

# POLITICAL SCIENCE, BACHELOR OF ARTS (B.A.)

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.

## Student learning outcomes

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

### Political science core outcomes

- **Assumptions, methods and analytical tools**  
Demonstrate knowledge of the assumptions, methods and analytical tools of the discipline of political science
- **Current political and policy issues**  
Demonstrate knowledge of current political and policy issues
- **Theory and principles of four subfields**  
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
- **Advanced understanding of one subfield**  
Demonstrate an advanced understanding of current theoretical and empirical study in one subfield
- **Expository and analytic writing**  
Demonstrate skill in expository and analytic writing in the political science discipline
- **Political behavior**  
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 Senior Seminar 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 six internship and three independent study credits 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.)

Course	Title	Hours
<b>General education</b> ( <a href="https://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/general-education-curriculum/">https://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/general-education-curriculum/</a> )		
Select 30 credits of general education courses in consultation with an adviser.		30
<b>Major requirements</b>		
• Major core requirements		
POLI 107	Political Theory	3
POLI 109	Comparative Politics	3
POLI 320 Play course	Research Methods in Political Science video for Research Methods in Political Science	3
POLI 490	Senior Seminar	3
• Major electives		
POLI electives (select from 300 and 400 level)		18
<b>Ancillary requirements</b>		
HUMS 202	Choices in a Consumer Society	1
POLI 103	U.S. Government and Politics (satisfies general education BOK for social/behavioral sciences and AOI for diversities in the human experience)	3
POLI/INTL 105	International Relations (satisfies general education BOK for social/behavioral sciences and AOI for global perspectives)	3
Experiential fine arts <sup>1</sup>		1-3
Foreign language through the 102 level (by course or placement)		0-6
<b>Open electives</b>		
Select any course.		50-58
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>120</b>

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Course offered by the School of the Arts

**The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 120.**

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.

## Recommended course sequence/plan of study

Freshman year		Hours
Fall semester		
POLI 103	U.S. Government and Politics (satisfies general education BOK for social/behavioral sciences and AOI for diversities in the human experience)	3
UNIV 101	Introduction to the University	1

UNIV 111	Introduction to Focused Inquiry: Play course video for Introduction to Focused Inquiry: Investigation and Communication	3
	Investigation and Communication (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	
Experiential fine arts		1-3
Foreign language 101		3
General education course (select quantitative foundations)		3
<b>Term Hours:</b>		<b>14-16</b>
<b>Spring semester</b>		
HUMS 202	Choices in a Consumer Society	1
POLI/INTL 105	International Relations (satisfies general education BOK for social/behavioral sciences and AOI for global perspectives)	3
UNIV 112	Focused Inquiry II (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
Play course video for Focused Inquiry II		
Foreign language 102		3
General education course (select AOI for scientific and logical reasoning)		3
Open electives		3
<b>Term Hours:</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>Sophomore year</b>		
<b>Fall semester</b>		
POLI 107	Political Theory	3
POLI 109	Comparative Politics	3
UNIV 200	Advanced Focused Inquiry: Literacies, Research and Communication (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
General education course		3
Open electives		3
<b>Term Hours:</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>Spring semester</b>		
POLI 320	Play Research Methods in Political Science course video for Research Methods in Political Science	3
POLI electives		6
Open electives		6
<b>Term Hours:</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>Junior year</b>		
<b>Fall semester</b>		
General education course (select BOK to complete breadth of knowledge requirement)		3
Open electives		9
POLI elective		3
<b>Term Hours:</b>		<b>15</b>

<b>Spring semester</b>		
General education course (select BOK to complete breadth of knowledge requirement)		3
Open electives		9
POLI elective		3
<b>Term Hours:</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>Senior year</b>		
<b>Fall semester</b>		
POLI 490	Senior Seminar	3
Open electives		9
POLI elective		3
<b>Term Hours:</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>Spring semester</b>		
Open electives		12
POLI elective		3
<b>Term Hours:</b>		<b>15</b>
<b>Total Hours:</b>		<b>120-122</b>

The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 120.