

POLITICAL SCIENCE

General Major

By the end of the general major in Political Science, the successful student will be able to:

I. Depth and breadth of knowledge

- A. Manifest at the introductory level a familiarity with the basic concepts and issues in the discipline of political science, as well as a rudimentary understanding of its historical trajectory, subfields, and how it relates to other academic disciplines.
- B. Articulate an understanding of the limited but important place of government and politics within the overall panorama of creation.
- C. Explain and synthesize the key issues and schools of thought in the western tradition of political reflection. Articulate an historical perspective on the current conflict amongst the modern political ideologies. Illustrate the extent to which the ideologies have developed both in continuity with and in reaction against each other.
- D. Articulate the basic theories, concepts, structures, and issues in international relations (POL-208, required).
- E. Explain the historical background and social, economic and cultural factors which constitute the unique setting of Canadian government and politics. Articulate a comprehension of the institutions and processes (constitutional, governmental and political) which contribute to the present pattern of Canadian politics. Discuss critically the issues and challenges facing the contemporary Canadian polity.
- F. Articulate the basic theories, concepts and issues in international political economy. Explain the historical background and social, economic and cultural factors which constitute the unique settings of several domestic political systems, including those of the United States, Russia and the principal European countries. Articulate a comprehension of the institutions and processes (constitutional, governmental and political) which contribute to the present pattern of politics in these countries.
- G. Explain how and why the political system of the United States has historically diverged and currently differs from that of Canada, as well as how and why the two countries have developed in similar ways. Explain the historical background and social, economic, cultural and personal factors which constitute the unique setting of Russia's political life. Articulate the complex role Marxism-Leninism once played in the development of the Soviet social and political systems and the factors leading to their ultimate demise. Explain the impact of the several ethnic nationalisms within and immediately adjacent to the territory of the Russian Federation. Critically assess the movement away from what might have become democracy towards something approaching personal absolutism. Explain the historical and cultural context of European politics, with respect to both the region as a whole and individual countries. Begin to use a framework for comparing and analyzing different political systems, including our own. Explain the different ways that different countries have attempted to accommodate cultural, religious and ideological diversity within their borders, and why some have been more successful than others. Manifest an awareness of the simultaneous (and seemingly contradictory) trends of integration and disintegration in Europe and elsewhere.
- H. Identify and articulate the ideas of the major political thinkers of the era stretching from the 5th century BC to the 19th century AD. Articulate an understanding of the influences which helped to shape the contemporary cultural and political landscape of Europe, North America and the world during this era. Identify and articulate the ideas of the major political thinkers of this era and the trends they represent. Articulate an understanding of the intellectual context in which these theorists have formulated their thinking (POL-321 and 323, one of which is required for general major).

II. Knowledge of methodologies

- A. Articulate a basic understanding of the methods of inquiry in political science, as well as the philosophical and worldview assumptions conditioning them. Articulate a critical framework, informed by a Christian worldview, for discerning the valid insights of such methods. Articulate a basic understanding of the methods of inquiry into political ideologies, as well as the philosophical and worldview assumptions conditioning them. Articulate a critical framework, informed by a Christian worldview, for discerning the valid insights of such methods (POL-121 and 122, both of which are required).
- B. Explain the importance of the study of our own political system and the different methods for so doing (POL-221, required). Explain the importance of the comparative study of different political systems, as well as the international context for the ongoing relationships amongst state actors. Articulate the complex relationship between stable political cultures and institutional reform.
- C. Explain how political theorizing affected political practice during the 5th century BC to the 19th century AD. Explain the ways various political theorists of the era addressed issues of virtue and the polis, politics and science, religion and the state, the nature of law and sovereignty. Interact critically with these theorists from the standpoint of a Christian worldview.
- D. Explain how political theorizing has affected political practice during the past century. Explain the ways various political theorists have understood the nature of the political and its place in the larger array of human life. Interact critically with these theorists from the standpoint of a Christian worldview.

III. Application of knowledge

- A. Synthesize the information in the texts and lectures within the context of the course as a whole and within the larger context of the university's core curriculum. Manifest a comprehension of how the concepts and issues of the discipline interrelate and how they apply to contemporary political practice. Explain and analyze the practical consequences of these ideologies for the contemporary political scene. Synthesize the information in the texts and lectures within the context of the course as a whole and within the larger context of the university's core curriculum. Show comprehension of how the issues raised by the course interrelate and how they apply to contemporary political practice. Apply the insights of a Christian worldview to the enduring questions of political theory.
- B. Write an analysis of a particular argument concerning the respective powers of the Prime Minister and Parliament within the Canadian polity. Explain the significance of the forces, both practical and philosophical, that threaten the continued unity of Canada.
- C. Research a topic related to comparative political systems, international relations and/or foreign policy, and write a paper based on this research. Research a topic in the subfield of political theory and write a paper based on this research. Grapple with the arguments of more than one political theorist and write a paper based on this.

IV. Communication skills

- A. Communicate ideas especially in written form but also orally in the classroom context. The 100- level courses focus on written communication in examinations. The 200-level courses call for a research paper, examinations and discussion where appropriate. The 300-level courses call for discussion, a research paper, a final examination and a formal oral presentation.

V. Awareness of limits of knowledge

- A. Articulate an awareness that, while God's creation constitutes a stable, knowable order, our ability to grasp it will always be limited and fragmentary. This is applicable to all courses taught in the department.

VI. Maturity and professional capacity

- A. Fulfil their own responsibilities as students in this course and begin to manifest a recognition of their own responsibilities as citizens and of how this relates to their other responsibilities towards family, church, and employment. Explain the importance of studying Canada's government for exercising the duties of citizenship and the larger responsibilities of the person created in God's image. Explain the importance of studying foreign governments for exercising the duties of domestic citizenship and the larger responsibilities of the person created in God's image. Explain the importance of studying the international realms for exercising the larger responsibilities of the person created in God's image. Show evidence of having grappled with the issues raised in the readings covered in the course, especially the place of the political in life and the importance of domestic citizenship and the larger responsibilities of the person created in God's image.