Political Science

Program Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration is to serve the State of Florida through excellent educational opportunities involving outstanding teaching, quality research, and effective civic engagement. The department focuses its resources to provide both undergraduate and graduate students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities for understanding, participating in, and managing the institutions, processes, and behaviors characteristic of national and international politics and public affairs. With excellent instruction as the highest priority, the department also supports extensive interaction with external constituencies through local, regional, state, and national professional service, and applied and theoretical research. The department is dedicated to maintaining program effectiveness for both students and community partners through continuous self-assessment.

Student Learning Outcomes

Graduates will be able to:

Content/Discipline-Specific Knowledge/Skills

- Understand the principles of the rule of law and its effects on political relationships, actors, institutions and policy.
- Understand the role of public policy, the policy-making process, the political and environmental factors which affect its development and its effects on political events, actors, and institutions.
- Understand the various types of political ideology and the relationship of specific ideologies to political processes and policy development.
- Understand the general types of political behaviors and the factors that cause them and relate those behaviors to specific political actions and outcomes.

Communication Skills

- Possess the verbal and writing skills needed to communicate clearly and effectively, make persuasive, professional presentations and convey information essential to the discipline in an orderly and understandable manner.
- Understand and be able to use normative and empirical analysis tools in the study of political science.

Critical Thinking Skills

- Be able to effectively apply critical thinking and problem solving skills to political issues.

Assessment Approaches

One direct and one indirect measure of student learning will be employed to assess mastery of the expected student learning outcomes. Course embedded assessments using a defined scoring rubric (criterion-based rating scale) will be one of the principal assessment approaches to be used in selected upper level classes and in the required Senior Seminar. A faculty committee made up of political science faculty will evaluate student achievement in accordance with approved scoring rubrics. An indirect measure will also be an examination of the results from the senior survey.