

Political Science

The School of Social Sciences

Chair

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Professors

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Assistant Professors

Regina P. Branton
 David S. Brown
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 Brett Ashley Leeds
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Lecturer

C. M. Hudspeth

Degrees Offered: B.A., M.A., Ph.D.

Students majoring in political science are encouraged to achieve both a broad understanding of the field and a specialized knowledge of one or more aspects of political science, including American and comparative politics, international relations (see also majors in managerial studies and public policy). Graduate study is grounded in the areas of American government (public policy, Congress, and intergovernmental relations), comparative government (Western Europe, Latin America, and political development), and international relations (international conflict).

Degree Requirements for B.A. in Political Science

For general university requirements, see Graduation Requirements (pages 16–18). Students majoring in political science must complete 30 semester hours (10 courses) in the field of political science, plus 6 hours (2 courses) of upper-level work in any of the following fields: anthropology, economics, history, philosophy, psychology, or sociology. Students select these upper-level courses in consultation with the department adviser.

For students who entered Rice in fall 1999 and thereafter, political science degree requirements are as follows:

- At least 1 course in each of the following fields: American government, comparative politics, international relations, theory, and methods. The Political Science Department Courses of Instruction listing (pages 494–503) indicates the field for each department offering. “A” indicates the course is in American government, “C” indicates the course is in comparative government, “I” indicates the course is in international relations, and “T” indicates the course is in theory and methods.

- At least 2 of the 4 introductory courses
- A concentration of at least 4 courses in one of the following fields: American government, comparative politics, international relations. These 4 courses must include the introductory course and a seminar.
- A statistics course offered by the Department of Political Science
- 2 seminars, at the 400 or 500 level, with different instructors

Students who entered Rice before fall 1999 may choose to satisfy the above requirements, or they may satisfy requirements in force at the time of their enrollment at Rice, which usually will be as follows:

- At least 1 course in any four of the following areas: American political institutions and behavior, comparative politics, international relations, political philosophy and legal theory, empirical theory and method, and American public policy
- 2 seminars, at the 400 or 500 level, with different instructors

Double majors in one of the related disciplines named above may automatically substitute 6 hours (2 courses) in upper-level studies (at the 300 level or above) from their second field for 6 of the required 30 hours of political science courses. Double majors whose second major is managerial studies or policy studies may automatically substitute 3 hours (1 course). Double majors whose second major is in a field other than those listed above normally must take the full 30 hours (10 courses) in political science. They may petition to substitute a course from another field for a political science course, but this is permitted only when the course to be substituted has a significant relationship to political science. Note: The reduction of political science course requirements for double majors is eliminated for students who entered in and after fall 1999.

Introductory Courses. POLI 209 Introduction to Constitutionalism and Modern Political Thought, POLI 210 American Government and Politics, POLI 211 International Relations, and POLI 212 Introduction to Comparative Politics constitute the introductory courses in political science. **Students entering in the Fall of 1999 and after must take at least 2 of these, including the 1 in the field of specialization.** Students should note, however, that POLI 210 is the course that meets the Texas state licensing requirements in political science for teachers. Students who entered Rice before fall 1999 and choose to stay with the old plan may count no more than 2 of the introductory courses toward their major requirements.

Directed Readings Courses. Directed readings courses are intended for students who have completed a substantial number of political science courses and who seek to explore a subject not covered in regular courses. They are available only if an appropriate faculty member agrees to supervise. The faculty member supervising a directed readings course must have a full-time appointment, and a student may not take more than 1 readings course from him or her. Students should submit a brief, one-page description of the work to be conducted in the readings course (including the name of the faculty supervisor) to the department director of undergraduate studies no later than two weeks into the semester in which they intend to take the course. Readings courses do not count toward the department's distribution requirement.

Honors Program. Admission to the honors program requires the approval of the department director of undergraduate studies. During the first semester of the two-semester program, students take a readings course that provides them with a basis for drawing up a thesis prospectus. At the end of the first semester, a thesis committee composed of two full-time members of the political science department reviews and approves the prospectus.

During the second semester, students write their honors thesis, which also must meet with committee approval. Students may not combine the 2 honors courses into one semester. Those who successfully complete the honors program may substitute it for one of the seminars required for the major. See also Honors Programs (page 33).

Degree Requirements for M.A. and Ph.D. in Political Science

For general university requirements, see Graduate Degrees (pages 60–65). Students in the Ph.D. program must complete 48 semester hours in advanced courses or seminars prior to candidacy and conclude the degree program with the oral presentation of a dissertation displaying original research. Normally, students take the specified core courses in the three general fields of American government, comparative government, and international relations, completing additional course work and comprehensive examinations in two of those three fields. Before taking the comprehensive examinations, students must:

- Complete courses in statistical analysis
- Demonstrate some familiarity with traditional political theory
- Satisfy the language or skill requirement in their major field
- Complete all course requirements

Students select specific courses for graduate study in consultation with the faculty adviser.

The master of arts degree can be obtained with 36 semester hours of course work, all of which must be taken at the graduate level (400 level or above), and the completion of 2 research papers in seminars taken over the course of study. A minimum G.P.A. of 3.0 is required for awarding the M.A.

The political science department requires that not more than three years elapse between the time the student is admitted to graduate study and the completion of the M.A. degree, unless an extension is approved by the department graduate committee.

See POLI (pages 494–503) in the Courses of Instruction section.