

Department of Political Science Undergraduate Handbook

This handbook contains information on requirements for the major and minor, advising services available to you, and an overview of all special certificates, programs, and opportunities available for political science students. The undergraduate experience in the Department of Political Science is overseen by the Chair of Undergraduate Studies, the Undergraduate Advisor, and the Internship Coordinator.

I. Credit and Degree Requirements

As a CLA/CST student, you must have a minimum of 123 credit hours in order to earn your BA or BS degree. Of this total, 90 must be in CLA/CST courses, of which 45 must be at the upper level (courses numbered 2000-4999).

Within Political Science, the **major** requirements entail the following eleven (11) courses:

Introductory (four courses)

- POLS 1101 – American Political System (POL 1911 for university honors)
- POLS 1201 – Foreign Governments and Politics (POL 1921 for university honors) -POL 1301 – International Politics (POL 1931 for university honors)
- POL 2496 – Introduction to Political Philosophy (POL 1996 for university honors)

Intermediate Sequence (three courses) -POL 2503 – Evidence and Knowledge -POL 3501-3599 – Research Preparation (2)

Final Course (one course)

- POL 4896 – Capstone Seminar (POL 3996 or 4996 for university honors)

Electives (three courses)

-You must take three upper-level electives in POLS courses numbered 2000-4999. Up to two of these courses may be substituted by internship credits.

The **minor** requirements entail six classes consisting of the following: any two out of the introductory courses, plus four upper-level electives in POLS courses numbered 2000-4999.

II. Advising

An advisor can help ensure that you follow a course of study that fits your needs and goals. The most important occasion to engage advising is when you register (or priority register) for the upcoming semester. Make tentative selections first, and then meet with your advisor to explain why those courses make sense. Be sure to have the DARS form handy for this meeting, and ask careful questions before reviewing each course, such as:

-Does this course advance your progress in meeting your degree requirements? -Have you taken all the necessary prerequisites the proposed course?

-Will the course open the door to new class options and opportunities?

Most advising resources are concentrated in CLA's Center for Academic Advising and Professional Development. Their staff can inform you about not just curricular matters but also information about CLA and University policies. They can also provide classes, programs, and guidance on how to enhance your skills and build credentials in preparation for post-graduate employment.

Seniors: Final-year students who expect to graduate within a year should see CLA Academic Advising for a "pre-graduate review," which will ensure all the requirements for graduation are being fulfilled.

Transfers: Transfer students should see, in addition to CLA Academic Advising, the Political Science Undergraduate Advisor once they receive a statement of how their previous credits transfer to Temple. The Department can help students interpret any special requirements and also evaluate how their classes map onto its requirements.

Pre-law: If you are interested in attending law school after your political science education, please consult with the CLA Pre-Law Director (Dr. Paul Crowe, in the Philosophy Department) as soon as possible for recommendations regarding your courses and extracurricular pursuits.

Advising in Political Science: For general political science questions, transfer equivalencies for study abroad questions, 4+1 degree programs, and career advice, please see the Undergraduate Advisor as listed on the departmental website.

III. Special Programs

There are various specialized programs that enable political science students to tailor and focus their academic program in more rigorous ways.

Honors: There are four kinds of honors available for undergraduates at Temple. These are:

- Phi Beta Kappa, a national honors society that inducts juniors and seniors once a year;
- Latin Honors (e.g., Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude), which the Temple Office of the University Registrar determines based upon GPA prior to graduation;
- University Honors program, where admitted undergraduates take honors-designated courses and earn special certification upon graduation;
- Distinction in the Major, designed for high-achieving major concentrators and which is designated by special notation on the official transcript.

The Distinction in the Major program is the only one administered by the Department of Political Science directly. To earn this honor, political science majors must have a minimum GPA of 3.5 and pass two honors-designated capstones (POLS 3996 and 4996) with a minimum grade of "B." Students are invited to join the program every year. For more information, please contact the Chair of Undergraduate Studies.

Political Economy Certificate: The Department of Political Science and the Department of Economics offer an interdisciplinary program leading to a Certificate in Political Economy. The program is open to all undergraduates and focuses on the relationship between the political and economic spheres of society. The certificate requires Macroeconomics (ECON 1101 or 1901), Microeconomics (ECON 1102 or 1902), the American Political System (POLS 1101 or 1901), and either Foreign Governments and Politics (POLS 1201 or 1921) or International Politics (POLS 1301 or 1931) as well as two upper-level political economy electives in Economics and Political Science. For more information, please contact the program's coordinators as listed on the departmental website.

MPP Four Plus One: The Department of Political Science and the Master of Public Policy (MPP) program offer an accelerated track that enables students to attain both the undergraduate and MPP degrees in five years; normally, completing each degree separately would take six years. Students apply to the program during their third or fourth year of study, and begin taking some graduate coursework prior to graduation. While they are not required to take the GRE exam, they must have an overall undergraduate GPA of at least 3.5 and complete the necessary application process. For more information, please contact the Director of the MPP Program as listed on the departmental website.

Internships: Internships comprise an integral part of the CLA experience. CLA students are permitted to earn up to 12 credit hours through internships. In the Political Science Department, students can further use six of those credit hours to replace two upper-level courses (POLS 2000-4999). Our department works especially closely with the Capital Semester program in Harrisburg and the Washington Semester program in Washington, D.C., to find the right fit for interested students, both which are run by the Institute for Public Affairs. The department also provides financial assistance for internships through the Tully Award, William Allen Jones Award, the Political Science Alumni Board Award, and Harrisburg/Washington stipends managed by the Institute of Public Affairs. For more information about internships, please contact the Internship Coordinator as listed on the departmental website.

Research mentorships: CLA and Temple provide many opportunities for students to work with faculty mentors on original research and creative scholarship. These include CLA's Liberal Arts Undergraduate Research Award (LAURA), the university-wide Diamond Research Scholars program, the Creative Arts, Research, and Scholarship (CARAS) program, the Diamond Peer Teachers Program, and annual conferences such as Global Temple and the Symposium for Undergraduate Research and Creativity (formerly TURF-CreWS). Interested students should explore these opportunities through the appropriate website, and then directly approach faculty members regarding their availability to serve as mentors.

IV. Student Organizations

The Political Science Department hosts two undergraduate organizations that offer exciting extracurricular opportunities to its students.

The Political Science Society: The society is open to all political science students, whether majors or minors. Its primary purpose is to cultivate student interests in political science and

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contemporary political issues. It sponsors various activities and events, such as student debates, career forums, special lectures, student and faculty mixers, alumni visitations, and law and graduate school forums. Interested students should consult the Society's website, Facebook page, or inquire directly (pssoc@temple.edu).

Pi Sigma Alpha: This is the national political science honors society, founded in 1920 and which currently has over 500 chapters across college and university campuses across the country. It confers not only an external honor upon members but also occasionally hosts public events. Temple University houses the Delta Rho chapter, and recruits majors biannually based upon a minimum GPA (3.5) and credit requirement (75). Students are invited to join every semester. Inquiries should be directed to the chapter advisor, who is also the Chair of Undergraduate Studies.

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