

Political Science Department

Fulton School of Liberal Arts



PROGRAMS

MAJOR

- Political Science
- International Studies

MINOR

- Political Science
- International Studies
- Law, Justice and Advocacy

About the Department

Political Science is the study of politics and government. In the Political Science Department, we explore the traditional subfields of the discipline, including American politics and public policy, international politics, comparative politics, and political theory. Reflecting the discipline's evolution, we also focus on the politics of racial, ethnic, and gender identity.

Our faculty educate students to think politically and scientifically. To think politically means evaluating the clashing values and interests that divide protesters on the street, legislators in Congress or countries at the United Nations. Thinking politically also involves reflecting on the meaning of power, authority, liberty and justice. To think scientifically means analyzing politics in a systematic, transparent and non-partisan way. This requires using theories and concepts supported by evidence. Through this approach, students refine their critical thinking skills and learn how to make persuasive arguments.



Finally, our department nurtures good citizenship. We live in a time of rapid change and upheaval, presenting us with opportunities to confront important issues like economic inequality, democratic backsliding, racial discrimination, environmental sustainability and national security. Our goal in the Political Science Department

is to help our students become politically engaged. To that end, we work closely with the Institute for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement (PACE) through student voting drives, candidate debates, guest speakers, and internships.



WHAT CAN I DO WITH A POLITICAL SCIENCE DEGREE?

Students who are considering graduate study after SU will find that the political science major provides excellent preparation for law school (J.D.), graduate programs in public administration and public policy (M.P.A. or M.P.P.), and advanced degrees in international relations and political science (M.A. or Ph.D.). Graduates of our department can be found at the highest levels of government, in politics and law, and across the business world. Many are working in federal, state, county and local government legislatures and agencies throughout Maryland, while others have cultivated successful careers in journalism and business. A degree in political science can lead to a career in:

- Government (e.g., policy analyst, legislative assistant, congressional staffer)
- Advocacy groups, think tanks and NGOs (e.g., researcher, analyst)
- Public relations and public affairs
- Lobbying
- Law enforcement and intelligence analysis
- Political campaigning (e.g., campaign manager)
- Polling agencies (e.g., pollster, data analyst)
- City and town administration (e.g., city manager)
- Journalism
- Education (e.g., social studies teacher)

“Just because you do not take an interest in politics doesn't mean politics won't take an interest in you.”

— Pericles

Make Tomorrow Yours

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salisbury.edu/politicalscience



A Sense of Community

The Political Science Department is all about building a community of learners. In the classroom, we discuss and reflect on hot-button political topics, which foster mutual learning among students and faculty. Outside the classroom, students continue the discussion through the Political Science Club, a student-led organization that offers an inclusive, civil space for political dialogue and debate. Ultimately, students work with faculty to develop their own “political voice,” a skill that will empower them as citizens long after they leave the classroom.

Department Specialties, Internships & Prelaw

Our faculty specialize in exciting areas of political science, including Black political participation, race and social justice, the influence of plutocracy in U.S. politics, the politics of waste, U.S. empire, the causes of war, and the political dynamics of world regions such as East Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America.

Political science is the most common undergraduate field of study for students applying to law school. Our department understands the connection between law and politics, as many of our classes and programs examine the political forces that shape how laws are made at the state, national, and international levels. In addition, we have a Law, Justice and Advocacy Minor – an interdisciplinary program that combines courses on politics, race, the legal system, morality and social justice. The department’s prelaw advisor helps students prepare for the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), assemble law school application materials, and develop the skills and habits necessary for success in law school and beyond. Additional resources include seminars and workshops focused on the law school application process, as well as a comprehensive prelaw handbook.

The Political Science Department also supports SU’s highly successful Model UN Club. Under the guidance of

political science faculty, this club regularly participates in international Model UN conferences where students role-play as delegates from various countries serving on UN committees. Students earn course credit for this experience in POSC 111: Model United Nations.

Finally, the Political Science Department coordinates a variety of internships, including a program with the Maryland General Assembly, as well as local internships with elected officials, advocacy groups, law firms, legal aid agencies and many others. The department also works with PACE and The Washington Center (TWC) to provide our majors with the opportunity to live, study and work in Washington, D.C., for a semester, interning at the White House, CNN, Congress, think tanks or in federal agencies. This experience allows students to earn 16 credits toward the completion of their degree.

FACULTY

Chair

- Associate Professor Eric Rittinger, Ph.D. Syracuse University

Professors

- Adam Hoffman, J.D., Ph.D. Albany Law School University of Maryland
- Taehyun Nam, Ph.D. University of Kansas

Assistant Professors

- Guillermo Caballero, Ph.D. Purdue University
- Michelle Fletcher, Ph.D. Southern Illinois University

Emeritus Professors

- Harry Basehart, Ph.D. Ohio State University
- Gregory Cashman, Ph.D. University of Denver
- Michael O’Loughlin, Ph.D. Ohio State University
- Leonard Robinson, Ph.D. University of Utah
- Sarah Surak, Ph.D. Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

“I had an extremely positive experience as a political science major at Salisbury University. The professors and courses were intellectually stimulating, and the major provided a great platform for developing a civic-minded attitude. Thank you!”

— Recent Political Science Graduate

CONTACT INFORMATION

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