign policy formulation: institutional; role; societal; and, individual. While we cover each source in distinct units for purposes of analytic clarity, throughout our study we will observe that no one decision can be explained fully without some overlap of sources.

Prerequisite(s): One 100-level PPA course, or permission of the instructor.

PPA 319 - Topics in the Study of American Politics (4 Credit Hours)

This course provides a venue in which to explore topics in American Politics at the advanced level. Topics will vary according to the needs and interests of the teaching faculty offering the course. In some cases, this course may be repeated for credit.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 323 - Issues and Politics in Europe (4 Credit Hours)

This course will focus on contemporary issues and policy debates in European politics. We will look at a broad range of countries such as Poland, Spain, Denmark, the Czech Republic, and others. Some of the issues discussed could include: health care policies, minority rights and minority communities, energy politics, and more. The exact issues, policies, and countries will vary over time.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201 or consent of Instructor.

PPA 326 - Radical Right Parties and Politics in Europe (4 Credit Hours)

What accounts for the emergence, persistence and demise of "radical" or "far right" political parties in Europe? After a period of post-war stability, European party systems began to break down in the 1960s. This led to several new developments, namely, a decline in democratic participation; a decline in the traditional parties of the center Left and center Right; and the emergence of new parties on both the Left and the Right. This course focuses on the newer parties on the Right that emerged in Western Europe during the 1980's and 1990's. Specifically we focus on what many scholars label the "far" or "radical" right. These parties tend to be organized around a particular set of ideological concepts emphasizing nationalism, exclusion of "foreigners," a strong state, welfare chauvinism and, more recently, Islamophobia. Over the course of the semester students will compare and contrast the emergence of these parties and their politics across Europe and discern the differences between what scholars describe as "populist radical" or "populist far" right parties from other parties on the extreme right, namely neofascist or neo-Nazis parties which are viewed as inherently undemocratic and often elitist.

PPA 339 - Topic in the Study of Comparative Politics (4 Credit Hours)

This course provides a venue in which to explore topics in Comparative Politics at the advanced level. Topics will vary according to the needs and interests of the teaching faculty offering the course. In some cases, this course may be repeated for credit.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 341 - The Conduct of American Foreign Policy (4 Credit Hours)

This course explores the evolution of U.S. foreign policy from the beginning of the Cold War to the present day. The course focuses on the responses of successive American administrations to potential or actual threats to the national interests of the U.S. Emphasis will be placed on the containment doctrine, its application in Vietnam, and subsequent efforts to replace containment following the end of the Vietnam war and the end of the Cold War.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 344 - The United Nations and World Problems (4 Credit Hours)

The founding of public international organizations represent an attempt to bring order to an unruly international system. International organizations are formal institutions established by states to address global problems. They include not only the United Nations, but also many other public or private, international, national or local, formal or informal institutions. Collectively, these institutions engage in global governance. Our goals in this course are to understand the theoretical and practical approaches to international organizations and global governance, the limitations under which global governance operates, and the future prospects for a system of global governance. This course has a substantial oral component and oral skills work and so satisfies the University's oral general education requirement.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 345 - Human Rights in Global Perspectives (4 Credit Hours)

This course analyzes the emergence, expansion and enforcement of international human rights norms. Students taking the course will acquire an enhanced understanding of the United Nations, national governments, nongovernmental organizations, customary international law, treaty law, regional courts, and international tribunals in articulating and enforcing human rights. Students will acquire a broad understanding of human rights as a topic of both intellectual inquiry and political action.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 346 - The European Union (4 Credit Hours)

The course explores the peculiarities of the EU and what makes it a unique organization, sharing characteristics of a state and characteristics of a traditional international organization. First, we will place the study of European integration in a historical context. Then we will make sense of the various decision-making processes and institutional actors of the EU. We will also examine theories of European integration to understand competing explanations for the integration process. Fourth, various policy areas will be studied to show how the power of the EU is distributed unevenly across areas. During the final two weeks of the course we will simulate a gathering of the European Council. This course has a substantial oral component and oral skills work and so satisfies the University's oral general education requirement.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 349 - Terrorism and Political Violence (4 Credit Hours)

Political violence, including terrorism, has been around since the beginnings of organized political society, though the word terrorism dates only from the French Revolution (1789-1799). In this course, we will explore what terrorism is, whether it is new (and why some analysts argue it is), who uses terrorist tactics, why they do so, and how terrorism differs from other forms of political violence such as war, insurgency, and so on. We will investigate various definitions of terrorism. Most scholars think that terrorism is not a random act of violence. They see terrorism as planned and, for those who use it, rational. However, there is still a lot of disagreement on what terrorism is, what motivates terrorists, how it can be fought, and on what we mean by rational and planned. We will compare the various definitions and perspectives to determine which might work best for our understanding of the phenomena. In addition, we will focus on some key concepts in the discipline of political science and how they relate to terrorism, for example: power, ethnicity, religion, and the media.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 359 - Topics in the Study of International Policies (4 Credit Hours)

This course provides a venue in which to explore topics in International Politics at the advanced level. Topics will vary according to the needs and interests of the teaching faculty offering the course. In some cases, this course may be repeated for credit.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 361 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)

Directed studies are undertaken at the initiative of the student and may involve any topic acceptable to the student and an instructor.

PPA 362 - Directed Study (1-4 Credit Hours)

Directed studies are undertaken at the initiative of the student and may involve any topic acceptable to the student and an instructor.

PPA 363 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)

Independent study in Politics and Public Affairs.

PPA 364 - Independent Study (1-4 Credit Hours)

Independent Study in Politics and Public Affairs.

PPA 374 - Constitutional Law (4 Credit Hours)

This course examines the basic principles of the U.S. Constitutional framework from an interdisciplinary perspective. What is the purpose and function of law in society? How does the legal process work through precedents, legal reasoning and case law? What are civil rights and civil liberties? Where are the lines or boundaries to be drawn between an individual's freedom and the public good or the rights of the community? Which liberties does the Court consider worth protecting and which liberties are circumscribed by the public interest? What might be the difference between liberty as a legal concept, and freedom? This course examines important political and theoretical questions regarding the rule of law, interpreting the Constitution, and the role of the Supreme Court in the U.S. system of politics and government. **Prerequisite(s):** PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 375 - Race and Law in US Politics (4 Credit Hours)

How have ideas about race shaped law, legal institutions, and legal practices in the United States? Conversely, how have law, legal institutions, and legal practices shaped how we think about and make race? In line with the work of Critical Race Theorists (such as Derrick Bell, Kimberlé Crenshaw, and Gary Peller), the fundamental assumption of the course is that these two domains are integrally related, such that to think of or analyze one requires thinking of or analyzing the other, as well. Thus, studying race without considering law's role in shaping race is deficient, and studying law without considering how race has shaped it is similarly unsatisfactory. This follows from contributions by scholars such as Michael Omi and Howard Winant who argue that categories of race are sociohistorical formations rather than eternal essences and that racial categories can be created, transformed, and destroyed; part of our work in this course will be to trace how categories of race in US politics have been built by law and within legal practices and institutions. To better understand our world, we should consider how they work together to shape our institutions and lives. The bulk of the course will consider the interaction between race and law in major policy areas such as immigration, incarceration and policing, education, or housing.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201, BLST major/minors or consent of instructor.

PPA 381 - Ancient Political Theory (4 Credit Hours)

Debating classical Greek and Roman thought through the works of thinkers like the Greek tragedians, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Augustine or Aquinas. This course involves intensive textual analysis and a study of the problems of morality, government, membership and expansion in the ancient Greek and Roman world. We will also judge the moral and political legacy of the ancients by addressing contemporary debates about democracy, citizenship, power, empire, and the rule of law.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 382 - Modern Political Theory (4 Credit Hours)

Debating the moral and political problems of modernity through the works of thinkers like Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel, Burke, Paine, or Mill. This course involves intensive textual analysis and a study of the problems of virtue, interest, power, sovereignty, rights, and revolution in the modern era. We will also judge the place of ideas like liberty and equality within the system of law in republican, liberal, conservative and radical political thought. **Prerequisite(s):** PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 383 - Contemporary Political Theory (4 Credit Hours)

Debating contemporary political theory through the work of such thinkers as Marx, Nietzsche, Dewey, Arendt, Fanon, Marcuse, Foucault, Rawls, Habermas, Walzer, or Butler. This course involves intensive textual analysis and a study of the problems of power, capitalism, rights, obligations, culture, and identity in the contemporary era. We will also judge the legacies of radical, liberal, and pragmatic thought, and the challenges offered by critical theory, feminism, and post-colonial studies.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 384 - Black Political Thought (4 Credit Hours)

This course focuses on black political thought in the United States and around the world by considering how Afrocentric scholars, activists, and intellectuals have considered and acted to realize justice for Black persons (and thus for all persons). The course will broadly focus on the experience of blackness since ~1500CE, also known as “modernity.” This choice of periodization is based on arguments made by foundational theorists of race such as Orlando Patterson, Omi & Winant, and Charles Mills, among others, who argue that racial formation is a sociohistorical process that unfolds over time and place, such that categories of race are neither eternal, unchangeable, or material, but subject to creation, evolution, and transformation through intellectual, political, social, and legal struggles. While we may experience race as real, the creation of race as a category of meaning was a political project. We will pay special attention to the experience and political significance of enslavement, colonization, and Afro-independence struggles to consider the meaning of freedom and grapple with contemporary legacies of violence. How does Black Political Thought enrich our understanding of significant political questions such as the nature of political equality, justice, and democracy? The course may include, among others, thinkers such as David Walker, Maria Stewart, Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells, Booker T. Washington, W. E. B. Du Bois, Alain Locke, Franz Chinua Achebe, Fanon, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, James Baldwin, Audre Lorde, Patricia Hill Collins, Orlando Patterson, Michael Omi and Howard Winant, Michael Dawson, Ta-Nehisi Coates, Angela Davis, and Claudia Rankine.

PPA 385 - American Political Thought (4 Credit Hours)

An examination into the issues, debates, and contested ideals of American political theory. Liberal, radical, and conservative perspectives on American political life are canvassed through a study of primary texts. Authors may include Jefferson, Madison, Tocqueville, Douglass, Stanton, Lincoln, DuBois, and King, in addition to others varying with the instructor’s expertise. We will address debates about colonialism, constitutionalism, federalism, rights, equality, popular sovereignty, and slavery, as well as religion, the long term legacies of both industrial capitalism, and race, and gender, and their long-term legacies. No FYS.

Prerequisite(s): One PPA 100-level course or consent of the instructor.

PPA 389 - Topics in the Study of Political Theory (4 Credit Hours)

This course provides a venue in which to explore topics in Political Theory at the advanced level. Topics will vary according to the needs and interests of the teaching faculty offering the course. In some cases, this course may be repeated for credit.

Prerequisite(s): PPA 201 or consent of instructor.

PPA 399 - Advanced Topics in Politics and Public Affairs (1-4 Credit Hours)

A general category used only in the evaluation of transfer credit.

PPA 451 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)

Senior Research in Politics and Public Affairs.

PPA 452 - Senior Research (4 Credit Hours)

Senior Research in Politics and Public Affairs.

PPA 491 - Senior Seminar (4 Credit Hours)

Senior Seminar is a required part of the politics and public affairs major and is offered only in the fall semester. Senior seminars will vary in topic but all emphasize skills in research and writing that will provide a capstone experience in the major. For senior majors. Others with consent of instructor.