

POLITICAL SCIENCE, BA

Students enrolled in political science classes may have interests in public service careers at the national, state, and local levels; the legal profession; teaching in high schools and universities; political advocacy; nonprofit organizations related to public policy; elective and appointive office; political campaigns; and the media. Studying political science also contributes to informed and effective citizenship.

Admission into the Major

Students are expected to formally declare a major no later than the fourth semester of full-time enrollment (or at 61 semester hours for transfer students). Students can declare a major by completing the Change of Major/Minor Application online under the Student tab of myBama.

Special Opportunities

The department offers several opportunities to earn advanced-level credit through its own Study Abroad programs: currently in Sweden, Guatemala, Israel, Belgium, and Germany. The department also offers credit for selected students' participation in the UA Mock Trial Team, as well as credit for internships in federal, state, and local politics and government.

Outstanding students can apply for the department's Accelerated Masters' Program, which allows students to begin work on a graduate degree while still enrolled as an undergraduate.

Students earning the bachelor of arts (BA) degree with a major in political science must complete all University, College and departmental degree requirements. These include the general education requirements, the following major requirements, all requirements for an approved minor and other sufficient credits to total a minimum of 120 applicable semester hours.

Code and Title	Hours
Major Courses	
PSC 101 Intro American Politics	3
Select two of the following:	6
PSC 202 Political Science Methods	
PSC 203 Comparative Politics	
PSC 204 International Relations	
PSC 205 Political Theory	
PSC 206 Public Administration	
Credit Hours Subtotal:	9
Field Requirement	
Select a minimum of three hours in three of the fields	9
Credit Hours Subtotal:	9
Electives	
Select 12 hours of PSC electives, 300-499	12
Credit Hours Subtotal:	12
Total Hours	30

Fields

Students must earn a minimum of 3 hours in three of the fields listed below, for a total of 9 hours.

Field 1: American Government

Code and Title	Hours
PSC 211 State & Local Govt	3
PSC 311 Pol Party & Elections	3

PSC 312 Amer Legislative Syst	3
PSC 313 The American Executive	3
PSC 314 Amer Judicial System	3
PSC 316 Southern Politics	3
PSC 317 Con Law: Freedom of Speech	3
PSC 318 Con Law: Limits of Gov Power	3
PSC 319 Con Law Civ Rts and Libs	3
PSC 322 Topics in American Politics	3
PSC 364 African Amer & Polit Sys	3
PSC 368 Interest Group Politics	3
PSC 369 Social Movements in US	3
PSC 370 American Public Policy	3
PSC 372 Religion and American Politics	3
PSC 373 Voting and Pol. Participation	3
PSC 374 Media and Politics	3
PSC 375 Election Reform in America	3
PSC 376 Political Participation	3
PSC 411 Public Opinion	3
PSC 413 Amer Foreign Policy	3
PSC 417 Gender and Politics	3
PSC 464 The Politics of Health Policy	3
PSC 466 The Politics of Poverty	3
PSC 467 American Conservatism	3
PSC 468 Politics of Education	3
PSC 471 Equal Opportunity and the Law	3
PSC 472 Law in Everyday Life	3
PSC 473 Political Psychology	3

Field 2: Comparative Politics

Code and Title	Hours
PSC 203 Comparative Politics	3
PSC 323 Topics in Comparative Politics	3
PSC 330 Democratization	3
PSC 331 Politics of Developing Nations	3
PSC 332 Politics of Latin America	3
PSC 333 Elections Around the World	3
PSC 334 Government Politics West Europ	3
PSC 336 African Politics	3
PSC 337 Politics of the Middle East	3
PSC 338 Mexican Politics	3
PSC 340 Civil Wars	3
PSC 343 Authoritarianism	3
PSC 344 The Israel-Palestine Conflict	3
PSC 439 UK Politics and Policy	3
PSC 443 Comparative Pub Policy	3

Field 3: Political Theory

Code and Title	Hours
PSC 205 Political Theory	3
PSC 325 Topics in Political Theory	3
PSC 353 Modern Political Thought	3

PSC 354	Ancient Political Thought	3
PSC 362	Organization Theory	3
PSC 452	American Political Thought	3
PSC 453	Theories of National Identity	3

Field 4: Public Policy and Public Administration

Code and Title	Hours	
PSC 206	Public Administration	3
PSC 211	State & Local Govt	3
PSC 326	Topics in PA/Policy	3
PSC 361	Fiscal Policy & Budget	3
PSC 362	Organization Theory	3
PSC 365	Environmental Policy	3
PSC 368	Interest Group Politics	3
PSC 369	Social Movements in US	3
PSC 370	American Public Policy	3
PSC 443	Comparative Pub Policy	3
PSC 462	Public Personnel Admin	3
PSC 464	The Politics of Health Policy	3
PSC 466	The Politics of Poverty	3
PSC 468	Politics of Education	3

Field 5: International Relations

Code and Title	Hours	
PSC 204	International Relations	3
PSC 324	Topics in IR	3
PSC 340	Civil Wars	3
PSC 345	Issues in Global Governance	3
PSC 413	Amer Foreign Policy	3
PSC 414	Foreign Policy Decisionmaking	3
PSC 434	Internatl Polit Econom	3
PSC 435	War And Peace	3
PSC 441	Terrorism and Political Islam	3
PSC 442	Internatl Conflict	3
PSC 444	International Organizations	3
PSC 445	Humanitarianism	3
PSC 446	Political Economy of Security	3
PSC 447	International Orders	3
PSC 449	IR of the Middle East	3

Grade Point Average

A 2.0 grade point average in the major is required for completion of the degree. Please see the Grades and Grade Points section of this catalog for an explanation on grade point average calculations.

Upper-level Residency

A minimum of 12 hours of 300- and 400-level courses in the major must be earned on this campus. PSC 399 Internship In PSC does not count toward this residency requirement.

Ancillary Courses

The major in political science does not require ancillary courses. However, it is recommended that students considering graduate school study a modern foreign language.

Required Minor

This major requires the completion of a minor.

Additional Major Requirements

Specific sections of topics courses (PSC 320 Special Studies In PSC, PSC 321 Special Topics In PSC, PSC 395 Civil Law & Judicial Advocacy, PSC 396 Crim. Law & Judicial Advocacy, PSC 399 Internship In PSC, PSC 421 Seminar in Political Science, PSC 422 Seminar Political Science, and PSC 497 Study Abroad Special Topics) may be appropriate to fulfill the field requirements. Additional credits, earned through transfer credit and/or education abroad, may also fulfill field requirements - please inquire with the department's undergraduate director.

PSC 399 Internship In PSC does not apply to the Department's 12-hour upper-level residency requirement. However, PSC 399 credits do count toward the total of 30 hours toward the major, and toward the College of Arts and Sciences' advanced-level course requirement.

Students should contact the department's undergraduate director concerning this use of special topics courses. Students are responsible for ensuring that they have met all University, College, major and minor requirements. However, each student must meet with an adviser in the major department for academic planning and to be approved for registration each semester. College advisers are also available for freshman students and to provide additional assistance with minor, college and University requirements.

Prerequisites

Unless otherwise stated, the prerequisite for enrollment in PSC 318 Con Law: Limits of Gov Power, PSC 319 Con Law Civ Rts and Libs, and PSC 439 UK Politics and Policy is PSC 101 Intro American Politics. PSC 204 International Relations is the prerequisite for PSC 435 War And Peace and PSC 444 International Organizations The prerequisite for enrollment in 300-level political science courses is sophomore standing or permission of the instructor, and the prerequisite for 400-level political science courses is junior standing or higher or permission of the instructor.

Besides preparing students for positions in the fields of public service and politics, law, education, and journalism, the PSC major also provides skills for careers in business. Every year our students are accepted into competitive graduate programs in these fields that enhance and broaden their career prospects.

Types of Jobs Accepted by Recent Graduates

congressional staff member, political party staff member, staff member at nonprofit organization, law enforcement official, military officer, teacher, AmeriCorps member, lobbyist, White House Staffer

Jobs of Experienced Alumni

city manager, diplomat, elected official, lawyer, chief of staff for member of Congress, communications director for member of Congress, lobbyist, judge, civil servant, VP for Government Relations, foreign service officer, military officer, professor, teacher, journalist, business manager

Learn more about opportunities in this field at the Career Center