Political Science, BS

Most of the political science coursework required for the major is the same for BS and BA students, but the BS also requires a set of statistics, research, and experiential courses, while the BA does not.

Learning Outcomes

Graduates will:

- possess a basic understanding of American and world politics;
- be able to apply a theoretical approach in political science to understand American or world politics;
- have effective written and oral communication skills; and
- be able to conceptualize problems and apply analytical tools to solve them.

Requirements

The Bachelor of Science with a major in political science requires a minimum of 120 s.h., including at least 39 s.h. of work for the major. At least 18 s.h. of political science coursework for the major must be taken at the University of Iowa. Students must maintain a grade-point average (GPA) of at least 2.00 in all courses for the major and in all UI courses for the major. They also must complete the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences GE CLAS Core.

Credit earned in POLI:1000 First-Year Seminar, POLI:3124 Guided Political Science Internship, POLI:3710 Law School Readiness Seminar, POLI:3711 Law School Readiness Seminar II, POLI:3993 Political Science Undergraduate Research Projects, and POLI:4900 Government and Politics Internship does not count toward the major, but grades in these courses become part of a student's grade-point average.

In planning coursework, students should be guided by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences maximum hours rule: students earning a BS may apply a maximum of 56 s.h. earned in one department to the minimum 120 s.h. required for graduation, whether or not the coursework is accepted toward requirements for the major; students who earn more than 56 s.h. from one department may use the additional semester hours to satisfy requirements for the major (if the department accepts them), and the grades they earn become part of their grade-point average, but they cannot apply the additional semester hours to the minimum 120 s.h. required for graduation.

The BS with a major in political science requires the following coursework.

Requirements	Hours
Political Science Introductory Courses	15
Additional Political Science Courses	15
Statistics/Research/Experiential Courses	9

Political Science Introductory Courses

Course #	Title	Hours
This course:		
POLI:1100	Introduction to American Politics	3
And four of these:		
POLI:1001	Introduction to Politics	3
POLI:1050	Big Ideas: Introduction to Information, Society, and Culture	3
POLI:1120	Introduction to Lawyers in the American Political System	3
POLI:1200	Introduction to Political Behavior	3
POLI:1300	Introduction to Political Thought and Action	3
POLI:1400	Introduction to Comparative Politics	3
POLI:1401	Introduction to Russian Politics	3
POLI:1449	Introduction to European Politics	3
POLI:1500	Introduction to International Relations	3
POLI:1501	Introduction to American Foreign Policy	3
POLI:1510	International Politics of Environmental Issues	3
POLI:1600	Introduction to Political Communication	3
POLI:1601	Introduction to Social Media and Politics	3
POLI:1700	Introduction to Political Analysis	3
POLI:1800	Introduction to the Politics of Class and Inequality	3
POLI:1900	Introduction to the Politics of Race	3
POLI:1950	Introduction to the Politics of Religion	3

Additional Political Science Courses

Students must complete at least 15 s.h. (typically five courses) in additional political science courses (prefix POLI) numbered 2000 or above, excluding POLI:3124, POLI:3710, POLI:3711, POLI:3992, POLI:3993, and POLI:4900.

Statistics/Research/Experiential Courses

Students receive further exposure to statistical methods, research processes, and experiential learning courses. Students are allowed to customize the courses to fit their interests and academic goals.

Course #	Title	Hours
This course:		
POLI:3000	Analyzing Political Data	3
One of these (minimum 3 s.h.):		
POLI:3001	Hawkeye Poll	3
POLI:3020	Project Vote Smart: Research and Engagement on Elections	3
POLI:3127	Legislative Policy Seminar	arr.
POLI:3160	Applied Research in Political Science	1-3

POLI:3525	Iowa Policy and Opinion Lab	3
POLI:3527	Civil War Research Lab	3
POLI:3530	Diplomacy Lab	arr.
POLI:3994	Political Science Undergraduate Research Projects	3-4
POLI:4700	Independent Study	arr.
POLI:4701	Undergraduate Research Tutorial	3
One of these (minimum 3 s.h.):		
POLI:3050	Problems in Methods	arr.
CS:1210	Computer Science I: Fundamentals	4
CS:2110	Programming for Informatics	4
ECON:3300	Introduction to Econometrics: Causal Inference With Data	3
ECON:4800	Econometric Analysis: Advanced Causal Inference With Data	3
SEES:2050	Foundations of GIS	4
SEES:3500/ IGPI:3500	Introduction to Environmental Remote Sensing	3
SEES:4150/ GHS:4150/ IGPI:4150	Health and Environment: GIS Applications	3
SOC:3880	The Sociology of Networks	3
SOC:4000	Data Science for Social Good	3
Statistics courses (prefix STAT) numbered 3000 and above		
Additional courses may be approved by exception; contact the director of undergraduate studies		

Emphasis Areas in Political Science

Students may elect to complete one or two emphasis areas while fulfilling the requirements for the major. Emphasis areas are indicated on the transcript at graduation if students complete the emphasis and request recognition from the department.

Each emphasis consists of four courses. Emphasis areas are available in American institutions, identity politics, international relations, political behavior, political communication, political theory, politics of foreign countries, and public policy. For courses approved in each area, contact the Department of Political Science.

Teacher Licensure

Students interested in teaching in elementary and/or secondary schools should seek admission to the Teacher Education Program (TEP) in the College of Education.

To qualify for licensure in secondary teaching, students in the TEP complete a degree in education as well as a related College of Liberal Arts and Sciences degree. See Apply on the College of Education website for details on requirements and deadlines for applying to the College of Education and about TEP choices of majors leading to licensure.

Honors in the Major

Students majoring in political science have the opportunity to graduate with honors in the major. Departmental honors students must maintain a UI grade-point average (GPA) of at least 3.33 and a major GPA of at least 3.50. In addition to maintaining the minimum GPA requirements and minimum major requirements, honors students must complete a final honors project.

Final Honors Project

Course #	Title	Hours
One of these:		
POLI:4600	Honors Research Project	3
POLI:4601	Honors Senior Thesis	3

Students who choose to write an honors thesis are required to schedule an oral discussion of their completed honors thesis, mainly to enrich the intellectual experience of its author. A student discusses the thesis with a faculty committee including the thesis director and the department's honors director or a faculty member designated by that official. The committee may withhold approval of fundamentally inadequate theses, but directors are to schedule theses for discussion only when they are ready. The discussion typically concentrates on exploring thesis ideas from several perspectives rather than whether to approve a thesis.

It is expected that students wishing to pursue the honors thesis (POLI:4601) begin discussing the thesis with their thesis director one full semester prior to the semester in which they want to write the thesis and consider enrolling in POLI:4700 Independent Study for 1 s.h. the semester before enrolling in the thesis seminar.

National Honor Society

The department sponsors a chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha. Students who have met the expectations for membership in Pi Sigma Alpha are invited to join. Contact the Department of Political Science honors advisor for more information.

University of Iowa Honors Program

In addition to honors in the major, students have opportunities for honors study and activities through membership in the University of Iowa Honors Program. Visit Honors at Iowa to learn about the university's honors program.

Membership in the UI Honors Program is not required to earn honors in the political science major.

A recent survey showed that graduates with political science degrees have higher average salaries than graduates in all other social sciences, excluding economics. The Department of Political Science organizes career workshops for its students throughout the year. The workshops are led by former political science students who have achieved distinction in business, law, campaign operations, local government, elected office, or other fields.

The department has an active alumni mentorship program. Students can be connected to alumni to learn about careers,

networking opportunities, and mentorship. The department also offers an opportunity for students to complete the last year of their collegiate career in Washington D.C.

The Pomerantz Career Center offers multiple resources to help students find internships and jobs.

Academic Plans

Four-Year Graduation Plan

The following checkpoints list the minimum requirements students must complete by certain semesters in order to stay on the university's Four-Year Graduation Plan. Courses in the major are those required to complete the major; they may be offered by departments other than the major department.

Before the fifth semester begins: two courses in the major.

Before the seventh semester: eight courses in the major, including one of the two required statistics/research/experiential courses and POLI:3000 Analyzing Political Data; and at least 90 s.h. earned toward the degree.

Before the eighth semester begins: 11 courses in the major

During the eighth semester: enrollment in all remaining coursework in the major, all remaining GE CLAS Core courses, and a sufficient number of semester hours to graduate.

Sample Plan of Study

Sample plans represent one way to complete a program of study. Actual course selection and sequence will vary and should be discussed with an academic advisor. For additional sample plans, see MyUI.

Political Science, BS

Course	Title	Hours
Academic Career		
Any Semester		
GE CLAS Core: Sustainability [a]		
	Hours	**0**
First Year		
Fall		
POLI:1100	Introduction to American Politics [b]	3
ENGL:1200 or RHET:1030	The Interpretation of Literature or Rhetoric: Writing and Communication	3 - 4
GE CLAS Core: World Languages First Level Proficiency or elective course [c]		4 - 5
CSI:1600	Success at Iowa	1
Elective course [d]		3
	Hours	**14-16**
Spring		
Major: introductory-level course numbered POLI:1XXX [b]		3
RHET:1030 or ENGL:1200	Rhetoric: Writing and Communication or The Interpretation of Literature	3 - 4
GE CLAS Core: Understanding Cultural Perspectives [e]		3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Second Level Proficiency or elective course [c]		4 - 5
Elective course [d]		2
	Hours	**15-17**
Second Year		
Fall		
Major: introductory-level course numbered POLI:1XXX [b]		3
GE CLAS Core: Historical Perspectives [e]		3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Third Level Proficiency or elective course [c]		4 - 5
Elective course [d]		3
Elective course [d]		2
	Hours	**15-16**
Spring		
POLI:3000	Analyzing Political Data [f]	3
Major: introductory-level course numbered POLI:1XXX [b]		3
GE CLAS Core: World Languages Fourth Level Proficiency or elective course [c]		4 - 5
Elective course [d]		3
Elective course [d]		2
	Hours	**15-16**
Third Year		
Fall		
Major: introductory-level course numbered POLI:1XXX [b]		3
Major: upper-level course numbered POLI:2XXX or above [g]		3
Major: statistics/research/experiential course [f]		3 - 4
GE CLAS Core: Values and Society [e]		3
Elective course [d]		3
	Hours	**15-16**
Spring		
Major: upper-level course numbered POLI:2XXX or above [g]		3
Major: upper-level course numbered POLI:2XXX or above [g]		3
GE CLAS Core: Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts [e]		3
GE CLAS Core: Natural Sciences with Lab [e]		4
Elective course [d]		2 - 3
	Hours	**15-16**
Fourth Year		
Fall		
Major: upper-level course numbered POLI:2XXX or above [g]		3
Major: statistics/research/experiential course [f]		3 - 4
GE CLAS Core: Natural Sciences without Lab [e]		3
Elective course [d]		3
Elective course [d]		3
	Hours	**15-16**
Spring		
Major: upper-level course numbered POLI:2XXX or above [g]		3
GE CLAS Core: International and Global Issues [e]		3
Elective course [d]		3
Elective course [d]		3
Elective course [d]		3

Degree Application: apply on MyUI before deadline (typically in February for spring, September for fall) h

Hours	**15**
Total Hours	**119-128**

a Sustainability must be completed by choosing a course that has been approved for Sustainability AND for one of these General Education areas: Natural Sciences; Quantitative or Formal Reasoning; Social Sciences; Historical Perspectives; International and Global Issues; Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts; or Values and Society.

b Fulfills a major requirement and may fulfill a GE requirement.

c Students who have completed four levels of a single language or two levels of two different languages in high school or college have satisfied the GE CLAS Core World Languages requirement. Students who have completed three levels of a single language may complete a fourth-level course in the same language or may choose an approved World Language and Cultural Exploration course. Enrollment in world languages courses requires a placement exam, unless enrolling in a first-semester-level course. Contact your academic advisor or CLAS Undergraduate Programs Office with questions concerning the World Languages requirement.

d Students may use elective courses to earn credit towards the total s.h. required for graduation or to complete a double major, minors, or certificates.

e GE CLAS Core courses may be completed in any order unless used as a prerequisite for another course. Students should consult with an advisor about the best sequencing of courses.

f Students must complete a set of statistics/research/experiential courses (9 s.h.), including POLI:3000 and at least 6 s.h. of additional approved electives.

g Students must complete at least 15 s.h. (typically five courses) in additional political science courses (prefix POLI) numbered 2000 or above, excluding POLI:3124, POLI:3710, POLI:3711, POLI:3992, POLI:3993, and POLI:4900.

h Please see Academic Calendar, on Office of the Registrar website, for current degree application deadlines. Students should apply for a degree for the session in which all requirements will be met. For any questions on appropriate timing, contact your academic advisor or Degree Services.