WHY SHOULD I STUDY POLITICAL SCIENCE?
I Don’t Want to Become a Politician!!

Many students believe that those who study political science are primarily interested in careers in politics: they want to become politicians. Actually, while some who study political science do become politicians, the vast majority of those who major in political science select a different course. The following possibilities for political science major illustrate the range of choice.

The Civil Service: Some political science graduates gain employment in government service, at a local, state, national, or international level. A background in political science not only helps our graduates understand how the political process works in their own countries; it also provides at least a glimpse into the nature of international relations and foreign policy.

Business: A background in political science provides a valuable asset for someone who plans to get an MBA and go into business. Increasingly, business can be successfully conducted only with knowledge of how government and business interact. People in business must understand how governmental structures, whether in the U.S. or another country, interface with each other and with businesses, from the biggest international conglomerate to the smallest local factory. Often, the government can provide what the business decision maker needs to survive. Indeed, companies often devote several positions or an entire office to liaison with the various government agencies whose regulatory powers affect them or whose services can aid them.

Private Interest Groups and Associations: A host of private interest groups, from business associations to charitable groups, constantly look for young men and women who understand how the political process works. These organizations must deal with the government, often at a number of levels. The individual who understands how government business is conducted in Washington, Topeka or Kansas City brings a valuable attribute to these groups.

Journalism: Being a journalist is more than having skills to write stories. It also requires the ability to get a story. Men and women who know where to look for the story will have a decided advantage. Because political science focuses on the exercise of power, students learn where to look for newsworthy material. Regardless of the particular journalistic medium – whether for broadcast, print or film – our students understand power and how it is exercised, enabling them to investigate the most fruitful areas.

Political Analysis: Regardless of whether as a staff aide to a U.S. senator in Washington, D.C. or as an employee for a major polling organization in another part of the country, graduates with a knowledge of how the political process works are always in demand. They understand the political context that shapes any particular area of analysis.
**The Armed Forces:** Gone are the days when a military officer could ignore politics. Our increasingly interdependent world places pressure on military officers to understand the intricacies of politics. Recent U.S. actions in Somalia, Haiti, and Bosnia have been political undertakings; woe to the officer who is forced to take troops into such areas without understanding how other political systems work.

**Law:** Of all the skills that lawyers need, none is more important than the ability to think clearly, reason accurately and understand how power is manipulated. A major in political science enables the student to do all three. While we cannot guarantee that our graduates will become the most successful lawyers in the world, we can be sure that they will understand power – not only how it is exercised, but also the ethical implications of its use. In addition, they will also have gained the ability to read, think, analyze, write and speak with clarity and conviction.

**International Trade:** As the world becomes more interdependent both economically and politically, political science majors appreciate the sizeable asset they have acquired. Many major corporations employ political science graduates to supply their need to understand various cultures and political systems. These corporations also recognize that they must comprehend how international and national political institutions affect the world’s economy. Political science graduates bring this knowledge.

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So you don’t want to be a politician? Become a political science graduate and obtain the knowledge of the world and the intellectual skills that provide the foundation for an immense variety of careers. Employers can then readily train you in the skills specific to their own needs. You will already possess the means to make the most of your opportunities.

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