

History and Politics

The mission of the History and Politics program supports the College by providing majors with a depth of knowledge and proficiency in the disciplines of history and political science. The social science major develops students' writing, research, and reasoning abilities. It addresses the need to construct clear and appropriate interpretations about complex information. Further, it helps students understand the nature of change and continuity in human experience over time. The major prepares students for a number of career paths including graduate training in a variety of disciplines. The major serves well the demand that graduates express their ideas clearly and think responsibly. The faculty in the program also support the College by encouraging all students in their courses to become informed, articulate, political individuals with a comprehension of the complex nature of living in an interdependent global community. The History and Politics program is inclusive and student-centered, using experiential learning where appropriate and enhancing student self-development through habits of lifelong learning.

The History and Politics program offers a history or politics concentration within the social science major with primary emphases in politics, European history, American history, and public history. Upon declaring the major a student will develop a contract for the course of study in consultation with faculty in the program. There are, in addition to the primary emphases, many possible areas of focus including graduate school preparation, pre-law, history or politics for journalism, history or politics for international studies, European Studies, American Studies, the American South, American Slavery, American Women's History, Asian Studies, history or politics for government service, history or politics for divinity services, history or politics for mass communications, and history or politics for careers in business. Other thematic contracts are possible with department approval.

Learning Outcomes: History and Politics

1. Students will identify, clarify, articulate, and evaluate personal political values while becoming knowledgeable global citizens.
2. Students will develop an awareness of the importance of the past for its own sake and for its use in the present and future.
3. Students will demonstrate their learning and growth toward undergraduate competency in reading, researching, and writing in the social sciences.
4. Students will develop a working knowledge of disciplinary methodologies appropriate to their area of specialization.
 5. Students will prepare for careers and vocational objectives.

Major in Social Science (History or Politics), B.A.

36 Credits

A standard major consists of 36 credits. A student must take a minimum of twelve credits at the 200 level that includes POL 201, POL 211, HIS 201 or HIS 202 and HIS 210 (formally HIS 102). Students must take a minimum of 18 credits at the 300-400 level and up to an additional six credits to fulfill the seminar sequence appropriate to their concentration (History or Politics) or the appropriate honors sequence; the politics seminar sequence requires POL 319 and POL 419 while the history seminar sequence requires HIS 325 and HIS 425 or HIS 491 and HIS 497 for honors completion.

Minor in Social Science (History or Politics)

18 Credits

The History and Politics program offers a minor with an emphasis in either history or politics. Students intending to minor in either emphasis complete eighteen credits with a minimum of nine credits at the 200 level and nine credits at the 300-400 level. Completing a minor with an emphasis in politics requires POL 201 and POL 211. Completing a minor with an emphasis in history requires HIS 201 or HIS 202 and HIS 210 (formally HIS 102).

Honors in Politics

A major, upon recommendation by the politics faculty, and upon certification by the Dean of the College, receive the designation "honors in politics" after successful completion of the following:

1. Achievement of a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better in all course work, and a 3.3 or better in all politics courses.
2. Satisfactory completion of six credits, four of which are completed in the fall semester as Politics 497 Politics Honors and two of which are completed in the spring semester as Politics 419 Senior Seminar in Politics.
3. Completion of a yearlong Honors Thesis on a topic approved by the politics faculty.
4. Achievement of periodic approval for continued work on the Honors Thesis.
5. A successful defense of the Honors Thesis before an examining committee which includes the faculty in politics, one faculty member outside the discipline, and/or an outside examiner.

Honors in History

A major, upon recommendation by the history faculty, and upon certification by the Dean of the College, receive the designation “honors in history” after successful completion of the following:

1. Achievement of a cumulative GPA of 3.2 or better in all course work, and a 3.6 or better in all history courses.
2. After successfully completing HIS 325 Junior Seminar with no less than a B course grade such students will, at the invitation of the history faculty, enroll in HIS 491 Honors Seminar during the fall of their senior year.
3. Continuing in the honors program requires the following by the end of HIS 491:
 - a. Approved thesis proposal.
 - b. Demonstration of adequate progress toward completion of the project.
 - c. The program will consider students meeting these criteria for enrollment in HIS 497, Honors Research.
4. In addition to the successful completion of HIS 491, a student will earn honors in history with successful completion of the following:
 - a. The submission of a thesis which conforms to the history faculty’s Thesis Guidelines manual on or before the designated deadline date. The normal deadline will be three weeks before spring graduation.
 - b. A successful defense before a three or four person defense committee of whom at least two are history faculty. At least one member must be tenured. The Department will arrange and convene this defense committee in consultation with the student.
 - c. The submission of a final copy of the approved thesis which includes: The revision of the thesis as required by the defense committee. A manuscript which meets the preparation rules described by the History Thesis Guidelines manual is required.
 - d. Notification by the director of the thesis to the program faculty that the student has met all the above conditions.

Internships: History and Politics

The program encourages majors and minors to consider academic internship opportunities in their sophomore and junior years. Internships are particularly helpful for students in public history and politics. Students interested in internships should work with program faculty at least a semester in advance of any intended program of study.