

Political Science

Political science is the study of public power: its mobilization, exercise and transformation by governments, political parties, interest groups, and mass behavior. Political scientists examine the causes and effects of political power and institutions in decision-making and governance at various levels, from the local to the global. The discipline is organized into four fields: American politics, comparative politics, international relations, and political theory. Ohio State's Department of Political Science offers a rich array of substantive courses in all four fields, plus training in political analysis.

Pursuing Political Science at Ohio State

All Ohio State freshman applicants are considered within a competitive admission process for the Columbus campus. The primary criteria for admission are the completion of the applicant's high school college preparatory program, performance in that program as indicated by class rank and/or grade-point average, and performance on either the ACT or SAT. Upon admission to the university, students can declare a major in political science within the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Political science at Ohio State is a rigorous major. High school students thinking about a major in political science should follow the college prep curriculum in their high school. Courses that provide exceptional preparation include English composition, mathematics, and the natural sciences.

Success in the study of political science at Ohio State requires clear, organized, precise writing skills. Advanced course work also demands logical thinking, understanding the application of scientific methods to problem solving, and comprehension of the literature at the discipline's core. Foreign language and high school social science are helpful, as are cultural and humanities work, particularly in history, but writing and clear thinking are the most important skills that students can master.

Students majoring in political science at Ohio State need to work closely with their advisors. Advisors work with students to plan sets of courses, both GEC Social Science political science courses and a mix of 500- and 600-level courses, to meet the individual student's intellectual needs and to satisfy the department's requirements.

Co-Curricular Opportunities

The Department of Political Science encourages students to become involved in paid or unpaid internships. With Columbus, Ohio as the seat of state government, many of our students find fulfilling opportunities at the Statehouse, with interest groups, with political parties, and with lobbying organizations. In addition to the myriad internships and academic projects designed individually by students locally, the John Glenn Institute for Public Service and Public Policy regularly accepts Political Science students for one-quarter internships in Washington, D.C. Students also gain internship experiences through a variety of other Washington-based organizations. Other avenues include numerous exciting Study Abroad opportunities and the Semester-at-Sea program.

Two organizations in which Political Science students can become involved are Pi Sigma Alpha, the National Honor Society for Political Science, and the Undergraduate Political Science Organization (UPS), a student-run organization that sponsors speakers, provides a forum for the common interests and concerns of political science students, and takes on community projects. Political science students also are heavily involved in student government and on-campus political party affiliates.

Top Ranked Faculty

While your friends at other schools will read our professors' works, you will actually get to learn directly from the sources of cutting edge scholarship in a department ranked fourth best in the world in a London School of Economics study.

Breadth of Offerings

If you want to understand what is happening in the world right now, you will find courses that not only teach you the facts, but also help you gain insight and understanding.

Honors & Scholars Programs

The Department of Political Science demonstrates its commitment to honors students by offering a variety

For more information, check these web sites:

Political Science: polisci.osu.edu

College of SBS: sbs.osu.edu

Ohio State: www.osu.edu

Admissions: undergrad.osu.edu

Multicultural Center: multiculturalcenter.osu.edu

First Year Experience Program: fye.osu.edu

Curriculum Sample

This is a sample list of classes a student will take to pursue a degree in political science. Since university students need more than a specific education in a narrow field, they also will take classes to complete the General Education Curriculum (GEC). The GEC will allow students to develop the fundamental skills essential to collegiate success across major programs. Course work options satisfying the GEC often come from a variety of academic areas of study allowing students to tailor their GEC toward their interests. Note: This sample represents one of many possible paths to a degree in political science. Consult the departmental web site, polisci.osu.edu, for details on the political science major.

Freshman Year:	
First-Year English Composition	5
Quantitative & Logical Skills	5
Foreign Language	15
Social Science	5
Political Science major course	5
Minor/Elective	10
SBS Survey	1

Total hours 46

Sophomore Year:	
Second Writing Course	5
Foreign Language	5
Historical Study	10
Natural Science	5
Social Science	5
Political Science major courses	10
Minor/Elective	5
Total hours	45

Junior Year	
Political Science major courses	15
Data Analysis, Political Science major course	5
Arts and Humanities	5
Natural Science	10
Additional Breadth course	5
Minor/Electives	5
Total hours	45

Senior Year:	
Political Science major courses	15
Arts and Humanities	5
Additional Breadth course	5
Issues of the Contemporary World	5
Minor/Electives	15
Total hours	45

of Honors courses. The following courses are among our regular offerings: H100, Introduction to Comparative Politics; H101, Introduction to American Politics; H145, The Politics of Global Problems; H201, Introduction to Political Behavior; and H245, The U.S. in World Politics. Political Science also offers upper-level honors courses in each of its fields. These include H367, Contemporary Issues in American Politics; H511, Political Strategy, Public Policy, and the Private Sector; H521, Supreme Court Decision Making; H531, Democracy in Muslim Majority Countries; H553, Political Analysis of International Economic Relations; H585, Techniques of Political Analysis; and H596, Honors Seminar in Political Science. In addition, the faculty collaborate with others to create unique interdisciplinary opportunities; for example, Philosophy and Political Economy.

Undergraduate Honors students are very competitive in the types of research that bring grants, scholarships, and other awards. Political Science Honors students are strongly encouraged to include a Senior Honors Research and Thesis Project in their program of study.

Multiple Opportunities

You may pursue independent research of your own devising; you may assist a faculty member's ongoing research; you may become involved in local, state or national government; you may create an organization of your own; you may travel overseas; you may meet world leaders.

Career Prospects in Political Science

Political scientists are usually found in universities, government and international organizations, interest groups, and in private research and consulting. There are ample opportunities for people with political science degrees in these areas, but undergraduate political science majors also have other options. Large numbers enter law school and become attorneys and judges. In fact, this is the second-largest career category for political science majors. The most common career for individuals with a B.A. in political science is management and administration. Managers and administrators are found in staff positions in state legislatures, in the U.S. Congress, in city halls, in international organizations, and even in research and marketing departments of large corporations. Political science majors also find opportunities in print and electronic journalism. And with the requisite education courses, many choose careers in secondary schools teaching social sciences.

Revised July 2008. For the most up-to-date information on the political science program, please visit polisci.osu.edu.

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