

Political Science

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Political science is the systematic study of politics and government and is widely recognized as one of the core disciplines within the liberal arts curriculum. The study of political science provides substantive and analytic background that can lead to a variety of professions; it is not intended to prepare students directly for any specific career. Most obviously it serves those with an interest in entering politics and government. Political science majors go on to become civic leaders, town managers, city planners, budget specialists, foreign service officers, policy researchers, and to hold a variety of management positions in local, state, national, and international organizations. Beyond government, a political science degree leads naturally to graduate training, including law school. Many journalists and broadcasters were political science majors. Business has recognized the analytic and management skills obtained through training in political science. Some studies have estimated that perhaps one-third of undergraduate political science majors undertake careers in business. Political science training is useful in other rapidly developing fields such as polling, communications, campaign management, consulting, private and public interest group activity, and data analysis. College teaching has been a traditional career for the political scientist. Demographics now suggest that entering freshmen can look forward to good job prospects by the time they have completed their graduate educations.

Programs and Requirements

Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

The minimum number of credits (exclusive of the University's Core curriculum) required for the major: 39.

Each major must complete POS 101J, POS 104J, POS 203, POS 205, and POS 290. Introducing ideas that are fundamental to the discipline, these required courses should be the first priority for students upon entering the major. Students may choose from any of the Department's other offerings to fulfill remaining credit hours, with the requirement that at least 12 hours be completed at or above the 300-level. A grade of C- or better is required to receive major credit in the Department.

Students interested in an international studies major should consult the International Studies Program section in this catalog.

The Department administers an elaborate, carefully structured internship program, open to majors and non-majors alike. Political science majors are especially encouraged to take advantage of the variety of internship opportunities as part of their undergraduate program.

The Political Science Department strongly urges its majors to take courses in economics, history, sociology, and computer science. For a number of majors, courses in geography-anthropology, psychology, philosophy, and communication would also be useful. All political science majors are encouraged to undertake at least one year of university-level foreign language study. Additional language study is recommended for those majors with an interest in comparative or international politics and for those considering graduate school.

All students are reminded that, in addition to their meeting departmental requirements for a major leading to a baccalaureate degree, they must also meet the requirements of the school or college involved, as well as the Core curriculum requirements.

Political science courses are normally offered on the following schedule:

Every semester: POS 101J, 102J, 104J, 203, 205, 290, and internships

Yearly: POS 256, 361, 363, 365

Approximately once every two years: POS 120, 233, 234, 261, 262, 280, 310, 315, 333, 335, 336, 338, 340, 342, 345, 347, 349, 360, 362, 374, 375, 385, 391, 392, 453, 459, 463, 464.

The Honors Degree in Political Science

For a B.A. degree in political science with honors, a student must achieve a 3.7 GPA or higher in courses taken in the major.

Minor in Political Science

The minimum number of credits (exclusive of the University's Core curriculum) required for the minor: 18.

Students who wish to complete a political science minor must take at least three of the following five courses: POS 101J, POS 104J, POS 203, POS 205, POS 290. Students may choose from any of the Department's other offerings to fulfill remaining credit hours. A grade of C- or better in POS required courses is necessary to receive credit toward the minor.

POS 101J Introduction to American Government

This course focuses on the political institutions, processes, behavior, and problems of government in the United States. The national government is emphasized. Key topics include: the Constitution, Supreme Court, Congress, Presidency, political parties, public opinion, and interest groups. Cr 3.

POS 102J People and Politics

This course introduces the student to modern political analysis. It centers on basic questions in the study of political behavior: how people learn about politics, what kind of political system they adopt and support, who does and who does not participate in politics, how political conflict is expressed and resolved in various societies. The course aims at familiarizing the student with major approaches or methods that political scientists have found helpful for understanding real political behavior. Note: POS 101J is not a prerequisite for POS 102J. Cr 3.

POS 104J Introduction to International Relations

Examination of the relationships of nations in their efforts to deal with each other from differing political, economic, and cultural bases. Cr 3.

POS 120 Government and Politics of Maine

This course concerns Maine state government, including legislative, executive and judicial programs and powers as exercised within the system of Maine values, political parties, and interest groups. Open to political science majors and as an elective to the student who has an interest in the programs and politics of the state of Maine. No prerequisite. Cr 3.

POS 203 Introduction to Political Science Research

An introduction to the way political scientists conduct research. Students will learn how to formulate ideas, conduct a literature review, test hypotheses, measure political phenomena, perform statistical analyses, draw conclusions, and present written results. Cr 3.

POS 205 Introduction to Comparative Politics

An introduction to the field of comparative politics with a focus on political systems and political participation. The course will examine political institutions, electoral laws, comparative methodologies, political culture, and the problem of establishing and maintaining democratic government. Case studies will be used to highlight major themes. Cr 3.

POS 233 Urban Politics

An introduction to the political structure and issues of the American city. Students will investigate the question of whether U.S. cities are democratic, with emphasis on issues of economic and racial pluralism. Cr 3.

POS 234 Race and Ethnicity in U.S. Politics

Are American political institutions representative? This course provides students with the opportunity to examine this question by confronting the relationship between race, ethnicity, and representation in elections, court cases, urban politics, and political theory. Cr 3.

POS 245 French Politics and Government

This course centers on the political, economic, and social structure of France over the last five decades. Students will learn the essential components of the French governmental system, the most typical economic policies, France's position in the EU, and the ongoing struggle about the defense of the French culture. Prerequisite: ENG 100C, 104C, or equivalent. Cr 3.

POS 256 Media and Politics

The media play an increasingly powerful role in modern political systems. This course examines that power and explains how it came about, while noting those forces that restrict or restrain the media's influence. The symbiotic relationship between politicians and journalists is given special attention. Prerequisite: POS 101J or POS 102J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 261 The American Congress

The role of the national legislature in American politics is considered. The course undertakes a study of the men and women who reach Congress, the internal norms and procedures on national decision making. Among topics covered are the committee system, leadership patterns in the Senate and the House, the public's influence on Congress, Congress and the Presidency, and Congressional policy-making in selected areas. Prerequisite: POS 101J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 262 The American Presidency

This course examines the development of the modern presidency; the scope and exercise of presidential decision making in domestic and foreign policy; and standards for assessing presidential performance. Prerequisite: POS 101J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 280 Issues Before the United Nations

An orientation to the activities of the United Nations. This course includes exposure to current events, exploration of pressing international issues, understanding the basics of international law, and mastery of the protocol and procedures of international diplomacy. Cr 3.

POS 290 Introduction to Political Theory

A survey of political theory from ancient times to the present. Themes include the nature of democracy, freedom, equality, power, legitimacy, justice, and the use of lying in political life. Cr 3.

POS 310 Internet and Politics

This course explores the politics of Internet communication. Topics include Internet development, communication techniques, access policy, citizenship, advocacy, government, journalism, and law. Cr 3.

POS 315 Media Law

This course explores the legal context of communication through the mass media. Major issues include censorship, ownership regulation, remedies for people in the news, the right to receive and send communication in the media, and news media privilege. Prerequisite: POS 101J or CMS 103 or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 333 Theories of Democratization

As a general overview of democratization studies, the course goes beyond theoretical discussions about what elements are needed to create a democracy. Students study specific examples of political institutions, economic systems, and political cultures and values as key variables across multiple geographic areas to assess the establishment of democracy. Prerequisite: POS 205 or equivalent or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 335 Politics in Western Europe

This course examines political processes and governmental structures in the nations of Western Europe. It focuses especially on Great Britain, France, and Germany. Among the topics covered are: political parties, elections, voting systems, interest groups, legislative-executive relations, constitutional principles, political elites, leadership behavior, and bureaucracies. Prerequisite: POS 101J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 336 Government and Politics of Russia

An introduction to Russia in the Soviet and post-Soviet periods. The course proceeds from a description of the classic Leninist model to the emergence of the new political institutions that began to develop in the Gorbachev era, with an analysis of the economic changes, the ethnic revolution, and the social impacts of the post-Leninist era. Cr 3.

POS 340 The Politics of Developing Nations

An examination of the thrust towards modernization in the Third World. Economic development, rela-

tionships with the world community, the role of the military, and various theories about the nature of the relationship between the Third World and the Communist and non-Communist industrial worlds are considered. Prerequisite: POS 104J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 342 Government and Politics of the Middle East

This course is designed to examine the political dynamics of the Arab countries of the Middle East and Israel. It will examine the social, ecological, historical-cultural, and political-ideological forces influencing political institutions and behavior in Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Israel, Jordan, and Lebanon. Cr 3.

POS 345 British Politics

A survey of the contemporary constitution of Great Britain, the workings of Parliament, the government, and the parties. Principal stress is on the main issues current in British politics. Prerequisite: POS 101J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 347 The Politics of China

An introduction to the government of the People's Republic of China, 1949-present. Principal topics include: historical and cultural antecedents, Maoism, party and state institutions, socialization and communications, political participation, policy formation and implementation, and change over time. Cr 3.

POS 349 The Middle East in International Politics

The crucial issues of international politics—war, revolution, superpower intervention, economic development and terrorism—converge in the Middle East on a regional basis. This course will examine the nature of Mideast regional politics and the foreign policies of the major constituents of the area. The purpose will be to secure an understanding of the conflict between Arab and Israeli worlds, the foundations of tension among the Arab states themselves, and the role played by the superpowers in stabilizing or disrupting the uneasy relationships of the region. Prerequisite: POS 104J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 360 Terrorism and the American Public

An exploration of the phenomenon of modern terrorism. The course defines terrorism, considers the motivations of terrorists, reviews the dangers associated with terrorist access to weapons of mass destruction, considers policy proposals that might be taken to reduce the likelihood of terrorism, and investigates the trade-off between liberty and security. Cr 3.

POS 361 Public Administration

An examination of national, state, and local bureaucracies, including their processes of decision making, communications, leadership, internal and external political relationships. A continuing question

will be, "How can those institutions be made responsive to the public?" Prerequisite: POS 101J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 362 Budgets and Politics

A comparative examination of the budgetary processes of municipalities, states, and nations. The budget is the critical point at which goals intersect with resources. Students who complete the course will have a working understanding of various budgeting techniques (such as PPBS, zero-based budgeting, and incremental budgeting) as well as an appreciation of their effectiveness, their impact on expenditures, and their political consequences. Prerequisite: POS 101J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 363 Legal Process and the Environment

An introduction to current legal techniques and institutions for environmental protection, with emphasis on statutory interpretation, rule making, licensing procedure, and the roles of expert testimony and citizen participation in administrative, legislative, and judicial processes. Prerequisite: POS 101J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 365 Environmental Politics and Policy

This course provides an introduction to policy making and implementation processes through a survey of current waste disposal issues, air and water pollution control policies, and management issues in environmental protection. Prerequisite: POS 101J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 374 United States Foreign Policy

A detailed evaluation of U.S. foreign policy focusing on such topics as: identification of U.S. policy; governmental agencies and personalities in the formulation and implementation of policy; the role of non-governmental influences. The course is designed to evaluate current policy goals and practices within the context of long-range goals. Prerequisite: POS 101J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 375 International Environmental Politics and Policy

This course addresses factors that can be obstacles or incentives in the process of negotiating effective agreements. Such factors include the role of the United Nations, nationalism, sovereignty, the North-South conflict, and the role of non-governmental organizations. Cr 3.

POS 380 Topics

Specially developed occasional courses exploring a variety of theoretical and substantive areas of political science. May be repeated for credit as topics vary. Cr 1-3.

POS 385 Conflict and Security in Contemporary World Politics

Contemporary threats and challenges to human security and survival often go beyond traditional concepts of "national security." This course focuses

on the multiple forms and sources of conflict and insecurity in the modern world system. It analyzes traditional approaches to war and peace in the context of debates over their current adequacy and also examines nontraditional challenges such as economic and environmental security. Prerequisite: POS 104J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 390 Ancient and Medieval Political Theory

An intensive study of ancient and medieval political theory. Emphasis is on textual criticism of a variety of different works including those from philosophy, literature, and theology. Prerequisite: POS 290, or sophomore status, or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 391 Modern Political Theory

A study of modern political theory from the sixteenth century (Machiavelli) to the nineteenth (Nietzsche). Cr 3.

POS 392 American Political Thought

An examination of American historical and contemporary thinking on a variety of political topics including equality, revolution, liberty, property, war, and individualism. Cr 3.

POS 395 Independent Study I

A concentrated program of research or study on a particular subject of the student's selection. The topic will be chosen with the advice and under the direction of a faculty member. Admission by permission of the political science faculty. Cr 3.

POS 396 Independent Study II

A concentrated program of research or study on a particular subject of the student's selection. The topic will be chosen with the advice and under the direction of a faculty member. Admission by permission of the political science faculty. Cr 3.

POS 405 The European Union

An examination of a unique example of political, economic, and cultural integration. The course will emphasize the evolution, enlargement, international positioning, and political organization of the European Union. Prerequisite: POS 101J or POS 102J or POS 104J or POS 205, or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 406 Research in the European Union

Advanced course on the political, economic, and cultural aspects of the European Union, offered exclusively for students who enroll in the summer abroad program, "The European Union in Brussels." Participants will travel to Brussels and The Hague for presentations at the EU institutions, NATO, and the International Criminal Court. Prerequisite: recommended, but not required, POS 205, or any other course with an international content. Cr 3.

POS 453 Politics of American Policy Making

An introduction to political analysis of public policy formation and implementation. Policy processes

will be examined to see what their study can tell us about American politics, institutions, and political behavior. Particular attention will be paid to “who gets what, when and how” from the United States political system, especially how they get it and why it works that way. Alternative methods of policy analysis will be applied to selected areas of current interest and critically evaluated. Prerequisite: POS 101J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 463 The Supreme Court and the Constitution

The role of the judiciary in American politics, with emphasis on the United States Supreme Court. A series of case studies will cover such topics as economic regulation, civil rights, reapportionment, and war powers. Attention will also be given to the impact of judicial philosophies on decision making. Prerequisites: POS 101J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 464 American Civil Liberties

An analysis of judicial interpretations of Bill of Rights guarantees and their effects on political processes in the United States. Topics include church and state, freedom of speech and press, the rights of the accused and the convicted. Prerequisites: POS 101J or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

POS 470 Electoral Politics Internship

Provision may be made to gain professional experience in a political party organization, electoral or referendum campaign. Students will meet for a series of internship seminars, for which readings and reports will be required. Prerequisite: open to selected students from any major. Cr 6.

POS 471 Internship in Private and Semi-Public Organizations

Provision may be made to gain professional experience in administration and research. Students will meet for a series of internship seminars, for which readings and reports will be required. The course is open to selected students. Cr 6.

POS 472 Not-for-Profit Internship

Provision may be made to gain professional experience in a civic, public interest, or other not-for-profit organization. Students will meet for a series of internship seminars, for which readings and reports will be required. Prerequisite: open to selected students from any major. Cr 6.

POS 473 Municipal Administration Internship

Provision may be made to gain professional experience in a local government. Students will meet for a series of internship seminars. Readings and research reports are required, focusing on the management, financial control and administration of modern American cities, with emphasis on administration of

personnel and finance, the city plan and line functions; public safety, transportation, health, welfare and housing. Prerequisite: open to selected students from any major. Cr 6.

POS 474 Federal Executive Internship

Provision may be made to gain professional experience in a department or agency of the federal government located outside of Washington, D.C. The course is open to selected students from any major. Participation in a seminar is required. Cr 6.

POS 475 Congressional Internship

Provision may be made to gain professional experience in the local offices of Maine's U.S. Congressmen and Senators. Students will meet for a series of internship seminars, for which readings and research reports are required. The course is open to selected students from any major. Cr 6.

POS 476 Internship in Washington, D.C.

Provision may be made to gain professional experience in a congressional office, an agency of the national government, or with a private or semi-public organization in Washington, D.C. The course is open to selected students from any major. Readings and research reports are required. Cr 9.

POS 477 State Internship

Provision may be made to gain professional experience in a department or agency of state government. Students will meet for a series of internship seminars, for which readings and research reports are required. The state government internship is available under the Maine State Government Internship Program. The course is open to selected students from any major. Cr 6.

POS 478 State Judiciary Internship

Provision may be made to gain professional experience in an administrative unit of the state court system. Students will meet for a series of internship seminars, for which readings and reports will be required. The course is open to selected students from any major. Cr 6.

POS 479 State Legislative Internship

Provision may be made to gain professional experience in an office of the state legislature. Students will meet for a series of internship seminars, for which readings and reports will be required. The course is open to selected students from any major. Cr 6.

POS 480 International Affairs Internship

Provision may be made to gain professional experience in an organization oriented toward international politics, trade, or other transboundary affairs. Students will meet for a series of internship seminars, for which readings and reports will be required. Prerequisite: open to selected students from any major. Cr 6.