

School of Arts and Sciences

**POLITICAL
SCIENCE**www.pitt.edu/~politics

A major in political science is aimed at preparing you to be a sophisticated citizen, ready to analyze and appreciate political life in the United States and around the world. The political science program provides a comprehensive core curriculum that covers the breadth of the discipline and an array of electives for those planning on pursuing advanced degrees in law, political science, journalism, public administration, public policy analysis, business, and philosophy. The political science major provides a School of Arts and Sciences student with a broad education that will prepare you for a variety of careers.

Political science is the study of power and influence in society, especially how those concepts relate to issues of governance and behavior. With that end in mind, classes encompass a number of topics, including political parties and interest groups, voting behavior, apolitical change and development, comparative political systems, international conflict and law, national security, public policy, constitutional law, and political philosophy. This program encourages you to analyze the theories, institutions, and processes of political systems in the context provided by the social sciences. It also tries to develop a continuing and responsible interest in political activity and public affairs, to provide you with opportunities to acquire a fundamental understanding of political science as a basis for citizenship or a career in government or professional study and service, and to stimulate your interest in graduate study.

Required Courses for Majors

A major consists of a minimum of 24 credits, distributed as follows:

I. Core Courses (at least two classes; all courses are 3 cr.)**PS 0200 American Political Process**

In order to be an active part of the political process, it is first necessary to understand that process. This course presents an introduction to the institutions and process of the national government. Attention will be given to such topics as voting behavior, public opinion and political attitudes, the party system, the president, the Congress, and the courts.

PS 0300 Comparative Politics

This course introduces you to theories and issues in the political science subfield of comparative politics. Your course of study will examine the current problems, history, parties, and institutions of Great Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and Eastern Europe.

PS 0500 World Politics

In this increasingly close-knit global world, you must understand the ways that nation states interact. This course will examine the characterizations of the structure of the international system, the components of a national actor's capabilities, and recent transformations in international politics.

PS 0600 Political Theory and Analysis

You will be provided with an introduction to political theory in this course by focusing on a number of the most fundamental political questions. You will gain a basic understanding of the history of Western political ideas and improved skills in thinking about politics with clarity and precision. Some of the authors you will discuss include Plato, Machiavelli, Locke, Mill, and Marx.



II. Field Requirements (18 cr.)—One 1000-level course in each of the four fields of political science (with additional 1000-level courses in one or more of the fields as necessary to complete the minimum number of credits):

- a. American Government
- b. Comparative Government
- c. International Relations
- d. Political Thought

Some examples of these classes are (all are 3 cr. courses):

PS 1202 American Constitutional Law
PS 1204 Women in Politics
PS 1211 Legislative Process
PS 1212 American Presidency
PS 1315 Italian Government and Politics
PS 1326 Politics of Revolution
PS 1379 Is Fascism Back?
PS 1501 Theory of International Relations
PS 1511 American Foreign Policy
PS 1602 Political Theory: Machiavelli–Rousseau
PS 1611 Liberalism and Democracy
PS 1636 Politics Through Film

Government and Public Service Track

A focus in government and public service also is offered within the political science major. This focus is designed to prepare you to enter a career in public service following graduation. The required courses offer practical information and experience, in addition to the more theoretical and analytical course work of the regular major. To complete the focus, you must take 12 credits in addition to those required for the major. The following courses are normally counted toward the focus.

Political Science

PS 1204 Women in Politics
PS 1241 Public Administrations and Political Systems
PS 1242 Intergovernmental Relations
PS 1251 Urban Government
PS 1252 State Government
PS 1261 American Public Policy
PS 1262 Health Policy in the United States
PS 1264 Problems in Public Management
PS 1265 Public Policy Implementation
PS 1532 United States National Security
PS 1632 Analysis of Political Variables

Public Administration

PA 0030 Introduction to Public Policy Analysis
PA 0070 Introduction to Public Administration
PA 1140 Public Personnel Management
PA 1145 Administrative Behavior

Economics

ECON 0230 Public Finance 1
ECON 0280 Introduction to Money and Banking
ECON 1230 Intermediate Public Finance

Sociology

SOC 1476 Urban Policy and Planning

Minors

The department recognizes four possible sequences of study as constituting a minor in political science. Each sequence includes one lower-division course and four upper-division courses for a total of 15 credits. The four sequences are American government, comparative government (non-U.S. countries), political thought, and international relations.

Honors Major Requirements

In order to qualify for departmental honors, you must complete all requirements for the regular major and also must:

1. Complete two seminars or a combination of one seminar and an honors research project with a B or better.
2. Achieve an overall quality point average (QPA) of 3.25 and a QPA of 3.5 in political science.

Related Area

You need to complete the 12 credits related area requirement in a related discipline such as anthropology, economics, geography, history, or sociology. You can also fulfill the requirement by participating in the concentration programs of Latin American studies, West European studies, or in other approved regional studies concentrations.

For more information about the political science program, contact:

University of Pittsburgh
School of Arts and Sciences
Department of Political Science
Professors Robert Donaldson or Patrick Altdorfer
Undergraduate Advisers
Wesley W. Posvar Hall
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-648-7269 or 412-648-7284
E-mail: robertd@pitt.edu or pda1@pitt.edu
www.pitt.edu/~politics

For information about other programs, contact:

University of Pittsburgh
Office of Admissions and Financial Aid
Alumni Hall, 4227 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15260-6601
412-624-PITT
E-mail: oafa@pitt.edu
www.oafa.pitt.edu

Special Programs and Opportunities

Pi Sigma Alpha is the local chapter of a national political science honorary. It has been recently revitalized and is currently one of the most active and publicized clubs on campus. Membership is based on grades, activism, leadership, and volunteerism. Recent programs that Pi Sigma Alpha has sponsored have included interactive seminars about Palestinian democracy, the Clinton scandal, and campus food services. Membership is open to all majors, but you must take at least 15 credits of political science courses to be eligible.

The **University Honors College (UHC)** offers many resources for talented, active students—unique courses, special degrees, opportunities to perform independent research or teach, supplemental advising, and a social and academic community of similarly motivated students. UHC courses offer a more in-depth treatment of the material covered in a nonhonors course. Students work more problems, write more, read more, and discuss topics in greater depth. Although UHC does not have a formal membership and does invite all students to participate in honors courses, there are certain qualifications that must be met to be eligible to take UHC courses. Entering freshmen are automatically considered for UHC participation on the basis of their admissions applications. A minimum QPA of 3.25 is required for current Pitt students.

Internships can be one of the most enlightening and productive aspects of your undergraduate education. They not only give you a closer look at working in a particular field but can help you gain a competitive edge, make contacts in the marketplace, and earn credits toward your degree. Pittsburgh is an exciting place for internship opportunities: internationally known as a renowned center for health care and groundbreaking medical research; home to many corporate headquarters; and a city with a wealth of cultural and entertainment activities, including three professional sports teams and the Carnegie system of museums. Internships are not limited to Pittsburgh, however. Every year, students complete internships in cities such as Philadelphia, Pa.; Washington, D.C.; New York, N.Y.; and their own hometowns.

Certificate programs allow students to complete a concentrated area of study in addition to their major. They consist of 18–24 credits of course work and in many cases can be used to fulfill the “related area” requirement of the Arts and Sciences degree. Certificate programs in Asian studies, Latin American studies, Russian and East European studies, and West European studies are offered through the University Center for International Studies (UCIS) and are designated by the U.S. Department of Education as among the best of their kind for research, teaching, and public service. Other UCIS certificate programs include African, European Union, and global studies. Certificate programs are also available in American Sign Language, children’s literature, conceptual foundations of medicine, film studies, geographic information systems, German language, historic preservation, history and philosophy of science, international engineering studies, Jewish studies, Medieval and Renaissance studies, professional and public writing, structural engineering for architectural studies majors, photonics, professional translation, and women’s studies.

Student organizations are another important aspect of your undergraduate years. Pitt's urban location and international reputation make it perfect to attract students with every political view imaginable. Many student organizations exist on campus that can provide you with the opportunity to meet and mingle with students who share your point of view, along with those who don't. You can work on setting up social events, volunteer with local and national political campaigns, and try to get your political point across to the public. Some of these groups include the Young Socialist Club, College Republicans, the International Socialist Organization, and the University Democrats.

Study Abroad

Studying abroad is an exciting way to add an international perspective to your undergraduate education and strengthen your credentials as a graduate. Since only about 8 percent of American students have studied abroad, this experience distinguishes you when you enter the job market or pursue graduate study. The experience allows you to broaden your personal experience and gain an appreciation of other cultures while earning credits toward your degree. Scholarships are available, and financial aid is applicable.

Some study abroad programs of particular interest to political science majors are:

University College of Wales at Aberystwyth

This yearlong program is a direct exchange program, meaning that for every Pitt student who goes to Wales, one Welsh student comes to Pitt. Aberystwyth offers a full curriculum, and the college has the oldest department of international politics in the world. All classes are taught in English, but you will have close interaction with Welsh students, as you will live with them in residence halls in addition to having classes with them. This program also offers a unique opportunity for you to earn a Diploma in Law and Politics from one of the top three law schools in the United Kingdom.

Institute of European Studies, Vienna, Austria

The Vienna, Austria, program will take you to a city that has long been an important crossroads in Europe. It is a cosmopolitan metropolis where you can spend a semester or a year taking classes from an extensive curriculum taught in English and German. Topics that you can study include the arts, humanities, international business, economics, and international relations with a special emphasis on Central and Eastern Europe. You can also intern in business or education. You can go on numerous field trips to locations such as Berlin, Germany; Budapest, Hungary; and the beautiful Danube Valley region.