

POLITICAL SCIENCE

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Political science addresses how individuals and groups organize, allocate, and challenge the power to make collective decisions involving public issues. The goal of the major is to enable students to think critically and analytically about the agents, incentives, and institutions that shape political phenomena within human society. The subfields of political philosophy and analytical political theory (which includes the study of both qualitative and quantitative methodology) support the acquisition of the lenses through which such thought skills can be enriched. The subfields of American government, comparative politics, and international relations, in turn, allow students to reinforce and refine those skills, while also promoting their application to a wide variety of contexts, whether contemporary or historical. Students may also construct interdisciplinary curricula, which allows them to apply the approaches of the discipline to a topic for which a more complete understanding also involves approaches gleaned from other disciplines.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

See [Links](#) to the attributes indicating courses approved for Political Science major requirements.

Students following the standard B.A. degree program must take twelve term courses. These courses include: at least two introductory courses (i.e. designated with a 1 as the first digit); at least one course designated as belonging to the methodology and formal theory subfield; at least two non-introductory lectures designated as "core;" at least two classes in each of any two of the department's subfields (other than methodology and formal theory)—international relations, American government, political philosophy, and comparative politics; at least two seminars, including at least one during their senior year.

All students may also take courses related to political science that are offered by other departments. Students who elect the standard program may petition to count up to two such courses toward the major. Students may routinely count Residential College Seminars taught by members of the Political Science faculty toward the major, and they may petition to count one Residential College Seminar taught by an instructor outside the department. Students who have completed Directed Studies may, with the approval of the DUS, count one term of DRST 0005 or DRST 0006 toward the major.

Students following the standard B.A. degree program, interdisciplinary concentration are allowed to identify and pursue an area of study that crosses conventional disciplinary and departmental boundaries. Examples of interdisciplinary concentrations include (but are not limited to) urban studies, health politics and policy, political economy, political psychology, or a focus on the politics of a given global region informed by the study of the history and society of that region. Students choosing an interdisciplinary concentration are required to take twelve term courses toward the major. At least seven courses must be in the field of concentration. Of the courses counting toward the major outside of the field of concentration, at least two

courses must be taken in each of any two of the department's five fields. As many as three courses taken in other departments may be counted toward the major, with the permission of the DUS. *Note:* students who choose the interdisciplinary concentration must fulfill the introductory course requirement, the core lecture requirement, the methodology and formal theory subfield requirement, and the seminar requirement as described for the standard degree program.

Students wishing to pursue the Political Science major with an interdisciplinary concentration must submit an application, which is due prior to the beginning of the November recess in the student's final year of enrollment. Students should also meet with the DUS to discuss their proposed program of study in their sophomore or junior year.

The intensive major The intensive major allows students to undertake more extensive coursework and research for the senior essay than is possible in the standard major. Requirements for the intensive major are identical to those for the standard program or interdisciplinary concentration, with the following exceptions: (1) in the spring term of the junior year, intensive majors take PLSC 4900 in preparation for writing a yearlong senior essay; (2) in the senior year, intensive majors fulfill the senior essay requirement by enrolling in the yearlong course sequence PLSC 4901 and PLSC 4903.

Juniors wishing to pursue an intensive major must apply to the DUS. The application should contain: (1) the intensive major application form signed by a faculty adviser who has agreed to supervise the student for the final three terms of enrollment; (2) a plan of study that identifies the political science courses that will be taken in those three terms; and (3) a one-page description of the proposed senior essay.

Seminar requirement Students majoring in Political Science are required to take at least two seminars taught by members of the Political Science department, including at least one during the senior year.

Credit/D/Fail Students may count up to two lecture courses taken Credit/D/Fail toward the requirements of the major. Seminars taken Credit/D/F do not count toward the major requirements.

SENIOR REQUIREMENT

Seniors in the major have two options for completing the senior essay. All students may complete the requirement with an essay in a senior seminar. Students pursuing honors in the major must complete an honors senior essay. In order to graduate from Yale College, a student majoring in Political Science must achieve a passing grade on the essay.

Honors essays can be written either in one term or over both terms of the senior year.

Honors senior essay eligibility will be granted to students who have current GPA of 3.7 in all PLSC courses where a letter grade is awarded and they have completed the following requirements of the major: two introductory level courses, one core lecture course, one seminar with a member of the Political Science department, and a methodology course. An application form for the honors essay must be signed by a faculty advisor and the requirements listed above must be met or in progress at the time of application.

Senior essay The senior essay provides an appropriate intellectual culmination to the student's work in the major and in Yale College. The essay should ordinarily be written on a topic in an area in which the student has previously done coursework, and an effort should be made to demonstrate how the student's work relates to broader topics, issues, and approaches within the discipline of political science. It should rest on research that is appropriate to the subject matter and should reflect an awareness of how the student's topic is connected to previous work within the discipline of political science. Essays are expected to be in the range of 25–30 double-spaced pages. At the time a student applies to pursue the honors essay, students must have their senior essay topic approved by a faculty member who has agreed to advise them. Each student is expected to consult regularly with the seminar instructor or adviser and take the initiative in developing a plan of research, scheduling regular meetings, and submitting preliminary drafts for review.

One-term essays may be written either in a seminar or, with the approval of an adviser and the DUS, in PLSC 4900. More extensive information about the senior essay can be found on the department website.

Yearlong senior essay Students who wish to undertake a more extensive research project than is possible in a single term may fulfill the senior essay requirement by enrolling in the yearlong course sequence PLSC 4900 and PLSC 4901. Both classes are offered in both terms, but must be taken in order. PLSC 4900 also counts toward the senior seminar requirement. In the first term, students writing a yearlong senior essay develop a research prospectus for the essay and begin their research under the supervision of a member of the faculty who specializes in the area being investigated. In the second term, students complete the essay. Yearlong senior essays are expected to be substantially longer than a regular term paper. While there is no fixed length, they are normally at least fifty pages long.

Majors who wish to enroll in the yearlong senior essay must apply for the honors essay track in their junior year. By the appropriate date, students should submit to the office of the DUS: (1) the honors essay application, (2) a senior essay form signed by a faculty adviser who has agreed to supervise the student during both terms of the senior year; and (3) a one-page statement describing the research project.

Honors in the major will be awarded to students who achieve an A or A- grade for the honors essay, which also meets the standard for honors (as determined by a second reader appointed by the DUS), and who achieve a minimum 3.7 GPA in all Political Science courses where a letter grade is awarded.

ADVISING

The DUS and other members of the department can provide advice about departmental requirements, options within the major, requirements of two majors, study abroad, and other matters related to the major. Although advisers (beyond the DUS and the senior essay adviser) are not formally assigned, students are encouraged to seek advice from other department faculty members who are knowledgeable about their fields of interest. Information on faculty interests can be found on the department website.

Combined B.A./M.A. degree program Exceptionally able and well-prepared students may complete a course of study leading to the simultaneous award of the B.A. and M.A. degrees after eight terms of enrollment. See Academic Regulations, section L,

Special Academic Arrangements, “Simultaneous Award of the Bachelor's and Master's Degrees.” Interested students should consult the DUS prior to the sixth term of enrollment for specific requirements in Political Science.

STUDY ABROAD

Students who study in the summer term or in a junior term abroad program may, with the approval of the DUS, count up to two courses toward the major. Students who study in a junior year abroad program may, with the approval of the DUS, count up to four courses toward the major. Students may also petition to have non-Yale courses that were not taught in political science departments count toward the major. Pending approval of the DUS, these courses will count toward the maximum number of substitutions.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

B.A. DEGREE, STANDARD PROGRAM

Prerequisites None

Number of courses *Standard major*—12 term courses; *intensive major*—15 term courses

Distribution of courses 2 intro courses; 2 core lectures; 2 seminars (1 in senior year); 1 course in methodology and formal theory subfield; 2 courses in each of any two subfields (excluding methodology and formal theory subfield)

Substitution permitted 2 courses from other depts with DUS approval

Senior requirement 1-term senior essay in sem or in PLSC 4900; or 2-term senior essay in PLSC 4900, PLSC 4901

Intensive major 1 addtl elective; PLSC 4900 in spring term of junior year; 2-term senior essay in PLSC 4901, PLSC 4903

B.A. DEGREE, INTERDISCIPLINARY CONCENTRATION

Prerequisites None

Number of courses *Standard major with interdisciplinary concentration*—12 term courses; *intensive major with interdisciplinary concentration*—15 term courses

Distribution of courses 7 courses in concentration: 2 intro courses; 2 core lectures; 2 seminars (1 in senior year); 1 course in methodology and formal theory subfield; outside of concentration: 2 courses in each of any two subfields

Substitution permitted 3 courses from other depts with DUS approval (2 courses from other depts with DUS approval for intensive major)

Senior requirement 1-term senior essay in sem or in PLSC 4900; or 2-term senior essay in PLSC 4900, PLSC 4901; both options on subject within concentration

Intensive major 1 addtl elective; PLSC 4900 in spring term of junior year; 2-term senior essay in PLSC 4900, PLSC 4901 on subject within concentration

FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Professors Bruce Ackerman, Akhil Amar, Seyla Benhabib (*Emeritus*), David Cameron (*Emeritus*), Jennifer Gandhi, Bryan Garsten, Alan Gerber, Jacob Hacker, Gregory

Huber, Hélène Landemore, Joseph La Palombara (*Emeritus*), Isabela Mares, David Mayhew (*Emeritus*), Adam Meirowitz, Gerard Padro i Miquel, Doug Rae (*Emeritus*), John Roemer (*Emeritus*), Susan Rose-Ackerman (*Emeritus*), Nicholas Sambanis, Kenneth Scheve, Jasjeet Sekhon, Ian Shapiro, Stephen Skowronek, Steven Smith, Milan Svolik, Peter Swenson (*Emeritus*), Steven Wilkinson, Elisabeth Wood

Associate Professors P. Aronow, Katharine Baldwin, Alexander Coppock, Ana De La O, Alexandre Debs, Joshua Kalla, Daniel Mattingly

Assistant Professors Kevin DeLuca, Allison Harris, Melody Huang, Christina Kinane, Shiro Kuriwaki, Egor Lazarev, Soyoung Lee, Charles McClean, Giulia Oskian, Didac Queralt, Noam Reich, Lucia Rubinelli, Emily Sellars, Ian Turner

Senior Lecturers Stephen Latham, David Simon

Lecturers Andrea Aldrich, David Allison, Federico Brandmayr, Greg Collins, John DeStefano, Kevin Elliott, Amir Fairdosi, Michael Fotos, Karen Goodrow, Maria Jose Hierro, Mordechai Levy-Eichel, Max Lewis, Joanne Lipman, Alexander Rosas, Eleanor Schiff, Daniel Schillinger, Gordon Silverstein, Sushant Singh, Heather Wilford, Graeme Wood, Lauren Young