

Course descriptions for the Bachelor of Political Science program – with a concentration in international political economy

First: List of compulsory courses (23 courses)

Principles of Political Science (PS 101)

This course is a general introduction to political science, familiarizing students with the concepts, theories, and institutions related to the scientific study of the phenomenon of "political power." This is achieved through the study of the following main areas: an introduction to the subject, its importance, branches, methodologies, and its relationship to other sciences; a brief overview of contemporary political thought and ideologies; an explanation of the concept of the state and the political institutions that constitute the political system; and an introduction to international political relations, the nature of the international political system, international organizations, and foreign policy.

The Saudi Political System (PS 111)

This course aims to introduce students, in a scientific and constructive manner, to the nature of their national political system. This is achieved through a discussion of the development of this system and its characteristics, the fundamental laws that define its structure, its main political institutions and their jurisdictions, and related political concepts. The course also aims to raise the student's national political awareness, strengthen their sense of belonging and understanding of good citizenship and public responsibility, and clarify the importance of the achievement of unifying the Kingdom and establishing this state, as well as the importance of preserving their homeland and its stability and actively contributing to its development.

Comparative Political Systems (PS 212)

This course introduces the student to the systematic and comparative study of states and their political systems. This is achieved through an in-depth study of key concepts related to the state and the political system, including topics related to governmental institutions (legislative, executive, and judicial), informal political institutions (political parties, pressure groups, and public opinion), various theories for analyzing the dynamics of the political system, and concepts of sovereignty, constitution, elections, civil society, culture, and political socialization. It also compares the main forms of contemporary political systems.

Political Sociology (PS 213)

This course introduces the student to the field of political sociology by reviewing traditional and modern theories and approaches to studying the interaction and mutual influence between the political system and its social environment. It also focuses on studying the concepts of the state, sovereignty, legitimacy, political socialization, political participation, and civil society (from a socio-political perspective).

The Development of Global Political Thought (PS 221)

This course discusses the most important stages in the development of political theory in ancient and modern Western political thought, through a review of the contributions of influential thinkers in ancient and medieval Greek, Roman, and Christian political thought, and examples of political thought in modern times.

International Relations (PS 231)

This course introduces students to the fundamental concepts and theories of international relations, through the study of the following topics: an introduction to the nature of this academic field, its development, and its branches; an explanation of the nature of the international community, its components, and the factors influencing it; a review of the nature and development of the international political system, along with a discussion of the main schools of thought in international relations and the debates between them; and a review of some of the most important theories of conflict and cooperation in contemporary international relations.

International Organizations (PS 233)

This course introduces the concept and types of international organizations, focusing on the United Nations as the most important contemporary international organization. It discusses the UN's origins and development, its main bodies, subsidiary organizations and agencies, its decision-making process, its contributions to achieving international stability and cooperation, and proposed solutions for its modernization and development. The course includes a simulation exercise in which students role-play as representatives of countries in the Security Council, discussing and presenting their countries' positions on a contemporary political issue. The course also reviews the contributions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the work of this organization and its subsidiary bodies.

Quantitative Research and its Applications in Political Science (PS 300)

This course examines the applications of quantitative methods in political research. It discusses quantitative research design, including topic selection, hypothesis formulation, variable measurement, data collection and analysis, and the presentation and interpretation of results. The course also aims to familiarize students with key databases, indicators, and metrics, and to train them in the use of statistical software.

Public Policy (PS 314)

This course aims to introduce students to the field of public policy, its concepts, and key theories. It focuses on explaining how public policy is formulated and analyzed. This is achieved through a discussion of the policy-making stages, beginning with the initial stage of defining and identifying the problem, moving through the stage of selecting an alternative, the stage of implementing and executing the public policy, and concluding with the stage of evaluating the public policy.

Political Development (PS 315)

This course focuses on introducing students to the fundamental concepts, issues, and theories of the field of political development. This is an important field related to a vital topic that touches upon the reality and future of political development in developing countries. For organizational purposes, the topics are divided into five main, interconnected parts: First: An introductory overview defining the concept of political development and its evolution; Second: Clarifying the nature of developing and developed countries and the crises of political development; Third: An introduction to the most important theories of political development; Fourth: A discussion of topics in political development (democratic theory, elite theory, political culture); Fifth: A critical review of the reality and future of political development and its challenges in the Arab world.

Arab and Regional Systems and Policies (PS 316)

This course focuses on the study of the political systems of regional powers in the region, such as the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Turkey, the Arab Republic of Egypt, and others. This is done through a discussion of an overview of the development of these political systems, their constitutions, organizational structures, key political institutions, their regional role and stances on regional issues, and their relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The development of these political systems, their constitutions, organizational structures, key political institutions, their regional role and stances on regional issues, and their relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Islamic Thought and Political System (PS 323)

This course focuses on the study of Islamic thought, through a discussion of the emergence and development of the Islamic state, the characteristics and principles of the political system and international relations in Islam, and the examination of some contemporary concepts in light of Islam and some pioneers of Islamic political thought.

Diplomacy and Negotiation (PS 330)

This course aims to introduce diplomacy and negotiation as a method and strategy among states and actors in the international system to achieve security and peace. The course discusses the historical stages of global diplomacy and the most important theories and methods of diplomacy used in the international system.

Foreign Policy Analysis (PS 334)

This course introduces students to the concepts and theories related to the field of foreign policy, through a discussion of the objectives of foreign policy, its determinants, how it is formulated, and the means of its implementation. This is done with a focus on studying and analyzing the foreign policy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and some of the foreign policies of major powers.

Regional International Organizations (PS 335)

This course aims to study regional international organizations in the Arab and Islamic worlds, including the Kingdom's contributions to these organizations. It also examines the circumstances of their formation, their charters, their organizational structures, their decision-making processes, their contributions, and the challenges they face.

International Politics (PS 336)

This course focuses on studying and analyzing the political interactions between entities within the international community. This is achieved through a discussion of two interconnected aspects: The first aspect addresses the reality of international politics by examining the evolution of the international political system and its most significant events, from the emergence of the nation-state to the present day. The second aspect focuses on understanding and analyzing this reality by studying the most important theories of international politics, particularly those related to explaining the causes of conflict and wars on the international stage.

Arab International Relations (PS 337)

This course aims to study inter-Arab relations and relations between the Arab world and other countries. This is achieved through a discussion of the emergence and development of modern Arab states, the competition between great powers and its impact on the Arab region, joint Arab action, Arab relations with major and regional powers, and the challenges facing the Arab world and ways to address them.

Political Concepts in English (PS 403)

This course focuses on introducing students to fundamental concepts in political science in English through the study and translation of selected documents, articles, and political texts in English. It aims to develop students' proficiency in using political texts in English.

The European Union (PS 432)

This course focuses on the development, institutions, principles, and policies of the European Union as a model of successful international cooperation and integration. It examines its role as a global power and the most significant challenges it faces. It also sheds light on the nature of the relationship between the European Union, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, and its stance on Arab issues.

Globalization (PS 437)

This course aims to introduce the concept of globalization, its causes, manifestations, repercussions, and the views of both its proponents and critics. It focuses on discussing the political aspects of globalization, particularly the political challenges it poses at the level of the nation-state, society, culture, and local development, as well as at the level of international politics. The course also sheds light on the challenges of globalization for the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Oil Politics (PS 438)

This course examines energy and environmental policies, especially oil policies, given its status as the most important energy source in the modern world. It discusses the political and economic importance of oil, its role in international political interactions, and its impact on political development in the Gulf and the Middle East region. The course also examines the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC). Furthermore, it reviews alternative energy and environmental policies, the interrelationships between them, and the challenges facing the world and developing countries in securing energy and protecting the environment. The course focuses particularly on the policies of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in these areas, especially the Kingdom's leading role in these organizations and in achieving stability in the global oil market and policy.

International Political Economy (PS 439)

This course focuses on the intersection of politics and economics in the international arena. Its aim is to understand the impact of international political factors on global economic relations and the reflection of international economic factors on the domestic and foreign policies of nations. This is achieved through discussions of concepts, theories, and policies related to international political economy, and by analyzing key issues in contemporary international economics, such as international financial, monetary, and trade relations; development; multinational corporations; and economic blocs.

Research and Training – International Political Economy (PS 491)

This course focuses on deepening students' research and practical skills under the academic supervision of the department. This is accomplished through conducting research in the field of global political economy or participating in a practical training program at a relevant institution within the specialization.

Second: List of Elective Courses (3 courses)

Comparative Public Policy (PS 414)

This course aims to introduce students to the field of comparative public policy by presenting its various theories and methodologies. Furthermore, numerous policies are being discussed in various fields and in multiple countries to identify the similarities and differences in these policies.

Development Models (PS 415)

This course focuses on studying the most prominent experiences of successful countries in development and the lessons learned from them, with the aim of understanding the nature of the development process and the internal and external factors that influence it. The course begins by discussing the most important tools (theoretical and practical) that help students understand and analyze countries' development experiences and the development process in general. It then reviews practical applications that use these tools to analyze specific development experiences. This is accompanied by training activities that enhance students' abilities and skills in employing these tools scientifically to analyze the development process and evaluate its dimensions.

Local and Urban Development (PS 416)

This course aims to introduce students to local and urban development and related concepts and theories. This includes discussing topics such as centralization and decentralization, local participation, local councils and their functions, and local development planning. It also discusses the concept of urbanization and urban planning, the theory of urban bias in development, and the problems and challenges associated with migration to cities and urban sprawl.