

Political Science

Phone: 314-935-5810
Email: polisci@wustl.edu
Website: <http://polisci.wustl.edu>

Majors

The Major in Political Science

Total units required: Students who major in political science are required to complete 30 graded units (10 courses) in political science with a C or better, distributed as follows:

Required courses:

- **Substantive Introductory Courses:** 6 graded units must come from two introductory courses. (**Note:** Students scoring a 4 or 5 on a relevant AP exam may place out of the associated introductory course and replace it with an upper-level course in a related subfield.)
- **Methodology Course:** 3 graded units must come from either Pol Sci 263 Data Science for Politics or Pol Sci 363 Quantitative Political Methodology. All majors are urged to complete this requirement during their sophomore year. (**Note:** Some statistics courses offered in other departments will allow students to opt out of this class, but those credits will not count toward their political science major. See the department website (<https://polisci.wustl.edu/>) for more information.)

Elective courses:

- **Distribution Requirement:** 18 graded units must come from any six 300- or 400-level courses, including at least one 400-level Capstone course (see below). Of these 18 units, students must complete at least one 3-unit course in three of the following fields: American politics, comparative politics, international politics, political methodology or political theory.
- **Other courses:** A student's remaining graded units may be earned by any political science course or independent study. However, credits given for writing a senior thesis (detailed in the Senior Thesis section below) do not count toward the major.
- **Capstone:** All majors must complete at least one 400-level class, home-based in political science, as a capstone experience. Students writing a senior thesis satisfy this requirement by completing Pol Sci 495 Research Design and Methods.

Limitations

No more than 6 units from the following may count toward the major: internship, directed reading, directed research, or teaching practicum.

No more than 6 units from the following may count toward the major: study abroad, summer school, the School of Continuing & Professional Studies, or transfer credit.

Additional Information

Concentrations: Political science majors may concentrate in a subfield of political science by taking (as part of their distribution requirement) three upper-level courses in any one of the five subfields (American politics, comparative politics, international politics, political methodology or political theory) and submitting a subfield concentration form. Students may earn concentrations in up to two subfields. The successful completion of a subfield concentration will be listed on the student's transcript.

Senior Thesis: The department encourages serious students to pursue independent research by working toward a senior thesis. Students admitted to this program work closely with a faculty advisor for a full calendar year, beginning at the end of their junior year. Students writing a senior thesis receive 6 units of credit for two semesters of work by enrolling in Pol Sci 415 Senior Thesis Research. However, this credit does not count toward the completion of the political science major. Although there is no grade point average requirement for writing a senior thesis, an application is required. For more information, contact the department office. All majors may apply.

To qualify to write a senior thesis, students must do the following:

- Complete the methodology course requirement by the fall of their junior year (all majors are strongly urged to complete this requirement during their sophomore year).
- Complete Pol Sci 495 Research Design and Methods prior to their senior year.
- Complete a subfield concentration (detailed in the Concentrations section above) by the end of the fall of their senior year in the subfield appropriate for their senior thesis. At least two thirds of the concentration must be completed by the end of their junior year.
- Apply during their junior year for admission into the program.

Senior Honors: To graduate with Latin Honors, students must successfully complete a senior thesis project and meet a GPA requirement set by the College of Arts & Sciences.

The Major in Environmental Policy

Required units: 40

Students who major in environmental policy will be required to complete 40 graded units (13 courses), distributed as follows:

- 16 units from required foundation courses
- 9 units from research methods requirements
- 9 units from the list of upper-division courses in political science
- 3 units from a social science breadth requirement
- 3 units from a substantive distribution requirement

At least 24 of the total units must be at the 300 or 400 level.

We also strongly recommend that students complete a capstone experience. Possible options include a senior honors thesis, the environmental law clinic or an appropriate internship.