About the major

Political science defines, describes, explains, and evaluates phenomena such as war and peace, revolution and reform, stability and instability, voting and office holding, and crime and punishment.

Some students come to political science because they seek careers in politics or academics; others study political science to gain a greater knowledge of this central human concern. Consequently, the curriculum is designed to train students in a discipline, reveal the possibilities of politics, meet the demands of thoughtful citizenship, and prepare those students who intend to pursue further work in either graduate or professional school.

Course offerings are divided into four subfields: political theory, American politics, comparative politics, and international relations and foreign policy. The department does not require its majors to develop expertise in any particular subfield of political science. Instead, students are provided a basic foundation in all parts of the discipline, and are then permitted to explore their own interests via the courses they select to meet degree requirements and through independent study.

“At Middlebury I learned how to take a lot of complex information, distill insight from it, and apply that to new areas or new challenges. In that way, my Middlebury education was instrumental in making me into a technology founder, even though I spent most of my time reading political philosophy and constitutional law rather than studying technology. That is the beauty of the liberal arts education.”

—George Arison ’00
Cofounder and CEO, Shift Technology

Reasons you might choose this major

• You are fascinated by the structure and function of local, national, and international organizations.
• You are ready to further enhance your understanding of how politics have shaped our world since antiquity.
• You are deeply invested in contemporary concerns, such as human rights, conflict and resolution, and the environment, and want to further broaden your expertise in these issues.
• You can see yourself working in a government agency, a nonprofit, public administration, the business world, education, or any other number of industries where a solid foundation in political science will serve you well.
• You are interested in law school or other graduate schools, for which political science majors are well prepared.
### Translating Learning into Professional Competencies

Throughout your time at Middlebury, you will develop and enhance the following core professional competencies, skills, and dispositions highly valued by employers that will prepare you for leadership and success in any given field:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Critical Thinking:</strong></td>
<td>Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems.</td>
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<td><strong>Oral/Written Communications:</strong></td>
<td>Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms.</td>
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<td><strong>Teamwork/Collaboration:</strong></td>
<td>Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers from diverse backgrounds.</td>
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<td><strong>Leadership:</strong></td>
<td>Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others.</td>
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<td><strong>Professionalism/Work Ethic:</strong></td>
<td>Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Global/Intercultural Fluency:</strong></td>
<td>Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Digital Technology:</strong></td>
<td>Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Career Management:</strong></td>
<td>Identify and articulate one’s skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional development.</td>
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### Where political science majors go

#### Applying your learning through internships...

Students pursue internships and research in a variety of fields, enabling them to apply their liberal arts learning in real-world settings. Internships, research, and self-directed projects enrich your academic experience and help prepare you for life after Middlebury. Students have interned or done research at the following:

- The Legal Aid Society
- Office of Congressman Joe Kennedy III
- National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations
- Center for the Advancement of Public Integrity
- CNN
- Clinton Global Initiative
- Evidence for Policy Design
- Refugee Children Integration Program
- Office of the Mayor of NYC
- White House Office of Communications
- Brooklyn District Attorney’s Office
- Cabrini Immigrant Services of NYC

...leading to meaningful, dynamic, and engaging career paths.

See just some of the many interesting ways our graduates have applied their liberal arts learning to engage the world. If you want to see what other Middlebury alumni are doing now, log into Midd2Midd and search by major. [go/midd2midd](go/midd2midd)

- CBS News/60 Minutes, Associate Producer
- New Orleans Redevelopment Authority, Project Manager
- U.S. Department of State, Foreign Service Officer
- President of the United Nations General Assembly, Special Advisor
- Popular Mechanics/Hearst Magazines, Editor-in-Chief
- Government of Canada, Global Affairs Policy Advisor
- US Department of Commerce, International Trade Specialist
- Nike, Global Operations Manager
- Sustainability Roundtable, President and CEO
- World Bank, Senior Energy Specialist
- Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), Financial Advisor/Global Peace Operations Initiative
- Largent Government Solutions, LLC
- Council on Hemispheric Affairs
- National Public Radio (NPR)
- United Strategies
- Human Rights First
- U.S. Department of Education
- The Office of Senator Patrick Leahy
- Frontline PBS
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic
- Bank of America Merrill Lynch
- The Centre for Policy and Research on Turkey
- CBS News/60 Minutes, Associate Producer
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