

# POLITICAL SCIENCE

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## DEPARTMENT OFFICE

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## Programs Offered

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Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

Master's in Public Administration

Minor in Political Science

Teaching Credential Preparation

Certificate Program in the Administration of Nonprofit  
Agencies

The political science program at Sonoma State University offers excellent opportunities for the study of government, politics and the exercise of political power. More than 40 courses cover all the major aspects of the discipline. Students develop an understanding of broad, philosophical questions as they relate to politics. They learn to discuss and analyze critically U.S. political institutions and the many public policy issues facing the United States and the world. They are taught how to analyze and understand world affairs and international relations. They are taught how to evaluate and compare political phenomena across different countries. They are trained in appropriate research techniques for the study of political actors, institutions and processes in a complex, interdependent and diverse world.

The political science major allows students to choose from a wide range of courses and subjects within the political science discipline. A common core of courses provides students with the foundational knowledge and research skills needed to pursue more advanced work at the upper division level. In core courses students study the relationship among values, ideology, and politics (POLS 201); fundamental issues in American politics (POLS 202); the logic of

research in political science (POLS 302); comparative approaches and politics (POLS 303); analysis of international politics (POLS 304); and a senior research seminar (POLS 498). Beyond this common core, as part of the additional 20 units required for the major, each student must complete at least one upper-division course in each of the four major fields of political science: political theory, international relations, comparative government, and American government and politics. Since politics and economics are so closely tied together, the department recommends each student complete a basic course in economics. In addition, the department encourages international study for political science students and will arrange for appropriate credits for courses of study at international universities.

A 20-unit minor in political science also is available. Although the minor most often is used in conjunction with such majors as communications, history, economics, and sociology, it can be paired with almost any major offered at the University.

## Internships

The department offers several programs through which students may gain practical experience while earning academic credit. A political science internship involves working in the office of a public official, on an election campaign, or for an advocacy group or nonprofit organization. Interns have served with state assembly members, state senators, members of Congress, and in a number of campaigns for local, state, and national office. Students have also worked with advocacy groups and nonprofit organizations to effect change at the local, state, national and international levels. The comparable program in public administration places students in positions, often paid, with local government offices and agencies where they may be involved with city planning and zoning issues, public relations efforts, special research topics, budget preparation, to mention several possibilities. In addition, the department regularly sends selected students to the state capitol to participate in the Sacramento Semester Program where they work with members of the Legislature, officers of the executive branch, or lobbyists to gain a fuller understanding of the political process firsthand. Finally, special arrangements also may be made for some students to serve as staff to members of Congress in Washington, D.C., for a semester.

## Academic Advising

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor to help plan and carry out an individualized academic program. The department expects students to seek faculty advice every semester, especially prior to registering for their next semester's courses.

## Preparation

Students are encouraged to take English composition and social science courses, including civics, economics, and history. Experience in journalism and debating activities can also be helpful. A foreign language is highly recommended but not required for the degree.

Students who plan further study at the graduate level are strongly encouraged to take courses in an appropriate foreign language, since proficiency in two foreign languages is often required in doctoral programs.

Community college transfer students should contact their advising office, the Sonoma State University Political Science Department or consult the ASSIST.org website to identify appropriate lower-division major/minor preparatory courses. Typically, these would include a basic course in American political institutions, which would fulfill the state code requirements for U.S. Constitution and California state and local government and meet the department core requirement in American Political Systems. Other lower-division courses introducing students to the discipline of political science, the study of international relations, and the study of comparative politics also are highly recommended. Please insert the following: The Pols 200/202 requirement can be met by a combination of AP American Government credit and Pols 151. The department will waive the Pols 201 Ideas and Institutions core requirement if students take both Introduction to Political Theory and Introduction to Comparative Government at a community college.

### Teaching Credential Preparation

Political science majors interested in seeking a general elementary credential may demonstrate subject matter competency by passing the CSET Multiple Subject Assessment for Teachers.\* For further information, contact the department office, or Miriam Hutchins, School of Social Sciences, (707) 664-2409.

\* Or the CSET Single-Subject Assessment for Teachers

### Careers in Political Science

#### Law and Paralegal Careers

A bachelor's degree in political science offers excellent preparation for a wide range of careers in the public, private and non profit sectors. In particular, political science majors acquire the broad based knowledge and research, analytical and communications skills desirable to twenty-first century employers. A major in political science prepares students for the study and practice of law. The department offers a number of specialized courses in the field of constitutional law and civil liberties. The degree also provides a foundation for public service careers at the national, state and local levels, including teaching, research, administration, planning, policy analysis and public office holder. Political science is also an appropriate major for students interested in positions in the overseas agencies of the U.S. government or in international organizations. The major can lead to opportunities in campaign management, speech writing, polling, public relations, lobbying, and voting analysis. Political Science students have also entered journalism careers in television, and social and print media. A political science degree also offers excellent preparation for a degree in the private sector, such as labor relations, information analyst, governmental relations or budget analyst.

### Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

(See page 226 for a sample four-year program.)

Degree Requirements	Units
General education	50
*Major requirements	40
General electives	30
<b>Total units needed for graduation</b>	<b>120</b>

\* Major requirement units (except internships) must be taken for a letter grade

#### Major Core Requirements

Passage of all major core requirements requires a grade of 'C' or better. Pols 302 is a prerequisite for POLS 498.

POLS 201 Ideas and Institutions	4
*POLS 202 Issues in Modern American Politics or POLS 200 (3)	4
POLS 302 Social Science Research Methods	4
POLS 303 Comparative Political Analysis	4
POLS 304 Theory and Analysis of International Relations	4
POLS 498 Senior Seminar	4

\*POLS 202 is strongly recommended for POLS majors.

#### Major Electives

One course must be taken from each of the following areas: Political Theory, International Relations, Comparative Politics, and American Government and Politics.

##### Political Theory

Choose one of the following six courses:

POLS 310 Classical Political Thought	4
POLS 311 Development of Modern Political Thought	4
POLS 312 American Political Thought	4
POLS 313 Critical Theory: Race and Gender	4
POLS 315 Modern Political Ideologies	4
POLS 415 Explorations in Political Theory	4

##### International Relations

Choose one of the following seven courses:

POLS 345 Model United Nations (MUN)	4
POLS 444 United States Foreign Policy	4
POLS 445 International Organizations	4
POLS 446 International Relations of the Middle East, Israel, the Palestinians and the United States	4
POLS 447 Non-violent Strategies in International Relations	4
POLS 448 Political Violence, Terrorism, and Law	4
POLS 486 Selected Issues in International Politics	4

##### Comparative Politics

Choose one of the following nine courses:

POLS 350 European Parliamentary Democracies	4
POLS 351 Politics of Russia	4
POLS 352 Politics of Eastern Europe	4
POLS 354 Comparative Political Parties	4
POLS 450 Politics of Asia	4
POLS 452 Politics of the Developing World	4
POLS 453 Politics of Latin America	4
POLS 458 Comparative Social Policy	4
POLS 487 Selected Topics in Comparative Politics	4

## American Government And Politics

Choose one of the following twenty courses:

POLS 320 State, City, and County Government	4
POLS 330 Race, Ethnicity, and Politics	4
POLS 391 Gender and Politics	4
POLS 420 American Political Development	4
POLS 421 Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations	4
POLS 423 Introduction to Constitutional Law	4
POLS 424 the Bill of Rights, Civil Liberties, and the Constitution	4
POLS 425 the American Party System	4
POLS 426 the Legislative Process	4
POLS 427 the American Presidency	4
POLS 428 Seminar in California Politics and Government	4
POLS 429 Interest Groups	4
POLS 430 Introduction to Public Administration	4
POLS 431 Politics and the Media	4
POLS 466 Political Psychology	4
POLS 475 Urban Politics and Policy	4
POLS 481 Politics of Regulation and Land Use	4
POLS 483 Politics of Wealth and Poverty	4
POLS 484 Elections and Voter Behavior	4
POLS 485 Political Power and Social Isolation	4
<b>Total units in the major core</b>	<b>40</b>

## Minor in Political Science

POLS 200 American Political System (3) or	
POLS 202 Issues in Modern American Politics (4)	3-4
POLS 201 Ideas and Institutions	4
Upper-division courses in political science	12-13
<b>Total units in the minor</b>	<b>20</b>

## Code Requirements

POLS 200 The American Political System or POLS 202 Issues in Modern American Politics fulfills state code requirements in U.S. Constitution and California state and local government. Upper-division courses may also be used to satisfy certain of these code requirements upon approval by the department chair.

## Master's in Public Administration

[www.sonoma.edu/polisci/masters/](http://www.sonoma.edu/polisci/masters/)

Offered primarily as an evening program, the master's degree in public administration provides a rigorous 40-unit curriculum that emphasizes the education required to effectively analyze, formulate, and implement public policy in local, state, and national government, and to achieve similar goals in nonprofit agencies. The program recognizes the need for a strong combination of theoretical and practical learning. Students choose from two concentrations: public management or nonprofit agency management.

Each student is required to complete a 20-unit analytic core, a 16-unit concentration, and 4 units of graduate-level electives. Courses are based upon the professional curriculum established for public administration programs by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA).

Concentrations include specialized courses oriented toward the operation and management of public and nonprofit agencies and typically include fiscal management, personnel administration, legal issues, public policy, labor relations, marketing and resource development for nonprofits, and grants and contract management. Electives cover a wide range of important topics, including ethics, leadership, organizational computer usage, internships, and special studies.

Up to 9 units of comparable graduate course work may be transferred into this program per CSU policy.

If at any time it is determined that the candidate has an English deficiency, extra courses in English will be required in addition to the regular course of study.

## Admission Requirements

Students apply to **both** the University and to the M.P.A. program.

- A bachelor's degree with a major from an accredited college or university with a grade point average of at least 3.00 for the last 60 units of college-level work attempted;
- Prerequisites:** To ensure adequate background, a candidate for admission should have experience or course preparation in the following areas:

- State and local government,
- Federalism and intergovernmental relations,
- Influences on domestic policy making.

- Recommended:** One year experience working in a non-profit organization or a course in introduction to nonprofit organizations (example: through Sonoma County Volunteer Center).

**Candidates without such experience or course preparation can be admitted to the program but must make up deficiencies during the first three semesters of study.**

Prerequisites do not count toward the 40-unit degree. Acceptability of experience or previous coursework as prerequisites will be determined in consultation with the program's graduate coordinator;

- Completion of **both** University and departmental applications. Included in the departmental application are three letters of recommendation. Only three letters will be considered; and
- Recommendation of the program by the graduate coordinator for entrance to the program.

## Graduation Requirements for the Master's Degree

- A grade point average of at least 3.00;
- Satisfactory completion of required coursework, including elective units. No courses for which a grade less than B is earned will be acceptable in meeting the 40-unit M.P.A. requirement. Students earning a B- or lower in a course will be required to repeat the course with a grade of B or better;
- Completion of a master's thesis and oral defense, or two comprehensive written examinations;

- D. Recommendation of the program graduate coordinator; and
- E. Successful completion of the WEPT (or its equivalent), or waiver by the University of this requirement. This waiver is granted by the program graduate coordinator.

**Course Work**

*Common Core Requirements - 20 Units*

POLS 502 Organizational Theory and Analysis	4
POLS 503 Budget and Fiscal Administration	2
POLS 505 Research Methods	4
POLS 539 Program Implementation	4
POLS 550 Planning and Evaluation	4
POLS 580 Nonprofit Dynamics: Politics and Community Environment	2

*Public Management Concentration Requirements - 16 Units*

POLS 501 The Administrative State	4
POLS 503A Public Finance	2
POLS 504A Human Resources for the Public Sector	2
POLS 506 Public Policy Process	4
POLS 511 Labor Relations	2
POLS 538 Administrative Law	2

*Nonprofit Concentration Requirements - 16 Units*

POLS 503B Fiscal Management Nonprofits	2
POLS 504B Personnel for Nonprofits	2
POLS 581 Nonprofit Governance and Legal Issues	2
POLS 582 Planning and Nonprofit Agencies	2
POLS 583 Resource Development	4
POLS 585 Marketing and PR for Nonprofits	2
POLS 587 Grants/Contract Management	2

*Electives - 4 Units Total, can include:*

POLS 507 Ethics in Administration	4
POLS 508 Comparative Public Policy	4
POLS 509 Politics of Health Care and Aging	4
POLS 512 Organizational Development	4
POLS 513 Leadership and Supervision	4
POLS 537 Bargaining, Politics, and Administration	4
POLS 551 Organizational Computer Usage	4
POLS 560 Special Issues in Public Policy	4
POLS 564 Aging Services Administration	4
POLS 588 Issues in Nonprofit Administration	4
POLS 597 Internship (max. 4 units)	4
POLS 599 Thesis	4

**Culminating Experience**

All students in the M.P.A. program are required to complete either a thesis or a comprehensive examination prior to award of the degree. Those opting for a thesis as their culminating experience are required to complete 40 units of coursework, exclusive of prerequisites, and can include 4 units of 599 (Thesis Prep) as an elective. Students electing to take the comprehensive exam must complete 40 units of total coursework exclusive of prerequisites and POLS 596 (exam preparation).

**Certificate Program in the Administration of Nonprofit Agencies**

The Political Science Department also offers a graduate certificate program in the administration of nonprofit agencies. Oriented to the needs of staff and administrators, this integrated series of courses is grounded in the study of contemporary trends in nonprofit agency administration, development, and fiscal management, and offers intensive exposure to the practical managerial techniques necessary for successful agency operation.

**Coursework for the Certificate Program in the Administration of Nonprofit Agencies**

The certificate program requires 24 units of coursework from the nonprofit concentration and common core, all of which may be later applied to the master's degree in public administration. Students in the certificate program are encouraged to pursue the master's degree, though there is no requirement to do so. Students enroll in the 16 units in the nonprofit concentration, and 8 units of electives chosen from common core courses in consultation with the M.P.A. program graduate coordinator.

**Sample Four-Year Program for Bachelor of Arts in Political Science**

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**FRESHMAN YEAR: 30 Units**

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POLS 201 (GE D5) (4)  
 POLS 202 (GE D4) (4)  
 GE (22)

**SOPHOMORE YEAR: 30 Units**

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POLS 302 (4)  
 POLS 303 (4)  
 POLS 304 (4)  
 GE (18)

**JUNIOR YEAR: 29 Units**

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Comparative Government (4)\*  
 International Relations (4)\*  
 GE (19)

**SENIOR YEAR: 31 Units**

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Political Theory (4)\*  
 American Government (4)\*  
 Senior Seminar (4)  
 Electives (19)

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**TOTAL UNITS: 120**

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\* Distribute these upper-division area courses across Junior/Senior years, according to Department offerings and/or your own personal schedule.

Note: It is recommended that majors consider taking history and economic courses as part of their elective options. Nine units of the GE requisite must be filled with upper-division courses, taken no sooner than the term in which upper-division standing (60 units) is attained. POLS 315 (Democracy, Capitalism, & Socialism) counts as both an upper-division GE course (D5) as well as an upper-division political theory course for the major.