

The study of politics is both humanistic and scientific and is centuries old. Aristotle called it “the queen of the sciences.” The American Constitution reveals a joining of political theory with the pragmatic formation of political institutions and practices. Today’s political research involves highly scientific and rigorous attempts to understand human behavior and world events. The study of political science prepares one not only for employment but for a life as an informed citizen ready to participate in political activities within interest groups or political parties, related to community organization and political advocacy, or even as an elected or appointed official.

The major in political science offers a solid undergraduate education in the liberal arts tradition. Such study prepares the graduate for a variety of careers by emphasizing the acquisition of skills in communication and analysis, and by encouraging independent thought, tolerance, and informed interest in current affairs. The ability to define a problem and contribute to its solution is highly valued in a variety of employment settings, as are skills in writing, research, and evaluation. These are the very elements that characterize a liberal arts education, like that offered in the Department of Political Science.

Today’s graduate can expect to change jobs a number of times and even to have more than one career in their lifetime, and political science is excellent preparation for the flexibility required in this modern employment market. More specifically, the study of political science provides a solid background for careers in government at the local, state, and national levels, in international organizations, political campaigns, interest groups and lobbying organizations, journalism, business, and law.

The federal government is the country’s largest employer, utilizing a vast variety of employees in terms of the skills and abilities they hold, the level of responsibility, and geographic location. Advancement within the federal government system is more likely than entering at a relatively high position. Historically, job security, pay, and benefits associated with federal employment are quite good. Agencies do not expect new employees to enter with skills or knowledge specific to the job at hand, but they do look for individuals who can learn readily, work as part of a team, and have a basic understanding of the policy process and the operations of the national government.

Course work on the executive branch, Congress, and the courts; on the policy process; on the activities of interest groups and political parties; and on the role of the media can be useful. Local and state governments provide services in nearly every area of citizens’ lives. Increased professionalization at the local and state levels means that jobs are more dependent than they once might have been on individual abilities. Courses on state and urban government, public policy, and public administration might be especially valuable.

Interest groups and associations (labor unions, corporations, grassroots organizations, etc.) are represented in Washington, D.C. and in most state capitals. Expertise in public policy formation and analysis are especially prized, with many employees having a background in government service. While experience is a key element in this field, students might want to choose classes that will give them a full understanding of the American political and public policy process.

International businesses and organizations offer a range of careers, with a growing demand for those who bring with them an understanding of the political and regulatory environment in which business is done. Political science majors with this sort of career in mind should include study in comparative politics, international relations and organizations, public policy, political development, and interest group politics. Students should choose elective courses or a minor that can train them in basic economics, statistics, computer science, or international trade.

Careers in campaign management and political polling can be pursued in political parties, individual campaigns, or in a consulting firm. A person interested in this sort of career should acquire a thorough understanding of the American political system, taking courses on parties, elections, public opinion, and voting behavior, as well as acquiring skills in writing and data analysis. Given that there are over half a million campaigns in the U.S. annually, entry level jobs with long hours, low pay, and enormous demands are numerous. A typical career would start with an individual campaign, move to a statewide or national campaign, and then to a consulting firm, where security and pay are considerably more comfortable.

Some lawyers engage in private practice on their own or in a firm of as many as 200 attorneys, while others are employed by corporations, government, and organizations. Some individuals with legal training work in other areas such as corporate or public management. Two primary factors for admission to law school are the undergraduate grade point average and the LSAT score. The substance of undergraduate course work is important only to the extent that it is training for the academic demands law students face. The political science major offers valuable experience in critical analysis and writing, and some courses specifically deal with subject matter related to the law and the legal process. However, political science is not specifically designed to be a “pre-law” program; those interested in pursuing a career in law should take a broad set of courses to prepare for the challenges law school and the legal profession.

A career in journalism is, of course, focused on the ability to communicate, especially in writing. Beyond that, the understanding of society and individuals that a liberal arts education can impart is paramount. This should include course work in such fields as political science, history, economics, and sociology. Depending on an individual’s area of interest, courses in comparative government and international relations might be useful. Participation on the staff of a school or group newspaper or campus broadcasting facility would be excellent experience. Whatever your career aspirations, take advantage of this opportunity to develop as a person as well as a potential employee. Seek to gain an understanding of the world and your place in it, rather than simply striving to earn a diploma.

## ADVISING

The Department is dedicated to providing accessible and thorough support to the students in our major.

The Department of Political Science is part of the College of Social Sciences and Public Policy, along with the Departments of Economics, Geography, Urban & Regional Planning, Public Administration, Sociology, and interdisciplinary

programs in African American Studies, Demography, Public Health, International Affairs and Social Sciences. With over 1,400 active majors, political science is the largest undergraduate program in the College. General advising for the Political Science major and for all graduation requirements for students pursuing a primary major through the College is provided the Office of Academic Affairs' undergraduate advising office. Advising services are available online via Zoom and in-person (105/106 Bellamy). These include, but are not limited to, course scheduling, academic planning, mapping, graduation checks, and major changes. For additional information on scheduling appointments or completing virtual drop-ins, see [coss.fsu.edu/academics/undergrad/how-to-schedule-an-appointment](https://coss.fsu.edu/academics/undergrad/how-to-schedule-an-appointment).

The Academic Coordinator (AC) for the Department is the primary contact for questions and concerns regarding the Political Science major and graduate programs in housed in the department. Among other things, the Academic Coordinator can:

- Advise or provide information for department specific programs including the MAAPP Combined Pathway, RIBC, Internships and experiential learning intensive programs, MAAPP, M.S. program, and the Political Science Ph.D program;
- Enroll students in full or reserved courses that require instructor approval or courses that require department approval; this includes Honors in the Major (POS 4935), Directed Individual Studies (POS 4905), Internships (POS 4941), RIBC courses (POS 3713/POS 3930) and APPLE courses (POS 3142/POS 4941);
- Verify if a student has completed major or minor requirements;
- Address general questions or concerns regarding the department's policies and curriculum;
- Process special exceptions involving major coursework.

Finally, the Undergraduate Director (UD) is available to discuss general questions or concerns you have about the political science major, our department's general curriculum requirements or coursework, special programs and related career tracks. The Director also supervises the Honors in the Major and Internship program, and so is available to discuss those programs as well. Please note however, that inquiries regarding major or minor declarations, transfer credits, application procedures, mapping and graduation status evaluations or requirements are advising matters on which the UD is not authorized to advise. You are welcome to bring any questions or concerns you have about our major, classes, life at FSU in general, or anything else we might be able to assist with.

**Please be proactive in familiarizing yourself with the material in the General Bulletin (available online), especially the Academic Regulations and Procedures, and Undergraduate Degree Requirements sections. Answers to many questions that may arise can be found here prior to needing to ask an advisor. Ultimately, students are responsible for understanding and properly completing all degree requirements.**

Each student is required to maintain an FSU email account. The Department often communicates with all majors or the students in a particular class by using group-mail capabilities. Set up your account early and check it often. **Here is another area where the responsibility rests on students - to be available to departmental e-mail contact.** Also keep your University records up to date with changes of address or phone number.

College of Social Sciences and Public Policy Academic Advising	<a href="https://coss.fsu.edu/academics/undergrad/">https://coss.fsu.edu/academics/undergrad/</a>	<a href="mailto:coss-advising@fsu.edu">coss-advising@fsu.edu</a>	101 or 105/106 Bellamy	(850) 644-5470
Academic Coordinator	Ms. Elisa Kuchvalek	<a href="mailto:ekuchvalek@fsu.edu">ekuchvalek@fsu.edu</a>	533 Bellamy	(850) 644-7305
Director of Undergraduate Study	Dr. Amanda Driscoll	<a href="mailto:adriscoll@fsu.edu">adriscoll@fsu.edu</a>	567 Bellamy	(850) 644-4542

## REQUIREMENTS FOR A MAJOR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

The major in Political Science requires a minimum of 30 semester hours of course work, with a grade of C- or better required for each course. Following are the characteristics those 30 hours must have. The numbers/amounts indicated are minimums; just as with the 30 hours required for the major, students can certainly take more than the requirement.

- 3 introductory courses (more information on the introductory courses is provided below)
- 6 hours in each of any 3 subfields – intro courses count towards subfields (more details on the subfields provided below)
- POS3713 Understanding Political Science Research (more information below)
- 21 semester hours at the 3000 or 4000 level
- 21 semester hours in the classroom (as distinguished from internship, honors work, and the like)
- 15 classroom hours completed at FSU (at least ½ of the credits for the major, per University policy)
- No more than two (2) grades below “C-” in major coursework (see below)

A separate minor or second major is required. Public Administration is the only area not permitted as a minor, nor is the Public Administration internship allowed towards credit for the major.

## REQUIREMENTS FOR A MINOR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Students majoring in other departments or programs may minor in Political Science by completing 15 semester hours of political science courses with grades of C- or better, beyond any hours used to complete a student's 36 hours of required General education coursework. Nine of those 15 hours must be at the 3000/4000 level, 6 of the 15 must be earned at FSU. No more than a combined total of 6 hours in PAD or PHM prefix courses can be used toward the minor. Internship credits cannot be counted toward the minor.

**NOTE: Advising suggestions are based on transcript information officially posted to student record at time of advising session. Correct final registration remains the responsibility of the student.**

## FIELDS OF STUDY AND INTRODUCTORY COURSES

The study of Political Science at FSU is divided into five subfields. Each subfield has an introductory course; in most cases that introductory course is a prerequisite to all other courses in the subfield; the exception being the public administration field. The following chart gives more detail on each subfield.

**NOTE:** Two courses taught in the Department of Philosophy - **PHM3331** Modern Political Thought and **PHM4340** Contemporary Political Thought - may be counted toward the major but do not constitute a subfield. **PHM2300 and POT3003 do not count towards political science major requirements.** Students who entered FSU **prior to Fall 2005** may choose to complete the major using the older standards which allow the following: POS2001 and PHM2300 can count as introductory courses; Political Theory can be used as a subfield (allowable courses have the POT prefix or are PHM2300, PHM3331, PHM4340; a student cannot count both PHM2300 and POT3003).

Subfield	Prefix	Intro Course	Description
American Government	POS	POS1041 American Government: National	The study of American politics aims to answer important and enduring questions about politics and government at the local, state, and national levels. Various courses consider such topics as political participation and voting behavior; the conduct of elected politicians, both in campaigning and in governing; and institutions like interest groups, bureaucracy, and the like. Courses take theoretical, historical, and analytical perspectives to illuminate the workings of the American political system. Not all POS courses are included in this subfield; the excluded courses are: POS2001, POS3713, POS3949, POS4715, POS4935/4936, POS4941. POS3931 and POS4905 may count depending on the topic (with prior approval). POS1112 counts towards this subfield, but is not an "introductory level" course. POS1041 is required for mapping purposes for all political science majors by the department and University (see Program of Study, below).
Comparative Politics	CPO	CPO2002 Introduction to Comparative Politics	Comparative politics studies the domestic politics of countries and regions throughout the world. It seeks to enhance the students' understanding of how politics works by observing the differences and similarities among various political systems. Comparative politics is interdisciplinary by its nature because to understand the politics of a country, we must also understand something of its economy, social system, international position, history, and culture.
International Relations	INR	INR2002 Introduction to International Relations	International relations studies the political relationships among the world's national governments. Courses look at many of the problems and issues of world politics and possible explanations for the events we witness. Topics include such things as the causes and effects of war and peace; the difficulties faced by nations in making agreements; the role of international organizations; the formation of foreign policy; and global responses to contemporary social problems. Courses offered by the International Affairs department with the INR prefix (including <i>Introduction to International Affairs</i> ) do not count towards political science requirements.
Public Policy	PUP	PUP3002 Introduction to Public Policy	The study of public policy focuses on what governments do, how and why they do it, and what the consequences are. These courses can look at governmental decisions made at any level and in any nation, and range from studies of specific government actions or programs to more general assessments of government performance.
Public Administration	PAD	PAD3003 Public Administration in American Society	Public administration (housed in a separate department, The Askew School) studies the role and function of bureaucracies in the formation and implementation of public policy. It looks at the legal, financial, and managerial aspects of government.

**POS3713 UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH**, required for all students in the major, is usually referred to as the "methods course." Over the last 40 years or so, a majority of political scientists have adopted a method for studying political questions that differs from the approach taken by journalists, historians, and political commentators. They have adopted the scientific method, used in other disciplines such as biology, physics, and medical research. This means that political scientists, as well as other social scientists, use data-quantifiable facts and figures to systematically test explanations of political phenomena. Much of the research in political science uses statistical tests to determine which explanations are best supported by the data. In order to assist political science majors in understanding and evaluating social science research, the Department has designed this course to acquaint students with how the scientific method is applied to the social science, show social science research is designed, how data is collected, and how presentations of research findings are interpreted. This course should be taken as early as possible since it helps students to understand the materials they read in their other classes, to research topics for term papers, to participate in the internship

program, and to design an honors thesis. Any one of the introductory courses is the only prerequisite to this class. The instructor will assume no other background, although there is a math component to this course that assumes the liberal studies math requirement has been completed. This course introduces a number of new terms and ideas. The course can be waived for any student with a documented math learning disability, and in certain circumstances where a student is a double-major and has taken a comparable methods course in the other major (both of these circumstances must be approved by the Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Academic Coordinator). If this requirement is waived, the student must take additional major coursework to maintain a minimum of 30 credit hours in the major. Consult the Academic Coordinator for more information.

### **RESEARCH INTENSIVE BACHELOR'S CERTIFICATE (RIBC) IN POLITICAL SCIENCE**

The Research Intensive Bachelor's Certificate in Political Science seeks to provide a outlet for students who wish to gain research skills and practical experience working in an academic research environment. Specifically, the Department of Political Science will target high-performing political science (and, secondarily, other social science) majors in their sophomore and junior years of study who wish either to 1.) focus on the quantitative approach of political science more than they would following the traditional requirements for political science students; and/or 2.) continue to graduate study in political science. Students admitted to the certificate program progress as a group through a sequence of intensive research methods classes and complete the program with a research internship supervised by faculty at the Department of Political Science, where students will work one-on-one with faculty and doctoral students on current research projects. Research projects are available in American politics, comparative politics, public policy, and international relations.

Admission to the RIBC program is competitive and is based on a review of a statement of interest, GPA, and fulfillment of prerequisite coursework. External test scores, such as the SAT or ACT, may also be requested. Enrollment is limited to 24 students per year. More information about the program is available on the Department's web site. Successful completion of requirements is recognized with a notation on the student's transcript. The director of the RIBC program is Dr. Carlisle Rainey.

### **HONORS IN THE MAJOR**

The Department offers honors in the major, consisting of a thesis or project that the student completes over a period of at least two semesters under the guidance of a three-member faculty committee. It is the student's responsibility to determine an area of interest and approach a faculty member to request that they serve as the major professor. Major professors should be a core and tenured faculty member of the department; faculty who hold the rank of "Assistant Professor" are generally discouraged from supervising HITM research but may serve as committee members. Under extraordinary circumstances, tenured faculty members from related disciplines and Departments in the College (e.g. Public Administration, Sociology) may be permitted to serve as the major professor, but this exception is made on a case by case basis and is subject to review by the Director of Undergraduate Studies and the Departmental Chair. Successful completion of this project warrants the notation "With Honors in the Major" on the transcript. Registration for the honors work credits is arranged through the Academic Coordinator. The following prerequisites determine eligibility, which are in addition to any requirements set forth by the University Honors Program.

- 1.) registration with the University Honors Program Office (Honors, Scholars, & Fellows House); and
- 2.) a minimum of 15 hours completed in political science, with at least 6 of those hours at FSU; and
- 3.) a 3.5 GPA on all political science course work (at FSU or elsewhere); and
- 4.) completion of POS3713 (or its approved equivalent) with a grade of B or better.

The student's responsibility to familiarize themselves with and adhere to requirements and deadlines set by the University Honors Program, and stipulations formalized in the HITM handbook. For additional information, see <https://honors.fsu.edu/honors-major>.

### **INTERNSHIPS**

The Department's internship program allows qualified students to receive up to 6 hours of academic credit while gaining practical experience in the field of government or politics. An internship is not required for the major but the hours can be counted toward the 30-hour requirement. They do not satisfy any specific subfield and are considered out-of-the-classroom hours. Interns have worked for various government-related entities such as legislators' offices or legislative committees, state or local government agencies, lobbying organizations, political parties, and election campaigns. Responsibility for finding an appropriate internship rests with the student, but the Department does provide information on the process and contacts. The internship assignment must allow the student to learn about politics - about decision-making, influencing public policy, government operations, public service, and the like, and must span the entire semester (13 weeks in the summer). Interns are expected to do useful, paraprofessional staff work. The Director of Undergraduate Studies/Internship Director determines whether an intern's work assignment is appropriate for earning credit. For the 6 hours of internship credit, the student works at least 20 hours per week, writes a research paper and fulfills all other course obligations as specified in the Internship course syllabus. Full information on the internship process and prerequisites, and the necessary forms are available in the Department and on the web at <https://coss.fsu.edu/polisci/undergraduate/internships/>. **POS3713 must be completed prior to earning credit for POS4941 – Internship. POS4941 is the only internship which can be counted towards political science major requirements. Applications for internship credit are generally due no later than the third day of the semester the internship will be completed.**

### **DIRECTED INDIVIDUAL STUDY (DIS)**

Individual study is designed to provide an opportunity for more in-depth study of a specific topic. A student who identifies an area in which she or he wishes to undertake further study can approach a faculty member with expertise in that field to request a DIS. The content and requirements of the course are worked out between each instructor and student, these expectations should be clearly

delineated in a DIS syllabus for the course of study. Generally, students should not expect a faculty member to agree to a DIS unless they have had the student in a regular class. A DIS is not permitted to substitute for an established course. DIS requests are generally not approved after the end of the drop/add period, and are not approved for the purpose of “making up” missing credits needed for a student to graduate in a given semester.

To register for a DIS, the student and the instructor complete an Individualized Course Approval/Registration Form and submit it to the Academic Coordinator for processing. Once the course is created, the student will be added into the course and contacted by the Academic Coordinator to confirm their addition into the DIS hours. Lower-division students must obtain the approval of the Office of Undergraduate Studies before registering for a DIS. Graduate Teaching Assistants are not permitted to direct DIS credit

## GRADUATION CHECKS

Students are required to complete a graduation check in the semester that they are on track to earn 90 or more credit hours. This progress check is completed through the College’s Office of Academic Affairs advising office. This check serves not only to validate progress toward the degree, but also to give you assurance University records are correct and up-to-date.

## PLAGIARISM/CHEATING

The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for the integrity of students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "...be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://fda.fsu.edu/academic-resources/academic-integrity-and-grievances/academic-honor-policy>) The Department adheres to the spirit and the letter of that code, and will pursue disciplinary action against those caught plagiarizing/cheating to the fullest extent allowed by University policy.

## REGISTRATION AND DROP/ADD

Information regarding registration dates and procedures is available on-line and in each semester’s Registration Guide. It is important that students register for political science classes as soon as they have access. Our classes fill quickly. Students requiring any sort of assistance with registration should see the Academic Coordinator. **Please note that the department is prohibited from adding students over the maximum capacity of a course.**

The drop/add period ends at midnight on the fourth day of classes in each term. Students have financial and grade liability for courses on their schedule at that time. Students have until the end of the seventh week of classes to drop a course with no grade liability. If such a drop takes the student below 12 hours of enrollment, they must seek permission from the College’s Academic Affairs Office (101 BEL). Any drop after the 12<sup>th</sup> week of classes requires this same permission and requires documentation of extenuating circumstances. These deadlines are different and pro-rated for Summer semesters and terms. Once classes have started, a student who decides not to attend school at all must withdraw from the University through the Office of Withdrawal Services.

The University’s first-day attendance policy requires students who fail to attend the first meeting of a class shall have that class dropped from their schedule. **While this is policy, students should not presume they are dropped from a class, and should always check their schedules before the end of drop/add.** Students who know they will miss the first day and don’t want to lose their seat can request through the instructor they not be dropped from the course.

## GRADES

- **Minimum - No course with a grade below “C-” can be counted toward a major or a minor in political science.**
- **“D/F” Rule – A student who has been admitted to the Political Science major at FSU and subsequently received more than two (2) grades below "C-" (D+, D, D-, F, U) in political science courses will not be permitted to graduate with a degree in the major.**
- **Incompletes** - Under extenuating circumstances, a student may ask an instructor to give a grade of Incomplete, which allows additional time to complete the requirements of the course. When the work is completed, the instructor changes the grade from an “I” to the updated earned letter grade. If the grade is not changed before the end of the next term in which the student is registered, the recorded “I” automatically defaults to the grade otherwise earned, as indicated by the instructor when initially approving an “I” grade. An Incomplete grade is not given unless the student explicitly requests it and makes arrangements for completing the work. An Incomplete grade is meant only for those rare cases where a student misses a final exam or is unavoidably unable to complete some final assignment. Incompletes are not given to students who simply stop attending class or who are doing poorly. Granting an Incomplete grade is at the instructor’s discretion.
- **Grade Appeal** - The University has a formal grade appeal process to be used where a student feels that she or he has been graded as an individual in a way other than that stipulated in the syllabus and other than that by which all other students in the class were graded. This circumstance is extremely rare and the grade appeal process is seldom required. Students should always feel free to verify their grades, and bring any suspected miscalculation to the instructor’s attention promptly. The burden of showing deviation from the syllabus falls upon the student initiating the grade appeal.
- **Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory** - No course taken on an S/U basis can count toward the major or minor, excluding

accelerated test credit (AP, AICE, CLEP, IB).

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Florida State University (FSU) values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to a climate of mutual respect and full participation. Our goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming. FSU is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities in a manner that is consistent with academic standards of the course while empowering the student to meet integral requirements of the course.

To receive academic accommodations, a student:

- (1) must register with and provide documentation to the Office of Accessibility Services (OAS);
- (2) must provide a letter from OAS to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type; and,
- (3) should communicate with the instructor, as needed, to discuss recommended accommodations. A request for a meeting may be initiated by the student or the instructor.

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from the Office of Accessibility Services has been provided.

This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request.

For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the

Office of Accessibility Services  
874 Traditions Way  
108 Student Services Building  
Florida State University  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167  
(850) 644-9566 (voice)  
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)  
oas@fsu.edu  
<https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas>

### **Confidential Campus Resources:**

Various centers and programs are available to assist students with navigating stressors that might impact academic success. These include the following:

#### **Victim Advocate Program**

University Center A, Rm. 4100  
(850) 644-7161  
Available 24/7/365  
Office Hours: M-F 8-5  
<https://dsst.fsu.edu/vap>

#### **Counseling and Psychological Services**

Askew Student Life Center, 2nd floor  
942 Learning Way  
(850) 644-8255  
<https://counseling.fsu.edu/>

#### **University Health Services**

Health and Wellness Center  
(850) 644-6230  
<https://uhs.fsu.edu/>

## **STUDENT ASSOCIATION – PI SIGMA ALPHA**

The FSU chapter of the national Pi Sigma Alpha Honor Society's advisor is Dr. Robert Jackson.

## **POLITICAL SCIENCE FACULTY AND THEIR AREAS OF INTEREST**

All political science faculty hold Ph.D. degrees from a wide variety of institutions. They share a common interest in research methodology. The Department's web page <https://coss.fsu.edu/polisci/> provides a complete list of the faculty and their e-mail

addresses, as well as links to their personal web pages. Dr. Brad Gomez is the Department Chair.

