

POLITICAL SCIENCE, BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A.) WITH A CONCENTRATION IN CIVIL RIGHTS

The Department of Political Science offers a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science as well as elective courses in political science for program majors and non-majors.

The political science curriculum has two central objectives. It offers the student a broad liberal arts education along with a comprehensive understanding of the nature and the functioning of the political process and government. It also provides a sound foundation for graduate study in political science, public administration and nonprofit management, or for careers that require knowledge of governance and the political process, such as law.

Learning outcomes

Upon completing this program, students will know and know how to do the following:

1. Assumptions, methods and analytical tools
Students will demonstrate knowledge of the assumptions, methods and analytical tools of the discipline of political science.
2. Current political and policy issues
Students will demonstrate knowledge of current political and policy issues.
3. Theory and principles of four subfields
Students will demonstrate an understanding of basic theory and conceptual principles of political science in the four subfields of American government, political theory, international relations and comparative politics.
4. Advanced understanding of one subfield
Students will demonstrate an advanced understanding of current theoretical and empirical study in one subfield.
5. Expository and analytic writing
Students will demonstrate skill in expository and analytic writing in the political science discipline
6. Political behavior
Students will demonstrate knowledge of the ways in which individuals, national governmental organizations, political movements and parties, nation-states, and intergovernmental institutions work to achieve their political objectives.

Honors in political science

Political science majors can earn honors in political science. Students earn honors status when they complete POLI 490 with an A grade and graduate with an overall 3.0 GPA and a 3.3 GPA in political science.

Special requirements

To graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, students must complete 45 upper-level credits (including upper-level course work in the major) and maintain a cumulative and major GPA of 2.0. Students may count a maximum of nine credits from internships, mentorships or independent studies toward the major. Students may also apply three

credits from courses in other departments toward the major with prior approval from the department chair.

Degree requirements for Political Science, Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) with a concentration in civil rights

General education requirements

University Core Education Curriculum (minimum 21 credits)

UNIV 111 Play course video for Focused Inquiry I	Focused Inquiry I	3
UNIV 112 Play course video for Focused Inquiry II	Focused Inquiry II	3
UNIV 200	Inquiry and the Craft of Argument	3
Approved humanities/fine arts		3
Approved natural/physical sciences		3-4
Approved quantitative literacy		3-4
Approved social/behavioral sciences		3-4
Total Hours		21-24

Additional College of Humanities and Sciences requirements (11-23 credits)

HUMS 202	Choices in a Consumer Society	1
Approved H&S diverse and global communities		3
Approved H&S human, social and political behavior (fulfills University Core social/behavioral sciences)		
Approved H&S literature and civilization (fulfills University Core humanities/fine arts)		
Approved H&S science and technology (fulfills University Core natural/physical sciences)		
Approved H&S general education electives		6-8
Experiential fine arts ¹		1-3
Foreign language through the 102 level (by course or placement)		0-8
Total Hours		11-23

¹ Course offered by the School of the Arts

Collateral requirements

Foreign language (201-level)		3
Foreign language (202-level)		3
Total Hours		6

Major requirements

POLI 103	U.S. Government (meets approved H&S human, social and political behavior requirement)	3
POLI/INTL 105	International Relations (meets approved H&S diverse and global communities requirement)	3
POLI 107	Political Theory	3
POLI 109	Comparative Politics	3
POLI 490	Senior Seminar	3
POLI electives		6

Select four concentration electives from the list below	12
Total Hours	33

Open electives

Select 35-49 open elective credits	35-49
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Total minimum requirement 120 credits

Electives

Select four civil rights concentration electives from the following: 12

POLI/AFAM 302	Politics of the Civil Rights Movement
POLI 314	U.S. Constitutional Law
POLI 315	Courts and Politics
POLI/GSWS 316	Women and the Law
POLI/AFAM/GSWS 318	Politics of Race, Class and Gender
POLI/GSWS 319	Women and American Politics
POLI/AFAM 343	Black Political Thought
POLI/AFAM 345	African-American Politics
POLI 372	Ethics, Law and Governance

What follows is a sample plan that meets the prescribed requirements within a four-year course of study at VCU. Please contact your adviser before beginning course work toward a degree.

Freshman year

Fall semester		Hours
POLI 103	U.S. Government	3
UNIV 101	Introduction to the University	1
UNIV 111	Focused Inquiry I	3
Play course video for Focused Inquiry I		
Approved quantitative literacy		3
Foreign language (101-level)		4
Term Hours:		14

Spring semester

HUMS 202	Choices in a Consumer Society	1
POLI 105 or INTL 105	International Relations or International Relations	3
UNIV 112	Focused Inquiry II	3
Play course video for Focused Inquiry II		
Approved natural/physical sciences		3-4
Foreign language (102-level)		4
Term Hours:		14-15

Sophomore year

Fall semester		Hours
POLI 107	Political Theory	3
POLI 109	Comparative Politics	3
UNIV 200	Inquiry and the Craft of Argument	3
Approved H&S literature and civilization		3

Foreign language (201-level)	3
Term Hours:	15

Spring semester

Concentration electives		6
Experiential fine arts		1-3
Foreign language (202-level)		3
Open electives		4
Term Hours:		14-16

Junior year

Fall semester

POLI elective		3
Approved H&S General Education electives		3-4
Open electives		9
Term Hours:		15-16

Spring semester

Approved H&S General Education electives		3-4
Concentration elective		3
Open electives		9
Term Hours:		15-16

Senior year

Fall semester

POLI 490	Senior Seminar	3
Concentration elective		3
Open electives		12
Term Hours:		18

Spring semester

POLI elective		3
Open electives		12
Term Hours:		15
Total Hours:		120-125

POLI 103. U.S. Government. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A study of American national government focusing on its underlying political ideas, constitutional basis, major institutions and their interaction in the determination of public policy.

POLI 105. International Relations. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An introductory analysis of interstate relations and world affairs. Attention focuses on theories of international politics, military capabilities and their application, international organizations, global economic trends, domestic sources of state behavior and other selected issues as appropriate. Crosslisted as: INTL 105.

POLI 107. Political Theory. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Introduces students to the great thinkers and ideas of political theory. Provides an analysis of the relationship between ethics and politics in contemporary democracy and current challenges to traditional democratic theory. Topics discussed may include the nature of human existence and civilization; political obligations between the state and the citizen and among citizens; attempts to justify authority; the content and uses of power; and the right to disobedience and resistance, freedom, social justice, and equality.

POLI 109. Comparative Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Introduces students to the ways in which societies around the world govern themselves. Covers such topics as the historical evolution of the political system, political processes and institutions, and key issues in contemporary public policy for a globally representative group of 10 to 15 countries.

POLI 301. U.S. Parties and Elections. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An overview of U.S. political parties and elections. Topics will include the history, organization and methods of U.S. political parties, presidential nominations and elections; Congressional elections.

POLI 302. Politics of the Civil Rights Movement. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. The main objectives of the course are to introduce and examine the personalities and activities of the modern Civil Rights Movement. The course provides the historical background leading up to the peak years of the struggle for racial equality in America. It has special focus on the events of the 1960s and particularly their implication for the current state of U.S. Civil Rights. Crosslisted as: AFAM 302.

POLI 303. Public Opinion, Polling and the Media. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Study of the interplay among the mass media, political campaigns and public opinion. Topics include public opinion and its measurement, how campaigns use public opinion polling and the impact of the media on public opinion.

POLI 304. Political Campaigns and Communication: New Hampshire Primary. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Enrollment requires permission of instructor. Introduces students to the historical and political contexts of presidential primary campaigning. Investigates candidate strategy and ways candidates seek out money, media coverage and grassroots organization. Includes a week-long trip to New Hampshire during the first-in-the-nation primary to provide students with hands-on experience. Offered as an intersession class during presidential election years.

POLI 305. Political Campaigns and Communication: Theory and Process. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An examination of political campaigns focusing on presidential elections. Analysis includes the study of electoral contexts, political mobilization, campaign organizational structures and strategies, campaign rhetoric, and the evolution of campaign-related technology such as polling and social media.

POLI 306. The Congress. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A study of the behavior of legislators and the structures and processes of legislative decision making in the U.S. Congress. Analysis will include both the internal and external environment of congressional policy making, and an assessment of the impact of congressional policy.

POLI 308. U.S. Presidency. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A political and institutional study of the chief executive, focusing especially on the presidential personality and relations with Congress, the bureaucracy, the courts and the shaping of domestic and foreign policy.

POLI 309. Bureaucratic Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An analysis of the nature of bureaucracy and bureaucratic phenomena in American governments; the role and involvement of the bureaucracy in politics and the policy-making process. Primary focus on theories and approaches to understanding the central role of bureaucracy in modern society and its use and abuse of power.

POLI 310. Public Policy. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An analytical survey of policy formulation and implementation in the United States, together with an examination of the impact of policy upon individuals and groups in American society.

POLI 311. Politics of the Environment. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An exploration of the current controversy about environmental politics and the issues and crises it centers on. Special attention will be given to the constitutional, political and geographical factors in the development of environmental policy and the organized effort to deal with governmental actions and inaction and its impact on policy outcomes. Crosslisted as: ENV 311.

POLI 313. U.S. Constitutional Law: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A survey of the major provisions of the U.S. Constitution concerning civil rights and civil liberties as interpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court. Topics to be covered include how the federal courts enforce individual rights found in the Constitution, limitations on governmental actions and the use of the Constitution as a starting point for discussions of the nation's need to balance competing interests of individuals, government and societal values.

POLI 314. U.S. Constitutional Law: Structure of Government. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A survey of the development of the Constitution as it pertains to the structure of U.S. government. Topics to be covered include an introduction to the operation of the Supreme Court, separation of powers, decisions on federalism, the powers of Congress, the president, the judiciary and judicial review.

POLI 315. Courts and Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A study of theories and models of judicial decision-making in the Supreme Court, focusing on judicial structure and procedures, policy-making analysis, political ideology, and judicial activism.

POLI 316. Women and the Law. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. This course will introduce students to the history, politics and status of women under the American legal system. Topics to be covered may include equal protection, sexual violence, the particular rights of women of color and lesbians, reproductive rights of women of color and lesbians, reproductive rights, women criminals and women in the legal profession. Crosslisted as: GSWS 316.

POLI 318. Politics of Race, Class and Gender. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A study of the racial, class and gender influences on the history and development of political values, conflicts, processes, structures and public policy in the United States. Crosslisted as: AFAM 318/GSWS 318.

POLI 319. Women and American Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. This course analyzes the participation of women in American politics. Attention is given to both women's historical and contemporary roles in politics, their participation as voters and citizens, and their behavior as candidates and office holders. Additional topics may include workplace, family and education issues and reproductive rights. Crosslisted as: GSWS 319.

POLI 320. Research Methods in Political Science. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 2 lecture and 2 laboratory hours. 3 credits. Current methods of research in the discipline of political science. Includes a brief introduction to the tools and techniques for exploring and analyzing political science data.

POLI 321. City Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An examination of urban political power and influence, governance, and public policy. Topics include: power and influence, governmental structures and the political process, public policy, and service delivery.

POLI 322. State and Local Government and Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An examination of the politics and governance of states and localities. Attention is devoted to political culture, interest groups, political parties, the legislative, executive and judicial components of state government, along with the structure and political processes of local governments.

POLI 323. Virginia Government and Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An examination of Virginia state government and politics, with appropriate attention given to political culture, interest groups, political parties, the media and the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government.

POLI 329. Intergovernmental Relations. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An examination of vertical and horizontal intergovernmental relations. Attention will be given to the major variants of federalism. The role of categorical and block grants in programmatic federalism will be assessed. Trends in intergovernmental relations will be advanced.

POLI 331. Public Administration. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A study of the concepts and practices of public administration in the United States. Particular attention will be given to the administrative procedures and practices of the national government and of the government in Virginia.

POLI 341. History of Political Theory: Classical to Modern. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A survey of leading political ideas of the ancient and medieval periods.

POLI 342. History of Political Theory: Modern to Contemporary. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A survey of leading political ideas of modern and contemporary thought.

POLI 343. Black Political Thought. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An historical and sociological perspective on the political and social ideas of black thinkers from David Walker to the present. Crosslisted as: AFAM 343.

POLI 344. Contemporary Political Theory. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. This course provides a survey of recent trends in political theory. It examines updates of the major ideological traditions, arguments about the nature of modernity and recent developments in environment, feminist and non-Western thought.

POLI 345. African-American Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. In this course, students will discuss and analyze the dynamics of the black experience in the American political system. The status of African-Americans in the United States and the struggle for racial equality will be examined, as will the manner in which American institutions have responded to these phenomena. Students will examine the race/class metric in African-American politics, particularly policies of Affirmative Action as a black progress strategy. Crosslisted as: AFAM 345.

POLI 351. Governments and Politics of the Middle East. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A comparative analysis of political systems in the Middle East including the study of contemporary aspects of traditionalism, the political nature of transition, the instruments of political modernization, and evolution and revolution in the political process of Middle Eastern states. The course will explore the primary bases of cleavage and conflict and the principal forces that shape the policies and political dynamics of the region. Crosslisted as: INTL 351.

POLI 352. European Governments and Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A comparative study of the political systems of selected western and eastern European countries. Crosslisted as: INTL 352.

POLI 353. Latin American Governments and Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A survey of politics characteristic of Latin American systems, including democratic reformism, military authoritarianism and revolutionary socialism. The course also examines the contemporary problems of fledgling democracies as they cope with economic and debt crises and various opposition challenges. Crosslisted as: INTL 353.

POLI 354. Russian and Post-Soviet Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A study of the origins, institutions, processes and disintegration of the Soviet political system and the ongoing reform efforts during the post-Soviet period. Special emphasis is placed on the politics of the transition to a democratic political system and a market economy. Other topics include nationality issues, social problems and foreign policy. Crosslisted as: INTL 354.

POLI 355. Asian Governments and Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A comparative analysis of the politics and governments of major Asian states, with a focus on Japan, China and India. Crosslisted as: INTL 355.

POLI 356. Government and Politics of Africa. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. This course will introduce students to the basic outlines of government and politics in Africa. The course will consider such topics as colonialism, elitism, and nationalism and modernization strategies. Using the comparative approach, the course will primarily focus on West, East and Central Africa. Crosslisted as: AFAM 356/INTL 356.

POLI 357. Politics of Southern Africa. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An examination of racial and political developments in the southern tip of Africa. While South Africa will be the primary focus of analysis, other countries in the region such as Zimbabwe, Angola and Mozambique will be studied. Crosslisted as: AFAM 357/INTL 357.

POLI 358. Concepts of Comparative Government. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Comparative study of politics and governments. Introduces concepts and theories used in the study of political systems. Topics include democratization and democratic governance, the role of the state, one-party and military regimes, revolution, and economic and political development. Crosslisted as: INTL 358.

POLI 359. The Politics of Developing Areas. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Analysis of the processes of political and economic development. Includes a study of various challenges facing developing countries, such as economic inequalities, environmental degradation, mass political participation, military coups, revolution and civil war. Crosslisted as: INTL 452.

POLI 360. China in Transition. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Traces how China is making the transition from a planned to market economy, and what implications this transition has on the political, social and urban landscape. Class discussions are grounded on a basic understanding of China's modern history and regional geography. Crosslisted as: INTL 480.

POLI 361. Issues in World Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An exploration of several significant issues in world politics. Topics may include peacekeeping and collective security, international economic competitiveness, global environmental politics as well as selected others. Topics will vary with current events and trends in the international arena. Crosslisted as: INTL 361.

POLI 362. International Organizations and Institutions. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A study of the background development structure and operations of organizations and institutions such as the United Nations, the European Community and the Organization of American States. Crosslisted as: INTL 362.

POLI 363. U.S. Foreign Policy. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An analytical survey of processes and practices in the formulation of U.S. foreign policy, including an introduction to the goals, problems of implementation and current challenges faced by policy makers. Crosslisted as: INTL 363.

POLI 364. Vietnam. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An analysis of the complete record of the conflict in Vietnam. The primary focus will be on the period of U.S. involvement. The course will examine closely how and why the U.S. became involved in Vietnam and what impact the Vietnam War has had on political institutions and behavior. In particular, the course will examine what impact the period of U.S. involvement has had upon U.S. foreign policy. The course also will consider additional topics including public opinion and the war, the relationship between the president and Congress in light of the war, and contemporary U.S. politics as a backlash against the political movements of the 1960s. Crosslisted as: INTL 364.

POLI 365. International Political Economy. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A survey of both theoretical and current policy issues in international political economy. Theories to be covered include liberalism, mercantilism, Marxism, regionalism, world systems theory and others. Policy issues include differing styles of capitalism in the industrialized world, the political economy of development, the politics of international corporate alliances and others. Crosslisted as: INTL 365.

POLI 366. Women and Global Politics. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A study of women and global politics, providing both a feminist re-examination of traditional international-relations theories and a comparative analysis of the political, legal and economic status of the world's women. The impact of women on global political institutions such as the United Nations will be addressed as well as other feminist and grass roots means of taking political action. Crosslisted as: GSW 366/INTL 368.

POLI 367. Terrorism. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: HSEP 101, POLI 103 and INTL 105/POLI 105, or permission of instructor. A survey of the modern problem of terrorism with an emphasis on the political nature of terrorist acts. Examines the history of terrorism, domestically within the U.S. and internationally, the role of religion, the structures and operations of terrorist organizations, as well as counterterrorism policies and policy-making. Crosslisted as: HSEP 301.

POLI 368. Comparative National Security Policy. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A study of national security policies and policy-making in a diverse set of nation-states. Emphasis is placed on comparing how threat perception, historical context, ideology, political structure and leadership impact national security policies of both powerful and weak nation-states. Crosslisted as: INTL 468.

POLI 369. U.S. National Security. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A survey of key issues in U.S. national security including national security decision-making, the use of force, military intervention, nuclear strategy and strategic arms control, ballistic missile defense, the transformation of war due to technology and globalization, defense policy, planning and budgeting, the impact of technology on strategy from airpower to cyberspace and robotics, and critical regional issues.

POLI 370. Nonprofit Organizations and Society. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Examines the history and foundations of the nonprofit agency in the U.S. and abroad. Compares and contrasts relationships between business, government and the nonprofit sector. Discusses requirements for formalizing and managing nonprofit organizations from the perspectives of the volunteer board and employees. Examines issues of accountability, policy, research and resource development.

POLI 372. Ethics, Law and Governance. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Examines how legal, legislative and public policy issues affect the development and growth of nonprofit organizations. Examines ethical principals and legal issues related to personnel and employment, as well as the goals of advocacy and its importance to nonprofit practitioners.

POLI 374. Financial Management for Nonprofits. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Examines how nonprofit organizations are influenced by prices, distribution of goods and services and the distribution of income and wealth. Topics include financial-statement analysis, time-value of money, budgeting concepts and techniques, securities valuation, long- and short-term financial planning issues and working capital management. Designed to develop skills in decision-making in financial management of the nonprofit organization.

POLI 380. Human Security. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A survey of the key elements of human security: the positive and negative impacts of globalization, the rise and impact of civil violence within many nations, the dilemmas of the aid industry, the impact of non-state actors, and issues related to chronic poverty, food security and water security.

POLI 381. The Politics of Genocide and Human Rights. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An examination of the history and causes of genocide and large-scale human rights violations of the 20th century and more recent examples. Using case studies, and focusing on the Holocaust as the paradigmatic genocide, the course studies historical events and theoretical explanations to understand why people have been so willing, in every historical era, to kill each other in large numbers.

POLI 382. International Health. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. A survey of the basic principles of international and comparative health, as well as the national and international institutional structures in place to address health challenges. Focuses on the political, economic, social and individual burdens of inadequate health to societies and the international community. The implementation of global health programs and methods used to evaluate them are studied in detail.

POLI 383. The Middle East and North Africa in Transition. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. An examination of the political, social and economic aspects of the "new" Middle East and North Africa after what has come to be known as "The Arab Spring." Topics addressed include a historical and geographical overview of the Arab world prior to the mass uprisings, an examination of the political and economic motivations for popular unrest in several Arab countries, the role of women and youth movements as well as social media in mass demonstrations that happened in several Arab countries, the wider regional and global impact of the uprisings, and an assessment of the Arab world today.

POLI 391. Topics in Political Science. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Maximum total of 9 credits in all departmental topics courses may be applied to the major. An intensive survey of a specialized field of political interest. See the Schedule of Classes for specific topics to be offered each semester.

POLI 448. Scope and Method of Political Science. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: POLI 103 or permission of instructor. A comprehensive and systematic study of the philosophy of political science, various theories seeking to explain political phenomena and some of the techniques of political analysis.

POLI 490. Senior Seminar. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Prerequisites: 24 credits in political science courses or permission of instructor. A capstone course examining the major ideas and debates in each of the four sub-fields of the discipline of political science: American government, political theory, comparative politics and international relations. Students are required to produce a research project on a critical issue in one of the sub-fields.

POLI 491. Topics in Political Science. 3 Hours.

Semester course; 3 lecture hours. 3 credits. Maximum total of 9 credits in all departmental topics courses may be applied to the major. An intensive survey of a specialized field of political interest. See the Schedule of Classes for specific topics to be offered each semester.

POLI 492. Independent Study. 1-4 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. Variable credit. Maximum of 4 credits per semester; maximum total of 6 credits for all independent study courses. Open generally to students of only junior or senior standing who have acquired at least 12 credits in political science. Determination of the amount of credit and permission of the instructor and department chair must be obtained prior to registration of the course. An independent study course that allows a political science major or other student who meets the requirement to do research, under the direction of an instructor qualified in that area, in a subject or field of major interest.

POLI 493. Political Science Internship. 1-6 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. 1-6 credits. (50 hours per credit.) May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits. Permission of internship coordinator required. Restricted to political science majors, nonprofit management and administration minors and public management minors. Provides an opportunity to relate theory to practice through observation and actual experience within the field of political science. Graded as pass/fail.

POLI 494. Political Science Mentorship. 1-3 Hours.

Semester course; variable hours. 1-3 credits. Prerequisites: 24 credits in political science courses including POLI 103, 105, 107 and 109, permission of instructor, and 3.3 GPA in POLI courses. May be repeated for a maximum of 6 credits. A mentorship course that allows students to develop advanced research skills, to experience managing a classroom and to present the results of their research in a classroom setting. Different sections of the course specialize in different subfields of political science: U.S. government, comparative politics, international relations and political theory.