

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, including PSC 130, PSC 250, PSC 270, PSC 310 or CJ 310, and PSC 492---plus 21 hours of PSC electives at the 300/400 level. PSC 130 is a prerequisite for most upper-level PSC courses.

Political Science majors must earn a grade of "C" or higher in PSC 130 and in the Capstone Seminar, PSC 492. Students pursuing a degree in Political Science 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 (The standards for passing are determined by the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice). Students with unsatisfactory scores on the ETS test can be required to retake the test, or they may be required to repeat coursework in political science. The

ETS is administered in the Capstone Seminar, PSC 492, which is typically offered in the Fall Semester only. PSC 492 is open to Political Science majors with Senior status.

All political science majors must show competency in oral and written communication. This requirement can be satisfied through paper presentations in the required capstone seminar in political science and Writing (W) courses. PSC/CJ 310 fulfills one W requirement, and PSC 492 fulfills the second.

Political Science Major	Credit Hours
Requirements	36
PSC 130	3 hrs
PSC 250	3 hrs
PSC 270	3 hrs
PSC 310 (W) or CJ 310 (W)	3 hrs
PSC 492 (W)	3 hrs
300/400 level PSC electives	21 hrs

General Education Requirements For Political Science Majors

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

Note that 3 credit hours of Area IV: History, Social, and Behavioral Sciences are fulfilled by successful completion of PSC 130.

Department Information

Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice website
<https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/artsandsci/pscj/>

Undergraduate Studies

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

1. To provide a broad and comprehensive education with exceptional social science training---promoting critical thinking, analytic, oral communication, and writing skills.
2. To help students advance toward professional careers in a diversity of fields including law enforcement; education; government; law; corrections; public policy; business; journalism; NGOs and non-profits; and more.
3. To prepare students to be leaders in their communities and to seize meaningful opportunities to effect positive changes locally, nationally, and globally.

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, communication, and analysis. Students in the department acquire knowledge of the criminal justice field. The program addresses issues relating to 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 components in the field.

Political Science

Political Science is a broad discipline that includes studies of governments, politics, and policies. Political scientists may focus on political behavior, decision making, processes, institutions, 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.

First Year Experience Requirement

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 science and criminal justice majors. Enrollment in PSC 310 or CJ 310 is required for both political science and criminal justice 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 complete a two-semester departmental honors thesis project with a faculty mentor and a committee.

Graduate Studies In Public Administration

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, officers in government, other public related organizations, not for profit agencies, and agencies that interact with governmental institutions and funding. It is a broad discipline, open to qualified students after completion of their undergraduate degree.

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 To The MPA Program

Students are admitted each semester. The following criteria supplement the Graduate School criteria (see Categories of Admission).

Regular Admission To The MPA Program

1. Students must have a minimum undergraduate GPA of 2.5 on all undergraduate work (on a 4-point scale) or a GPA of 2.75 over the last 60 hours of undergraduate work.
2. Students must have taken PSC 130 Intro to US Government or its equivalent prior to taking core MPA courses. A minimum grade of C for this course is required. Students may be admitted to the program without having taken PSC 130, provided they enroll in the course in their first year.
3. Students are encouraged to apply in the fall semester, but are admitted each semester.