Political Science

Bachelors of Arts in Political Science

The study of Political Science gives the student an understanding of politics, government, and public affairs. Political Science graduates develop a coherent and reasoned knowledge about governance, political behavior, and public administration. This degree prepares students to be part of an informed national and global citizenry. Political Science provides an excellent academic background for students preparing for careers in law, public service, journalism, non-profits, and many private sectors jobs. Students are encouraged to participate in our internship program to practice and expand skills gained in the classroom. The internship program gives students the opportunity to earn credit for on-the-job experience with government agencies, Members of Congress and the state legislature, and non-profit agencies. Students choose one of the four options offered for an area of emphasis, and the options offered are Political Institutions, International Relations, Policy and Analysis and Political Theory.

Requirements for a degree in Political Science include:

1. Completion of five Political Science foundation courses with a grade of “C” or better;
2. Breadth requirement: Taking one course in each of the four options, including Political Institutions, International Relations, Policy and Analysis and Political Theory.
3. Specialization: Choosing one option and taking two more courses in that option along with an associated skills class;
4. Completion of a senior research project (PSCI 499R);
5. Completion of MSU general graduation requirements of 120 credits, including 42 upper division credits, and the MSU core.

Political Institutions Option (p. 1)

For students with an interest in political institutions, including legislative, executive and judicial branches, who wish to obtain a sound background in how political systems operate. This option includes courses on the American political system. The skills requirement is Applied Political Analysis (PSCI 310).

International Relations Option (p. 1)

Offering a sound background in international relations theory, international institutions, international policy and international political economy. The skills requirement is proficiency in a foreign language (two semesters of university level foreign language, CLEP, or existing bilingualism)

Policy and Analysis Option (p. 1)

This option develops skills in the analysis of public policies and knowledge of the policy process. The skills requirement is Applied Political Analysis (PSCI 310).

Political Theory Option (p. 1)

For students who wish to pursue key questions of political theory, including questions about rights, identity, virtue, gender, knowledge, and justice, among others. The skills requirement is Introduction to Logic (PHL 236Q).

Curriculum

Before a Political Science major may enroll in any upper division course, the student is expected to have achieved a grade of “C” or better in the five Political Science foundation courses.

First: Take all of the following foundation courses:
- PSCI 200 Intro to Conducting Political Inquiry
- PSCI 210S Intro to American Government
- PSCI 214S Principles of Political Science or PSCI 240 Intro to Public Administration
- PSCI 230D Intro to International Relations
- ECNS 101S The Economic Way of Thinking

Second: Take one course in each of the following four options, then choose one option and take two more courses in that option along with an associated skills class.

Political Institutions
- PSCI 302 Media and Politics
- PSCI 306 Legislative Process
- PSCI 341 Political Parties and Elections
- PSCI 346 American Presidency
- PSCI 444 Congressional Campaigns
- PSCI 471 American Constitutional Law
- Skills Course: PSCI 310 Applied Political Analysis

International Relations
- PSCI 331 International Relations Theory
- PSCI 406 Political Economy of Energy
- PSCI 418 The Politics of War and Peace
- PSCI 423 The Politics of Development
- PSCI 434 International Law
- PSCI 436 Politics of Food and Hunger
- PSCI 437 International Political Economy
- PSCI 439 International Human Rights
- Skills Course: Proficiency in a foreign language (two semesters of university level foreign language, CLEP, or existing bilingualism)

Policy and Analysis
- PSCI 362 Natural Resource Policy
- PSCI 406 Political Economy of Energy
- PSCI 407 Public Policy Analysis
- PSCI 423 The Politics of Development
- PSCI 436 Politics of Food and Hunger
- PSCI 465 Public Administration and Policy
- Skills Course: PSCI 310 Applied Political Analysis

Political Theory
- PSCI 323 Modern Political Thought
- PSCI 354 Contemporary Issues in Political Theory
- PSCI 356 Classical Political Thought
- PSCI 454 Cinema and Political Theory
- PSCI 455 Politics and Virtue
- Skills Course: PHL 236Q Intro to Logic

Third: Take your senior thesis class
- PSCI 499R Senior Thesis

Political Science Non-Teaching Minor

To earn a Political Science Non-Teaching Minor, a minimum of 21 credit hours are required, with 9 credits from upper division classes, 300-level and above.

Take 4 of the following:
Undergraduate Curriculum in Political Science

- Policy and Analysis Option (http://catalog.montana.edu/undergraduate/letters-science/political-science/analysis-policy-option)
- International Relations Option (http://catalog.montana.edu/undergraduate/letters-science/political-science/international-relations-option)
- Political Institutions Option (http://catalog.montana.edu/undergraduate/letters-science/political-science/political-institutions)
- Political Theory Option (http://catalog.montana.edu/undergraduate/letters-science/political-science/political-theory)

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree is a professional degree designed to prepare both pre- and mid-career professionals and administrators for supervisory, analytical support and policy-making positions in public sector agencies, and non-profit organizations, at local, state and federal levels. The program stresses sound preparation in wide range of administrative competencies. MPA coursework includes studies in public administration theory, human resource management, public budgeting, leadership, ethics, organization dynamics, and research methods for public administrators. Information on this program can be found at the MPA Graduate Program (http://catalog.montana.edu/graduate/letters-science/political-science) page.

A minimum of 120 credits is required for graduation; 42 of these credits must be in courses numbered 300 and above. No political science course may be counted in more than one upper division sub-field requirement. Political science majors must fulfill Social Science Inquiry (IS) and Diversity (D) University Core requirements outside of the PSCI rubric. Before a political science major may enroll in any upper division political science course, the student must have achieved a grade of "C" or better in all lower division courses required for the political science major. To be credited toward graduation, a student must earn a "C" or better in any upper division political science course required for the major.