

Political Science and Economics

Undergraduate Degrees and Areas of Concentration

The political science and economics department offers undergraduate work leading to the B.A. degree in political science, B.A. degree in economics, B.A. degree in international relations, B.S. degree in public policy and administration, and B.S. degree in economics. In cooperation with the College of Education, we also offer the B.A. in political science with teacher certification and the B.S. in education with an emphasis in social studies. (See College of Education section in this Bulletin for details.) Minors in political science and economics are available to students who are majoring in another discipline and who have a special interest in economics, law, government, politics, nonprofit organizations, international relations, and public policy. In many courses, emphasis is placed on the ways in which public policies are developed and administered. In addition to formal course work, internships are available in which the student can relate classroom learning to practical field experience.

Graduate Degrees

The M.A. in Economics is specifically designed for those seeking to work as professional economists. Students acquire knowledge and a versatile set of skills that are highly valued in the workplace. The M.A. program has an excellent track record in job placement and placement in top Ph.D. programs. A unique feature of the program is the large number of applied econometrics and quantitative courses offered. The program can accommodate prospective full-time students as well as those who wish to study part-time. Classes are small, and student-faculty interaction is encouraged.

The department also offers graduate courses leading to the M.A. and Ph.D. in political science. The M.A. program in political science offers advanced education for those seeking careers in government, business, secondary education, community, or not-for-profit agencies. The principal foci of the 33-hour program are public administration and public policy analysis/evaluation in the local, state, national, and international areas. The flexibility of the general master's degree allows for individualized programs in urban politics, prelegal education, American national government, comparative politics, international relations, and political theory.

The Ph.D. in political science emphasizes the study of theoretic, analytic, and substantive approaches to public policy. Core courses include research methods, normative and empirical theory, and policy processes and institutions. Doctoral candidates, in consultation with the faculty, develop a policy concentration, which can be interdisciplinary. Internships, when appropriate, may be a component. All successful doctoral candidates must complete a dissertation, which makes a significant contribution to knowledge in the field.

Most graduate classes are scheduled so those employed outside the university can participate in the programs on a part-time basis.

Special Interdisciplinary Degree

The Department of Political Science and Economics also offers a master's degree in public policy administration (MPPA) in cooperation with the

College of Business Administration. Graduates of the Master's in Public Policy Administration program can expect to find opportunities in local, state, and federal government agencies, non-profit organizations, and private companies. There is a growing need for professionals with a strong understanding of public policy and administration due to increasingly complex and challenging policy issues.

Accelerated M.A. Dual Degree Programs

The Department of Political Science and Economics also offers accelerated B.S./M.A. or B.A./M.A. dual degree programs in Economics, Political Science, and Public Policy Administration. These are accelerated programs that allow students to complete a B.A. or B.S. and M.A. degree in five years of full-time study. The B.S./M.A. in Economics is targeted at students who are comfortable with mathematics and have demonstrated success in undergraduate-level quantitative and analytical economics courses.

Certificate in Applied Econometrics and Data Analysis

This Certificate is designed to prepare students to perform applied econometric analysis in a variety of professional settings, such as banks, telecomm companies, and consulting firms. BS students can further distinguish themselves with this Certificate, which can be combined with the BS or completed as a freestanding certificate.

Labor Studies Certificate Program

The Labor Studies Certificate Program gives students, current and future union members, leaders, representatives, activists, and workers a basic background and history along with the skills needed to deal with the ever-changing U.S. workplace and economy.

Graduate Certificates in Public Policy Administration

Our program also offers three Graduate Certificates: Nonprofit Management and Leadership; Local Government Management; and Policy and Program Evaluation. The Certificates are designed to help students gain expertise and knowledge in their desired field. Students can receive the Graduate Certificate alone, or in conjunction with the Master of Public Policy Administration, or with another approved graduate degree. Each graduate certificate is an 18-credit-hour program, consisting of core course requirements and electives. In addition, each of the certificates requires an internship/project.

Cooperative Programs

Political Science and Economics students may also study abroad, or obtain a Certificate in Data Science, International Studies, Modern European Studies, African American and African Diaspora Studies, Gender Studies, or Labor Studies, in conjunction with their major. See Certificate Programs in this Bulletin.

Research in political science and economics is encouraged for students at all levels. Assistance is available at UMSL's Community Innovation Action Center and UMSL Global. The department's membership in the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research provides access to a wide range of data on local-state-national, comparative, and international politics. In addition, extensive research opportunities are available within the metropolitan St. Louis area. Scholarships are available for qualified students; details can be obtained from the department office.

Resources

A valuable campus resource available to economics students is the Economic Resources Center (ERC). The ERC serves as a University Computer lab, study, and meeting space. The ERC also provides peer tutors for undergraduate economics courses (especially for Principles of Microeconomics and Principles of Macroeconomics).

Faculty

Political science and economics faculty are nationally known scholars in their respective fields, dedicated to high-quality teaching and education. Department faculty members have received distinctions such as the Curators' Research Award, Curators' Distinguished Teaching Professor Award, Presidential Award for Research and Creativity, Chancellor's Award for Research and Creativity, Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Teaching, Governor's Teaching Awards, Emerson Electric Excellence in Teaching Award and E. Desmond Lee Endowed Professor Award. They have received research grants from such prestigious agencies as the John F. Kennedy Library, the Ford Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation, the National Science Foundation, the German Marshall Fund, the United States Department of Education, the Fulbright Program, and the United States Institute for Peace. The faculty has published its research in more than 80 books and 400 articles in scholarly journals and is devoted to using its research findings to improve teaching.

In addition to helping students become more knowledgeable about economics, politics and public policy, political science and economics course work provides rich opportunities for students to develop a variety of practical skills--such as information-gathering and processing, analysis, research, decision making and oral and written communication--that are transferable to many career paths and job settings after graduation.

Career Outlook

Nearly every decision that a person, business, or government makes falls under the purview of economic, political science, and public policy analysis. Our students learn to think analytically and apply their knowledge to a broad range of topics and problems. These skills are highly valuable in our ever-changing economy, as well as in everyday life. For this reason, graduates with economics, political science, or public policy administration degrees are in high demand in a wide number of occupations, whether in business, government, or nonprofit organizations. In addition, our majors are especially sought after by law schools, M.B.A. programs and other graduate programs. Job prospects for those with economics, political science, and public policy administration degrees at both the undergraduate and graduate levels are expected to remain strong over the next decade.

Programs

Undergraduate Degree Programs

Economics BA

Economics BS

Political Science BA

International Relations BA

Public Policy Administration BSPPA

- Nonprofit Emphasis
- Public Administration Emphasis

- Public Policy Emphasis

Graduate Degree Programs

Economics MA

Economics MA, Business Economics Emphasis

Political Science MA

Public Policy Administration MPPA

- Individualized Emphasis
- Local Government Management Emphasis
- Nonprofit Organization Management Emphasis
- Policy Research and Analysis Emphasis

Political Science PhD

Accelerated Master's Degrees

Economics MA, Accelerated Master's Program

Political Science MA Accelerated Master's Degree

Public Policy Administration MPPA Accelerated Master's Degree

Minors

Economics Minor

Political Science Minor

American Politics Minor

Gender and Politics Minor

International and Comparative Politics Minor

International Relations Minor

Public and Nonprofit Administration Minor

Public Law Minor

Public Policy Minor

Urban Politics Minor

Undergraduate Certificate

Applied Econometrics and Data Analysis Undergraduate Certificate

Graduate Certificates

Nonprofit Organization Management and Leadership Graduate Certificate

Local Government Management Graduate Certificate

Policy and Program Evaluation Graduate Certificate

Affiliated Interdisciplinary Programs

Actuarial Science BS

Actuarial Studies Undergraduate Certificate

Data Science and Analysis BS, Economics Emphasis

Data Science Undergraduate Certificate

Personal Finance Literacy Education Graduate Certificate

Courses

Courses offered by the department can be found at the links below:

Economics (ECON)

Geography (GEOG)

Political Science (POL SCI)

Public Policy Administration (P P ADM)