Politics, Law and Social Thought (PLST) is an interdisciplinary minor open to all undergraduate students at Rice from all backgrounds. Its task is the study of political ideas in their philosophical and historical contexts as well as with regard to their effects on constitutional law and social and political practices.

The central focus of the minor is political theory, taken in a wide sense to mean the theory and philosophy of how polities form, function, and fail. The minor has a strong orientation toward works of political, legal, and social philosophy, understood in their historical context. Politics, Law and Social Thought is a program of study that enables Rice students to engage successfully with the “big” political questions relevant to contemporary society in a global setting: Why democracy? What are the foundations of law? What is political liberty? What is political citizenship? Are states necessary? How do normative political and social orders come into existence? Is there a philosophical justification for human rights?

The Politics, Law and Social Thought interdisciplinary minor is an initiative of the Schools of Humanities and Social Sciences, administered by the School of Humanities.

Minor


Politics, Law and Social Thought does currently not offer an academic program at the graduate level.

Director

Peter C. Caldwell

Humanities Faculty Director, Law, Justice and Society Scholars

Shannon LaBove

Professors

Dominic C. Boyer
Peter C. Caldwell
Steven G. Crowell
Luis Duno-Gottberg
Christian J. Emden
David W. Leebron

Melissa J. Marschall
Donald Ray Morrison
George Sher
Lora Wildenthal
Harvey E. Yunis

Associate Professors

Andrea Ballestero
Gwendolyn M. Bradford
Julie Fette
Aysha Pollnitz
William Suarez-Potts

Assistant Professors

Sophie Esch
Vida Yao

Professor in the Practice

Steven W. Lewis

Lecturers

Shannon LaBove
Rudy Ramirez
Robert Werth

For Rice University degree-granting programs:
To view the list of official course offerings, please see Rice's Course Catalog (https://courses.rice.edu/admweb/ISWKSCAT.cat?p_action=cata/)
To view the most recent semester’s course schedule, please see Rice’s Course Schedule (https://courses.rice.edu/admweb/ISWKSCAT.cat)

Politics, Law and Social Thought (PLST)

PLST 238 - SPECIAL TOPICS
Short Title: SPECIAL TOPICS
Department: Politics Law Social Thought
Grade Mode: Standard Letter
Course Type: Internship/Practicum, Lecture, Laboratory, Seminar
Credit Hours: 1-4
Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.
Course Level: Undergraduate Lower-Level
Description: Topics and credit hours may vary each semester. Contact department for current semester’s topic(s). Repeatable for Credit.

PLST 301 - MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT: MACHIAVELLI TO RAWLS
Short Title: MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT
Department: Politics Law Social Thought
Grade Mode: Standard Letter
Course Type: Lecture
Credit Hours: 3
Restrictions: Enrollment is limited to Undergraduate, Undergraduate Professional or Visiting Undergraduate level students.
Course Level: Undergraduate Upper-Level
Description: Introduction to political theory and political philosophy from the Renaissance to the present: Machiavelli, Hobbes, Pufendorf, Montesquieu, Kant, Hegel, Constant, Mill Marx, Nietzsche, Weber, Habermas, and Rawls. Topics include human rights, political power, citizenship, democracy, the modern state. Required core course for minor in Politics, Law, and Social Thought.
Of Aristotle. Cross-list: CLAS 316.

The rudimentary beginnings in Homer to the complex, incisive arguments of political society, democracy, reached its pinnacle in Athens. We shall study political society in order to understand and improve it. One particular form of political society, democracy, reached its pinnacle in Athens. We shall attempt to understand how ancient Greeks thought about politics from the rudimentary beginnings in Homer to the complex, incisive arguments of Aristotle. Cross-list: CLAS 316.
Undergraduate Minor Description and Code

- Minor in Politics, Law and Social Thought: PLST

CIP Code and Description

- PLST Minor: CIP Code/Title: 22.0000 - Legal Studies, General

1 Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) 2020 Codes and Descriptions from the National Center for Education Statistics: https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/