

## *Political Science Major and Minor*

[www.polisci.pitt.edu](http://www.polisci.pitt.edu)

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A major in political science is designed to help students understand the complexity of political developments in the United States and throughout the world. The major also provides students with a broad education that will help them to prepare for a wide variety of careers in various levels of government service, law, education, journalism, business, and the nonprofit sector. Those interested in government service careers may wish to complement their study of political science with courses in public service offered through the College of General Studies and the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs.

The political science department offers courses that meet the international foreign cultures, philosophy, social science, and quantitative requirements of the core curriculum of the School of Arts and Sciences, as well as requirements for the wide range of certificate programs sponsored by the University Center for International Studies (African Studies, Asian Studies, European Union Studies, Global Studies, Latin American Studies, Russian and East European Studies, West European Studies, Global Service Center).

### **Required courses for the Political Science major**

The political science department offers a large number of courses in four fields: American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Theory. The core courses provide students with a survey in each of these fields and with the methods employed in the contemporary study of politics. The field courses, at 1000-level, provide students with advanced coursework in each of these areas of specialization. The combination of core and field courses provides students with a comprehensive overview of political science as a discipline while permitting students to concentrate in a particular field or fields. The major requires the completion of 33 credits distributed as follows.

#### **Core courses**

PS 0200 American Politics  
PS 0300 Comparative Politics  
PS 0500 World Politics  
PS 0600 Political Theory  
PS 0700 Research Methods in Political Science

#### **Field courses**

At the 1000 level, students must take at least six courses, distributed across a primary field (three courses), a secondary field (two courses), and one elective course in any of the substantive fields. One of the field courses must be a capstone seminar.

#### **Capstone seminar**

The University of Pittsburgh requires students to complete one writing-intensive course in their major. The Capstone Seminar, which is ideally taken in the primary field, fulfills the university-wide requirement of an intensive writing course (W-course) in the major and allows students to undertake advanced work under the direction of faculty in a smaller seminar setting.

**Honors major requirements:** Departmental honors are conferred upon students who maintain an overall GPA of 3.5 and achieve a GPA of 3.7 or better in political science.

**Related area:** A minimum of 12 credits is required in any one Dietrich School department chosen in consultation with the major advisor. The completion of an official Dietrich School major, minor, or a Dietrich School or UCIS certificate also satisfies this requirement.

**Grade requirements:** A minimum GPA of 2.0 in departmental courses is required for graduation. In addition, a student must earn a grade of at least C- for a course to satisfy a PS requirement.

**Satisfactory/No Credit option:** No course to be counted toward the major can be taken on an S/NC basis.

**BS and BPhil in Political Science:** Outstanding and motivated students seeking an even more challenging academic experience, especially those who are considering graduate school, must consult with an advisor about the option of a BS or BPhil in Political Science. The BS degree requires the departmental secondary field to be Methods and Models in Political Science (PS 1702 and 1710), as well as 12 credits of additional coursework in cognate fields and an original paper of high quality. The BPhil degree, which is offered through the University Honors College (UHC), requires a plan of cognate fieldwork and a thesis approved by the department and UHC. For more information on the BPhil, see [www.honorscollege.pitt.edu/bphil](http://www.honorscollege.pitt.edu/bphil).

**Advising:** Questions about courses, departmental requirements, and extracurricular opportunities should be addressed to the undergraduate advisors.

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**Internship:** A wide range of internships in the public and private sector are available. Students should work closely with a faculty advisor to ensure receipt of academic credit. Internships are taken for S/NC and do not fulfill major requirements.

**Checklist for the BA in Political Science**

**All of the following core courses**

- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 0200 American Politics
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 0300 Comparative Politics
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 0500 World Politics
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 0600 Political Theory
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 0700 Research Methods

**6 upper level courses**

**Three courses in a primary field**

- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 1\_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ PS 1\_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_ PS 1\_\_\_\_\_
- (may be Capstone)

**Two courses in a secondary field**

- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 1\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 1\_\_\_\_\_

**Capstone course (recommended in primary field)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 1\_\_\_\_\_

**One elective course in any field (only for students who take Capstone as third primary field class)**

- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 1\_\_\_\_\_

**Related Area Requirement**

12 Dietrich School credits in one related area OR a Dietrich School double major, minor, or certificate

**Checklist for the BS in Political Science**

\_\_\_\_\_ All of the requirements for the BA in Political Science, but with a secondary field in **Methods and Models in Political Science**.

**Methods and Models in Political Science**

- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 1702
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 1710

**At least four courses in cognate disciplines, approved by the student's advisor**

Subject	Course No.	
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_\_ Completion of an original paper of high quality, at least 25 pages in length, approved by the student's advisor.

**Checklist for the BPhil in Political Science**

\_\_\_\_\_ All of the requirements for the BA in Political Science

**At least four courses in cognate disciplines, approved by the student's advisor**

Subject	Course No.	
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

\_\_\_\_\_ Completion and defense of an original paper of high quality, at least 25 pages in length, approved by the student's advisor and UHC.

**Checklist for the Political Science minor**

Students may complete a minor in Political Science, which consists of a sequence of five courses in one of the four substantive fields.

**The core course in one field**

- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 0X00

**Four upper-level courses in the same field**

- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 1X00
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 1X00
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 1X00
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS 1X00

**Note:** Students must apply for any official minor they will complete or have completed at the time they apply for graduation.

**Potential PS Courses (Note: Specific course offerings differ by semester)**

**American Politics**

- PS 1201 Constitution and Civil Liberties
- PS 1202 American Constitutional Law
- PS 1203 Judicial Politics
- PS 1204 Women in Politics
- PS 1211 Legislative Process
- PS 1212 American Presidency
- PS 1213 Law and Politics
- PS 1230 Interest Group Politics
- PS 1231 Political Parties and Elections
- PS 1233 Political Psychology
- PS 1234 Electoral Behavior and Democratic Process
- PS 1235 Media and Politics
- PS 1252 State Government
- PS 1261 American Public Policy
- PS 1275 Religion and Politics
- PS 1281 Capstone Seminar in American Politics

**Comparative Politics**

- PS 1302 Political Development
- PS 1311 Western European Government and Politics
- PS 1314 German Government and Politics
- PS 1317 Politics of the European Union
- PS 1321 Latin American Politics
- PS 1324 US-Latin American Relations
- PS 1330 European Union Capstone Seminar
- PS 1332 Government and Politics of Contemporary China
- PS 1333 Government and Politics of Japan
- PS 1336 Contemporary China, Politics, Society, and Economy
- PS 1341 Government and Politics of the USSR and the Russian Federation
- PS 1348 Xenophobia in Modern Europe
- PS 1350 Russia, the CIS, and European Union
- PS 1351 Government and Politics of the Middle East
- PS 1352 Introduction to African Politics
- PS 1353 African Liberation Movements
- PS 1361 Comparative Political Party Systems
- PS 1381 Capstone Seminar in Comparative Politics

**International Relations**

- PS 1501 Theory of International Relations
- PS 1503 International Organization
- PS 1504 Nationalism
- PS 1509 Conflict and War Theory
- PS 1510 The Cold War: The Soviet Union and the West
- PS 1511 American Foreign Policy
- PS 1513 Foreign Policies in a Changing World
- PS 1521 Eastern Europe in World Politics
- PS 1522 Latin America in World Politics
- PS 1523 East Asia in World Politics
- PS 1530 New International Relations of Europe
- PS 1542 Global Environmental Politics
- PS 1543 Globalization and International Politics
- PS 1551 Cognitive Psychology and International Relations
- PS 1581 Capstone Seminar in International Relations

**Political Theory**

- PS 1601 Ancient Political Thought
- PS 1602 Early Modern Political Thought
- PS 1603 Contemporary Political Thought
- PS 1607 American Political Thought
- PS 1610 American Political Theory
- PS 1614 Theories of Justice
- PS 1622 Women and Political Theory
- PS 1629 Topics in Political Theory
- PS 1681 Capstone Seminar in Political Theory

**Additional Offerings**

- PS 1701 Field Methods of Political Research
- PS 1702 Analysis of Political Variables
- PS 1710 Formal Political Analysis
- PS 1900 Internship
- PS 1901 Independent Study
- PS 1902 Directed Reading
- PS 1903 Directed Research

**Independent Study:** Students who have completed a field course may explore a particular subject in greater depth through a tutorial with a faculty member.