

# School of Social Sciences

*Political science majors study how politics work at the individual, group, national, and international levels.*

*As a political science major, I have been offered a unique opportunity to enhance my perception of the world and the political dynamics that make it function. After serving in the Army and deploying in support of operation Iraqi Freedom, the scholarship at UC Irvine holistically combined my experiences and has raised my knowledge to an academically mature level.*

*With a political science degree from UC Irvine, I will continue my dedication to public service as a sculpted leader through ambition and independent thought.*

*-Nick Masellis*  
Political Science Major

## Political Science

### What is political science?

Why do some countries become democracies? How are public policies determined? What shapes relationships between nations in the international system? As a political science major at UC Irvine, you will have the opportunity to explore these and other issues related to how politics work at the individual, group, national, and international levels.

Methods for gathering and analyzing information about political behavior and political processes are a major focus of the introductory course work.

Upper-division courses are organized around general areas of study including:

- American politics
- Political theory
- International relations
- Comparative politics
- Public law

Each area provides students an opportunity to pursue a more focused, in-depth look at political science from different angles.

### Topics of research in political science

As one of the top 35 programs in the nation, the political science department offers more than 100 courses each year to nearly 1,000 undergraduate majors. World renowned faculty experts explore a host of topics including politics of advanced and democratizing societies and their interactions, political economy, international relations, legal systems, political institutions, political philosophy, political ideology, political behavior, and radical and ethnic politics.

### What can I do with a political science degree?

Students have many opportunities to pursue special topics in political science through independent study courses, field studies, and internships. Many political science majors participate in the UC/DC Internship Program, in Washington, D.C. and the University's Education Abroad Program.

Political science majors learn how to understand politics and acquire the skills for effective performance in many professional fields. The course work emphasizes the development of analytic thinking and clear writing skills essential for success in a number of fields. Political science majors have gone on to pursue careers in business, international relations, law, politics, consultancy, journalism, and public service as well as advanced graduate training in law, academics, and public policy.

### Opportunities in political science at UC Irvine

Explore the opportunities available to students interested in studying political science at UC Irvine.

#### *Minor in Political Science*

Are you interested in studying political science but a major isn't right for you? Consider the minor in political science which enables you to explore the field beyond the introductory level but in less depth than the major.

#### *Minor in Global Peace and Conflict Studies*

Political science majors are often interested in the minor in global peace and conflict studies, an interdisciplinary curriculum which addresses issues of international conflict and cooperation; international political economy, and international environmental issues. The minor combines internationally oriented courses from the Schools of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Social Ecology.

## Suggested curriculum for a political science major

### Freshman<sup>1</sup> (12 to 16 units per quarter)

Lower Division Writing (two courses)  
Lower Division Political Science core courses (three courses)  
Social Science 10A-B-C or Math 2A-B-7  
Social Science 3A  
General Education VI<sup>2</sup>

### Sophomore<sup>3</sup> (16 units per quarter)

Lower Division Political Science courses (two courses)  
General Education II (three courses)  
General Education IV (three courses)  
General Education VII<sup>3</sup> (one course)  
General Education VIII<sup>4</sup> (one course)  
Electives

### Junior (16 units per quarter)

Upper-Division Writing (one course)  
Upper-Division Political Science courses (two courses)  
Upper-Division Social Science courses (three courses)  
Lower/Upper-Division Social Science course (one course)  
Upper-Division Political Science module courses (two courses)  
General Education IX (one course)  
Electives

### Senior (16 units per quarter)

Upper-Division Political Science module course (one course)  
Upper-Division Political Science course (one course)  
Electives

<sup>1</sup>Students should move from a 12 to 16 unit work load sometime in first year, when comfortable with the change

<sup>2</sup>Language may be satisfied in high school prior to matriculation

<sup>3</sup>This requirement can be met with PS 61A

<sup>4</sup>This requirement can be met with PS 6A or 41A or 51A

## Opportunities in political science at UC Irvine (cont.)

### Honors Program

The honors program provides an opportunity for the most outstanding students in the major to go beyond the usual course offerings. Students in the program engage in original research under the close supervision of a faculty member, providing a chance for students to do independent research as an undergraduate. The program also provides students the opportunity to investigate topics not covered in the classroom. Learn more at [www.polisci.uci.edu/honorsprogram.htm](http://www.polisci.uci.edu/honorsprogram.htm).

### Public Affairs Internship Program

The public affairs internship program identifies political internship opportunities in the Orange County area and matches these openings with interested UC Irvine students. Local government agencies, state and local legislators, public interest groups, campaign organizations, and other political groups are seeking qualified UC Irvine students to serve in these positions. Learn more at [www.polisci.uci.edu/paip.htm](http://www.polisci.uci.edu/paip.htm).

### Student Organizations

The department supports an active chapter of the **Model United Nations**, a group focused on developing an understanding of current international issues. Learn more at [www.polisci.uci.edu/modelun.htm](http://www.polisci.uci.edu/modelun.htm).

The department also sponsors the **Law Forum**, a student group for those interested not only in pursuing legal careers, but also for those interested in becoming more informed, effective citizens. Learn more at [www.polisci.uci.edu/undergraduateprogram.html](http://www.polisci.uci.edu/undergraduateprogram.html).

## Undergraduate Counseling Office

The Social Sciences Undergraduate Counseling Office provides numerous services and special programs for undergraduate students including course planning, change of major request, financial aid appeals, course substitutions, and information concerning honors, graduate and professional school, and career and internships. Visit the Counseling Office online at [www.socsci.uci.edu/ugs](http://www.socsci.uci.edu/ugs) or call (949) 824-6803 to set an appointment.

## Academic Resource Center

A great starting point for information about academic-related endeavors is the School of Social Sciences Academic Resource Center (SSARC) where students may obtain information about internships, graduate school, and careers in a number of Social Sciences related fields. Visit the Academic Resource Center online at [www.socsci.uci.edu/ssarc](http://www.socsci.uci.edu/ssarc) or call (949) 824-8322 to set an appointment.



*Pictured at right: Nick Masellis, political science undergraduate student*