



University Bulletin

Undergraduate Degree Programs

Science, Technology, and Society (S T S)

S T S 135 (GS) (PL SC 135) The Politics of the Ecological Crisis (3) The political implications of the increasing scarcity of many of the world's resources.

**S T S (PL SC) 135 The Politics of the Ecological Crisis (3)
(GS)**

(BA) This course meets the Bachelor of Arts degree requirements.

"The Politics of Scarcity" examines some "big" questions about the prospects for human in general and democracy in the United States in particular. Much of the reading assumes that our civilization faces the twin problems of increasingly serious shortages of resources and a growing ecological crisis that threatens the basis of life. Further, it argues that these "twin crises" feed upon each other, and that together they pose serious short and long run challenges to survival. Some readings attribute these problems to the dominant values that characterize modern Western society. The course does consider some dissents from this perspective, arguments that things will be just fine. However, it concentrates on problems and predictions of trouble. Thus, the class does not claim to present an evenly balanced assessment. Rather, it recognizes that most of what we learn, read, and see supports the status quo and assumes our civilization and energy-dependent way of life will continue. Consequently it makes sense to emphasize the less frequently argued position that we may be headed for disaster.

The class aspires to appeal to students regardless of major or college -- to scientists, engineers, students of the humanities, and even economists and political scientists. It fulfills the University-wide general education requirement in Social Science. Although it discusses the role of politics in general and the role of the American political system in particular in discussing the "twin crises," it mostly grapples with fundamental questions of value that underlie and guide the play of power in our political system and with how the massive changes now taking place globally both affect and are affected by politics.

General Education: GS

Diversity: None

Bachelor of Arts: Social and Behavioral Science

Effective: Spring 2001

Note : Class size, frequency of offering, and evaluation methods will vary by location and instructor. For these details check the specific course syllabus.

This is the official bulletin of The Pennsylvania State University. Programmatic expectations for General Education are those in effect at the time of admission to degree candidacy, and college and major requirements are those in effect at the time of entry to college and major. These are accurately indicated in each student's degree audit.

The University reserves the right to change the requirements and regulations listed here and to determine whether a student has satisfactorily met its requirements for admission or graduation, and to reject any applicant for any reason the University determines to be material to the applicant's qualifications to pursue higher education. Nothing in this material should be considered a guarantee that completion of a program and graduation from the University will result in employment.

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