Recommendations

B.A. Political Science

To learn more about making the most of your educational experiences within and beyond the classroom contact:
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PARTICIPATE

Community Service

Related courses
POLI 121: Green Explorations; POLI 122: Green Engagements

Sites/experiences
Martin Luther King Day of Service; Service Saturdays; Students Advocating a Greener Environment (SAGE); Alternative Breaks; CityServe; Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Columbia

Why this is important
Community service fosters awareness of political and social problems and common goals. Service projects can illustrate in a concrete way some of the concepts and issues examined in the Political Science major (environmental projects) and give students the opportunity to share their knowledge with the community.

Global Learning

Related courses
POLI 391M: The Foundations of Law and Government; POLI 391M: The Political Economy of Central America; Study Abroad

Timing for “study abroad”
Summers, Junior Year

Why this is important
Global study opportunities connect political science course material to real-world experiences in other countries and help students draw comparisons between their own cultural norms and institutions and those of other cultures.

Peer Leadership

Student Organization(s)
Pi Sigma Alpha: the National Political Science Honor Society; Students Advocating a Greener Environment (SAGE); Mock Trial; Student Government; College Republicans; College Democrats; College Libertarians

Opportunities
POLI 215: Introduction to Leadership Studies; Minor in Leadership Studies

Why this is important
Leadership activities train students to be and assess leaders in all walks of life, and help them to draw connections between political science course material and real-world leadership.

Internships

Related Courses
POLI 379: Public Affairs Internship (requires sophomore standing and prior completion of at least 6 credit hours of 300-level POLI coursework)

Recommended sites/work experiences
South Carolina Senate Judiciary Committee; Office of the Governor; Office of the Attorney General; Mayor’s Fellows; Columbia offices of Members of Congress and state legislators; South Carolina Republican Party; South Carolina Democratic Party campaigns; political consulting firms.

Why this is important
Internships allow students to apply knowledge learned in the classroom, build professional skills, and develop a professional network.

Research

Related courses
POLI 399A: Independent Study (Political Science); POLI 498: Research Experience; POLI 499: Senior Thesis
Sample research projects or topics

Professor Finocchiaro offers a research experience for undergraduate students, “Exploring the Historical Congress,” in which a small cohort gains experience in basic social science research. The team meets once a week to discuss scholarly work and to collaborate on an ongoing research project. Students are mentored over the course of the semester in the development of their own research proposal, and emerge from the experience with a better understanding of both the U.S. Congress and the tools of modern social science.

Why this is important

The development of general research skills is part of a political science education and is helpful for those seeking advanced degrees. Research opportunities also allow for further exploration of specific topics of interest.

INTEGRATE

How to integrate

POLI 121: Green Explorations; POLI 122: Green Engagements; POLI 215: Introduction to Leadership Studies

LEAD

Initial career opportunities

Variety of careers in public affairs; local, state, and national government; NGOs

Related graduate programs

Master of Arts in International Studies (MAIS); Master of Public Administration (MPA); PhD in Political Science; Graduate programs in law

Future career opportunities

Leaders in national government, academia, law, corporations, non-governmental organizations, community organizations and schools, local politics, and public interest groups

The listed experiences are a sample of options for your major. See the USC Connect experiences database to search for more opportunities.

www.sc.edu/uscconnect/participate