

POLITICAL SCIENCE

THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

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DEGREES OFFERED: BA, MA, PHD

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 politics and comparative politics and politics and international relations (see also majors in managerial studies and public policy). Graduate study is grounded in the areas of American politics (public policy, Congress, and intergovernmental relations), comparative politics (Western Europe, Latin America, and political development), and international relations (international conflict).

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR BA IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

For general university requirements, see Graduation Requirements (pages 14–15). 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 advisor.

Political science degree requirements are as follows:

- At least 1 course in each of the following fields: American politics comparative politics, international relations, 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 politics, comparative politics, and international relations. These 4 courses must include the introductory course and a seminar.
- A statistics course offered by the Department of Political Science.

- Two seminars, at the 400 or 500 level, with different instructors.
- POLI 110 and 112 do not satisfy any requirement for the political science major

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 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, 1-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 2 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 2-semester program, students take a readings course that provides them with a basis for drawing up a thesis prospectus. At the end of the 1st semester, a thesis committee composed of 2 full-time members of the political science department reviews and approves the prospectus. During the 2nd semester, students write their honors thesis, which also must meet with committee approval. Students may not combine the 2 honors courses into 1 semester. Those who successfully complete the honors program may substitute it for 1 of the seminars required for the major. See also Honors Programs (page 26). Failure to complete the 2nd semester of the honors program will result in loss of credit for the 1st semester of the honors program.

Alternatively, students may earn honors in political science by successfully completing the Rice University Honors Program (RUSP), HONS 470/471. In addition to successfully completing this program, the student must complete a research project in political science, and the student must be supervised by a faculty member in the political science department.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS FOR MA AND PHD IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

For general university requirements, see Graduate Degrees (pages 57–58). Students in the PhD program must complete 48 semester hours in advanced courses or seminars before 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

politics, comparative politics, and international relations, completing additional course work and comprehensive examinations in 2 of those 3 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 advisor.

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 MA.

The political science department requires that not more than 3 years elapse between the time the student is admitted to graduate study and the completion of the MA degree, unless an extension is approved by the department graduate committee.

See POLI in the Courses of Instruction section.