

## **THE FIELD**

Political science students study political life in the varied contexts in which it occurs—institutions, social movements, power relations, elections, political culture, ideas, and war. Our curriculum emphasizes issues central to public life, such as democracy, citizenship and participation, inequality, global forces, institutions, and governance. The most significant purpose of political science is to help educate a reflective and active citizenry capable of sharing power and responsibility in a contemporary democracy. The curriculum supports this goal first by developing students' skills in articulating clear, sound, and compelling arguments of their own, based on appropriate evidence, in spoken and written presentation. Majors are strongly encouraged to pursue a diverse course of study, combining depth in various areas of political science with breadth in the rest of the liberal arts. Majors are also urged to take full advantage of internships, foreign and domestic exchange, the Five College Consortium, and service-learning opportunities. The major prepares students for careers in public service, law, political advocacy, nonprofit work, communications, and many other fields. Many majors go on to graduate study in political science and law at top institutions.

***A minor in political science is available.***

## **THE MAJOR**

The Department of Political Science requires majors to complete a minimum of 44 credits in political science including three introductory courses, 12 credits at the 200 level or higher, 12 credits at the 300 level or higher (to include Junior Year Writing an Integrative Experience), and nine credits of Global Knowledge and Skills work. All courses counted toward the major must be taken for a letter grade, and no fewer than 20 credits required for the political science major can be taken outside the department. Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA within the major, as well as overall at the university in order to graduate.

Political science students may choose to focus their major toward graduate and professional studies or a variety of career choices. For example, American political management focuses on the growing field of campaign management, lobbying, community organizing, public affairs consulting, or legislative service. Global political studies include foreign and security policy, political economy, democratic reform, war and conflict, and new social movements. A focus on law may be of interest to students who consider themselves pre-law or wish to prepare for the criminal justice or paralegal professions.

## **RELATED PROGRAMS**

Many programs complement the political science major quite well. These include the Five College international relations certificate, area studies certificates in Russian and Eastern Europe, the Near East, Latin America, and Asia, and the minor in modern European studies.

## **INTERSHIPS**

Several types of internships are available to political science majors, including positions with government institutions at all levels, nonprofit advocacy groups, research organizations, and other agencies with public service functions (including law offices). These are designed to enable students to earn graduation credits while gaining work experience. More information about internships is available from the department's director of undergraduate advising, chief undergraduate advisor.

## **UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM**

The Undergraduate Research Engagement Program (UREP) is designed to partner advanced undergraduate political science majors with faculty for hands-on, one-on-one research experiences. The UREP offers a new model for undergraduate education in the social sciences by training students to work collaboratively with faculty to develop studies with real-world significance and to carry them out with practical, readily transferable skills that will provide them with a crucial edge in the job market. Students who gain sophisticated research skills will be highly sought after by potential employers: They will understand how to conduct research; how to choose and use the appropriate qualitative or quantitative methods to carry out studies; how to work collaboratively toward a common goal; and how to write effectively in order to convey their findings to the public.

## **HONORS**

Contact the departmental honors coordinator for information on how to pursue honors opportunities within the major.

## **STUDY ABROAD AND EXCHANGES**

Numerous opportunities are available for study at other institutions, including members of the local Five College Consortium, North American colleges and universities participating in the National Student Exchange, and a variety of foreign universities.

## **CAREER OPPORTUNITIES**

A major in political science is valuable preparation for a wide variety of career fields and further academic pursuits. These include law; business and corporate positions in environmental protection, consumer affairs, and public affairs; journalism; federal and state government employment in such areas as environmental protection, criminal justice, public health and welfare, and transportation; local management and general administration in planning, zoning, housing, human resource management, law enforcement, and budgeting and finance; secondary-level teaching of social studies; positions with nonprofit research and advocacy organizations; management of domestic or international grassroots development or refugee assistance organizations; educational administration; and university-level teaching.

## **COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES**

The social and behavioral sciences focus on behavior and organization from cultural, social, and biological perspectives, examining people as both social and individual beings. Undergraduates in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences study culture, society, and individual and social interaction processes and learn methods by which knowledge in the social and behavioral sciences is created. Students are guided by the SBS Pathways approach, integrating their academic, experiential, and professional pathways. They anchor their knowledge in at least one discipline, but are encouraged to expand this knowledge through various broadening experiences inside and outside the classroom.

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