WHY STUDY POLITICAL SCIENCE?

Politics have been put under scrutiny in a systematic way since the ancient Greeks. 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, law, or public service, but also to become an informed and active citizen. Especially during these times when the value of facts and objective truth seem to be under attack, political science plays an important role in helping inform political debate and discourse.

Political science is a broad and rich discipline. Some of our faculty members conduct research on why people behave the way they do politically. Others study institutions such as legislatures, courts, political parties, and bureaucracies both as organizations and as political actors themselves. Many political scientists use statistical analysis to understand political attitudes; others take deep dives into political philosophy. The field is divided into four principal fields: American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Theory. Americanists study elections, voting, the presidency, Congress, the bureaucracy, race and politics, social movements, and courts. Comparativists primarily study the domestic politics of other countries, and they leverage comparison to seek answers to perennial political questions around democracy and authoritarianism, social identity and gender, political violence and conflict, why people protest, and the political economy of development. IR scholars study relations between states, including why states go to war, terrorism, international organizations like the United Nations and the World Bank, trade and finance across borders, and foreign policy. Theorists are intellectual historians and social critics interested in the millennia-long quest for the good and just society.

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. With a degree in political science, you will be able to apply reason and rigor to problems that are often consumed by ideology and emotion. 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 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 by completing a form on the department website. After meeting with the major advisor, that declaration will be made official.

Students in other schools and colleges interested in adding the Political Science major to their primary degree program need a declaration form signed by the Political Science advisor in order to obtain permission from their home school/college to add the additional major.

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/#requirementsforundergraduatestudytext) section of the Guide.

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 DEGREE REQUIREMENTS: BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.S.)

Students pursuing a Bachelor of Science 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 the Bachelor of Arts or the Bachelor of Science degree requirements.

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Mathematics: Complete two courses of 3+ credits at the Intermediate or Advanced level in MATH, COMP SCI, or STAT subjects. A maximum of one course in each of COMP SCI and STAT subjects counts toward this requirement.

Foreign Language: Complete the third unit of a foreign language.

L&S Breadth: Complete:
- 12 credits of Humanities, which must include at least 6 credits of Literature; and
- 12 credits of Social Science; and
- 12 credits of Natural Science, which must include 6 credits of Biological Science and 6 credits of Physical Science.

Liberal Arts and Science Coursework: Complete at least 108 credits.

Depth of Intermediate/Advanced Coursework: Complete at least 60 credits at the Intermediate or Advanced level.

Major: Declare and complete at least one major.

Total Credits: Complete at least 120 credits.

UW-Madison Experience:
- 30 credits in residence, overall, and
- 30 credits in residence after the 86th credit.

Quality of Work:
- 2,000 in all coursework at UW–Madison
- 2,000 in Intermediate/Advanced level 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. They do not need to complete the L&S Degree Requirements above.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MAJOR

30 credits are required in the following areas:

DISTRIBUTION

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>9-12</td>
<td>International Relations</td>
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<td>International Political Economy</td>
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<td>Introduction to Political Psychology</td>
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<td>Law, Politics and Society</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Politics in Multi-Cultural Societies</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>African and African-American Linkages: An Introduction</td>
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<td>Mexican-American Politics</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>The Political Economy of Race in the United States</td>
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<td>Elections and Voting Behavior</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Civil Liberties in the United States</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>United States Congress</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Criminal Law and Justice</td>
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POLI SCI 315  Legislative Internship
POLI SCI 402  Wisconsin in Washington Internship Course
POLI SCI 405  State Government and Public Policy
POLI SCI 408  The American Presidency
POLI SCI 409  American Parties and Politics
POLI SCI 410  Citizenship, Democracy, and Difference
POLI SCI 411  The American Constitution: Powers and Structures of Government
POLI SCI 412  The American Constitution: Rights and Civil Liberties
POLI SCI 414  The Supreme Court as a Political Institution
POLI SCI 415  The Separation of Powers and Federal Courts
POLI SCI 416  Community Power and Grass Roots Politics
POLI SCI 417  The American Judicial System
POLI SCI/ PUB AFFR 419  Administrative Law
POLI SCI 490  Study Abroad Topics in Political Science: American Government
POLI SCI 508  American National Security: Policy and Process
POLI SCI 510  Politics of Government Regulation
POLI SCI 511  Campaign Finance
POLI SCI 514  Interest Group Politics
POLI SCI 515  Public Opinion
POLI SCI 516  Political Communications
POLI SCI/ AFROAMER 519  African American Political Theory
POLI SCI 602  Wisconsin in Washington Advanced Public Policy Course

**Political Theory**

POLI SCI 160  Introduction to Political Theory
POLI SCI 265  Development of Ancient and Medieval Western Political Thought
POLI SCI 266  The Development of Modern Western Political Thought
POLI SCI 360  History of American Political Thought
POLI SCI 361  Contemporary American Political Thought
POLI SCI 363  Literature and Politics
POLI SCI 460  Topics in Political Philosophy
POLI SCI 463  Deception and Politics
POLI SCI/ GEN&WS 469  Women and Politics
POLI SCI/ AFROAMER 519  African American Political Theory
POLI SCI 561  Radical Political Theory
POLI SCI 590  Study Abroad Topics in Political Science: Political Theory

**Comparative Politics**

POLI SCI 120  Introduction to Comparative Politics
POLI SCI 182  Introduction to Comparative Politics (Honors)
POLI SCI/ CHICLA 231  Politics in Multi-Cultural Societies
POLI SCI/ASIAN/ GEOG/HISTORY/SOC 244  Introduction to Southeast Asia: Vietnam to the Philippines
POLI SCI/ GEOG/HISTORY/SLAVIC 253  Russia: An Interdisciplinary Survey
POLI SCI/ GEOG/HISTORY/SLAVIC 254  Eastern Europe: An Interdisciplinary Survey
POLI SCI/ASIAN/EASTDS/HISTORY 255  Introduction to East Asian Civilizations
POLI SCI/ AFROAMER/ANTHRO/C& SOC/GEOG/HISTORY/LACIS/SOC/SPANISH 260  Latin America: An Introduction
POLI SCI/ AFROAMER/ANTHRO/GEOG/HISTORY/SOC 277  Africa: An Introductory Survey
POLI SCI 321  Latin-American Politics
POLI SCI 322  Politics of Southeast Asia
POLI SCI 324  Political Power in Contemporary China
POLI SCI/ INTL ST 325  Social Movements and Revolutions in Latin America
POLI SCI/ INTL ST 327  Indian Politics in Comparative Perspective
POLI SCI 329  African Politics
POLI SCI 330  Political Economy of Development
POLI SCI 332  German Politics
POLI SCI 334  Russian Politics
POLI SCI 421  The Challenge of Democratization
POLI SCI/CHICLA/HISTORY 422  Latino History and Politics
POLI SCI/ INTL ST 423  Social Mobilization in Latin America
POLI SCI/ INTL ST 431  Contentious Politics
POLI SCI 432  Comparative Legal Institutions
POLI SCI/ RELIG ST 433  Religion and Politics
Political Science, B.S.

<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI 434</td>
<td>The Politics of Human Rights</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI 436</td>
<td>Political Inequality. Measures, Causes, Effects and Remedies</td>
<td></td>
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<td>POLI SCI 437</td>
<td>Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 438</td>
<td>Comparative Political Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI 439</td>
<td>The Comparative Study of Genocide</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI 529</td>
<td>Arab-Israeli Conflict</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 534</td>
<td>Socialism and Transitions to the Market</td>
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<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 690</td>
<td>Study Abroad Topics in Political Science: Comparative Politics</td>
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RESEARCH METHODS

Complete one course from:

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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI 170</td>
<td>Research Methods in Political Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI 270</td>
<td>Understanding Political Numbers</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 274</td>
<td>Political Choice and Strategy</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 348</td>
<td>Analysis of International Relations</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI/JOURN/URB R PL 373</td>
<td>Introduction to Survey Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLI SCI 374</td>
<td>Introduction to Statistical Inference for Political Research</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Credits</td>
<td>3-4</td>
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</table>

ELECTIVES

Additional POLI SCI courses to attain 30 credits in the major.2

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 residence3
- 15 credits in POLI SCI, taken on campus

HONORS IN THE MAJOR

To declare Honors in the Major, students must have at least one POLI SCI course for Honors, at least a 3.300 University GPA, and meet with the major advisor to discuss the requirements.

To earn Honors in the Major, students must satisfy the requirements for the major (above) and these additional requirements:

- Earn a 3.300 or higher University GPA
- Earn 3.500 GPA or higher in all POLI SCI courses
- Complete at least 20 credits in POLI SCI for Honors to include:4

DISTINCTION IN THE MAJOR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Students not declared for Honors in the Major may be awarded Distinction in the Major, if they have:

- a 3.700 GPA or higher on all POLI SCI courses and courses that count toward the major
- a University GPA of 3.000 or higher
- 20 credits of upper-level work in the major, taken in residence
- One of the following
  - POLI SCI 691-POLI SCI 692, or
  - POLI SCI 601, or
  - Coursework approved by the major advisor

FOOTNOTES

1 Courses may only meet one Distribution area. A course may meet both a Distribution and the Research Methods requirement, but will only be applied once toward the 30 credits required in the major.

2 No more than 6 total credits of Directed Study (POLI SCI 199, POLI SCI 698, POLI SCI 699) and Internship (POLI SCI 315) may count in the major.

3 POLI SCI courses numbered 300 and higher count as upper-level in the major.

4 A grade of B or higher is required to earn Honors credit.

UNIVERSITY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Total Degree

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.

Residency

Degree candidates are required to earn a minimum of 30 credits in residence at UW-Madison. "In residence" means on the UW-Madison campus with an undergraduate degree classification. "In residence" credit also includes UW-Madison courses offered in distance or online formats and credits earned in UW-Madison Study Abroad/Study Away programs.
Quality of Work
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.

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.

FOUR-YEAR PLAN

SAMPLE FOUR-YEAR PLAN

This Sample Four-Year Plan is a tool to assist students and their advisor(s). Students should use it—along with their DARS report, the Degree Planner, and Course Search & Enroll tools—to make their own four-year plan based on their placement scores, credit for transferred courses and approved examinations, and individual interests. As students become involved in athletics, honors, research, student organizations, study abroad, volunteer experiences, and/or work, they might adjust the order of their courses to accommodate these experiences. Students will likely revise their own four-year plan several times during college.

First Year

Fall | Credits | Spring | Credits
--- | --- | --- | ---
POLI SCI 104, 120, 140, or 160 | 3-4 | POLI SCI 104, 120, 140, or 160 (complete two) | 3-4
Communications A | 3 | Literature Breadth | 3
Quantitative Reasoning A | 3 | Foreign Language (if needed) | 4
Foreign Language (if needed) | 4 | | |

Second Year

Fall | Credits | Spring | Credits
--- | --- | --- | ---
Declare the major | | POLI SCI elective | 3
POLI SCI 207, 231, 297, or 355 (satisfies Ethnic Studies requirement) | 3-4 Communications B | 4
POLI SCI 270, 274, 348, or 374 (satisfies Quantitative Reasoning B requirement) | 3-4 Physical Science Breadth | 3

TOTAL 120 CREDITS

FALL Credits 14 Spring Credits 15

THREE-YEAR PLAN

SAMPLE THREE-YEAR PLAN

This Sample Three-Year Plan is a tool to assist students and their advisor(s). Students should use it—along with their DARS report, the Degree Planner, and Course Search & Enroll tools—to make their own three-year plan based on their placement scores, credit for transferred courses and approved examinations, and individual interests.

Three-year plans may vary considerably from student to student, depending on their individual preparation and circumstances. Students interested in graduating in three years should meet with an advisor as early as possible to discuss feasibility, appropriate course sequencing, post-graduation plans (careers, graduate school, etc.), and opportunities they might forgo in pursuit of a three-year graduation plan.

DEPARTMENTAL EXPECTATIONS

Students planning to graduate within three years with a Political Science major should enter the University with a minimum of 18 advanced standing credits, and have satisfied the following requirements with course credit or via placement examination:

- Communication Part A
- Quantitative Reasoning Part A
- 18 credits of any elective coursework
- 3-4 units of foreign language
Students missing one or more of these requirements upon entering the University should talk to their advisor about completing coursework over Summer terms to stay on track for a three year timeline.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<td>POLI SCI 104, 120, 140, or 160</td>
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<td>POLI SCI 104, 120, 140, or 160</td>
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<tr>
<td>Biological Science Breadth</td>
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<td>POLI SCI Elective</td>
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<td>Literature Breadth</td>
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<td>Communication B</td>
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<td>Intermediate or Advanced COMP SCI, MATH, or STAT (if B.S.) or Elective (if B.A.)</td>
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<td>Literature Breadth</td>
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<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
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<td>POLI SCI 270, 274, or 348 (satisfies Quantitative Reasoning B)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science Breadth</td>
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<td>Intermediate or Advanced COMP SCI, MATH, or STAT (if B.S.) or Elective (Intermediate or Advanced level) (if B.A.)</td>
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|          |                         | 17 | 17 |

Total Credits 102

1 Students wishing to write a senior thesis (with or without Honors) should apply in the spring of their second year.

**ADVISORS 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 hold walk-in advising hours during specified times each week during the academic year. Information about scheduling appointments and the current walk-in schedule can be found [here](https://polisci.wisc.edu/advising-and-major-information/#advising). Please note that no advising appointments are scheduled via email.

**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.
CAREER ADVISING
Students can find information about meeting with the career and internship advisor here. (https://polisci.wisc.edu/professional-development-appointments/)

L&S CAREER RESOURCES
SuccessWorks at the College of Letters & Science helps students leverage the academic skills learned in their major, certificates, and liberal arts degree; explore and try out different career paths; participate in internships; prepare for the job search and/or graduate school applications; and network with professionals in the field (alumni and employers). In short, SuccessWorks helps students in the College of Letters & Science discover themselves, find opportunities, and develop the skills they need for success after graduation.

SuccessWorks can also assist students in career advising, résumé and cover letter writing, networking opportunities, and interview skills, as well as course offerings for undergraduates to begin their career exploration early in their undergraduate career.

Students should set up their profiles in Handshake (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/handshake/) to take care of everything they need to explore career events, manage their campus interviews, and apply to jobs and internships from 200,000+ employers around the country.

- SuccessWorks (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/)
- Set up a career advising appointment (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/make-an-appointment/)
- INTER-LS 210 L&S Career Development: Taking Initiative (1 credit, targeted to first- and second-year students)—for more information, see Inter-LS 210: Career Development, Taking Initiative (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/inter-ls-210-career-development-taking-initiative/)
- INTER-LS 215 Communicating About Careers (3 credits, fulfills Com B General Education Requirement)
- Handshake (https://careers.ls.wisc.edu/handshake/)
- Learn how we're transforming career preparation: L&S Career Initiative (http://ls.wisc.edu/lsci/)

PEOPLE
Professors Burden, Canon, Cramer, Gehrlich, 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, Tahl, 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.