ISS 308: Section 733 (1st Session)
Crime and Punishment
This class will focus on crime and punishment in the United States over the last fifty years. There has been a 400% increase in the number of people incarcerated in the U.S. since 1980. Of the total number of individuals incarcerated in the world, 25% are in the U.S. The class will focus on the factors that have led to the unprecedented increases including media portrayals of crime, the war on drugs, the crime rate, and public opinion. The consequences of mass incarceration will be explored including the impact on people of color. Finally, the class will explore the costs of incarceration especially their impact on primary, secondary, and higher education.

ISS 308: Section 731 (2nd Session)
International Law and Organizations
Governments and rebel groups from around the world continue to commit gross human rights abuses on a regular basis. Terrorist groups attack and kill innocent civilians in the West and beyond. Over three million children die every year due to undernutrition. Climate changes threaten the very survival of the planet. Can international law and international organizations help to mitigate these global threats to peace and prosperity? This class will explore how international law and international organizations can help to resolve these issues and others like them (genocide, trade, use of force). By the end of the course, you will have a basic understanding of the international legal system and how it affects contemporary issues. No prior knowledge of international law or social science methods is assumed or required to be successful in this class.

ISS 325: Section 733 (1st Session) and Section 734 (2nd Session)
Video Games and Society
What can video games teach us about society and the individual? In this class, you'll play video games to find out. Video games, even more so than literature, provide the ability to experience the viewpoints of characters in their historical or fictional contexts. Gamers will be able to choose their own adventure from a menu of topics. Newb? Expert? Options are available for both (and everyone in between). Build cities and conquer the world in Civilization. Question the myth of the wild west in Red Dead Redemption. Storm the beaches of Normandy in Call of Duty. Probe the depths of human behavior in Zero Escape. And much, much more. Course instructor is winner of several MSU teaching/mentoring awards.

ISS 338: Section 732 (1st Session) and Section 733 (2nd Session)
Social Science and Sports
Explore what sports can teach us about how people and institutions behave outside of sports. What doping and match-fixing tell us about when people are more likely to be corrupt. What referees and team owners illustrate when racial discrimination occurs and how it might be prevented. Why efforts to prevent tanking in the NBA are similar to reducing the poverty trap in America. What hockey fights and baseball pitchers can teach us about violent behavior, how Michael Jordan passing the ball tell us something about how political parties spend their campaign money, and why pro sports teams might be smarter than college admissions officers.

ISS 338B: Section 733 (2nd Session)
East Asia and Social Science
Rocket man. Armored trains. Nuclear weapons. Dragons and tigers and (panda) bears, oh my! China, Japan, Taiwan, and North and South Korea constitute one of the most, nay *the* most, important regions in the world today. Students enrolling in this course will study major current events in the region through the lens of the social sciences. Win more friends. And debates. No previous experience with East Asia is required, so long as you're interested in broadening your horizons.
PLS 200: Section 730 (1st Session)
Introduction to Political Science

The science of politics in three parts. First, we begin with a broad overview of the themes and topics such as “why do we have government?” Second, we progress to examining a host of political institutions such as the executive and legislative branches. Third, we move beyond formal institutions and turn our attention to things like the media and political culture.

PLS 201: Section 730 (2nd Session)
Introduction to Methods of Political Analysis

This course provides an introduction to the tools of research design and statistical analysis used in social science research. Topics covered include experimental design, the logic of control, descriptive statistics, statistical inference, and statistical tests of significance.

PLS 325: Section 730 (1st Session)
The Presidency

The Presidency is one of America’s major contributions to modern democratic political thought and practice. This course will examine the “invention” of the presidency at the Constitutional Convention in 1787 and trace the development of the institution to the present. Emphasis will be placed on the role of the presidency in American political culture, the relationship of the office to other major institutions and the nature and sources of presidential power. Students will be introduced to these themes through discussions of selected presidential speeches, elections, and decisions.

PLS 362: Section 730 (2nd Session)
Modern Political Philosophy

Political philosophy in the modern era forms the theoretical basis of all contemporary constitutional democracies, the United States in particular. This class will trace the ideas of these philosophers, with their heightened focus on ideas such as freedom, equality, and the separation of church and state.

PLS 377: Section 730 (2nd Session)
American Political Thought

This course examines American political life and development primarily through the lens of one book: Alexis de Tocqueville’s Democracy in America, focusing particular attention on its main themes: the relationship of religion to American political life, the vitality of local government, the America love of material goods, and the dangers of majority tyranny. We will consider such questions as: What are the sources—intellectual, cultural, and social—of the American political outlook? What are the strengths and weaknesses of American democracy? Finally, we will read short speeches and stories from authors who challenge Tocqueville’s key arguments, or take his assertions in a new direction, and we will consider how well his predictions have been borne out.

PLS 392: Section 730 (1st Session) and Section 732 (2nd Session)
Special Topics in Political Science: Getting Ready for a Career

This class will introduce students to potential career opportunities for political science and prepare students for the transition from college into the job market. First, students will learn about careers common to political science, and have the opportunity to develop a tentative path for their ideal career. Second, students will have the opportunity to develop a professional portfolio targeted to your career goals.

PLS 422: Section 731 (1st Session)
Seminar in Political Science: Law for Public Policymakers and Administrators

This seminar examines how law both empowers and restrains policymakers. Topics include administrative law, judicial review, state-local government relations, the Freedom of Information Act, employee rights, and governmental liability. Course material will be applied to real-world situations in writing assignments designed to simulate the work of policy specialists.

PLS 494: Section 730 (Full Summer)
Field Experience in Political Science

This course provides supervised field work in several areas of study. It may involve internships with non-profit organizations or public agencies, or participation in survey research, political campaigns, or petition drives.

ISS 210: Section 732 (1st Session) and Section 734 (2nd Session)
Video Games and Society

What can video games teach us about society and the individual? In this class, you’ll play video games to find out. Video games, even more so than literature, provide the ability to experience the viewpoints of characters in their historical or fictional contexts. Gamers will be able to choose their own adventure from a menu of topics: Newb? Expert? Options are available for both (and everyone in between). Build cities and conquer the world in Civilization. Question the myth of the wild west in Red Dead Redemption. Storm the beaches of Normandy in Call of Duty. Probe the depths of human behavior in Zero Escape. And much, much more. Course instructor is winner of several MSU teaching/mentoring awards.

ISS 215: Section 731 (1st Session)
Social Differentiation & Inequality: Role of Religion in Global Society and Politics

Religion is one of the oldest forms of societal organization and a phenomenon that touches aspects of most individuals’ lives. It is hard to read or listen to the news today without hearing some mention of religion in world affairs. How do social scientists approach the study of religion? Using readings from sociology, anthropology, political science, psychology, and economics, the course will examine how the teachings and practices of the world’s major religious traditions affect rights, equality, conflict, and peace in different countries around the world.

ISS 305: Section 730 (1st Session) and Section 731 (2nd Session)
Evaluating Evidence: The Social Science of Decision Making

On any given day, each of us will make hundreds of decisions. Some of these decisions will be mindless and unimportant: Should I bring an umbrella with me? Some, however, have the potential to substantially alter one’s life: Should I go to graduate school? This course will investigate what social science can tell us about how individuals make decisions ranging from the mundane to the monumental.