
Political Science (major and minor)

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Major: (36 hours)*

Minor: (16 hours)*

Political Science Major: The political science major helps students develop an understanding of politics that integrates four elements: a grasp of fundamental theoretical concepts and problems of political life; an understanding of how those concepts and problems shape and inform the domestic politics of the United States; an understanding of how those concepts and problems shape and inform the world of international relations; and finally a sense of how our understanding of those same concepts and problems is enriched by the comparative analysis of different countries and political systems. In all of these ways, the major helps prepare students for responsible citizenship. It is helpful to students contemplating careers in teaching, government, law, diplomacy, international service, business, and journalism.

The major consists of 36 hours:*

20 hours of core requirements

POLS 212	Social Science Research Methods.....	4
POLS 220	The American Political System.....	4
POLS 230	Introduction to International Relations.....	4
POLS 260	Introduction to Political Thought.....	4
POLS 480	Senior Capstone: Politics Seminar.....	4

16 hours of political science electives*

(Majors may fulfill up to 4 of these 16 hours through an internship)

Students will be encouraged to complete a broad liberal arts education, especially including exposure to the other social sciences (economics, sociology, psychology, and cultural anthropology) as well as history, philosophy, ethics, logic, and critical thinking.

Optional Public Law and Policy concentration – 16 hours (*pending*)

Required:

POLS 270	Introduction to Public Policy.....	4
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Electives: choose 3 courses from the list below

POLS 225	Introduction to Environmental Governance.....	4
POLS/PHIL 322	Philosophy of Law.....	4
POLS 328	Governing Urban Communities.....	4
POLS 342	American Foreign Policy.....	4
POLS 346	Governance and Development.....	4
POLS 375	Immigration and Citizenship.....	4
POLS 427	Constitutional Law I.....	4
POLS 428	Constitutional Law II.....	4
POLS 429	Religion and the Constitution.....	4
POLS 437	International Law and Organization.....	4

Minor: 16 hours of POLS coursework.*

*If a student takes a Mayterm course worth only 3 credit hours, s/he may complete the major with only 11 hours of elective credit and 35 hours total. The minor can be completed in 15 hours in the same way.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

POLS 205 In Search of Justice

(4, F/S)

How do we do justice and avoid injustice through political activity? We explore the possibilities and pitfalls of the search for justice by considering classic theories of justice, studying citizen action and the policy process, and examining case studies of specific issues such as health care, same-sex marriage, human trafficking, or other issues of current concern. Community: Political Science.

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- POLS 210 World Regional Geography** (4, M)
Study of location and character of major world regions and nation-states. The concept of the *region* in geography is examined, followed by detailed analysis of nine regions, focusing on political and economic issues and cultural diversity.
- POLS 212 Social Science Research Methods** (4, S)
Basic scientific method, application to social phenomena; procedures and methodological problems in various types of social research; methods of data analysis.
- POLS 220 The American Political System** (4, S)
The foundation course in American politics. Focuses on the basic design of the American political system, including constitutionalism, federalism, and the separation of powers, with special attention to the Founding principles as explained in the *Federalist*. Additional topics can include political parties, elections, Congress and the President, bureaucracy, the judiciary, and state and local government.
- POLS 225 Introduction to Environmental Governance** (4, F)
Introduces students to alternative civic and governmental approaches to environmental problems, beginning with the political history of the conservation movement and considering questions related to law and policy, conflict and collaboration, value trade-offs, intergenerational fairness, and sustainability, including Christian responses to environmental issues. Fieldwork component.
- POLS 227 Governing Rural Communities** (4, OD)
A study of local governance and politics in a rural context, exploring town, county, and regional perspectives with an emphasis on policy analysis and civic engagement. Includes a fieldwork component combining research and service learning.
- POLS 230 Introduction to International Relations** (4, F)
Development of the international system of nation-states; effects of system structure and intrastate elements on international relations; concepts such as power, balance of power, sovereignty, interdependence, and issues such as foreign policy decision making, causes of war, and nuclear arms control.
- POLS 240 Comparing Nations** (4, OD)
Comparative basis for understanding similarities and differences in political systems around the world, focusing on Europe and Asia. Typical issues: historical development, ideology, political parties, interest groups, government, and domestic and foreign issues.
- POLS 260 Introduction to Political Thought** (4, F)
Introduces students to the tradition of Western political thought from the ancient to the modern world through a close reading of important thinkers. By considering problems of community, obligation, order, justice, liberty, and freedom, the course equips students for careful normative reflection on public life.
- POLS 270 Introduction to Public Policy** (4, OD)
An introduction to the nature of public problems and the diverse ways in which governments respond. Includes concepts and methods of policy analysis, legal instruments of public policy, legislation and its implementation, the work of public agencies at various levels of government, and the role of the courts in the policy process. Illustrated by cases drawn from a range of policy areas, such as the environment, education, health-care, transportation, and housing.
- POLS/PHIL 322 Philosophy of Law** (2, F or S)
Introduction to fundamental issues surrounding the concept of law, such as the debate between natural law theorists (who maintain that there is a law above human law) and legal positivists (who deny this), as well as issues such as punishment and the basis of the legitimacy of legislative authority.
- POLS 325 Executive Power and the Presidency** (4, OD)
Careful study of the nature of executive power and its embodiment in the American presidency. Focuses on the executive's role in our constitutional order and changes in that role over the course of America's political development.
- POLS 328 Governing Urban Communities** (4, OD)
A study of local governance and politics in an urban context, exploring neighborhood, citywide, and metropolitan levels of organization with an emphasis on policy analysis and civic engagement. Includes a fieldwork component in Buffalo combining research and service learning. This course has a fee.

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- POLS 329 Issues in Environmental Law and Policy** (4, M)
Focuses on specific problems and recurrent issues, e.g., wetlands policy, endangered species, deforestation, and so forth. Topics vary. Offered in Mayterm, usually in a field setting.
- POLS 336 American Foreign Policy** (4, OD)
Formulation and execution of U.S. foreign policy, especially since WWII. Special attention to foreign policy strategies in light of different conceptions of vital interests, threats to these interests, and appropriate responses.
- POLS /HIST 341 Conceptualizing the City: An Exploration of the City in Western Culture** (4-6, F&S)
Explores the history of cities and the ideas that have shaped both their objective development – in terms of their material culture, their economic base, and their political structure – and our subjective experience of them. Also considers social science explanations of urban development (why cities?), 20th century trends (suburbanization, metropolitanization) and reactions to them, and ponders the future of cities in the 21st century. Reading ranges over works of history, philosophy, literary fiction, and social science. Throughout, connections to the Buffalo experience provide concrete (sometimes literally concrete) illustrations of ideas and their effects.
- POLS 342 The European Union: Politics and Policymaking** (4, OD)
Examines the vision, structure, and functioning of the European Union, together with case studies of the policy process in various policy areas, as well as controversial issues unique to the EU.
- POLS 345 Community Organization and Development** (4, OD)
A comparative study of how local communities organize themselves to manage natural resources and provide collective goods and sources, with a focus on developing countries. Considers issues related to decentralization and sustainable development. Emphasis on analytic approaches to problem-solving.
- POLS 346 Governance and Development** (4, S)
A study of patterns of governance and politics typical of developing countries with an emphasis on relationships between governance and development.
- POLS/INCL 353 War & Terrorism in the Middle East: History and Politics** (4, OD)
This course explores three phenomena: (1) war and terrorism in general and in the Middle East in particular; (2) the history and politics of this region (with forays into geography, religion, society, culture, and economics); and (3) country-specific histories and politics. In-depth analysis of the religion-terrorism nexus, Arab-Israeli conflict and peacemaking, and the theory and practice of pacifism and just war.
- POLS 355 East Asia: History and Politics** (4, OD)
Introduction to history and politics of East Asia from ancient time to the present, with focus on China and Japan. Emphasis on historical and political developments in 19th and 20th centuries leading to founding of Communist China and the new Japan.
- POLS 357 Russia and the USSR: History and Politics** (4, OD)
Introduction to Russian and Soviet history and politics from first records to present, with focus on government, institutions, culture, and society of Imperial and Soviet periods.
- POLS 362 Loyalty** (4, OD)
Careful consideration of the meaning, origin, objects, and limits of loyalty, with special attention to its political manifestations. Draws on a wide range of philosophical, political, legal, theological, and literary sources.
- POLS 364 The Roots of Conservatism** (4, OD)
Examines the origins of contemporary conservatism in the thought of three influential early modern thinkers: Edmund Burke, Adam Smith, and David Hume. Comparisons throughout with contemporary versions of conservative thought.
- POLS 366 Contemporary Political Thought** (4, M)
An introduction to a broad range of theoretical approaches within current Anglo-American political philosophy. Special focus on liberalism, communitarianism, multiculturalism, and feminism.
- POLS 368 Aristotle** (4, OD)
An introduction to fundamental political concepts by means of a careful study of the *Ethics* and *Politics* of Aristotle. Topics considered include the nature of political science, the relation between ethics and politics, community, justice, equality, law, constitutionalism, property, citizenship, conflict, institutional design, different regime types, the purposes of political life, and the relation between empirical and normative analysis.

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- POLS 375 Immigration and Citizenship** (4, OD)
Course explores the question, what does it mean to be a member of a political community? And how does one become a member? Typically considers historical development of American immigration and citizenship policy; philosophical analyses of citizenship and the right of movement; problems of integration and diversity; comparative policy analysis; and the role of citizenship in a changing world.
- POLS 393 Field Experience (Internship)** (1-4, OD)
Supervised participation in executive, legislative, judicial, or legal offices in local, state, or federal government when deemed suitable for academic credit and approved by the political science advisor and the chair of the Department of History and Political Science. Usually four hours of credit may be counted toward the major or minor. May be combined with an additional four hours of credit for POLS 391 Independent Study.
- POLS 425 Problems and Issues in American Politics** (4, OD)
Focuses on specific problems and recurrent issues in the study of American politics, including concerns related to elections, representation, accountability, public law, governance, and the constitutional order at all levels of government. Topics vary. Includes a research or field component.
- POLS 427 Constitutional Law I: Structures and Powers of Government** (4, F)
First half of the constitutional law sequence. Focuses on government structure and powers, including judicial review, the separation of powers, and federalism. May be taken independently of Constitutional Law II.
- POLS 428 Constitutional Law II: Civil Rights and Liberties** (4, S)
Second half of the constitutional law sequence. Focuses on civil rights and liberties, especially issues dealing with the Bill of Rights and equal protection. Constitutional Law I is not a prerequisite.
- POLS 429 Religion and the Constitution** (4, OD)
Examines constitutional debates surrounding the “first freedom”, religious liberty. In the context of different theories of the proper relationship between church and state, we examine First Amendment cases involving the establishment and free exercise clauses, as well as relevant privacy issues such as abortion and euthanasia.
- POLS 437 International Law and Organization** (4, OD)
Introduces students to the fields of international law and international organization. Heavy emphasis on reading, analyzing, and briefing international law cases. Students examine issues of international organization from a number of theoretical perspectives, such as realism, liberal idealism, Marxism, and feminism.
- POLS 468, 469 America and the World I, II** (4, OD)
Exposes students to cutting-edge discussions of both the American polity and its role in world affairs by reading extremely current literature. Emphasis on the relation between normative theory and political practice. Topics considered include citizenship, American national identity, democracy, sovereignty, and globalization, but specific focus varies depending upon readings. Heavy reading load; emphasis on class discussion and student book reviews of material. Taught alternately as POLS 468 A&W I or POLS 469 A&W II, with a different reading list each time; students may take both 468 and 469 for credit.
- POLS 480 Senior Capstone: Politics Seminar** (4, S)
Capstone course of the major in which students integrate concepts, knowledge, skills, methods, approaches, and practical experience in politics and government. Will improve research, writing, analytical, and communication skills by researching, writing, and defending a paper based on original research in both primary and secondary sources and similar in quality to what would be expected in the first year of graduate study.
- POLS 191, 291, 391, 491 Independent Study** (1, 2, 3, or 4)
- POLS 295, 395, 495 Special Topics in Political Science** (4, OD)
According to demand and interest, courses will be offered on a range of topics in any area of political science.
- POLS 496 Honors in Political Science** (4, S)