

Political Science – Pre-Law

Department of Political Science, College of Arts & Sciences



Program of Study

The department offers a major in Political Science with a Pre-Law option. The option gives students solid preparation in Constitutional law and the key institutions that adjudicate law, such as the Supreme Court. Western political science majors have been admitted to all the law schools in Illinois as well as other elite schools, such as Harvard, the University of Michigan, Stanford, and Georgetown. Our graduates who went on to attend law school work in settings ranging from small, private practices to some of the nation's largest and most prestigious law firms. Others have become judges, lobbyists, and elected officials. The option offers more structure in an area of specialization, but the number of hours required for the major remains 36 semester hours (SH). The department also offers minors in Political Science, Public Administration, and International Relations.

Faculty

Courses are taught by faculty holding doctoral degrees from universities across the U.S., including Harvard University; Georgetown University; Northern Illinois University; Hamline University; and the Universities of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Florida at Gainesville, Georgia, Iowa, North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Texas at Austin, and Wisconsin at Milwaukee. Our faculty members come from diverse backgrounds and have a wide range of academic specialties.

While most faculty are involved in active research, our primary mission is that of teaching and mentoring, and we take this mission seriously. All Political Science courses taken by our majors are taught by faculty members rather than by graduate students or teaching assistants. Most courses enroll fewer than 40 students.

Scholarships

There are four departmental scholarships available to our majors. The Marcy & Lulu Bodine Scholarship is awarded each year to an outstanding incoming freshman major. This scholarship is renewable for up to three additional years. The Charles Leonard, Don Marshall, and Clarence Neff Scholarships are awarded annually to deserving freshmen and transfer students. Detailed information on scholarships is available from the department office at (309) 298-1055; Western's Scholarship Office at (309) 298-2001; or on the Web at wiu.edu/Scholarship.

Honors in Political Science

To be eligible for the Centennial Honors College, entering freshmen must have an ACT composite score of at least 28 OR have a 26 or 27 composite ACT and be in the top 15% of their graduating class OR have an ACT composite score of at least 24 and be in the top 10% of their high school graduating class. A comparable SAT score is acceptable. Transfer and current WIU students who wish to join the Honors College (including the Quad Cities Honors Program) must have a 3.4 grade point average on a 4.0 scale based on 12 or more semester hours. Honors credit is given for honors coursework completed at other accredited institutions. To find out more, visit wiu.edu/Honors.

General honors seminars in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences provide students with the opportunity to explore key academic issues with distinguished faculty members.

Student Activities

Political Science majors and minors are encouraged to join the Associated Students of Political Science, which fosters student involvement in department affairs. There is also a chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha, the national political science honorary society, on campus. Additionally, Pre-Law students have the opportunity to participate in many University-wide Pre-Law student activities, including the Pre-Law fraternity Phi Alpha Delta, a moot court competition through Model Illinois Government, and an American Mock Trial Association (AMTA) mock trial team. The Political Science department offers a course in judicial simulation to help students prepare for mock trial competitions and offers Pre-Law advising.

Special Opportunities

The department is a member of the Western Survey Research Center. The center administers sample surveys for both the University and the local community as well as statewide. Survey research is an integral component of a number of courses in the department and offers a set of marketable skills that are much in demand in the private and public sectors.

The department strongly recommends that all majors supplement their classroom education with the practical, hands-on experience of an internship. Students can receive up to 6 SH of course credit that can be applied to the major. The department also has established a scholarship fund to subsidize these internships. In recent years, our students have served internships in the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Department of State, and the Illinois legislature as well as in many governmental agencies at the local, state, and national levels.

After College

The Political Science major is a typical component in preparation for the law school career path. Our graduates have been admitted to all of the law schools in Illinois and to many law schools throughout the country, including Harvard, Yale, Stanford, and Georgetown.

Students who major in Political Science pursue a wide variety of careers in both public and private practice, including prosecuting and defense attorneys, corporate or civil litigators, government attorneys, judges, and administrative law judges. Lawyers also pursue a wide variety of careers related to politics and government, including lobbying and holding high elected and appointed office. Western Political Science alums hold such positions throughout Illinois and the nation.

For More Information

Contact Dr. Keith Boeckelman, Chair, Department of Political Science, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455-1390, or e-mail him at KA-Boeckelman@wiu.edu. You can also contact the Political Science Pre-Law Advisor, Phi Alpha Delta Faculty Advisor, and Mock Trial Advisor, Dr. Kimberly Rice, Assistant Professor, Western Illinois University, 1 University Circle, Macomb, IL 61455-1390, or e-mail her at KJ-Rice@wiu.edu.

Campus Visits

The Admissions Reception Center (Sherman Hall 115) is open most weekdays from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM when the University is in session. Group information sessions are available on Mondays and Fridays at 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM, and individual appointments can be made on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Campus tours are conducted at 11:00 AM and 2:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Appointments with advisers, faculty, or a financial aid adviser may be arranged separately during the week. The Admissions Reception Center is open from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM most Saturdays when the University is in session. A group information session is available at 10:00 AM, and a campus tour is conducted at 11:00 AM. You may schedule your visit or tour online at wiu.edu/admissions by selecting "Visit Campus." You may also schedule a visit, tour, or individual appointment by calling toll free (877) PICKWIU (742-5948) or (309) 298-3157, or by e-mailing admissions@wiu.edu.



[wiu.edu/cas/
politicalscience](http://wiu.edu/cas/politicalscience)

Department of Political Science

Morgan Hall 422 • Western Illinois University
1 University Circle • Macomb, IL 61455-1390
Phone: (309) 298-1055 • Fax: (309) 298-1739



WESTERN
ILLINOIS
UNIVERSITY