

Political Science

Faculty: Bowen (Chair); Chartock, Dumas, Lowi, Potter, Toloudis

Political science studies patterns of power and influence through an examination of governments, political behavior, and public policies, both in the United States and around the world. More specific topics analyzed include globalization, political development, law, civil rights and liberties, the environment, public opinion, and foreign policy. The discipline examines political theories, both past and present, that inform political discussion and decision-making.

Political science majors interpret political events, evaluate theories of politics, and analyze public policies by gathering and weighing evidence. They do so through the mastery of appropriate empirical research tools and the development of advanced skills in critical thinking, including the ability to dissect scholarly texts. By engaging in these activities, students learn the fundamentals of scholarship, develop a concept of what it means to be a citizen of a representative democracy, and hone the communications and analytical skills at the heart of a liberal education.

Political science prepares students for a broad range of careers in the public, non-profit, and private sectors directly upon graduation or after further study in graduate or law school. The political science major prepares students for careers in law, electoral politics, community or non-governmental organizations, governmental or international agencies, advocacy or lobbying, and public affairs.

Requirements for the Major

The political science major must take an introductory course, either POL 110/American Government or POL 230/International Relations; POL 200/Political Analysis; POL 390/Tutorial in Political Science; POL 498/Seminar in Political Science; one course in each of four fields, American politics, comparative politics, international politics, and political theory; and four courses of political science electives, for a total of 12 course units in the core major. Eight courses in political science must be at the 300 or 400 level. In addition, political science majors must take STA 115/Statistics I, ECO 101/Principles of Microeconomics, and ECO 102/Principles of Macroeconomics; these three correlate courses may be used to satisfy the liberal learning requirements in mathematics and social sciences. The course used as the introductory course (POL 110 or POL 230) may not be used to meet a field distribution requirement. For example, if POL 110 is used as the introduction to the major, it may not be used to satisfy the requirement for one course in the American politics field.

Transfer students are required to take half of the 12 course units in the political science core at TCNJ. Once they are enrolled at TCNJ, majors may not take core POL courses at a two-year institution. Students who have taken the AP exams for American Government and Politics or for Comparative Politics will receive credit toward the major by earning a score of 4 or 5. Students should be careful not to repeat AP courses or courses taken elsewhere here at TCNJ because you cannot be credited twice.

American Politics Courses: POL 110, POL 207, POL 215, POL 300, POL 305, POL 311, POL 315, POL 316, POL 318, POL 320, POL 321, POL 323, POL 324, POL 328

Comparative Politics Courses: POL 150, POL 250, POL 350, POL 352, POL 357, POL 358

International Politics Courses: POL 230, POL 330, POL 333, POL 335, POL 337, POL 345, POL 355, POL 380

Political Theory Courses: POL 275, POL 365, POL 372

The following courses may be counted toward one of these field requirements by designation of the department chair: POL 370, POL 390, POL 391, POL 399, POL 401, POL 402, POL 495, POL 498. The same applies to new topics courses POL 170 and POL 270, which will be offered occasionally.

The following courses are pre-approved substitutes for the designated POL course: PHL 240 for POL 270; ECO 231 or SOC 302 for POL 200; and INT 498 for POL 498. Certain of these other courses may have prerequisites controlled by their home department. Students may take STA 215 instead of STA 115. STA 215 is normally required for majors housed in the School of Business (including Economics) and the School of Science.

Program Entrance, Retention, and Exit Standards

Every major program at the College has set standards for allowing students to remain in that program, to transfer within the College from one program to another, and to graduate from a program. For political science:

- Transfer into the program from another program within the College is based upon the following performance standards in a “foundation course”: Earning the grade of C or higher in POL 110/American Government or POL 230/International Relations.
- Retention in the program is based on the following performance standards in two “critical content courses”: Earning the grade of C or higher in either POL 110/American Government or POL 230/International Relations *and* earning a grade of C or higher in POL 200/Political Analysis.
- Graduation requires a GPA of 2.0 in courses for the program.

Requirements for the Political Science Minor

Political science minor requirements are POL 110/American Government or POL 230/International Relations, one course in comparative politics, one course in international politics, one course in political theory, and one political science option, for a total of five course units. Three course units for the minor must be at the 300 or 400 level.

Also see requirements for the Public Policy Analysis and Management Minor; the International and Area Studies Minor; and the Law, Politics, and Philosophy Minor.

Departmental Honors

A departmental honors program is available. For information or eligibility, see the department chair. Students who meet eligibility standards apply in the spring semester of their junior year. Graduation with departmental honors requires the completion of an honors thesis with a grade of B or better and maintenance of a 3.5 GPA in political science and overall.

Political Science Major

First Year

FSP First Seminar	1 course unit
POL 110/American Government*	1 course unit
<i>or</i>	
POL 230/International Relations	
POL Comparative Politics Option	1 course unit

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Quantitative Reasoning including STA 115	2 course units
WRI 102/Academic Writing (if not exempted)**	1 course unit
Foreign Language (if not exempted) **	2 course units

**Students who have taken a course in American politics or government prior to TCNJ should take POL 150, POL 230, or POL 250 instead.*

***It is recommended that students exempted from these courses take other liberal learning courses. Note: Arabic 151 and 152, Chinese 151 and 152, Japanese 151 and 152, and Russian 151 and 152; are intensive courses and carry two course units of credit each. Students should take this into account when planning a normal four-course semester.*

Sophomore Year

POL 200/Political Analysis	1 course unit
POL Electives	2 course units
Liberal Learning courses (including foreign language, if needed, and economics)	2-3 course units
Electives	2-3 course units

Junior Year

POL 390/Tutorial in Political Science	1 course unit
POL Electives	3 course units
Liberal Learning courses	1-2 course units
Electives	2-4 course units

Senior Year

POL 498/Seminar in Political Science	1 course unit
POL Electives	2 course units
Electives	4-5 course units