



# **POLITICAL** SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT

## Undergraduate Student Handbook

## PREFACE

This student handbook gives an overview of the discipline of Political Science. It also introduces readers to: the University of Nevada Reno's Department of Political Science; the faculty's teaching and research interests; the department's undergraduate educational goals; requirements for the major; academic advising; independent study options; internships and career opportunities in Political Science. This information will help prospective majors and minors plan their course of study. We, as a department, hope this handbook helps you take advantage of the various faculty, staff and student resources available to you. Please feel free to visit us any time in our offices or at our website <http://www.unr.edu/cla/polisci> for additional information or advice.

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## **UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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## WHY STUDY POLITICAL SCIENCE? THE DISCIPLINE

Political science has been called “the queen of the sciences,” and rightly so. It is the only major where one can obtain practical knowledge and at the same time gain insights into the great issues of our age. What, for example, are the causes and institutional forces behind conflicts between the President and the chairman of a congressional committee? Are nations threatening an armed confrontation? What lies behind this conflict? Is there public and media frenzy over a certain policy? Why do people react this way and is it justified? What is the human condition? What is the meaning of civil society, and what is the individual’s place in it?

When you study Political Science you will think about these questions often. You will be able to answer them better than you could otherwise thanks to an understanding of the Presidency and Congress, international relations, political ideologies, and political theory. The knowledge and critical skills gained from the study of politics will enable you to be a more rational citizen, a more constructive participant in public affairs, and a better professional in any vocation that deals with the public domain, including important positions in corporations, government and non-profit organizations.

Political Science is a broad and inclusive discipline. Some political scientists are psychological researchers who want to understand why people behave the way they do politically. Some political scientists study institutions such as legislatures, courts, and bureaucracies. Others seek to know the whys and wherefores of judicial processes and constitutional issues. Some study foreign political systems to learn how their political systems work and why they differ from ours and each other. Other political scientists are intellectual historians and social critics who are interested in the quest for the good society. Still others are policy analysts. Some are omnibus students of American politics. Some are statistical theorists and specialists in surveying political attitudes. Some investigate the causes of war and the conditions for peace among nations.

Amid this wide diversity of interests and approaches lies a common concern with anything “political”: issues, institutions, behavior, power, and public goods. Political scientists also share a common interest: the public arena of human society, the uses of power and persuasion, and the ideas which shape it. The different pursuits and the varied methodologies of political scientists all are directed in one way or another toward promoting this common goal of understanding politics.



## THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE: AN OVERVIEW

Since Aristotle linked traditional inquiry into the political good with empirical comparison of governance, the systematic study of politics has been an integral part of the Western intellectual tradition. The study of politics is recognized as an essential component of a liberal arts preparation for citizenship and leadership in a democratic society. Indeed, the controversies that plague our society—and the world—make the study of politics more important now than ever before.

The Political Science Department recognizes and embraces its distinctive roles, as defined by not only the liberal arts tradition of the College of Liberal Arts in which it is located—but by the land grant origins of the University of Nevada, Reno. At the heart of the department's mission is the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research and service.

A core component of the Department's teaching mission is the education of informed, competent, and efficacious citizens. The Department fulfills this role through our Political Science major and minor programs; our three graduate programs; our participation in an interdisciplinary major in International Affairs; and through the participation of our faculty and graduate assistants in the delivery of the University's core curriculum. The Department encourages the pursuit of excellence in teaching in a number of ways.

Undergraduate education is a historic strength in the department. Our program affords young men and women an unmatched opportunity to:

- develop an understanding of political institutions and behavior
- question the ends and principles of political life
- understand the role of human agency within the nexus of society's political institutions and processes

We recognize that most University of Nevada, Reno Political Science undergraduates will not pursue professional careers in academia or government. Our curriculum develops both an understanding of politics and political life and an ability to analyze and critically evaluate political developments from both an observational and theoretical standpoint.

The Department offers its undergraduate curriculum together with its commitment to graduate education, public service and research. We are committed to the idea that research and teaching benefit each other, and that students benefit most by being linked to faculty at the cutting edge of research and public service, and that they learn as much from committed fellow students, as from faculty.



## FACULTY RESOURCES

The faculty of the Department of Political Science includes twelve full-time members. Members of the faculty have published dozens of books and hundreds of articles that have appeared in every major Political Science journal. Various members of the faculty edit or serve on the editorial boards of major professional journals of the discipline. They have received various national and international fellowships, and have been visiting scholars at Columbia, National Fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Chiang Ching-kuo International Foundation Individual Research Fellowship, London School of Economics, U.C.L.A, U.C. Berkeley, New York University and University of Florence, and lectured to the U.S. Marine Corps War College and the Air War College, and lecturer on U.S. military and economic interests in East Asia for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management's National Security Seminars

The Political Science Department is a very strong teaching department, as reflected in student and peer evaluations. Three of our faculty members are Alan Bible Teaching Excellence Award Winners (three others were finalists for this award). Three were also finalists for the university-wide Tibbits award for excellent teaching. A majority of our faculty members have participated in the Excellence in Teaching program on campus, and have availed themselves of other ways to have their teaching evaluated with an eye toward continuous pursuit of excellence in teaching. Several of our faculty members routinely participate in Continuing Education courses and seminars. The whole department contributes to our effort to make our classes available at non-traditional times so that non-traditional students and the community at large can more conveniently pursue various educational goals. (Ours is one of a handful of departments in which students can fulfill many their major requirements in the evenings or on Saturday, and this is the case for three of our five programs: the PSC major, the M.P.A., and the Ph.D.)

The faculty has actively participated in important national and international research, teaching and service roles. These have involved cooperation with the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the United Nations, the Americorp Program, the American Civil Liberties Union, Amnesty International, state and local criminal justice agencies, and the Office of the Nevada Secretary of State. They are relied upon by state and national news media to lend their expertise to journalism in their areas of specialization.

In the pages that follow you will find more information on our faculty, courses, and programs. If you have questions about this information or just want to talk about the major, please feel free to contact us at any of the numbers listed at the front of this brochure.



## FACULTY BY TEACHING FIELD

### AMERICAN GOVERNMENT:

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*William Eubank*

American Politics, Judicial Process, Constitutional Law, Rational Choice, Research Methods, Terrorism, Political Parties, Voting, and Elections

*Stacy Gordon*

American Politics, Campaign Financing, Citizen Participation, Pressure Groups, Presidency, Political Movement and Congressional Behavior

*Eric Herzik*

American Politics, Presidency, State and Local Politics

*John Marini*

American Politics, Congress, Presidency and Policy Process

*Jennifer Ring*

Women and Politics, Racial and Ethnic Minorities Politics, Race and Politics

### COMPARATIVE POLITICS:

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*Leonard Weinberg*

Political Terrorism, Radical and Right-Wing Extremism, Holocaust Studies, Western European Politics and Party Systems and Middle Eastern Politics

*Jiangnan Zhu*

Chinese Politics, Comparative Politics, Political Economy, and Methodology

### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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*Carlos Guevara Mann*

Human Rights, International Relations and Latin America

*Robert Ostergard*

International Relations and Security policy, Comparative Politics (regional focus on Africa), International Political Economy, Civil-Military Relations, and Civil Conflict



## POLITICAL THEORY

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*John Marini*

Political Philosophy, American Political Thought, Liberal Theory

*Jennifer Ring*

Marxism, Contemporary Political Theory, Deconstruction, American Political Thought

## PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY

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*Eric Herzik*

Policymaking and Administration

*Derek Kauneckis*

Institutional Development, Environmental Governance and Public Policy

*John Marini*

Public Policy

*Christopher Simon*

Public Administration, Public Policy, Localism and Natural Resource Policy, Elementary and Secondary Education Policy, and Macro Organizational Theory

*Allen Wilcox*

Legislative Voting, Public Opinion and Political Attitudes, Political Ideology, Values and Behavior, and Environmental Policy

*Leah Wilds*

Public Policy, Environmental Politics, Western Water Policy, Global Environmental Policy



## THE CURRICULUM

The Political Science curriculum at the University of Nevada Reno is divided into five fields:

### AMERICAN POLITICS

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The American politics area includes all facets of the American political system: elections, parties, the presidency, the legislatures, the courts, the media, the bureaucracy, state and local government, public administration, and interest groups. American politics courses also consider the effects of different institutional arrangements and decision rules.

### COMPARATIVE POLITICS

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The comparative politics area includes general comparative analysis of national political systems, as well as, comparative topics such as women in politics, revolution, terrorism, human rights, and political development. It also includes the study of politics in specific areas: Western Europe, the former Soviet Union, Latin America, the Middle East, South Asia, Japan and China.

### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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The international politics area covers interaction, cooperation, and conflict among nations. It includes theories of international relations, great power politics, foreign policy, defense and national security, international law and organizations, global environmental policy, human rights and international political economy.

### POLITICAL THEORY

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The political theory area includes political philosophy and its history, contemporary political ideologies, democratic theory, political ethics and evaluation.

### PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY

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In addition, there are several courses in methodology that deal with research methods and techniques for data gathering and analysis.

Within each area there are four categories of courses:

1. The 100-level courses are open without any prerequisite to all students. They are intended to provide an overview of the different sub-fields of the discipline without assuming previous knowledge on the part of the student
2. The 200-level courses focus on specific topics. Some previous knowledge may be required. Therefore, students should usually take one of the introductory courses before enrolling in 200-level courses.
3. The 300-level course focus on specific topics in more depth. They provide an opportunity for intensive analysis of specific issues and problems in Political Science. Students should enroll in these courses only after taking as least one 200-level course in the relevant subfield.
4. The 400-level classes are recommended for juniors and seniors only. These courses vary in scope and content. To guide students, explicit prerequisites, as well as permission of the instructor, may be required.



## POLITICAL SCIENCE COURSE DESIGNATIONS

\*Denotes course is listed in more than one category

### AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

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PSC 101-American Politics: Process and Behavior PSC 103-Principles of American Constitutional Government (CORRESPONDENCE COURSE ONLY) PSC 208-Survey of State and Local Government PSC 255-The American Women's Movement PSC 304-The Legislative Process PSC 305-The American Presidency PSC 332-The Judicial Process\* PSC 353-Identity Politics in the United States\* PSC 354-Politics and Women\* PSC 401a-Urban Politics\* PSC 401e-Politics of Nevada PSC 401f-Public Opinion and Political Behavior PSC 401h-American Political Parties and Electoral Behavior PSC 401i-Citizen Participation, Pressure Groups and Political Movements PSC 401m-Intergovernmental Relations PSC 401z-Special Topics in American Government PSC 403h-The Supreme Court and Public Policy\* PSC 411g-Constitutional Law: Separation of Power and Federalism PSC 409b-Internship: Legislative PSC 409g-Internship: Congressional

### COMPARATIVE POLITICS

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PSC 211-Comparative Government and Politics PSC 404d-Comparative Public Administration\* PSC 405e-Foreign Policies of Major Powers PSC 407a-Political Systems of Western Europe PSC 407b-Political Systems of East Asia PSC 407c-Political Systems of Russia and East-Central Europe PSC 407d-Political Systems of the Middle East and North Africa PSC 407e-Political Systems of Latin America PSC 407f-Political Systems of China PSC 407h-Politics and Problems in Developed Areas PSC 407i-Politics and Problems in Developing Areas PSC 407j-Nationalism PSC 407l-Basque Diaspora Studies PSC 407p-The Middle East in World Affairs\* PSC 407q-Political Violence and Terrorism\* PSC 407r-Politics and History of Anti-Semitism PSC 407s-Comparative Political Economy\* PSC 407t-Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa



## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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PSC 231-World Politics PSC 336-International Community PSC 403a-Natural Resource Policy\* PSC 403d-Global Environmental Policy\* PSC 405a-International Law PSC 405d-American Foreign Policy PSC 405e-Foreign Policies of Major Powers\* PSC 405f-Problems of World Politics PSC 405g-International Conflict PSC 405h-International Human Rights PSC 405i-Holocaust and Genocide PSC 405p-Global Political Economy\* PSC 407p-The Middle East in World Affairs\* PSC 407q-Political Violence and Terrorism\* PSC 407s-Comparative Political Economy\*

## POLITICAL THEORY

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PSC 227-Introduction to Political Philosophy PSC 323-History of Political Thought PSC 324-History of Political Thought PSC 403j-Political Ethics and Political Corruption PSC 409a-Political Philosophy PSC 409b-Philosophy of Political Science PSC 409c-American Political Thought PSC 409d- Contemporary Political Thought PSC 409g-Politics and Literature in the 20th Century PSC 409i Marx and Marxism PSC 409j-Feminist Political Theory PSC 409k-Jurisprudence PSC 409z-Special Topics in Political Theory

## PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY

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PSC 210-American Public Policy PSC 320-Policy Analysis PSC 332-The Judicial Process\* PSC 341-Elements of Public Administration PSC 353-Identity Politics in the United States\* PSC 354-Politics and Women\* PSC 401a-Urban Politics\* PSC 401m-Intergovernmental Relations\* PSC 403b-Energy Politics and Policy\* PSC 403c-Environmental Policy



PSC 403d-Global Environmental Policy PSC 403e-Environmental Law PSC 403g-Law and Water Resource Policy PSC 403h-The Supreme Court and Public Policy\* PSC 403k-Problems in American Public Policy PSC 403z-Special Topics in Public Policy and Administration PSC 404a-Public Financial Administration PSC 404b-Public Personnel Administration PSC 404c-The Politics of Administration PSC 404d-Comparative Public Administration\* PSC 404e-Theories of Public Administration PSC 404f-Administrative Law PS 404z-Special Topics in Public Administration PSC 405p-Global Political Economy\*

### PLANNING A COHERENT PROGRAM OF STUDY

The best course of study combines planning with flexibility. It is usually a mistake to select courses each semester on a purely ad hoc basis without giving any thought to the coherence of a program. On the other hand, no one should try to plan ahead so completely that the ability to accommodate new interests and enthusiasms disappears. Plans and goals can be revised periodically.

### SOME OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPING A MAJOR FIELD OF STUDY

Ten courses are required for the major with at least one of the classes in each of the sub-fields. PSC 101 is the only required course for the Political Science major. Six of the courses must be at the 300 level or above. Only six credits of internship courses may be used to fill the ten course requirement.

**Suggested Work in Related Disciplines.** Selected courses in such disciplines as anthropology, economics, history, philosophy, psychology, religion, and sociology are desirable.



## SOME OPTIONS FOR DEVELOPING A MINOR FIELD OF STUDY

The Department offers a minor in Political Science, for which the requirements are: a minimum of seven (7) courses in Political Science, no more than two of which may be at the 200 level or less.

The form to declare Political Science as a minor can be obtained in the main office, Mack Social Science, Room 236, or online.

## INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMS

It is also possible to pursue special interdisciplinary interests. A Political Science major combines well with such programs as those offered by Basque Studies, International Affairs and Women's Studies. Students interested in women's studies and gender roles, for example, would find a number of Political Science courses relevant to their major. Professor Ring devotes part or all of some courses to discussion of women and men's political participation and to the consequences of that participation for the study of politics.

## ADVISING

Upon notification of your declaration as a major in Political Science, you should make an advising appointment with the Undergraduate Advisor. The department has prepared a packet of information for new majors, which is obtainable in the main office.

Your advisor is a valuable resource. He or she can help you plan a coherent and satisfying curriculum and can provide you with information on course offerings and opportunities within the department. Meeting with your advisor also ensures progress toward fulfilling both university graduation requirements and departmental major requirements.

Faculty members usually set aside office hours when they are available without specific appointment. These hours should be posted on their office doors, listed with the department's Administrative Assistant in Mack Social Science Room, 236 and online.



## INTERNSHIPS

The Political Science department offers three types of internships:

- Public Service Internship
- Congressional Internship Program
- Legislative Internship Program

### PUBLIC SERVICE INTERNSHIP

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The Public Service Internship program offers interested and qualified students, at the undergraduate and graduate level, the opportunity to earn three to six credits while serving as an intern in one of various public, nonprofit or approved private organizations in the community. While serving as an intern, students gain invaluable experience in and exposure to the day-to-day working environment of a host organization. Opportunities exist at both the domestic and international policy levels. In addition, internship positions are available in various state-level campaign offices.

It is possible to carry an internship position over from one semester to another. Although a few internships provide modest stipends or salaries, and some provide per diem expenses only, most are voluntary. The student typically works in his/her assigned or selected organization for from six to twelve hours per week depending on the number of credits a student wishes to earn.

Students must contact the faculty member with whom s/he is working at the end of each month. A final evaluation of the student's internship experience is due when the internship is completed.

Interested students should contact Dr. John Marini for more information.



## CONGRESSIONAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

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Dr. John Marini Students can earn 3-6 units of Political Science credit, while obtaining practical experience in the legislative process, by serving as an intern in one of Nevada's Senate or House congressional offices in Washington, D.C. Students must obtain internship through the congressional office, not the Department of Political Science. Prerequisite: 9 Political Science credits, including PSC 304, or examination.

## LEGISLATIVE INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

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Sue Wagner, Former Lieutenant Governor of Nevada Gain first hand experience in the inner workings of Nevada government. Three or six university credits. An experience of a lifetime! The duration of internship is from mid-January until the end of the semester during the legislative session. This internship is available to Juniors, Seniors and Graduate students. Interested students should make sure that they have completed PSC 304 or PSC 308 by Fall of the year. A GPA of 3.0 is preferred. Applications will be available in the Fall at the Political Science Department. Three faculty references and one letter of recommendation are required. Also, an interview will be conducted by Sue Wagner, Ex-Lieutenant Governor, prior to acceptance in the program.



## PI SIGMA ALPHA

The Delta Xi Chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha recognizes eligible juniors and seniors who have demonstrated academic excellence in Political Science. The Chapter cooperates with the Department of Political Science in promoting valuable extracurricular activities related to public affairs. Membership in the University of Nevada Reno Chapter of this national honorary society of approximately 100 members is open to all students who have:

- 1) completed at least three Political Science courses, one of which must be at the 100-level or above;
- 2) achieved a minimum G.P.A. of 3.3 overall, and a minimum G.P.A. of 3.5 in Political Science courses;
- 3) rank in the top one-quarter of the relevant class.

One-time membership dues are used to fund chapter activities and the national office, and to provide each member with a distinctive certificate attesting to his or her membership in the society. The Faculty Advisor to Pi Sigma Alpha is Dr. Christopher Simon.

For more information, please see the Pi Sigma Alpha's national website at:  
<http://www.apsanet.org/~psa/>



## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Like all the disciplines in the liberal arts, a degree in Political Science is not a vocational or professional degree. It is not intended to provide training for any one specific career.

Nevertheless, an undergraduate major in Political Science is appropriate and valuable preparation for a wide variety of careers. Any professional whose work involves the public domain would benefit from the knowledge gained and the critical skills developed as a Political Science major.

Political science majors follow varied paths after graduation. A recent survey reported that 56 percent of the graduating Political Science majors intended to seek immediate employment while another 37 percent planned to pursue graduate or professional education. Of the latter, 74 percent were headed for law school. Medical, business schools and graduate departments in the social sciences were each the immediate goals of 6.5 percent of the graduating Political Science majors.

In the longer run, a larger proportion of those planned to pursue advanced education, envisioned business school (21 percent) and social sciences graduate study (10.5 percent). A relatively smaller proportion perceived themselves in law school (50.5 percent). Eventually, 50 percent of those with post-graduate education plans intended to seek a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree, 4.9 percent a doctor of philosophy (Ph.D.) degree, and

5.9 percent a medical doctor (M.D.) degree. Graduating Political Science majors who planned to enter the workforce intended primarily to enter business (29.2 percent), media, advertising or journalism (15.3 percent), and government or politics (12.5 percent).

Former Political Science majors hold a wide variety of responsible positions. A 2000 survey reported that graduating seniors will serve as a management consultant, an account executive assistant, a teacher, a campaign manager, and a policy analyst. By majoring in Political Science, previous University of Nevada Reno undergraduates have enjoyed access to numerous and different careers in the public and private sectors.

A career in teaching and research at the university level provides another professional option for those who plan to continue their education through the doctoral degree. The profession continues to enjoy the traditional advantages of academic life including intellectual engagement through teaching and research, self-directed work, and interaction with students in a learning environment. In addition, scholars in most Political Science fields find that opportunities are available to bring their expertise to bear on pressing public issues. Thus, an academic Political Science career can be an exciting and highly rewarding career choice.



These are some of the principal career choices of our majors. There are others as well. For any of them, a Political Science major will not only give you valuable job training; but it should help prepare you to be a knowledgeable and creative member of your chosen field.

## CONCLUSION

For those of you who are currently contemplating choosing a major in Political Science, we hope this survey of our program will be helpful to you in making your decision.

For those of you who are already majors, we hope that this booklet will assist you to make the most productive use of your time with us. Keep it as a reference to consult when questions arise.

For those of you in either category who need information or advice omitted from this booklet, please feel free to visit us.

