

POLITICAL SCIENCE, B.A. (BEHREND)

Seven Penn State campuses are scheduled for closure after Spring 2027: DuBois, Fayette, New Kensington, Mont Alto, Shenango, Wilkes-Barre, and York. New students are not being admitted at these campuses.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: Erie

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science, a minimum of 120 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	15
Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements	24
Requirements for the Major	42-43

0-7 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 0-6 credits of GS courses; 0-4 credits of GQ courses; 0-3 credits of GH courses.

3 of the 24 credits for Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements are included in the Requirements for the Major, General Education, or Electives and 0-12 credits are included in Electives if world language proficiency is demonstrated by examination.

Per Senate Policy 83.80.5, the college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of coursework in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned.

Requirements for the Major

Each student must earn at least a grade of C in each 300- and 400-level course in the major field.

To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn a grade of C or better in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>).

Common Requirements for the Major (All Options)

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
PLSC 1	American Politics: Principles, Processes and Powers	3
PLSC 3	Comparing Politics around the Globe	3
PLSC 14	International Relations	3
Additional Courses		
Select one of the following:		3
PLSC 7N	Contemporary Political Ideologies	
PLSC 17N	Introduction to Political Theory	
PLSC 17W	Introduction to Political Theory	

Supporting Courses and Related Areas

Supporting Courses and Related Areas: Require a grade of C or better

Select 12 additional credits of PLSC courses not used to complete other requirements. At least 12 credits from Additional and Supporting Courses must be at the 400-level. 12

Requirements for the Option

Select an option 18-19

Requirements for the Option Crime and Law Option (18 Credits)

Code	Title	Credits
Additional Courses		
Select 6 credits from the following:		6
SOC 5	Society's Problems: Causes, Consequences, and Solutions	
SOC 12	Criminology	
SOC 13	Juvenile Delinquency	
CRIMJ 100	Introduction to Criminal Justice	

Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better

Select 6 credits from the following:		6
PLSC 471	American Constitutional Law	
PLSC 472	The American Legal Process	
PLSC 487	International Law and Organizations	

Supporting Courses and Related Areas

Select 6 PLSC credits in law courses from an approved list 6

International Relations Option (18 Credits)

Code	Title	Credits
Additional Courses		
ECON 104	Introductory Macroeconomic Analysis and Policy	3
or GEOG 126	Economic Geography	
Select 6 credits from the following:		6
PLSC 90	Introduction to Security	
PLSC 140	Contemporary Controversies in International Relations	
PLSC 200N	Government and Politics of Europe	
PLSC 220	Politics of the Developing World	

Supporting Courses and Related Areas

Select 3 credits of HIST from approved list (GH) 3

Select 6 credits in PLSC comparative politics or international relations courses from an approved list 6

Politics and Government Option (18 Credits)

Code	Title	Credits
Supporting Courses and Related Areas		
Select 12 credits of PLSC courses		12
Select 6 credits of courses in related areas from a major-approved list		6

Public Policy Option (18-19 Credits)

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
PLSC 202	American Public Policy	3
Additional Courses		
PLSC 111	Debating the Purpose of Government	3
or PLSC 223N	Ethnic and Racial Politics	

Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better

Select 3-4 credits from the following:	3-4
PSYCH 200 Elementary Statistics in Psychology	
SCM 200 Introduction to Statistics for Business	
STAT 200 Elementary Statistics	
STAT 250 Introduction to Biostatistics	

Supporting Courses and Related Areas

Select 3 credits of GEOG from approved list	3
Select 6 PLSC credits in policy courses from approved list	6

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements**First Year Engagement**

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

B.A. Degree Requirements

World Language (0-12 credits): Student must attain 12th credit level of proficiency in one world language in addition to English. This proficiency must be demonstrated by either examination or course work. See the Placement Policy for Penn State World Language Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/advising-planning-degree-program/course-placements/placement-policy-world-language-courses/>).

B.A. Fields (9 credits): Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Arts, World Languages, Natural Sciences, Quantification (may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major; world language credits in this category must be in a second world language in addition to English or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the first language). Credits must be selected from the list of approved courses.

World Cultures (0-3 credits): Select 3 credits from approved list. Students may count courses in this category in order to meet other major, minor, elective, or General Education requirements, except for the University Cultural Diversity (US/IL) requirement.