Interested in INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS?

Major in Political Science-International Relations

Political Science major based on 9 PSCI courses plus 3 “major-related” courses from other disciplines; IR concentration emphasizes cluster focused on core “IR” issues such as security, political economy, human rights

Academic department featuring 30 full-time permanent faculty members, many of whom regularly publish and teach on international relations/comparative politics

Training in major international relations concepts, theories, and models, supplemented with attention to domestic politics of other countries and areas (comparative politics) and American politics and foreign policy.

Thesis: Optional dedicated honors experience combining (a) honors seminar and (b) individual faculty mentorship; plus opportunity to present findings at Midwest Political Science Association conference in Chicago, as well as to publish findings in Penn’s College Electronic Research Undergraduate Journal (CUREJ)

Typical courses offered for: Political Science Major with International Relations concentration

**International Relations Subfield:**
- Introduction to International Relations
- American Foreign Policy
- International Security
- International Political Economy
- International Law & Institutions
- International Human Rights
- America & the World
- War Strategy and Politics
- Civil Wars
- Causes of War & Peace
- International Politics of the Middle East
- The European Union
- International Relations of South Asia
- Chinese Foreign Policy
- Race & IR Theory
- Oil and Grand Strategy

**Other Subfields (Comparative, American, Pol. Theory):**
- Introduction to Comparative Politics
- Political Change in the “Third World”
- Political Economy of Development
- China’s Domestic Politics
- Politics of Deeply Divided Societies
- Political Economy of East Asia
- Russian Politics
- Politics in the Contemporary Middle East
- Contemporary African Politics
- Comparative South Asian Politics
- Political Economy of Modern India
- Politics of Postwar Western Europe
- Authoritarian Politics
- Muslim Political Thought
- European Union
- Social Movements
- Money & Markets
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Political Science-International Relations Major

Question: Can I be a Political Science major and take mostly International Relations courses?

Answer: Yes! If you want, as many as 11 of your 12 major courses can focus on international relations and comparative world politics. (At least one course must be drawn from either American government or political thought.) Some students concentrate heavily in international relations; others choose to embrace a set of courses that draws more heavily from other subfields.

Question: How does majoring in an academic discipline differ from majoring in an interdisciplinary program?

Answer: Political Science majors leave Penn with a core grounding in one academic field of study. By taking at least 9 Political Science courses, PSCI majors explore the ways in which different levels of politics interact with each other. With this foundation, they gain both analytical depth and breadth.

Question: Does a Political Science major allow me to pursue interdisciplinary study?

Answer: Yes! Political Science majors are required to take “major-related electives” in other departments to complement their PSCI courses. Additionally, many Political Science majors choose to double major or minor in another field.

Question: How much flexibility do I have in choosing my major courses?

Answer: A lot! The major is structured to give you
- grounding (2 core/introductory courses)
- breadth (3 courses that cover different levels, or subfields, of politics)
- flexibility (7 electives – 4 PSCI and 3 non-PSCI - that meet your interests and goals)

Your major advisor is available to work with you to design the ideal course of study for you.

Question: As a political science major, can I participate in Study Abroad or Penn in Washington?

Answer: Yes! Study abroad courses and PIW courses count toward the Political Science major.

Question: Do a lot of Political Science majors get internships in foreign policy or international relations fields?

Answer: Yes! When you declare the Political Science major, we will also discuss your internship goals and work with you to make sure you know the best strategies for finding an internship right for you.

Question: Will I be required to write a thesis?

Answer: Political Science majors are not required to write a thesis. Instead, if you have a 3.6 major GPA at the end of your junior year, you can apply to participate in an Honors Thesis Program. As an honors student, you would conduct original research under the guidance of a dedicated faculty mentor. At the same time you work one-on-one with your mentor, you would participate in a senior honors seminar. This gives you the “best of both worlds”: the advantage of a focused mentorship experience and the opportunity to participate in a vibrant research community of similarly-minded student.