POLITICAL SCIENCE TOPICS COURSES
(from Fall 1998 to present)

POL 252 Topic: American Civil Rights Policy. Examines the various meanings of equality and their implications for policy, distinguishing between a 'discrimination' -- which violates an individual's civil rights -- and a 'differentiation,' which is permitted by law. Studies the major civil rights policies which have been adopted since 1960 and how they have evolved and been interpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court. Analyzes the political processes that influence the production of civil rights policy and studies the major actors -- Congress, the President, parties, voting blocs, and major interest groups -- to illustrate the conflict generated by civil rights. Also examines several major areas of civil rights policy: voting representation, educational opportunity, affirmative action/reverse discrimination, sex discrimination, and the administration of justice.

POL 305 Topic: Comparative Urban Poverties. Examines the process of urbanization in the third world to gain an understanding of the politics and sociology of the shantytowns and lower income communities that emerged on the peripheries of third world megacities. The forces that led to tremendous rural to urban migration and the creation of communities and popular political identities will be investigated with an eye toward understanding the sociology of urban poverty in the developing world. Prerequisite: POL 100.

POL 305 Topic: International Environmental Affairs. Outlines context of global environmental diplomacy, considering both political sources of conflict and specific strategies that foster cooperation. Both governmental and civil society approaches considered. Topics include global and regional environmental threats such as climate change, ozone depletion, acid rain, global fisheries, and species loss. Prerequisite: POL 100.

POL 315C Topic: War and Conflict on the Silver Screen: Fact and Fiction in Film. Uses a number of seminal political conflict films as an alternative medium to better understand sources of past, present, and future wars and conflict. Prerequisite: POL 100 or 130. International Relations major and Film Studies minor elective.

POL 315E Topic: Peace and Conflict Resolution. Examines diverse perspectives on the causes of violent conflict, the meaning of peace, and the avenues to achieve peace. Studies various attempts to intervene in violent conflict, including prevention, negotiation, mediation, peacekeeping, and post-conflict reconciliation. Students will gain experience in analyzing the dynamics of conflict, as well as skills in interpersonal negotiation and mediation.

POL 315J Topic: Politics of Northern Ireland. Explores the development of the Northern Ireland ‘troubles,’ in which 3,600 people have died since 1969, and various attempts to regulate the conflict. Includes explanations for unionist-nationalist antagonism, role of Britain’s secret agents, IRA disarmament, American interventions, and consociational approaches to conflict resolution in NI and other divided societies. Emphasis placed on difficulties implementing the 1998 Good Friday Agreement. Prerequisite: POL 100 or 130. International Relations major elective.

POL 315K Topic: International Human Rights. Covers the historical, political, legal, and normative development of international human rights, with a primary emphasis on the post World War II era. Both the theory and practice of human rights in the international system will be addressed, with attention to specific cases of human rights abuses, as well as the intersection of human rights and issues of gender, modern slavery, the media, and refugees.

POL 315L Topic: Latin American Trade and Financial Environments. Analyzes the contemporary political economy of Latin America from a business and investment perspective. Gives special attention
to domestic policies, regional trade agreements, and foreign investment activities, using business cases to illustrate how to operate in the Latin American market. Knowledge of macroeconomic issues is useful, but not required, as students will be provided with the tools to effectively assess the current Latin American trade and financial environments and likely future scenarios.

**POL 315M Topic: Political Psychology.** Focuses on the intersection of human psychology and the conduct of politics. In recent years, political psychology has emerged as a formal area of study and this class is designed to introduce students to some of the most interesting, timely questions being tackled in the field. Topics include the psychology of leadership and decision-making, psychology of conflict, and the psychology of terrorism. *Prerequisite: POL 130. International Relations major elective.*

**POL 315N Topic: Contemporary Inter-American Relations.** Analyzes inter-American relations using the theories and concepts of international relations. Gives special attention to relations in the post-cold war and post 9/11 eras. Because the United States is the regional superpower, the course will emphasize U.S.-Latin American relations. Students can expect to acquire familiarity with the history of international relations of the Western hemisphere, an understanding of regional organizations and the ability to interpret contemporary issues and analyze five key bilateral relationships. They will also become more knowledgeable about contemporary Latin America political economy. *Prerequisites: POL 100/130/200, LAC 201/305.*

**POL 315O Topic: Economic Sanctions.** Explores the major theoretical concepts on the role and usefulness of economic sanctions as a tool of foreign policy. Applies some of these concepts to specific sanction situations. In particular, we will analyze U.S. economic sanctions against Sudan, Iran, Burma/Myanmar, and Cuba. *Prerequisite: POL 130.*

**POL 315P Topic: Introduction to Peace and Conflict Studies.** Provides an introduction to the interdisciplinary field of peace and conflict studies. Examines causes for conflict from various angles, and then focuses on how various theoretical and empirical perspectives attempt to resolve conflicts.

**POL 315Q Topic: Conflict in the Middle East.** Surveys some of the major current conflicts in the Middle East, such as the existence of Israel, the Shiite/Sunni divide, scarce natural resources, religious fundamentalism, and nationalism. Special attention will be given to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Lebanon, Iran, and Iraq.

**POL 315R Topics: Politics and Political Science.** Why do things happen as they do in state and local government? Three perspectives will be offered in addressing this question-that of a political insider and long-time elected official, that of an academic political scientist, and that of newspaper editorial boards and good government groups. Issues addressed will range from taxation, to transportation, to economic development and growth management, all in Florida. Taught by Orange County Mayor Richard Crotty and Rollins political science professor Richard Foglesong.

**POL 350A Topic: American Political Parties.** Examines the roles that political parties play in the American political system. Studies the history of American political parties, beginning with the battle between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton over the nation’s future, through the development of mass political parties under Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren, the changes wrought by Progressivism and the New Deal, and the fluctuation of partisanship in recent years. Then examines how parties shape elections for both candidates and voters and how they shape the relationship between Congress and the President.
POL 395A Topic: Feminist Political Thought. An exploration and analysis of 18th-, 19th-, and 20th-century feminist theory within the conventions and discourse of traditional political theory; contemporary feminism from a theoretical point of view. Topics will include equality, difference, regulation of the body, and sexuality. Prerequisite: POL 120 or WMS 205. Women’s Studies minor elective course.

POL 395A Topic: Gender and Political Theory. An analysis of how idealized images of masculinity and femininity shape political theories, feminist theories, and influence public policy and law. Consciously engages students in gender critiques, but will also be critical of gender as a methodology itself, analyzing the difficulties involved in contemporary approaches to studying gender. Provides a basis for understanding gender politics as well as the politics of gender. Prerequisite: POL 120.

POL 395B Topic: Theories of Social Justice and Welfare. Attacks on the ‘Welfare State’ are common in Western liberal democracies. These attacks criticize the welfare state’s philosophical underpinnings and social ideals, and challenge its political viability. The criticisms include welfare states interference with individual autonomy and/or they embody an ethically unacceptable vision of justice, namely, one that violates basic considerations of reciprocity by favoring those who do not deserve to benefit. These objections are founded on philosophical principles, which often sit well with moral intuition. This course reviews normative reasons given for and against the concept of the Welfare State. In so doing, it explores issues such as the role of solidarity for political thinking, duties of fair play towards fellow citizens, the connection between equality and liberty, and whether higher order human needs such as self-realization should be the province of social and economic rights.

POL 395C Topic: Marxist Political Thought. Examines the development of Marxist thought through a survey of central texts by Marx, as well as some contemporary ‘post-Marxist’ movements such as critical theory, radical democracy, and anti-globalization. Topics covered include alienation, the revolutionary process, the treatment of culture and religion, and the adequacy of Marxist thought for explaining and improving contemporary socio-political situations. Prerequisite: POL 120.

POL 395D Topic: American Political Thought. Analysis of the idea and ideals of America, as both have been imagined, cultivated and practiced. What does it mean to be an American? What does it mean to be a citizen of American democracy? How have these ideals and realities been shaped by changing historical contexts? We will see how different texts have addressed, embodied and enacted these questions by studying political writings by Puritans and Revolutionaries, Federalists and Anti-Federalists, Transcendentalists, Utopian Socialists of the 19th century, Abolitionists, Feminists, Progressives and Twentieth Century thinkers. Prerequisite: POL 120.

POL 395E Topic: Israel and Palestine. Introduces students to the history of the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, focusing primarily on the 20th century to present. Cultivates a multifaceted understanding of the conflict by exploring issues of post-colonialism, religion, culture, nationalism, political power, economics, and regional influences. Particular attention will be paid to the ongoing peace process, the significance of changes in leadership among Israelis and Palestinians, the possibility of a viable Palestinian state, and the impact of this conflict on regional and global politics. Prerequisite: POL 130.

POL 395H Topic: Cuba and the U.S. An analysis of contemporary Cuba’s political, economic, and social realities, with a focus on the post-Cold War period. Special attention paid to the deep economic recession following the collapse of the former Soviet Union, the limited capitalist-style reforms implemented in the first half of the 1990s and more recent changes, the characteristics of the Cuban society, and the relations between Cuba and the U.S. The overall goal of the course is to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to interpret political and complex socioeconomic phenomena related to Cuba.
POL 481 Seminar in American Politics. Explores the "political personality" through a close reading of the biographies of contemporary political figures. Looks for common denominators among these figures, exploring the differences between leadership and political skill, examining the sacrifices people make to serve in public office, assessing the importance of passion and judgment in politicians' careers, and considering how race, gender, and ethnicity affect the political personality. Students will participate in presenting the course material and research the life of a major political figure.