POLITICAL SCIENCE
Political Science Department

Faculty
Andrew Green (chair), Keith Yanner, James Zaffiro

Statement of philosophy
Government is the process through which people pursue collective goals, allocate scarce resources, and attempt to establish justice. Government decisions affect life and death, wealth and poverty, crime and punishment, individual freedom, opportunity, and happiness. Students in the political science program learn about government and how individuals and groups interact with government in the United States, other countries, and international organizations. Student learning focuses on theory and experience. In their courses political science students confront classic as well as contemporary political questions: Is there a best political order; how can hunger be eliminated; what are the causes of political violence and terrorism; what is the citizen’s responsibility to the environment; what is the most efficient way to fund local schools? Political science students also learn how to do original research and citizenship projects that apply their theoretical knowledge to questions and concerns of personal interest. This is accomplished through the required research sequence, supervised independent study, service learning, and internships. Many of our students study abroad to learn firsthand about foreign and international politics, or intern on one of Central’s programs in Washington, D.C., Des Moines, or Chicago to learn about federal, state, and local government in the U.S.

Major Communication Skills
Oral Communication and Writing skills are an integral part of a major in political science and for careers which political science majors will pursue. Political science majors will have their own communication and writing skills assessed on an annual basis and will be provided feedback from the department’s faculty members. The final evaluation of the major communication skills will occur while the student is enrolled in POLS 489 after successful completion of the following:
  a) A professional research project
  b) A professional presentation of the research project’s findings

Political Science Major Requirements (34-40 credits)

1. Complete all of the following (16 credits):
   POLS 110 Introduction to American Politics (4)
   POLS 140 Introduction to International Politics (4)
   POLS 250 Political Science Research Methods (4)
   POLS 489 Research Seminar (4)

2. Complete three of the following (9-12 credits):
   POLS 223 Contemporary Europe (3)
   POLS 225 Modern Latin America (4)
   POLS 231 Middle East in World Affairs (3)
   POLS 241 International Political Economy (4)
   POLS 242 Global Sustainability (4)
   POLS 326 Political Violence and Terrorism (4)
   POLS 344 International Law and Organizations (3)

3. Complete three of the following (9-12 credits):
   POLS 212 Congress (4)
   POLS 213 Courts (4)
   POLS 214 The Presidency (3)
   POLS 215 The Politics of State and Local Governments (4)
   POLS 216 Political Behavior (3)
   POLS 233 American Environmental Politics and Policy (3)
   POLS 235 The US in World Affairs (4)
   POLS 316 Presidential Elections (4)
   POLS 355 Seminar in Public Policy (3)
   POLS 361 American Political Philosophy (4)

Note: A 3-credit, political science internship (POLS-397) will count as one course in either Group 2 or Group 3.

Political Science Minor Requirements (18-24 credits)

Complete six Political Science courses with a 6 s.h. of internship credit in POLS 397 counting for up to two courses.