



What is political science? What do political scientists do? What jobs can a political science major get?

Political Science majors at SUNY Oswego examine relationships among individuals, groups, institutions, and governments to understand the quest for justice, liberty, power and wealth that is at the heart of politics. At Oswego, this quest is studied from a variety of analytical perspectives and theoretical approaches. Political Science courses cover issues as far ranging as American civil liberties, globalization and democracy, African politics, international law, immigration policy, and terrorism.

At its core, the discipline of Political Science looks at the ways in which people organize their societies to make collective choices for themselves and others. Thus, politics is an attempt to respond to fundamental questions like: "How should we live?," "What is justice?," and "Who should get what, why, and how?" Political Science also tries to understand and explain what motivates people to seek political change and how the success of such endeavors is conditioned by history, economics and patterns of social life.

In all cases, our faculty encourage and help students to develop two of the most important skills in today's rapidly changing world: the capacity to think critically and the ability to communicate effectively. Graduates of our department have applied these skills to a diverse range of careers including journalism, teaching, business, law, government, foreign service, and the military.

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Political Science at SUNY Oswego



***Information for Current
and Prospective Majors***

POL MAJOR
POLITICAL SCIENCE

Subjects

Political Science courses at SUNY Oswego are organized into three subject fields: American Politics, Global Politics, and Political Theory. Majors take an introductory course in each of these fields, then select nine electives based on their interests.

AMERICAN POLITICS

The study of American politics uses a variety of different approaches to conduct theoretical, institutional, and behavioral analyses of U.S. government and politics. In addition to subjects like American political thought, American politics encompasses the Presidency, Courts, Congress, urban politics, interest groups, intergovernmental relations, and electoral processes. Courses in American politics include Constitutional Law, Political Parties, and New York State Politics.

GLOBAL POLITICS

Global politics examines political, economic, and social institutions in particular countries and world regions, as well as the varied relations of international actors across national boundaries. Subjects covered in the study of global politics include democratization, sustainable development, comparative political systems, international law, foreign policy, and international security. Courses in global politics include European Politics, Political Violence and Terrorism, and The Nation-State and Global Order.

POLITICAL THEORY

The inquiries of political theory are fundamental: What is human nature? What standards should be applied for right and wrong, just and unjust, legitimate and illegitimate? How can we know the answers to such questions? Political theory is also comprehensive: rather than taking as its focus any one particular historical context or political setting, it includes every historical period in its purview. Studying political theory is more like participating in an ongoing debate than mastering a set doctrine. Courses in political theory include Ancient and Medieval Political Thought, Modern Political Theory, and Democratic Theory.

Opportunities

INTERNSHIPS

Various internships are available for interested Political Science majors.

HONOR SOCIETY

The department also sponsors a local chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha, the national honor society for political science students.

POST GRADUATION

After receiving their degrees from SUNY Oswego, Political Science majors have followed a number of different paths. Some have gone on to graduate school to pursue Master's, doctoral, or law degrees. Others are employed in a wide range of career fields.

Requirements

Students who major in Political Science must complete 36 credit hours of course work: 12 hours of core requirements and 24 hours of electives.

CORE

- POL 201 - Global Politics
- POL 203 - Critical Thinking in Politics
- POL 205 - American Politics
- Either POL 490 (Political Science Honors) or POL 497 (Seminar in Political Science)

ELECTIVES

Eight courses that include:

- one course from each of the three subject areas (American Politics, Global Politics, and Political Theory)
- at least seven courses at the 300 or 400 level

Advisement

All majors are encouraged to collaborate with a department faculty member, who teaches in their area of interest, to design a course of study that meets their needs. Students who would like help finding a suitable advisor can consult with the Political Science Advisement Coordinator.