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. Graduate study is grounded in the areas of American politics, comparative politics, and international relations.

Degree Requirements for BA in Political Science

For general university requirements, see Graduation Requirements (Undergraduate Students section, pages 2–5). Students majoring in political science must complete 30 semester hours (10 courses) in the field of political science, plus six hours (two courses) of upper-level work in any of the following fields: anthropology, economics, history, philosophy, psychology, or sociology.

Political science degree requirements are as follows:

- At least one course in each of the following fields: American politics, comparative politics, international relations, theory and methods.
- At least two of the four introductory courses.
- A concentration of at least four courses in one of the following fields: American politics, comparative politics, and international relations. These four 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.

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 one 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. During the second semester, students write their honors thesis, which also must meet with committee approval. Students may not combine the two honors courses into one semester. Those who successfully complete the honors program may substitute it for one of the seminars required for the major. Failure to complete the second semester of the honors program will result in loss of credit for the first 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 full-time faculty member in the political science department. See also Honors Programs (Undergraduate Students section, pages 14–15).

Degree Requirements for MA and PhD in Political Science

For general university requirements, see Graduate Degrees (Graduate Students section, pages 3–4). Students in the PhD program must complete 42 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 two of the three general fields of American politics, comparative politics, and international relations, completing additional course work and comprehensive examinations as well. Before taking the comprehensive examinations, students must:

- Complete courses in statistical analysis
- 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 two 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 three 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.