Political Science (BA)

Degree Requirements

Majors in Arts and Sciences may be completed with a minimum of 120 semester hours unless designated otherwise. At least 30 hours of course work, which represents 25% of the required 120 hours, must be at the upper division level in order to fulfill the University's residency requirement. At least 15 of the 30 upper-division hours must be in the major or concentration area. An overall grade-point-average (GPA) of 2.0 is required for graduation. In addition, a minimum GPA of 2.0 is required in the student's major or concentration area.

Requirements For A Major In Political Science

The major in political science requires 36 semester hours, of which 12 hours come from the core political science courses, 15 hours of PSC electives at the 300/400 level, and 6 hours of PSC electives at the 400 level, and the capstone seminar in political science. A grade of "C" or higher is required for PSC majors in all core classes and the capstone seminar (PSC 130, PSC 250, PSC 270, PSC 310, and PSC 492). Students must complete 15 hrs. of the 36 hrs. at the 300/400 level at the University of South Alabama. Students pursuing a degree in Political Science also must have a minor in another discipline.

In addition, all political science majors must take the ETS major field test in political science and receive a satisfactory score (standard for passing is determined by the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice). The ETS test is a standardized national examination in political science that is administered by the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey. Students with unsatisfactory scores on the ETS test can retake the test, or they may be required to repeat foundation classes in political science.

All Political Science majors must take the Capstone Seminar and the ETS test during the Fall Semester of their senior year. Failure to do so may prevent you from graduating.

All political science majors must show competency in oral communication. This requirement can be satisfied through paper presentations in the required capstone seminar in political science.

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<tr>
<th>Political Science Major</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>Requirements</td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSC 130</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
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<td>PSC 250</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
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<td>PSC 270</td>
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<td>PSC 310</td>
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<td>PSC 492</td>
<td>3 hrs</td>
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<td>400 level PSC electives</td>
<td>6 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>300/400 level PSC elective</td>
<td>15 hrs</td>
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General Education Requirements For Political Science Majors

General Education Requirements for Political Science majors are specified in the College of Arts and Sciences section.

Department Information

Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice web site
http://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/artsandsci/poliscie/index.html
Undergraduate Studies

The courses offered in the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice are designed to achieve three important objectives:

1. To help students attain a liberal education
2. To encourage and prepare students to participate actively in public affairs
3. To help students advance toward professional careers in such fields as education, law and government.

Political Science

Political Science is a broad discipline in both content and methods. Political Science includes philosophical, historical, and analytical studies of governments, politics, and policies. Political scientists may focus on political behavior, decision making, processes, organizations, and public policies. Inquiry in political science addresses the domestic and international policies of the United States and all other countries and regions. Political scientists study the political values, attachments, and activities of people, individually and in groups. Political science examines both what preferences people share and how they differ according to their personal attributes and positions in the economy and society. Political science also studies how people regard and trust each other as well as their leaders and governments. Consequently, political science has many facets and offers opportunities for many different concentrations.

All first-time freshmen must successfully complete CAS 100: First Year Experience as a degree requirement. Students must enroll during their first term at USA, except for summer-entry students who must enroll in the fall semester following entry.

Technological Competency Requirement

Research Methods (PSC 310/CJ 310) will satisfy the technology competency requirement for both political and criminal justice majors. This is a requirement course for both majors.

Departmental Honors

The Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice offers an opportunity for students in Political Science or Criminal Justice who are not in the University's Honors College to graduate with departmental honors. In order to graduate with departmental honors, the student needs to have at least a 3.50 grade point average (overall and in the major) and maintain that average upon graduation. In addition, the student must take a two-semester departmental honors thesis project with a faculty mentor and a committee.

Criminal Justice

The curriculum in Criminal Justice provides students interested in law enforcement, criminal law, corrections, and the criminal court system with a broad educational background emphasizing social science and the University's general education skills of critical thinking, writing and analysis. At the same time, students in the department gain basic knowledge of the criminal justice field to the extent of specialization compatible with University and College requirements. The curriculum leads to the Bachelor of Arts degree. The mission of the program must be conceived as interdisciplinary in nature, since no traditional discipline covers the wide spectrum of expertise required. The undergraduate program addresses issues respecting the entire criminal justice system, from the nature of crime and delinquency to society's varied responses to crime. Such a focus includes the organization and operation of each of the functional components in the field.

All first-time full-time freshmen are required to successfully complete CAS 100: First Year Experience.

Graduate Studies

The Master of Public Administration degree (MPA) curriculum in the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice is a professional degree program designed principally for present and future administrators and officers in government and other public related organizations. It is open, however, to other qualified students as well.

Students entering the program come from varied academic and vocational backgrounds. Accordingly, no specific undergraduate major is required for admission to the MPA Program. However, certain course prerequisites must be satisfied prior to enrollment in any of the required core courses of the curriculum.

Requirements For Admission

Students are admitted each semester. The following criteria supplement the Graduate School criteria (see Categories of Admission).
Regular Admission
1. Students must have a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 on all undergraduate work (on a 4-point scale).
2. Satisfactory GRE scores (at least 300 combined score on the Verbal and the Quantitative Sub tests).
3. The GRE requirement may be waived for holders of earned advanced degrees on the recommendation of the program coordinator. GRE scores must be submitted prior to any category of admission—except for the person with an earned advanced degree from an accredited institution.

Provisional Admission
In addition to the minimum standards required by the Graduate School, the student must have a minimum undergraduate GPA of 2.7, or 3.0 (on a 4-point scale) for the last 60 hours of undergraduate work and submit GRE general test scores.