# POLITICAL SCIENCE, B.A. (LIBERAL ARTS)

**Begin Campus:** Any Penn State Campus

**End Campus:** University Park, World Campus

## Program Learning Objectives

- Students will develop substantive knowledge of the discipline of Political Science.
  - Students will be able to define and use the concepts political scientists employ to make and substantiate knowledge claims.
  - Students will be able to describe the central debates and theoretical frameworks of political science and international politics.
- Students will develop knowledge about how political scientists use empirical analysis to gain insight into political and social processes, to advance political and social goals, and to evaluate the effects of programs and policies.
  - Students will be able to explain multiple approaches to empirical research, such as large-scale observational research, experiments, surveys, case studies, formal modeling, and elite interviewing.
  - Students will be able to describe both the application, and the advantages and disadvantages of different research methods in relation to particular problems.
- Students will develop the ability to create coherent, persuasive, and empirically grounded oral and written arguments.
  - Students will be able to construct and defend logical arguments.
  - Students will be able to present evidence to support empirical claims.
  - Students will be able to communicate ideas effectively in conformity with academic standards.
- Students will develop the ability to systematically analyze problems and draw evidenced based inferences. Students in different majors will accomplish this with different emphases depending on the courses they take as part of the BA/BS.
  - Bachelor of Arts students in PLSC and INTPL will analyze problems and draw evidence based inferences using a broad range of techniques according to programmatic focus and individual preference.
  - PLSC Bachelor of Science majors will analyze problems and draw inferences using various data sources and statistical tools.
  - PLSC SODA majors will analyze problems and draw inferences using computational tools appropriate to large complex data sets.
- Students will develop the ability to combine the substantive knowledge, modes of inquiry, and analytic skills learned in the classroom to address contemporary problems in an uncertain world.
  - Students will be able to draw upon political science research to construct testable explanations of novel situations.
  - Students will be able to weigh the arguments, evidence and inferences used to address problems under conditions of uncertainty.
- Students will develop ethical reasoning and citizenship skills to participate in a global, pluralistic society.
  - Students will be able to trace the possible ethical implications of public policies and political structures and their consequences for democratic political values.
  - Students will be able to articulate the goals, conditions, and challenges of democracy and describe the roles of citizens and public officials in manifesting and preserving democratic values.
  - Students will be able to critically evaluate the values inherent in the exercise of power through political systems, social structures, information, and collective action.