POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJOR, B.A.

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Political science is concerned with the description and explanation of political ideas, institutions, processes, policies, and behavior, both in the United States and in other countries. The undergraduate program provides students with a basic knowledge of the political and economic relationships that exist among nations, international agencies, and governmental and nongovernmental organizations. It also introduces students to the role that traditions of thought and political ideologies have played in shaping our understanding of politics in the past and today.

The undergraduate major is designed to provide

1. a broad understanding of political ideas, institutions, and issues as a central element of a general education;
2. a basic knowledge of the governmental process as preparation for those considering a career in public service as well as for active and informed citizenship;
3. preprofessional training for students planning to enter law school; and
4. a foundation in political science for those contemplating specialization at the graduate level.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the political science program, students should be able to:

• Demonstrate a command of at least one of the following areas of substantive knowledge:
  • Themes and concepts that have shaped the Western political tradition, as well as core contemporary political theoretical issues
  • Principles and processes of American political institutions, political behavior, and civic culture
  • Principles and processes of political institutions, political behavior, and civic culture in societies other than the United States
  • Fundamental structures and forces that shape relations between states
• Demonstrate competence in the identification, use, and development of theoretical explanations appropriate for the study of their respective areas of substantive focus. These skills may include:
  • Evaluating competing theories of political explanation
  • Reconstructing the logic of political theories
  • Constructing theoretical models intended to address specific questions in political analysis
• Demonstrate a working understanding of the methods appropriate for developing rigorous description and explanation of political phenomena. These may include one or more of the following, depending on the student’s area of substantive interest:
  • Principles of textual interpretation and critical evaluation
  • Identification, collection, and organization of empirical data
  • Use of qualitative, quantitative, and other analytical techniques for analyzing data

Requirements

In addition to the program requirements listed below, students must

• attain a final cumulative GPA of at least 2.0
• complete a minimum of 45 academic credit hours earned from UNC-Chapel Hill courses
• take at least half of their major course requirements (courses and credit hours) at UNC-Chapel Hill
• earn a minimum of 18 hours of C or better in the major core requirements (some majors require 21 hours).

For more information, please consult the degree requirements section of the catalog (http://catalog.unc.edu/undergraduate/general-education-curriculum-degree-requirements/#degrequirementstext).

Core Requirements

Nine courses, including the following courses and including at least one 400-level political science (POLI) course:

- POLI 100 Introduction to Government in the United States
- POLI 150 International Relations and World Politics
- One course in comparative politics chosen from:
  - POLI 130 Introduction to Comparative Politics
  - POLI 131 Political Change and Modernization
  - POLI 232 Politics of the United Kingdom
  - POLI 235 The Politics of Russia and Eurasia
  - POLI 236 Politics of East-Central Europe
  - POLI 237 The Politics of China
  - POLI 238 Contemporary Latin American Politics
  - POLI 239 Introduction to European Government

One course in political theory chosen from:

- POLI 265 Feminism and Political Theory
- POLI 270 Classical Political Thought
- POLI 271 Modern Political Thought
- POLI 272 The Ethics of Peace, War, and Defense
- POLI 274 African American Political Thought
- POLI 276 Major Issues in Political Theory
- POLI 280 American Political Thought
- POLI 470 Social and Political Philosophy
- POLI 471 Contemporary Political Thought


One course in research methods chosen from:  
1. Quantitative Research in Political Science
2. Research Methods and Experiments
3. Strategy and International Relations
4. Strategy and Politics
5. Advanced Political Psychology
6. Game Theory
7. Honors Seminar in Research Design
8. Introduction to Statistics and Econometrics
9. Quantitative Methods in Geography
10. Research Methods in Geography
11. Knowledge and Society
12. Philosophy of the Social Sciences
13. Theory of Knowledge
14. Induction, Probability, and Confirmation
15. Quantitative Analysis for Public Policy
16. Laboratory Research in Psychology
17. Research Methods
18. Data Analysis

Four political science (POLI) electives at the 100 level or above

**Additional Requirements**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECON 101</td>
<td>Introduction to Economics</td>
<td>3</td>
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**Total Hours**

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<th>Hours</th>
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H Honors version available. An honors course fulfills the same requirements as the nonhonors version of that course. Enrollment and GPA restrictions may apply.

1 Whenever possible, students are encouraged to take a research methods course in political science. However, students with a second major in a related discipline may find it beneficial to fulfill this requirement with one of the alternative courses.

2 First-year seminars do not count toward the political science major.

3 Whenever possible, students should take an introductory course in a subfield (American politics, comparative politics, international relations, political theory) before taking more advanced courses in the subfield.

**Sample Plan of Study**

Sample plans can be used as a guide to identify the courses required to complete the major and other requirements needed for degree completion within the expected eight semesters. The actual degree plan may differ depending on the course of study selected (second major, minor, etc.). Students should meet with their academic advisor to create a degree plan that is specific and unique to their interests. The sample plans represented in this catalog are intended for first-year students entering UNC-Chapel Hill in the fall term. Some courses may not be offered every term.

**Course**

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<th>First Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POLI 100</td>
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<td>POLI 150</td>
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<td>ENGL 105</td>
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**Second Year**

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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**Junior Year**

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<th>Hours</th>
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**Senior Year**

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<tbody>
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**Total Hours**

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<th>Hours</th>
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<td>120</td>
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1 Students with a second major in economics and students who plan to apply for admission to the business school should take ECON 101 in their first year.

2 At least one political science course must be at the 400 level.

**Special Opportunities in Political Science**

**Political Science Major, NUS Joint Degree**

Political science majors may wish to consider applying for the Joint Degree Program, an innovative joint undergraduate degree program joining the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the National University of Singapore. UNC-Chapel Hill undergraduates spend anywhere from two to four semesters at the National University of Singapore and receive a joint bachelor of arts degree from both institutions. For further information, contact the Study Abroad Office.

**Honors in Political Science**

The honors program provides political science majors the opportunity to pursue an independent research project over a two-semester period. Students begin the program by taking POLI 691H in the spring semester of their junior year. During this course they complete a thesis proposal.

If the proposal is acceptable, students continue their thesis research in the senior year under the supervision of the honors director and a faculty advisor in POLI 692H and POLI 693H. A maximum of two honors
thesis courses can count as elective credit in the major. Upon successful completion of the program, which includes an oral defense of the thesis, students are awarded a degree with honors or with highest honors in political science.

To be admitted to the honors program, students must have at least a 3.3 overall grade point average and a 3.5 in political science courses. They should have completed at least four courses in the major. Students interested in participating in the honors program should apply by October 15 of their junior year. For further information on the honors program, please consult the department’s Web site (http://politicalscience.unc.edu/undergraduate/honors-program).

Experiential Education
Internship courses provide students with the opportunity to earn academic credit while obtaining practical work experience in agencies and organizations clearly related to the study of political science. Political science majors who would like to obtain credit for internship work in government or public service must enroll in POLI 193. While this course satisfies the experiential education General Education requirement, POLI 193 is offered on a Pass/Fail basis only and does not count towards the nine courses required for the major. For specific information about the procedures and requirements for POLI 193, please consult the department’s Web site (http://politicalscience.unc.edu/undergraduate/internships).

Study Abroad
Because we live in an increasingly globalized society, students are encouraged to study abroad as they are able. Students interested in the fields of comparative politics and international relations are strongly urged to participate in a study abroad program; indeed, all students may find the experience to be transformational and helpful in choosing a career path. Students are advised to work with the Study Abroad Office and to contact the undergraduate advisor when planning their study abroad experience. For information about applying study abroad credit toward the political science major, please consult the department’s Web site (http://politicalscience.unc.edu/undergraduate-programs/current-students/study-abroad).

Undergraduate Research
Courses in political science often include a research component, and students may engage in directed research under the supervision of a faculty advisor. The honors program provides political science majors the opportunity to pursue an independent research project over a two-semester period, culminating in a senior thesis. See the section above for more information on the honors program.

POLI 196 Independent Study in Political Science provides an opportunity for students to pursue a special research interest under the direction of a faculty member of the Department of Political Science. The research and writing entailed in an independent study must be equivalent to the workload of a regular course. For specific information about the procedures and requirements for POLI 196, please consult the department’s Web site (http://politicalscience.unc.edu/undergraduate/independent-study).

Undergraduate Awards
Pi Sigma Alpha is the national political science honorary society. Membership is restricted to those political science majors who have completed 15 hours of political science with an overall grade average of 3.3 or better and a political science grade average of 3.5 or better.