



Political Science Major and Minor

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 many courses in four substantive fields: American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Theory. Core courses provide students with a survey in each of these fields and with the methods employed in the contemporary study of politics. Upper-level courses (PS >1000), provide students with advanced coursework in each area of specialization, and are numbered to match the introductory courses (12xx American Politics, 13xx/14xx Comparative Politics, 15xx International Relations, 16xx Political Theory). 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. The major requires the completion of 33 credits distributed as follows.

Core courses

PS 0200 American Politics
PS 0300 Comparative Politics
PS 0500 International Relations
PS 0600 Political Theory
PS 0700 Research Methods

Primary Field

Minimum of three 1000's level PS courses within one subfield (i.e., 12xx, 13xx/14xx, 15xx, or 16xx).

Breadth Requirement

Minimum of three 1000's level PS courses outside of the student's primary field.

Analytical Requirement

At least one "analysis" course or one political methodology course (17xx). Analysis courses count towards either the Primary Field or Breadth requirement, except for upper-level methodology courses, which only count for the latter.

Capstone seminar

The University of Pittsburgh requires students to complete one writing-intensive course in their major. The Capstone Seminar, which is ideally taken as part of the Primary Field, fulfills a general education intensive writing requirement (W-course) in the major and allows students to undertake advanced work under the direction of faculty in a smaller seminar setting. Capstone topics vary by faculty and semester.

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.

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 rule

Courses taken as S/NC may not be counted towards the major

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 BPhil in Political Science. 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.

Date of Adoption

Students declaring the PS major after August 26, 2019, use this version of the major. Students who declare the PS major prior to that date should consult with the PS advisors for information about the requirements of the prior PS major.

Advising Team

Questions about courses, degree requirements, extracurricular opportunities, and career paths should be addressed to the following departmental academic advisors. PS advisors' offices are in WWPH 4600 (in the Political Science Department). To schedule an advising appointment, please click [here](#).

Advisor	Portfolio
Courtney Blackington blackington@pitt.edu	[students with last names A-E, research assistantships]
Horia Dijmarescu dijmarescu@pitt.edu	[students with last names F-L, study abroad programs]
Tony Ocepek ANO38@pitt.edu	[students with last names M-R, internship credit]
Andrew Lotz ANL7@pitt.edu	[students with last names S-Z, undergrad TA-ships]

Internships

A wide range of internships in the public and private sector are available. Students interested in receiving academic credit (S/NC) for Fall and Spring internships should consult with Dr. Ocepek. Internship credits do not fulfill major requirements.

Directed Reading / Research

Students interested in additional in-depth study of a specific topic may do so with faculty mentorship.

Checklist for the BA in Political Science

All the following core courses

- _____ PS 0200 American Politics*
- _____ PS 0300 Comparative Politics*
- _____ PS 0500 International Relations*
- _____ PS 0600 Political Theory*
- _____ PS 0700 Research Methods*

Six upper-level courses (these must include a capstone seminar AND either an "analysis" OR methodology course)

Primary Field: Three courses in the same substantive field (12xx, 13xx/14xx, 15xx, or 16xx)

- _____ PS 1_____
- _____ PS 1_____
- _____ PS 1_____

Breadth Requirement: Three courses in substantive fields other than the Primary Field

- _____ PS 1_____
- _____ PS 1_____
- _____ PS 1_____

One upper-level course must be an "analysis" OR methodology course (17xx): Analysis courses either say "analysis" in the title or are marked with [*]

- _____ PS 12xx_____
- _____ PS 13xx_____ or PS 14xx_____
- _____ PS 15xx_____
- _____ PS 16xx_____
- _____ PS 17xx_____

One Primary Field (recommended) OR Breadth Requirement must be a Capstone course

- _____ PS 1_____

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

Course No.	Course Name
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

_____ Completion and defense of an original paper of high quality, at least 25 pages in length, approved by the student's advisor, thesis committee, 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. Students must officially declare a minor before applying for graduation.

The core course in one field

_____ PS 0_____

Four upper-level courses in the same field

- _____ PS 1_____
- _____ PS 1_____
- _____ PS 1_____
- _____ PS 1_____

Potential PS Courses

Below is a **non-exhaustive sample of PS courses**. **This is not all, and offerings vary by term.**

American Politics (1200s)

- PS 1201 Constitution and Civil Liberties
- PS 1202 American Constitutional Law
- PS 1204 Women in Politics
- PS 1205 Race, Gender and Politics
- PS 1211 Legislative Process
- PS 1212 American Presidency
- PS 1220 Sports and American Politics
- PS 1221 Latina/o/x Politics
- PS 1222 African American Politics
- PS 1232 Political Attitudes and Public Opinion
- PS 1233 Political Psychology
- PS 1234 Electoral Behavior and Democratic Process*
- PS 1240 Politics of Diversity
- PS 1252 State Government
- PS 1254 Politics of Appalachia
- PS 1261 American Public Policy
- PS 1263 Health Policy and Human Flourishing†
- PS 1264 American Politics through Film
- PS 1275 Religion and American Politics
- PS 1281 Capstone in American Politics*
- PS 1291 Women in Politics - Analysis*

Comparative Politics (1300s and 1400s)

- PS 1300 Capstone in REEES†
- PS 1303 Peace Movements and Education
- PS 1309 Comparative Regionalism
- PS 1311 Western European Gov't and Politics*
- PS 1316 Asian Politics
- PS 1317 Politics of the European Union
- PS 1321 Latin American Politics*
- PS 1324 US-Latin American Relations*
- PS 1326 East Asian Political Economy 1950-Present*
- PS 1327 Politics of Revolution

- PS 1332 Gov't and Politics in Contemporary China*
- PS 1333 Government and Politics of Japan
- PS 1340 Democratization
- PS 1341 Gov't & Politics of the USSR & Russian Fed.*
- PS 1345 Politics of Oceania
- PS 1348 Xenophobia in Modern Europe
- PS 1349 Transatlantic Governance and Policy
- PS 1351 Government and Politics of the Middle East*
- PS 1352 Introduction to African Politics*
- PS 1367 Environmental Politics
- PS 1371 Islam, Law and Politics
- PS 1373 Comparative Political Economy
- PS 1374 Politics of Global Inequality
- PS 1378 Challenges to Democracy and Its Institutions*
- PS 1381 Capstone in Comparative Politics*
- PS 1387 Politics of Water*
- PS 1398 EU Simulation†
- PS 1399 Analysis of Comparative Politics†
- PS 1412 Comparative Populism
- PS 1442 Politics of East Central Europe

International Relations (1500s)

- PS 1501 Theory of International Relations
- PS 1502 Int'l Law and Problems of World Order
- PS 1503 International Organizations
- PS 1504 Nationalism*
- PS 1508 International Terrorism
- PS 1509 Conflict and War Theory
- PS 1511 American Foreign Policy
- PS 1512 Politics of Migration
- PS 1514 Political Strategy and Int'l Relations*
- PS 1517 US Foreign Policy Toward the Middle East†
- PS 1521 Eastern Europe in World Politics*
- PS 1531 National Security Policy
- PS 1533 Political Violence and Revolution
- PS 1534 Civil Wars*
- PS 1536 Human Security
- PS 1537 Peacemaking and Peacekeeping
- PS 1550 Gender and Global Politics
- PS 1581 Capstone in International Relations*
- PS 1587 US Foreign Policy in Africa*
- PS 1599 Analysis of International Relations†

Political Theory (1600s)

- PS 1602 States of Nature: Early Modern Political Thought in Context*
- PS 1603 Contemporary Political Thought
- PS 1607 American Political Thought*
- PS 1614 Theories of Justice*
- PS 1619 Democratic Theory
- PS 1621 History of Feminist Political Thought
- PS 1622 Outsider Politics: Anarchist, Queer, Punk Feminist Theories*
- PS 1650 Processes of Identity Formation
- PS 1675 Politics of Human Rights*
- PS 1681 Capstone in Political Theory*
- PS 1691 Myth Propaganda and the State - Analysis†
- PS 1693 Political Theory and the Future - Analysis†

Additional Offerings

- PS 1702 Visualizing and Understanding Social Data†
- PS 1900 Internship
- PS 1901 Independent Study
- PS 1902 Directed Reading
- PS 1903 Directed Research
- PS 1910 Institute of Politics Internship/Seminar

Note: Courses marked with an asterisk [*] may satisfy DSAS general education requirements. Please consult with an academic advisor about where these fit into your broader academic plan.

Note: PS 1300 may not count as a PS major capstone.