At the Radford University Department of Political Science, students are not just a number; they will have the opportunity to develop strong bonds with their faculty members and to benefit from close mentoring to achieve their personal and professional goals. Political Science student organizations like the Political Science Society and Model United Nations are active, helping students to raise their political awareness and develop skills in leadership, event planning, public speaking, and negotiation.

Undergraduate Program:

The political science curriculum at Radford University offers a broad grounding in the discipline. Majors take courses across the subfields, including American Government, Political Theory, Comparative Government, and International Relations. Students also have the opportunity to specialize, concentrating in Foreign and National Security Policy; Law, Justice, and Society; or Public Affairs. All majors take a senior seminar with a research and writing focus. We encourage students to study abroad and engage in at least one internship during their undergraduate studies.

The minor in Political Science consists of 18 hours of coursework with two courses chosen from POSC 110, POSC 120, POSC 231 or POSC 241, and twelve additional hours in POSC, at least nine of which are at the 300- or 400-level.

Students may earn either a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science.

- B.A. (Bachelor of Arts): 120 hours
  The B.A. program consists of 43 to 45 hours of Core Curriculum coursework, six to eight hours of study in one foreign language, and 33-42 hours in Political Science coursework. Students in the Foreign and National Security Policy track are encouraged to pursue the B.A.

- B.S. (Bachelor of Science): 120 hours
  The B.S. degree consists of 43 to 45 hours of Core Curriculum coursework, six hours of statistics and economics coursework, and 33-42 hours in Political Science coursework.

Highlights:

Our curriculum prepares students with concrete knowledge of political science, management of public and non-profit organizations, and international affairs.

Faculty members use high impact teaching practices to reach students and involve them in their own learning. We encourage original undergraduate research, study abroad, simulations of political forums (such as Model UN), and collaborative learning. Our Political Science Days event (held in October) exposes students to documentaries on politics, career events, and special lectures on domestic and international political issues.

Further, we work to develop in students the skills employers say they want 21st century workers to have: critical thinking, information literacy, oral and written communication, ethical citizenship, problem solving, understanding of diversity/global issues, and collaboration.

But Can I Get a Job?

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, demand for liberal arts graduates in political science is expected to grow by 21% from 2008-2018. Majors can expect to earn annual starting salaries of about $35,000. Political science majors have jobs as writers, research assistants, policy analysts, grant writers, administrators, government workers, and employees of for-profit and non-profit advocacy organizations. Ask the Department Chair or Department Administrative Assistant for a copy of the American Political Science Association’s guide to Careers and the Study of Political Science, a helpful booklet with reams of information on career tracks for political science grads. Employability is highest for those with Masters degrees and quantitative research skills. Many of our alums go on to study at the graduate level, either in public and international affairs or the law.
Study Abroad Opportunities
The Department strongly encourages its students to study abroad. Faculty-led programs exist. Dr. Paige Tan, our department study abroad advisor, can also help connect you with other study abroad options including Summer, semester, and academic year-long programs. Exchange programs can be done for the price of your Radford University education plus airfare, and scholarships are available.

Extracurricular Experiences
The RU Political Science Society is non-partisan and open to all students, a political science major or minor is not required. The Political Science Society sponsors candidate forums, election return watching parties, and events for the campus as a whole.

In Model United Nations, students act the part of diplomats to solve pressing international issues. Students develop skills in negotiation, leadership, and public speaking.

The National Honor Society in Political Science is open to undergraduate men and women who are making the study of political science one of their major interests and who meet the minimum qualifications.

Transfer Opportunities
Students wishing to transfer from the VCCS should complete an Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, or Associate of Arts & Science degree and include courses that will transfer to RU, such as POSC 120 & STAT 200, in their studies. Check our transfer information at www.radford.edu/registrar “Transfer Credits” link.

Faculty
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Need More Information?
If you have questions about Political Science, contact Dr. Mary Ferrari, Interim Chair, mferrari@radford.edu.

For information on other undergraduate programs contact the Office of Admissions, Box 6903, Radford, VA 24142 or you may apply online. For specific information on admissions and financial aid, see the RU website at www.radford.edu.