**WHY STUDY POLITICAL SCIENCE?**

Politics have been put under scrutiny in a systematic way since the ancient Greeks. Aristotle even called it the *Queen of the Sciences*. Our own Constitution is the product of both the scholarly study of political theory and a practical framework for political institutions and norms. Our faculty in the Department of Political Science engage politics in a scientific and rigorous way to understand human behavior and world events. Study political science to prepare yourself for a career in campaigns, public policy, business, administration, political advocacy, or public service, but also to become an informed and active citizen.

Political science is a broad and rich discipline. Some of our faculty members conduct research on the psychology of why people behave the way they do politically. Others study institutions such as legislatures, courts, and bureaucracies both as organizations and as political actors themselves. Other faculty members seek to clarify recent constitutional and legal issues. Many study foreign political systems to learn the peculiarities of different political systems comparing them regionally and globally. Our political theorists are intellectual historians and social critics interested in the millennia-long quest for the good society. Still others are policy analysts and dedicated students of American politics. Many are statistical theorists and specialists in surveying political attitudes. Our comparative and international relations experts investigate the causes of war and the conditions for peace among nations.

Political science majors are comfortable at the intersection of the humanities and the sciences. Poli Sci majors can apply rigor to problems and they can articulate solutions with clarity and with an analytical command of data. Poli Sci graduates move into a wide spectrum of positions that demand well-honed writing and presentation skills. Poli Sci graduates can apply reason and rigor to problems that are often consumed by ideology and emotion. Other disciplines may also stress rigor, but Political Science will keep you honest. The ability to define a problem and contribute to its solution while placing it within political, social, and cultural realities is a rare skill indeed, with applications well beyond the narrow confines of political work. The wide range of intellectual, analytical, qualitative, and quantitative skills, and a broad knowledge of world events that Poli Sci majors develop form the cornerstone of a powerful liberal arts education.

**WHAT CAREERS DO POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJORS PURSUE?**

Poli Sci majors learn quickly, work well in teams, and have basic understanding of the policy process and the operations of government. Poli Sci majors understand that for every endeavor, no matter how important, there is a mountain of ordinary grunt work that has to be done. Poli Sci majors can be counted on to do the foot-work, put in the face-time, and endure the slog necessary of everything of consequence.

Poli Sci majors go on to work in all levels of government. Local and state governments have a direct impact on the quality of life of all Americans. Courses on state and urban government, public policy, administrative law, and public administration are especially valuable. Quantitative and statistical skills developed in these courses and applied in the internships many of our students do provide a powerful combination.

Poli Sci majors go on to work in a wide range of International careers, in business, Foreign Service, and non-governmental organizations. Political Science offers a wide variety of courses in comparative politics, international relations and organizations, public policy, political development, and interest group politics. These courses in combination with economics, statistics, computer science, and international trade.

Poli Sci majors pursue careers in campaign management, political polling, national political committees, and consulting. They will have taken multiple courses in the American political system, comparative political parties, elections, public opinion, and voting behavior; as well as committing themselves to developing their writing and data analysis. There are over half a million campaigns in the United States annually, and while entry level jobs have long hours, low pay, and enormous demands, they are places where you can ‘cut your political teeth’. Local campaigns lead to statewide or national campaigns, and then perhaps to consulting and polling if that strikes your interest.

Poli Sci majors have also traditionally gone into law. Some lawyers are litigators while others are employed by corporations, government, and other organizations. Political Science track fits nicely for students seeking law degrees as official credentials to ‘practice law’ and those students who seek a law degree as an additional ‘tool’ to make positive impacts in their professional areas of interest. Some individuals with legal training work in other areas such as corporate or public management. The department offers a wide variety of political theory, constitutional law, and public policy courses that will help you explore the interaction between law, politics, and society.

**HOW TO GET IN**

Students in the College of Letters & Science can declare political science as their major by filling out a form on the political science department’s website. After a first meeting with an academic advisor that declaration will be made official. Students in other schools and colleges on campus should make an appointment with an advisor and obtain a signed declaration form to take to their prospective college or school for approval.

**REQUIREMENTS**

**UNIVERSITY GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

All undergraduate students at the University of Wisconsin–Madison are required to fulfill a minimum set of common university general education requirements to ensure that every graduate acquires the essential core of an undergraduate education. This core establishes a foundation for living a productive life, being a citizen of the world, appreciating aesthetic values, and engaging in lifelong learning in a continually changing world. Various schools and colleges will have requirements in addition to the requirements listed below. Consult your advisor for assistance, as needed. For additional information, see the university Undergraduate General Education Requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#requirementsforundergraduatethestudytext) section of the Guide.
Requirements | Detail
---|---
**General Education** | • Breadth—Humanities/Literature/Arts: 6 credits  
• Breadth—Natural Science: 4 to 6 credits, consisting of one 4- or 5-credit course with a laboratory component; or two courses providing a total of 6 credits  
• Breadth—Social Studies: 3 credits  
• Communication Part A & Part B *  
• Ethnic Studies *  
• Quantitative Reasoning Part A & Part B *

* The mortarboard symbol appears before the title of any course that fulfills one of the Communication Part A or Part B, Ethnic Studies, or Quantitative Reasoning Part A or Part B requirements.

**COLLEGE OF LETTERS & SCIENCE BREADTH AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A.)**

Students pursuing a bachelor of arts degree in the College of Letters & Science must complete all of the requirements below. The College of Letters & Science allows this major to be paired with either a bachelor of arts or a bachelor of science curriculum. View a comparison of the degree requirements here. (https://pubs.wisc.edu/home/archives/ug15/images/babs2009.pdf)

**BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

Requirements | Detail
---|---
**Mathematics** | Fulfilled with completion of University General Education requirements Quantitative Reasoning a (QR A) and Quantitative Reasoning b (QR B) coursework. Please note that some majors may require students to complete additional math coursework beyond the B.A. mathematics requirement.

**Foreign Language** | • Complete the fourth unit of a foreign language; OR  
• Complete the third unit of a foreign language and the second unit of an additional foreign language  

Note: A unit is one year of high school work or one semester/term of college work.

**L&S Breadth** | • Humanities, 12 credits: 6 of the 12 credits must be in literature  
• Social Sciences, 12 credits  
• Natural Sciences, 12 credits: must include one 3+ credit course in the biological sciences; must include one 3+ credit course in the physical sciences

**Liberal Arts and Science Coursework** | 108 credits

**Depth of Intermediate/Advanced work** | 60 intermediate or advanced credits

**Major** | Declare and complete at least one (1) major

**Total Credits** | 120 credits

**UW-Madison Experience** | 30 credits in residence, overall  
**Experience** | 30 credits in residence after the 90th credit

Minimum | 2.000 in all coursework at UW–Madison
GPAs | 2.000 in intermediate/advanced coursework at UW–Madison

**NON–L&S STUDENTS PURSUING AN L&S MAJOR**

Non–L&S students who have permission from their school/college to pursue an additional major within L&S only need to fulfill the major requirements and do not need to complete the L&S breadth and degree requirements above.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR**

A minimum of 30 credits is required for the major.

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
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<td>Select one course in three of the following subfields:</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Relations</td>
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<td>American Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comparative Politics</td>
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Select at least one research methods course from the following: 3-4

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<td>Research Methods in Political Science</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 270</td>
<td>Understanding Political Numbers</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 272</td>
<td>Introduction to Public Policy</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 348</td>
<td>Analysis of International Relations</td>
<td>3-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI/JOURN/URB R PL 373</td>
<td>Introduction to Survey Research</td>
<td>3-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI 374</td>
<td>Introduction to Statistical Inference for Political Research</td>
<td>3-4</td>
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</table>

Additional credits in POLI SCI to reach 30 credit minimum for the Major

1 No more than 6 credits of Directed Study (POLI SCI 199 Directed Study, POLI SCI 698 Directed Study, POLI SCI 699 Directed Study) and/or Internship (POLI SCI 315 Legislative Internship, POLI SCI 303 Election Campaign Practicum) may be counted toward the major. Note: After the sixth week of class, students adding a Directed Study must obtain permission from the department chair.

**SUBFIELDS**

**International Relations**

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<td>Introduction to International Relations</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 340</td>
<td>The European Union: Politics and Political Economy</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 343</td>
<td>Theories of International Security</td>
<td>3-4</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 345</td>
<td>Conflict Resolution</td>
<td>3-4</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 346</td>
<td>China in World Politics</td>
<td>3-4</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 347</td>
<td>Terrorism</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 348</td>
<td>Analysis of International Relations</td>
<td>3-4</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 350</td>
<td>International Political Economy</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 351</td>
<td>Politics of the World Economy</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 353</td>
<td>The Third World in the International System</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 354</td>
<td>International Institutions and World Order</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 356</td>
<td>Principles of International Law</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 359</td>
<td>American Foreign Policy</td>
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<td>POLI SCI/ECON/ENVIR ST/URB R PL 449</td>
<td>Government and Natural Resources</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 455</td>
<td>African International Relations</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 652</td>
<td>The Politics of Development</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 390</td>
<td>Study Abroad Topics in Political Science: International Relations</td>
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**American Government**

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<td>Introduction to American Politics and Government</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 184</td>
<td>Introduction to American Politics</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI 205</td>
<td>Introduction to State Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI 206</td>
<td>Introduction to Political Psychology</td>
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<td>POLI SCI/Legal ST 217</td>
<td>Law, Politics and Society</td>
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<td>POLI SCI/AFRICAN/AFCROAMER/HISTORY 297</td>
<td>Politics in Multi-Cultural Societies</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI/CHICLA 231</td>
<td>African and African-American Linkages: An Introduction</td>
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<td>POLI SCI/CHICLA 302</td>
<td>Mexican-American Politics</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 303</td>
<td>Election Campaign Practicum</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 304</td>
<td>The Political Economy of Race in the United States</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 305</td>
<td>Elections and Voting Behavior</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 308</td>
<td>Public Administration</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 309</td>
<td>Civil Liberties in the United States</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 311</td>
<td>United States Congress</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 314</td>
<td>Criminal Law and Justice</td>
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<td>Legislative Internship</td>
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<td>Wisconsin in Washington Internship Course</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 405</td>
<td>State Government and Public Policy</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 408</td>
<td>The American Presidency</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 409</td>
<td>American Parties and Politics</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 410</td>
<td>Citizenship, Democracy, and Difference</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 411</td>
<td>The American Constitution: Powers and Structures of Government</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 412</td>
<td>The American Constitution: Rights and Civil Liberties</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 414</td>
<td>The Supreme Court as a Political Institution</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 415</td>
<td>The Separation of Powers and Federal Courts</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 416</td>
<td>Community Power and Grass Roots Politics</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 417</td>
<td>The American Judicial System</td>
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**Political Theory**

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<td>POLI SCI 160</td>
<td>Introduction to Political Theory</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 266</td>
<td>The Development of Modern Western Political Thought</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 360</td>
<td>History of American Political Thought</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 361</td>
<td>Contemporary American Political Thought</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 363</td>
<td>Literature and Politics</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 460</td>
<td>Topics in Political Philosophy</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 463</td>
<td>Deception and Politics</td>
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<td>POLI SCI/GEN&amp;WS 469</td>
<td>Women and Politics</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 561</td>
<td>Radical Political Theory</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 590</td>
<td>Study Abroad Topics in Political Science: Political Theory</td>
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**Comparative Politics**

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<td>Politics Around the World</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 182</td>
<td>Politics Around the World (Honors)</td>
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<td>POLI SCI/CHICLA 231</td>
<td>Politics in Multi-Cultural Societies</td>
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<td>POLI SCI/GEOG/HISTORY/LCA/SOC 244</td>
<td>Introduction to Southeast Asia: Vietnam to the Philippines</td>
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<td>POLI SCI/GEOG/HISTORY/LCA/SOC 252</td>
<td>The Civilizations of India-Modern Period</td>
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<td>POLI SCI/GEOG/HISTORY/SLAVIC 253</td>
<td>Russia: An Interdisciplinary Survey</td>
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<td>POLI SCI/GEOG/HISTORY/SLAVIC 254</td>
<td>Eastern Europe: An Interdisciplinary Survey</td>
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<td>POLI SCI E A STD'S/HISTORY 255</td>
<td>Introduction to East Asian Civilizations</td>
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<td>POLI SCI/</td>
<td>Latin America: An Introduction</td>
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<td>International Politics of the Middle East</td>
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<td>Socialism and Transitions to the Market</td>
<td>3-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI 537</td>
<td>Electoral Systems and Representation</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 538</td>
<td>Politics and Policies in the European Union</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 635</td>
<td>Comparative Politics of Sport</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 637</td>
<td>Comparative Political Economy</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 690</td>
<td>Study Abroad Topics in Political Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI 692</td>
<td>Senior Thesis</td>
<td>1-4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### NOTES

Courses listed in two groups may be counted in either, but not both, groups. Students must have a grade of at least C in at least one course in each group.

Note that courses at the 300–600 level are generally comparable in difficulty. The 300-level courses are generally international relations; 400-level courses are American politics (with the exception of POLI SCI 400 Topics in Political Science and POLI SCI 401 Selected Topics in Political Science Topics courses); 500-level courses are political theory; and 600-level courses below 680 are comparative politics.

POLI SCI 400 and POLI SCI 401 Topics courses can be used to satisfy the 400-level course requirement as appropriate. Distribution requirements met by a specific topics course will be announced prior to enrollment.

### RESIDENCE AND QUALITY OF WORK

- **2,000 GPA in all POLI SCI courses and courses that count toward the major**
- **2,000 GPA on 15 upper-level credits in the major, taken in residence**
- **15 credits in POLI SCI, taken on campus**

### DISTINCTION IN THE MAJOR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Students who are not enrolled in the honors program may be awarded *Distinction in Political Science*. To receive Distinction students must have:

- 3.700 GPA or higher on all POLI SCI courses and courses that count toward the major
- A minimum university GPA of 3.000
- Completed at least 20 credits of upper-level work in the major, taken in residence (POLI SCI courses numbered 300 and higher).
- Completed at least one of the following: senior thesis (POLI SCI 691 Senior Thesis-POLI SCI 692 Senior Thesis); POLI SCI 601 Proseminar: Topics in Political Science; other “advanced level” coursework (see a political science advisor for details); or submit a letter from an instructor describing “substantial additional work” in an advanced political science course.

Students qualifying for *Distinction in Political Science* will be informed as they graduate.

### HONORS IN THE MAJOR

Students may declare Honors in the Political Science Major in consultation with the Political Science major advisors. To be admitted to the Honors Program in Political Science, students must have declared a major in political science, complete or be enrolled in at least one POLI SCI course with an Honors component, and have a 3.300 overall university GPA.
To earn a B.A. or B.S. with Honors in the Major in Political Science students must satisfy both the requirements for the major (above) and the following additional requirements:

- Earn a 3.300 overall university GPA
- Earn 3.500 GPA for all POLI SCI courses, and all courses accepted in the major
- Complete at least 20 credits POLI SCI or other courses accepted in the major for Honors, to include:
  - POLI SCI 601 Political Science Proseminar, POLI SCI 685 Honors Research Internship in Political Science, or other advanced-level coursework with permission of the undergraduate political science advisor and the consent of the instructor
  - A two-semester Senior Honors Thesis in POLI SCI 683 and POLI SCI 684, for a total of 6 credits

### UNIVERSITY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

<table>
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<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Detail</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Total Degree</td>
<td>To receive a bachelor's degree from UW–Madison, students must earn a minimum of 120 degree credits. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 degree credits. Students should consult with their college or department advisor for information on specific credit requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency</td>
<td>Degree candidates are required to earn a minimum of 30 credits in residence at UW–Madison. &quot;In residence&quot; means on the UW–Madison campus with an undergraduate degree classification. &quot;In residence&quot; credit also includes UW–Madison courses offered in distance or online formats and credits earned in UW–Madison Study Abroad/Study Away programs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of Work</td>
<td>Undergraduate students must maintain the minimum grade point average specified by the school, college, or academic program to remain in good academic standing. Students whose academic performance drops below these minimum thresholds will be placed on academic probation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Develop an understanding of and appreciation for the methods and approaches of diverse subfields in Political Science—American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Theory—and their relevance to important theoretical and pragmatic questions.
2. Analyze different forms and practices of governance both democratic and non-democratic.
3. Argue effectively and defend propositions with intellectual integrity, while considering a range of alternative points of view and evidence.
4. Analyze relations among individuals, civil society, political institutions, and states.
5. Analyze the motivations and consequences of political decision making and activities.

### ADVISING AND CAREERS

#### ADVISING

The Department of Political Science has two academic advisors and one career advisor who are available to meet with you to offer guidance on:

- Course selection
- Program planning
- Internships opportunities
- Study abroad programs
- Post-college plans
- Career prospects
- Scholarship opportunities
- Student research interests
- Transfer and study abroad credits

Advisors are available for 30-minute appointments and are available for walk-in advising Mondays from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and Thursdays from 1 to 4 p.m. each week during the academic year. **Please note that no advising appointments are scheduled via email.** Information about scheduling appointments can be found here (http://polisci.wisc.edu/undergrad/scheduling-advising-appointment).

#### ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

Political science majors who wish to enroll in the following course(s) must obtain prior consent/authorization:

- Directed Study (note that after the sixth week of class students adding a Directed Study must obtain permission from the department chair)
- Thesis
- Proseminars (varies by specific course; check footnotes in the class schedule)
- Specific Topic
- Honors Research Internship
- Other advanced-level coursework with permission of the undergraduate advisor and consent of the instructor in lieu of other required courses

Information and course descriptions for topics courses (POLI SCI 201, POLI SCI 400, POLI SCI 401) and proseminars (POLI SCI 601, POLI SCI 601, POLI SCI 601) are posted on the department website prior to each enrollment period. POLI SCI 315 Legislative Internship is available by application only. Specific deadlines will be announced each semester. For further information, see Internships on the department website. Students with a classification making them ineligible for certain courses due to retroactive or AP credits may see the instructor for possible permission to enroll on a space available basis. Students who wish to enroll in a course that is closed may use the online wait list available through the Student Center in MyUW. The number of credits for variable credit courses is determined by course format and contact periods for a specific semester as noted in the class schedule. For graduate programs, see the Graduate section of this Guide.

#### HONORS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Honors in the Major in Political Science is intended for students who are eager to experience the excitement of original research and who wish to graduate with the best possible undergraduate training in the
discipline. Honors in the Major is especially appropriate for students who are considering graduate work in political science or who want an especially rigorous training in research, reasoning, and writing skills. Students should consult with the department advisor to determine the best way to fulfill Honors requirements and how to make the most out of the Honors in the Major experience in the field.

See the Requirements section for political science Honors in the Major requirements.

Proactive planning and frequent collaboration with majors advisors is key to successfully completing Honors in the Major. It is recommended that students complete the Proseminar or Honors Research Internship in their junior year.

Students should secure a faculty thesis advisor by the end of their junior year; successful theses normally include planning activities during the junior year. Students should enroll for the Honors Thesis Colloquium, POLI SCI 683 in the Fall and POLI SCI 684 in the Spring. Students must be making sufficient progress in POLI SCI 683 to be admitted into POLI SCI 684; Students not making sufficient progress will not be admitted into POLI SCI 684, and will consequently not complete Honors in Political Science. Rarely, students may enroll in the independent honors thesis, POLI SCI 681 in the Fall and POLI SCI 682 with the permission of the Political Science advisor and the supervising faculty thesis advisor. Likewise, students must be making sufficient progress in POLI SCI 681 to be admitted into POLI SCI 682; Students not making sufficient progress will not be admitted into POLI SCI 682, and will consequently not complete Honors in Political Science.

**CAREER ADVISING**

Students can find information about meeting with the career and internship advisor here (http://polisci.wisc.edu/undergrad/scheduling-advising-appointment).

**PEOPLE**

Professors Burden, Canon, Cramer, Gehlbach, Hendley, Herrera, Marquez, Martin, Mayer, Pevehouse, Schatzberg, Schweber, Shafer, Straus, Tripp, Weimer, Yackee, Zumbrunnen

Associate Professors Ahlquist, Avramenko, Copelovitch, Ewig, Kapust, Kinsella, Kydd, Owens, Ringe, Shelef

Assistant Professors Bhavnani, Lindsay, Lupu, Powell, Renshon, Simmons, Tahk, Weeks

For appointments, see schedule an advising appointment (http://www.polisci.wisc.edu/undergrad/scheduling-advising-appointment) on the Political Science Major page on the department website.