

# Political Science

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## Goals and Careers

The Political Science major and minor enable students to learn about the theory and practice of politics across four established subfields: 1) American politics (including the local, state, and federal levels), 2) comparative (foreign) governments, 3) international relations, and 4) political theory. Students develop strong proficiency in analytical, research, and writing skills, with a particular emphasis on methodological rigor. They learn how to develop sophisticated arguments, conduct critical research on a variety of topics, and communicate their work through oral presentations and scholarly papers. Finally, they gain civic awareness about their role as citizens and thinkers in an increasingly complex political world.

Political Science graduates pursue a wide range of careers. Many work in government offices, political campaigns, civic organizations, public institutions, and international agencies. A degree in Political Science is also excellent preparation for graduate school, with law school, public policy, and international affairs being the most popular choices. Many also work in the private sector, such as consulting, business, and the media. To support career planning, the department offers its own 1-credit career development seminar (POLS 1002).

The department offers many opportunities for students to further their learning outside the classroom. Many students undertake internships linked to academic study, including public service opportunities. The Experiential Learning Program offers internships combined with academic seminars. The department also works closely with several student organizations, including the Political Science Society as well as Pi Sigma Alpha, the national honorary political science society.

## Special Programs

### Distinction in Major

Distinction in Major (also known as departmental honors) gives highly motivated Political Science students the opportunity to take two academically rigorous capstone seminars and acquire the skills necessary to achieve in-depth research on topics of interest. Distinction is an official university recognition and is noted on the Temple transcript.

Political Science majors who have completed their sophomore year with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.5 are eligible to pursue this honor. Students earn Distinction in Major by completing two capstone seminars in the Political Science Department. Students are permitted to take a two-course writing-intensive sequence: POLS 3996 Honors Capstone Seminar I in their junior year and POLS 4996 Senior Honors Capstone Seminar in their senior year. Students who pass both courses with a B or better and a GPA of 3.5 or better will graduate with Distinction in Major. Note: POLS 3996 counts as an upper-level elective and writing-intensive course and POLS 4996 counts as the senior capstone requirement.

Eligible students prior to their junior year will be contacted via e-mail. Students who believe they are eligible for the program but who were not notified are encouraged to contact the Undergraduate Chairperson Dr. Alexandra Guisinger ([alexandra.guisinger@temple.edu](mailto:alexandra.guisinger@temple.edu)).

## **Accelerated Degree Bachelor of Arts/Master of Arts in Political Science (4+1 Program)**

High-achieving undergraduates can apply for the 4+1 BA/MA accelerated degree program in Political Science, which enables them to obtain their BA and MA in Political Science in five years rather than the usual six. Students begin taking graduate courses in their last three undergraduate semesters, and then spend their fifth year completing all remaining MA requirements. Eligible students must have a minimum overall undergraduate GPA 3.5, and have passed POLS 2503 Evidence and Knowledge. Students will receive notification of eligibility at the end of their sophomore year, and applications will be accepted until October 15th of their junior year. For more information, please contact the Graduate Chairperson.

## **Accelerated Degree Bachelor of Arts in Political Science/Master of Public Policy (4+1 Program)**

The Department of Political Science and the Master of Public Policy (MPP) program offer an accelerated track that enables students to attain their BA in Political Science and an MPP in five total years, instead of the customary six. Students apply to the program during their third or fourth year of undergraduate study and begin taking graduate coursework upon entry. The GRE is not necessary, but students must maintain an overall undergraduate GPA of at least 3.5. For more information, please contact the MPP Director, Dr. Gary Mucciaroni ([gary.mucciaroni@temple.edu](mailto:gary.mucciaroni@temple.edu)).

## **Funding and Support**

- Students may apply for financial support to cover research-related activities, such as visits to archives, travel to present a scholarly paper, etc., through the Creative Arts, Research and Scholarship (CARAS) Program.
- Funding is also available through the Diamond Research Scholars Program.
- Students are also encouraged to submit their completed research papers to the Library Prize for Undergraduate Research and the Temple University Symposium for Undergraduate Research and Creativity.
- The department is committed to supporting student success through internships and presenting research. It works with alumni funding to support internship placements. The department also funds students traveling to present undergraduate research, such as with the annual conference of Pi Sigma Alpha, the national honorary political science society.

## **The Political Economy Certificate Program**

The Department of Political Science and the Department of Economics offer an interdisciplinary program leading to a Certificate in Political Economy. The program focuses on the interaction between government and the economy and is ideal preparation for students planning careers in either the public or private sector. It also provides an excellent foundation for graduate studies in law, the social sciences, and public administration. The program is open to all matriculated students in the university. Contact Dr. Alexandra Guisinger ([alexandra.guisinger@temple.edu](mailto:alexandra.guisinger@temple.edu)) or Dr. Roselyn Hsueh ([rhsueh@temple.edu](mailto:rhsueh@temple.edu)) for specific details and requirements.

## **Pre-Law Studies**

Beth Lawson  
 CLA Academic Advising  
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Political Science is one of the most popular majors for pre-law students. Pre-law students should develop skills in communicating ideas, sharpen their analytical abilities and ability to think logically, and acquire in-depth understanding of at least one liberal arts field (such as Political Science). Students interested in law school can read these requirements at CLA Pre-Law, and for more information contact Dr. Paul Crowe in the Philosophy Department.

## **Internships and Study Abroad**

The department encourages students to obtain internships linked to academic study. Students may replace up to two upper-level electives (equivalent to 6 credit hours) from qualifying internships undertaken with external organizations and programs, as approved by the Internship Coordinator. In addition, the Experiential Learning Program offers internships combined with academic seminars, with courses specially designated for this track.

## **Public Service Opportunities through the Public Service Cooperative**

Temple University's faculty, students and alumni have a long tradition of public service. For internships related to public service, the department offers several credit-bearing opportunities at the local, state, and federal levels. Interested students should complete the program application and contact Internship Coordinator Erin Dwyer ([erin.dwyer@temple.edu](mailto:erin.dwyer@temple.edu)).

## **The City Hall Experience**

The City Hall Internship Experience allows undergraduate students the opportunity to work in Philadelphia City Hall for 10-12 hours each week while earning the equivalent of a 3-credit internship. In addition to receiving credits for internship, students will participate in a 1-credit class for one hour each week to discuss Philadelphia, its policy initiatives, and the ins and outs of city government.

## Harrisburg Capital Semester

Started in fall 2009, Temple University sponsors an internship semester each fall and spring in Harrisburg in association with Temple's Harrisburg campus. Students have the opportunity to explore government affairs, policymaking and implementation first-hand while being full-time students and staying on track to graduation. The Harrisburg semester allows students to receive 6-9 credit hours of internship along with a 3-credit Research Preparation course, and a 1-credit Professional Development Seminar.

## The Washington Semester

The Washington Semester allows Temple students to gain valuable career experience in the nation's capital, while remaining full-time students. If accepted into the program, students register for three courses in the College of Liberal Arts (two for 3 credits each, and one for 9 credits) for a 15-credit semester in the fall or spring. (Summer programs are also available for 12 credits.) Temple University serves as liaison to The Washington Center (TWC), a well-established and well-regarded internship semester program in Washington, D.C., through which Temple students receive internships and take classes.

## Study Abroad

Many Political Science majors taken advantage of Temple's study abroad programs, which provide the life-changing experience of scholarship at overseas institutions, immersion in foreign cultures, and learning new languages. The Office of Education Abroad and Overseas Campuses has information on a variety of programs. The most popular destinations include the Temple campuses in Tokyo and Rome, as well as programs in the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Spain. Study abroad destinations include over 80 countries located on every continent. For questions regarding eligibility and program equivalency, please contact Undergraduate Advisor Nick (ncatsis@temple.edu) Catsis (ncatsis@temple.edu).

## Student Organizations

The department hosts two main organizations that represent the breadth and depth of its students. The faculty advisor is Undergraduate Chairperson Sean Yom (seanyom@temple.edu).

## Political Science Society

The Political Science Society is the organization for all Political Science majors and minors at Temple University. The purpose of the association is to represent the opinions and interests of undergraduate majors within the Political Science Department. The association sponsors activities including career forums, lectures, student and faculty mixers, law and graduate forums, seminars on popular topics, and trips to locales like New York City and Washington, DC.

## Pi Sigma Alpha

Pi Sigma Alpha is the national honorary society for political science students. Temple's chapter was founded in 1965, and since then has inducted over a thousand students. Eligible students are offered membership prior to their junior or senior year. Membership is lifetime. Students who join have opportunities to attend special research conferences, apply for internship and graduate funding, and publish their work in research journals.

## Programs

- Bachelor of Arts in Political Science
- Minor in Political Science
- Minor in Public Policy