

POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJOR (B.A.)

<https://cola.unh.edu/political-science-international-affairs/program/ba/political-science-major>

Description

The study of government and politics, to which the courses and seminars of the Department of Political Science are devoted, includes the development of knowledge of political behavior by individuals and groups as well as knowledge about governments: their nature and functions, their problems and behavior, and their interactions—at the national and international levels as well as local, state, and regional levels.

Much of the learning offered by the Department of Political Science can also be regarded as essential for good citizenship, since political knowledge helps to explain the formal and informal institutions by which we are governed and the forces that lead to policy decisions, and also seeks to clarify the issues and principles that encourage people toward political involvement. In addition, such learning is especially valuable to students planning to enter local or national government or other public service related fields, including the Foreign Service, and it will be of great help to those who intend to study law and enter the legal profession. For teaching, particularly at the college level, and for many types of government service, graduate work may be indispensable. An undergraduate major in political science will provide a helpful foundation for any further study of politics and related fields in the social sciences and humanities. Such an emphasis will also be valuable for students seeking careers in journalism, international organizations, and the public affairs and administrative aspects of labor, financial, and business organizations.

Requirements

Degree Requirements

Minimum Credit Requirement: 128 credits

Minimum Residency Requirement: 32 credits must be taken at UNH

Minimum GPA: 2.0 required for conferral*

Core Curriculum Required: Discovery & Writing Program Requirements

Foreign Language Requirement: Yes

All Major, Option and Elective Requirements as indicated.

*Major GPA requirements as indicated.

Candidates for a degree must satisfy all of the University Discovery Program and Writing Program requirements in addition to satisfying the requirements of the major program. Bachelor of Arts candidates must also satisfy the foreign language proficiency requirement.

Major Requirements

The major in political science consists of at least 10 courses (40 credits) and not more than 12 courses (48 credits).

The minimum grade requirement is C- per course. Any grade lower than a C- will not count toward the major. The required minimum overall GPA for major coursework is 2.0.

Political Science majors may use one major-required course to satisfy one Discovery category requirement.

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
POLT 401	Politics and Society ¹	4
POLT 402	American Politics and Government ¹	4
POLT 403	United States in World Affairs ¹	4
Select Six 500-level Courses		
Select three (3) subfield courses, one course from each of three different subfields below.		12
Select three (3) elective courses from any of the five subfields below. ²		12
Subfield: American Politics		
POLT 500	American Public Policy	
POLT 502	State and Local Government	
POLT 504	American Presidency	
POLT 505	American Congress	
POLT 506	Parties, Interest Groups, and Voters	
POLT 507	Politics of Crime and Justice	
POLT 508	Supreme Court and the Constitution	
POLT 509	Managing Bureaucracy in America	
POLT 511	Women & Politics	
POLT 512	Public Opinion in American Politics	
POLT 513	Civil Rights and Liberties	
POLT 701	Courts and Public Policy	
POLT 705	Elections in the United States	
POLT 709	Reforming American Government	
POLT 797B	Seminar in American Politics	
POLT 798B	Seminar in American Politics	
Subfield: Political Thought		
POLT 522	Dissent and the Political Community	
POLT 523	American Political Thought	
POLT 524	Politics and Literature	
POLT 584	Selected Topics in Political Thought	
POLT 721	Feminist Political Theory	
Subfield: Comparative Politics		
POLT 544	Of Dictators and Democrats	
POLT 545	People and Politics in Asia	
POLT 546	Wealth and Politics in Asia	
POLT 548	Drug Wars	
POLT 549	The Politics of Markets	
POLT 550	Comparative Government and Society	
POLT 551	Ethnicity, Violence, Democracy	
POLT 552	Contemporary European Politics	
POLT 554	Revolution and Protest in Latin America	
POLT 556	Politics in China	
POLT 559	Comparative Politics of the Middle East	
POLT 740	States and Societies in the Middle East	
POLT 742	Beyond Bollywood: Politics of India & South Asia	
POLT 748	Food and Wine Politics	
POLT 751	Comparative Environmental Politics and Policy	
POLT 797C	Seminar in Comparative Politics	
Subfield: International Politics		
POLT 560	World Politics	
POLT 562	Strategy and National Security Policy	
POLT 566	International Security in Asia	
POLT 568	International Security	
POLT 569	The Rise of China	
POLT 592	Selected Topics in International Politics	
POLT 760	Theories of International Relations	
POLT 762	International Political Economy	
POLT 778	International Organization	
POLT 797E	Seminar in International Politics	
Subfield: Methods		
POLT 595	Smart Politics	

POLT 700	Political Science Pro-Seminar
Discovery Program Capstone	
Select one 700-level POLT course	4
Total Credits	40

¹ Once students declare the major, POLT 401, POLT 402, POLT 403 must be completed within the first calendar year.

Note: POLT 440A, POLT 444, POLT 444B do not count toward the major.

² Students can take any POLT course at the intermediate level or higher (500-799) to count toward elective credit.

ECON 402 or ECON 605 and ECON 401 or ECON 611 may also be used to fulfill the fifth or sixth elective in this sequence. Additional economics courses will be considered by petition. Only one economics course can count toward this requirement. If students substitute an economics course for a POLT 500-level course, the economics course cannot be used to satisfy Discovery Program category requirements.

Degree Plan

Sample Degree Plan

This sample degree plan serves as a general guide; students collaborate with their academic advisor to develop a personalized degree plan to meet their academic goals and program requirements.

First Year

Fall		Credits
ENGL 401	First-Year Writing	4
POLT 401	Politics and Society	4
Language 401		4
Discovery Course		4
First Year Seminar		1
Credits		17

Spring

POLT 402	American Politics and Government	4
POLT 403	United States in World Affairs	4
Language 402		4
Discovery Course		4
Credits		16

Second Year

Fall		Credits
Subfield 1		4
Elective ¹		4
Discovery Course		4
Elective ¹		4
Credits		16

Spring

Subfield 2		4
Major Elective 1		4
Discovery Course		4
Discovery Course		4
Credits		16

Third Year

Fall		Credits
Major Elective 2		4

Elective ¹	4
Discovery Course	4
Discovery Course	4
Credits	16

Spring

Subfield 3	4
Discovery Course	4
Elective ¹	4
Elective ¹	4
Credits	16

Fourth Year

Fall

Major Elective 3	4
Discovery Course	4
Elective ¹	4
Elective ¹	4
Credits	16

Spring

Major Capstone Course	4
Elective ¹	4
Elective ¹	4
Elective ¹	4
Credits	16

Total Credits **129**

¹ Electives can be classes towards a minor, a second major, or other experiences to supplement your primary major and should be chosen in consultation with your advisor.

Student Learning Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes

- **Knowledge Base:** a proficient knowledge base of the five subfields of Political Science including American Government, Political Theory, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Methods. Areas of strength include the study of public opinion, comparative politics and international relations, political economy, environmental politics, Latin American politics, Middle Eastern politics, and Asian politics. In this regard, the program fosters the development of a strong empirical foundation through multiple levels of courses.
- **Research Skills:** A second goal is to advance the students' abilities to understand and use basic political science research skills. These include computer literacy, knowledge of credible sources of information, basic statistical applications, and support for foreign language proficiency. We also strive to help students identify interesting and important research questions clearly and concisely, gather and assess various types of information, and come to well-reasoned conclusions.
- **Critical Thinking:** The third objective involves enhancement of student cognitive abilities and critical thinking. We hone the ability to analyze, assess, and reconstruct findings in written, oral, and graphical form. We strive to promote students who are self-disciplined thinkers who understand the rigorous standards of research, are intelligent consumers of political information, and are able to understand and weigh multiple perspectives and interpretations.

- **Communication Skills:** Another aim is to enhance the written and oral communication skills of our students. We support the goals of the writing intensive requirement and expose students to different genres and conventions in academic writing. Most 500 and 700-level courses emphasize cultivating strong writing and reading skills, while at the 700-level, student engagement in sustained discussion becomes the centerpiece of instruction in many seminars. Writing instruction includes emphasis not only on research papers but on short analytical essays, précis, and reviews that ask students to synthesize complex information, develop arguments, and delve more deeply into interpretation. In some courses, part of this work includes iterated practice of grammar and stylistic choices through revision and proposal assignments.
- **Professional Socialization and Support for Post-Graduate Training and Placement:** The sixth aim of the program is to give students the requisite skills, preparation and knowledge base to become capable and responsible political actors in their chosen professional careers and future goals. We expect our students to be exposed to the ethics and organizational culture of political science specifically and the social sciences generally. We aim to provide a foundation of professionalism for students who enter both the private and public sectors upon graduation and for those who continue their studies beyond the B.A.
- **Inspire Curiosity and Enthusiasm for Inquiry:** A final goal is to foster a spirit of inquiry. Faculty in the Department hope to stimulate curiosity about the political world and inspire life-long learners who are engaged in the political process at the local, national and global levels.