

EIU Political Science Department

Undergraduate Handbook, 2014-2015*

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(*This Handbook is subject to revision and updating, and it does not substitute for processes such as course planning recommendations from your academic advisor and information provided through the university's Degree Audit Report system.)

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Is Political Science the Right Major for Me?

The Political Science Department emphasizes a focus on social science research methods and techniques, the liberal arts approach, both written and verbal communication, and practical education opportunities as it prepares students for future careers and their ultimate role as responsible citizens in a diverse world. The Department provides high quality undergraduate and graduate level education that stresses knowledge of politics, government and public policies while promoting responsible, active citizenship and skills that lead to professional skills and career opportunities. The Department promotes diverse learning experiences that address multiple learning styles while enabling students to apply the skills of comparison, explanation, prediction and critical analysis to a wide variety of political issues and situations. The Political Science Department at EIU values an active learning environment that fully engages students in the study of politics, government and public policy.

The curriculum of the EIU Political Science Department is focused on meeting the following learning goals for undergraduate majors:

1. Knowledge of Political Science: Students will demonstrate satisfactory knowledge of government, politics and public policy, including the ability to interpret and analyze scholarly sources and data sources to conduct research.
2. Critical Thinking: Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze, evaluate and apply concepts and frameworks from Political Science.
3. Writing: Students will demonstrate the ability to effectively write about Political Science, including writing hypotheses and research questions, communicating findings effectively, and using an appropriate citation style.
4. Responsible Citizenship: Students will demonstrate the ability to function effectively as global citizens, including an understanding of the importance of race, culture, and ethnicity, and an understanding of the role the United States plays in the world.
5. Effective Speaking: Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills.

This handbook is designed as a reference for finding out requirements and resources in the Political Science Department. It also provides links to resources on the internet that are relevant to Political Science majors.

Careers & Opportunities in Political Science

Just about everyone who has studied political science has been asked this question. You don't have to be a politician—although our major is a great foundation for building a career in politics. And you don't have to be a lawyer, though a degree in Political Science is great preparation for law school. The reality is that Political Science majors pursue careers in a variety of fields, ranging from government, the non-profit sector, and the private sector. Furthermore, the broad scope of the political science major—with its emphasis on research, writing, analytical and communication skills-- allows our graduates flexibility in a rapidly changing economy and job market.

Below are just a few examples of the past twenty years of Political Science job placement at EIU, with some guidelines about entering these fields.

Federal Government

- Caseworker/district office manager for Congressional Representative
 - Foreign Affairs Officer, U.S. State Department
 - Special Agent, FBI
 - International Affairs Officer, Department of Defense
 - Active military officers and trainers
 - Attorney, U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee
 - AmeriCorps VISTA Administrator
 - Human Resource Specialist, US Department of Veterans' Affairs
 - Revenue Officer, IRS
 - Regional Program Analyst, US Department of Housing & Urban Development
 - Law Clerk, White House Council on Environmental Quality
 - Attorney, US. Court of Appeals, 8th Circuit
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- If you are interested in federal government careers:
 - Focus on International Relations/Comparative Politics and American Politics/Policy/Public Administration courses.
 - Consider study abroad and internships.
 - Consider a graduate degree or law degree.
 - Consider the PLS/International Studies option and/or minors in foreign language, other social sciences, and interdisciplinary minors.
 - An independent study or departmental Honors can demonstrate analytical and communication skills.
 - Participate in community, campus and departmental leadership, volunteer work, Alternative Spring Break, and activism.
 - Develop writing, quantitative, technological, communication and analytical skills.
 - Be willing to relocate and travel regularly.

State Government

- Committee Staffer, Illinois House and Senate Democrats and Republicans
 - Budget Analyst, Illinois Office of Management and Budget
 - Personnel Liaison, Illinois Office of the Governor
 - Campaign Finance Director, congressional campaign
 - Budget Analyst, Illinois Office of the Treasurer
 - Management Analyst
 - Legislative Analyst, Iowa State Government
 - Bureau Chief of Marketing and Promotions, Illinois Department of Agriculture
 - Division Supervisor, Illinois State Board of Education
 - Labor Relations Analyst, State of Illinois
 - Legislative Liaison, State University Retirement System of Illinois
 - Policy Advisor, Illinois Commerce Commission
 - Federal Policy Analyst, Illinois Department of Transportation
 - Election Specialist, Illinois State Board of Elections
 - Legislative Liaison, Illinois Department of Revenue
 - Economic Development Research Manager, State of Nebraska
 - Budget Analyst, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
 - Appropriations Analyst, Illinois State Senate
- If you are interested in state government careers:
 - Focus your courses on American Politics/Policy/Public Administration
 - Consider a graduate degree.
 - Complete an internship in Springfield.
 - Consider the Public Administration concentration and/or minors in other social sciences, geographic information systems (GIS), business, communications, and interdisciplinary minors.
 - Participate in Model Illinois Government (MIG).
 - An independent study or departmental Honors can demonstrate analytical and communication skills.
 - Participate in community, campus, and departmental leadership, volunteer work, and activism.
 - Develop writing, quantitative, technological, communication and analytical skills.

Local and Regional Government

- Transportation Liaison, Saint Clair County
- County government league
- City Administrator, Arcola
- Macoupin County Clerk
- City Clerk/Director of Elections, Pontiac
- Community Development Director, City of Mount Carmel
- Labor Relations Manager, Springfield

- Special Projects Coordinator, Davenport, IA
- Appraiser, County of Hawaii
- Auditor, Champaign County
- Community Planner, Coles County Regional Planning & Development
- Firefighter, Mattoon
- Commissioner Staff, Cook County Board
- City Attorney, Naperville
- If you are interested in local/regional government careers:
 - Focus your courses on American Politics/Policy/Public Administration.
 - Consider a graduate degree or law degree.
 - Complete an internship with local government.
 - Consider the Public Administration concentration and/or minors in other social sciences, geographic information systems (GIS), business, or interdisciplinary minors.
 - An independent study or departmental Honors can demonstrate analytical and communication skills.
 - Participate in Model Illinois Government (MIG).
 - Participate in community, campus, and department leadership, volunteer work and activism.
 - Develop writing, quantitative, technological, communication and analytical skills.

Lobbying, Activism and Non-Profits

- Educational Leadership Consultant, national sorority office
- Municipal Representative, SEIU
- Director of Member Leader Development, SEIU
- Communications and Program Director, Constitutional Rights Foundation Chicago
- Legal Advocate, SACIS domestic violence
- Director, homeless shelter
- Case Manager and Advocate, HOPE of East Central Illinois
- Business Development, Global Rights; Partners for Justice
- Outreach Coordinator, American Conservation Experience
- Social/Political Journalist and Broadcaster, Radio Free Asia
- Operations Coordinator, National Tribal Environmental Council
- Government Relations, Illinois Principals Association
- Director of Planning & Programming, Will County Governmental League
- Director, Constituent Relations, Eastern Illinois University
- Director, Macon County Extension Office
- If you are interested in lobbying, non-profit and activism careers:
 - Focus on the fields of Political Science that fit your interests.

- Get involved in volunteer work and activism; complete an internship for experience.
- Develop foreign language skills and consider study abroad.
- Consider a graduate degree or law degree.
- Consider minors in Sociology, communications, foreign language, and interdisciplinary minors.
- Participate in community, campus, and departmental leadership, Model Illinois Government, volunteer work, alternative Spring Break, and activism.
- Develop writing, quantitative, technological, communication and analytical skills.
- For lobbying, you may need to work in state government first, before moving into lobbying.
- Be willing to relocate and travel.

Legal Careers and Law Enforcement

- Legal Researcher, law publishing firms
- Private attorneys, real estate attorneys, sports attorneys
- State's attorney, Clark County, Kankakee County
- Assistant Public Defender, State of Missouri
- Paralegal
- Cook County Attorney
- Circuit Court Judges, Coles County, Kankakee County, Montgomery County
- Illinois State Police
- Police Officers, University of Illinois, Chicago, Pekin, Mokena, Lake County Forest Preserve District
- Terrorism Research Analyst, Illinois State Police
- Supervisor, Cook County Correctional Office
- If you are interested in legal/law enforcement jobs:
 - Focus your courses on Political Theory/Public Law and American Politics/Policy/Public Administration.
 - If you are interested in international law, consider the PLS/International Studies option, and take courses in International Relations/Comparative Politics
 - Definitely consider the pre-law minor, as well as minors in Philosophy, History, English, criminology, and other social sciences.
 - For attorneys, law school is required. Certification is required for paralegals.
 - Complete an internship with the State's Attorney or Public Defender's offices.
 - Participate in Moot Court and Phi Alpha Delta.
 - An independent study or departmental Honors can demonstrate legal analytical and communication skills.

- Participate in community, campus, and departmental leadership, volunteer work and activism.
- Develop writing, quantitative, technological, communication and analytical skills.

Private Sector

- Vice-President, Cardinal Health
- Public Relations, Kinder Morgan
- Director Federal Government Affairs, Land O'Lakes
- Senior Business Analyst, Coventry Healthcare
- Strategic Accounts, Dropbox
- Portfolio Manager, Southern Wine & Spirits
- Agent, State Farm
- Financial Analyst, IBM
- Senior Business Analyst, Charles Schwab
- Vice President, First National Bank, Mattoon
- Financial Consultant, Smith Barney
- Legislative Director, Exelon
- Business Process Manager, Herff-Jones
- Human Resource Coordinator, TDK, Japan
- Manager, 1st Mid Illinois Bank & Trust, Charleston
- If you are interested in private sector jobs:
 - Focus on American Politics/Policy/Public Administration or Political Theory/Public Law, as well as other fields, depending on your specific interests.
 - Foreign language skills are an advantage; consider study abroad.
 - Complete an internship to gain experience.
 - Consider minors in business, other social sciences, and consider the Public Administration Concentration.
 - An independent study or departmental Honors can demonstrate analytical and communication skills
 - Consider a graduate degree or a law degree.
 - Get involved in community, campus, and departmental leadership, volunteer work and activism.
 - Be willing to relocate and travel.
 - Develop writing, quantitative, technological, communication and analytical skills.

Education & Administration

- Social Sciences Teacher, high schools
- School principal
- Professors and instructors, Eastern Illinois University, Cardinal Stritch University, Shepherd University, Lake Land College, Indiana State University, Truman State University, University of Missouri-Saint Louis, Millikin University, University of the West of Scotland, Brunswick

- County Community College,
Lincoln Land College
- Executive Director, EIU
Foundation
- Director, Constituent Relations,
EIU
- Technology Coordinator,
community college
- Assistant Director, Faculty
Development, EIU
- University admissions officer
- Campus Service Representative,
Illinois Central College
- Budget & Data Analyst, Wesleyan
University
- Associate Director for Housing
Administration, Baylor University
- Assistant Dean for Public Services,
University of Mississippi
- Adult Education Advisor, Lake
Land College
- Assistant Director for Faculty
Development, Eastern Illinois
University
- If you are interested in education jobs:
 - For public school teaching, Social Science Teacher Certification with the PLS option is required.
 - For community college teaching, a Master's degree is required.
 - For 4-year colleges/universities, a Master's is required, and a Ph.D. is highly recommended.
 - Graduate degrees are often required for college/university staff and administration.
 - Be willing to relocate.
 - Focus on American Politics/Policy/Public Administration, as well as other fields, depending on your specific teaching interests.
 - Consider the Public Administration concentration, as well as minors in other social sciences and interdisciplinary minors.
 - An independent study or departmental Honors can demonstrate research skills.
 - Get involved in community, campus, and departmental leadership, volunteer work and activism; volunteer in local public schools and after school programs.
 - Develop writing, quantitative, technological, communication and analytical skills.

National Wages & Employment Trends for Political Science

You can find detailed information about the job outlook for a variety of careers in Political Science from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics' 2013 Occupational Profiles, at www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_stru.htm. The 2013 unemployment rates for most careers in Political Science range from 2.5-3.5 percent (www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat25.htm), compared to 7.4% as the average unemployment for all jobs. The median income tells us that 50% of people in this career make more than the median, and the other half make less.

Career	Median Salary, 2013
Political Science, Policy & Public Administration	
Federal Executive Branch Employees	\$115,740
Political Researchers	\$80,340
Higher Education	\$67,580
Political Consulting	\$73,080
Local Government Administration	\$66,100
State Government Administration	\$60,730
Social Advocacy Organizations	\$70,450
Political Advertising and Public Relations	\$56,720
Social & Community Managers	\$65,750
Human Resource Manager, Local Government	\$94,520
Budget Analysts	\$69,280
Social Studies Teacher	\$55,050
Corporate Labor Relations Specialist	\$71,100
Survey Researcher	\$53,210
Urban & Regional Planner	\$67,920
Lawyers	
Private Practice Attorneys	\$138,140
Local Government Attorneys	\$89,790
State Government Attorneys	\$80,320
Federal Executive Branch Attorneys	\$134,510
Social Advocacy Attorneys	\$87,400
Business, Political, Labor, Professional Association Attorney	\$118,380
Religious, Grantmaking, Civic, Professional Group Attorney	\$105,890
Corporate Attorneys	\$164,270

The Bureau of Labor Statistics also provides information about job outlooks (<http://data.bls.gov/projections/occupationProj>), where job growth is expected. Average growth for all jobs is about 10 percent.

Job Title	Projected Job Growth, 2012-2022
Political Scientists	21%
Lawyer	10%
Social & Community Manager	21%
Teacher, Higher Education	15%
Survey Researcher	18%
Human Resource Management	13%
High School Teacher	6%
Urban & Regional Planner	10%
Budget Analyst	6%

Internet Job Searches in Political Science

- Public Service Careers
www.publicservicecareers.org/
- Careers with Non-Profits
www.idealists.org
- National Conference of Black Political Scientists Career Link
www.ncobps.org
- USA Jobs
www.usajobs.gov/
The U.S. Government's official site for jobs and employment information, maintained by the Office of Personnel Management. Many positions requiring a social science background can be found through this site.
- Student Jobs
<http://www.usajobs.gov/StudentsAndGrads>
The U.S. Government's official site for employment geared towards students and recent graduates. The site is maintained by the Office of Personnel Management and allows students to find and apply for internships, entry level positions and other opportunities with the federal government.
- The Politix Group
www.politixgroup.com/
This site provides links to job listings in U.S. federal agencies, U.S. Congressional offices, and international legislatures. The Politix Group is an independently run private organization whose purpose is to increase knowledge and understanding of the political process with the purpose of inspiring early involvement and activism at the local, state and federal levels of government.

- National Council of State Legislatures
www.ncsl.org/public/joblegis.htm
- National Governor's Association
www.nga.org
- Videos on State Legislative Careers
http://ncsl.typepad.com/the_thicket/2012/06/announcing-a-new-online-resource-for-recruiting-young-people-into-legislative-service.html
- Careers in Public Service—National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration
www.naspaa.org/students/careers/careers.asp
Advice on seeking a career in public service, first-person accounts, links to resources to find public service jobs.
- National League of Cities
www.nlc.org/job_opportunities/jobpostings.aspx
- American Association for Public Opinion Research
www.aapor.org
AAPOR/WAPOR (World Association) Blue Book is a comprehensive directory of agencies and organizations
- Congressional Research Service
www.loc.gov/crsinfo/
- World Bank
[Inweb28.worldbank.org/hrs/careers.nsf/](http://inweb28.worldbank.org/hrs/careers.nsf/)
- The Chronicle of Philanthropy
<http://philanthropy.com/jobs/>
- AJR NewsLink
<http://newslink.org/>
JOBLink for Journalists
- Southeast Diversity Journalism
<http://newsjobs.com/home.html>
The National Diversity Newspaper Jobbank. Emphasis on employment for minorities and women
- Many foreign embassies in Washington and their consulates in major U.S. cities seek American citizens to fill vacancies. The United States Department of State provides links to most of these embassies websites at www.usembassy.gov/.
- U.S. Department of State
www.careers.state.gov/
Information on becoming a Foreign Service Officer, Foreign Service Specialist, or Civil Service employee for the U.S. Department of State.
- U.S. Department of Defense
<https://dod.usajobs.gov/>
- Central Intelligence Agency
<https://www.cia.gov/careers/index.html>

- Career Network
chronicle.com/jobs/
The Chronicle of Higher Education's "Career Network" site features job listings in higher education by discipline, advise for job seekers, job-market news, as well as first-person accounts from job-seekers in higher education.
- HigherEdJobs.com
www.higheredjobs.com/
HigherEdJobs.com is the largest job database focused exclusively on college and university positions. Their focus is to provide a recruitment tool that adds value to the job seeker and recruiter by providing cost-effective, innovative, useful, and timely services in all areas of the site. HigherEdJobs.com was designed to help job seekers and job posters in higher education find each other.
- Job Guide
www.h-net.org/jobs/
The Job Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences is prepared by H-Net, Humanities and Social Sciences Online. The site covers positions in History and other fields in the Humanities and social sciences and is updated every Monday. The site allows customized searching and an archive of previous jobs.
- Jobs in Higher Education
www.academic360.com/
A site prepared by the Graduate School of Library and Information Science (GSLIS) at the University of Texas at Austin for jobs in higher education. The site is updated frequently.
- JournalismJobs.com
www.journalismjobs.com/
JournalismJobs.com is operated in association with Columbia Journalism Review magazine, through Columbia University, and is a free service for job seekers.
- JournalismDegree.com
www.journalismdegree.com
Occupational and educational information regarding pursuing a career in journalism.

Advising & Mentoring

Who is my adviser? How should I prepare for my advising appointment?

During your freshman year, you will be assigned an advisor in 9th Street Hall to help you select your spring 2014 classes. All other students are assigned to Mr. John Morris for academic advising in the Political Science Department (217-581-5989 or jsmorris@eiu.edu). Mr. Morris will have a sign-up sheet outside his office door (Coleman 3681) for advising appointments. You can make an appointment to meet with him at any time, but usually students meet with him once per semester to select their courses for the following semester. At this meeting, you will receive the alternate pin number you need to register.

Upon arrival for orientation, most transfer students will meet with the department chair, Dr. Richard Wandling (581-2523 or rawandling@eiu.edu) for academic advising, including review of your coursework to date and identification of priority courses to facilitate a smooth transition to becoming a Political Science major at EIU. After this first advising session, transfer students will also meet with Mr. Morris.

It is best to schedule an appointment with your adviser after you have reviewed the schedule of classes for the next semester and the General Education and Political Science courses that you still need to complete. You can review your progress toward completing your requirements by accessing a “degree audit” using the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS), which is available through PAWS. This advanced preparation will enable you to be better prepared to discuss your academic progress and ask relevant questions when you meet with your adviser. You should come to the advising meeting with an outline of courses you are considering for the next semester and a list of any questions you may have. Be prepared to take notes.

Remember, your adviser’s job is to provide you with advice and guidance related to your progress toward graduation; do not expect your adviser to choose which specific classes you should take and what time of day to take them. The typical meeting with your adviser lasts between 10 minutes. If you have reason to believe that you will require more time, then you should mention this to your adviser when scheduling your appointment.

When can I register?

The day you can register depends on your class standing, for example junior or senior. Honors students and athletes are usually eligible for priority registration.

The registration dates are available at the Registration Office's website:
<http://www.eiu.edu/registra/schedule.php>.

How do I get to know my professors? How can I find a mentor?

Besides meeting with your academic advisor, it is important for you to meet with your professors in Political Science on a regular basis. All of the faculty members are available for informal mentoring, and we enjoy discussing a wide variety of topics with our students, from career and graduate school planning, to political debates and policy issues. By getting to know your professors better, you also will open up opportunities to learn about internships, scholarships, and research projects. Studies show that students who meet with their professors outside of the classroom are more successful in college, and better prepared for life after graduation.

One of the best ways to get to know your professors is to visit them during their office hours. Office hours are posted on each professor's door, and on their class syllabi. These are times when professors are in their offices specifically to meet with students. Professors usually prioritize these meetings, to help students with academic work first, but often they are available for broader discussions. Many professors are available outside of office hours as well, but you should always check that it's okay to simply drop in. Finally, you could make a formal appointment to meet with your professors.

You may also contact your professors by email, especially if you have a very specific question. If you plan to email any professor, be sure that you follow good rules of netiquette. Professor Michael Leddy from the English Department has a very accurate blog post with recommendations about emailing your professors. You should read it here: <http://mleddy.blogspot.com/2005/01/how-to-e-mail-professor.html>. Keep in mind though that face-to-face meetings are really ideal for career and academic mentoring. Go visit your professors!

A final way to get to know your professors is by attending Department sponsored events, such as Political Science Association and Pi Sigma Alpha meetings, the annual department picnic at the beginning of the fall semester, the spring semester student awards/recognition banquet; guest speakers and scholars; and other events. The key is to get involved, and please know that your professors enjoy the opportunity to interact with their students outside the traditional classroom.

You can learn more about PLS faculty on the department webpage:
<http://www.eiu.edu/polisci/facultynarratives.php> and
<http://www.eiu.edu/polisci/faculty.php>.

The Political Science Curriculum

Undergraduate PLS Courses

<http://www.eiu.edu/polisci/courses.php>

Political Science Major and International Studies Option requirements

http://www.eiu.edu/polisci/major_plan.php

Social Science Teacher Certification with Political Science Option requirements

<http://www.eiu.edu/polisci/PLSChecklist2013.pdf>

Selecting Coursework and Minors

Most freshmen begin by taking PLS 1153G/1193G (Introduction to American Government and the U.S. Constitution) during the fall semester, and PLS 1003 (Introduction to Comparative Politics) and PLS 2253G (Introduction to International Relations) during their first year. PLS 2001 (Introduction to Political Research) may be taken as early as the second semester of your freshman year, and it is highly recommended that you complete the research methods courses (PLS 2001 and PLS 2033) by the end of your sophomore year. It is best to complete all introductory major requirements by the end of your sophomore year.

We usually recommend that second-semester sophomores begin taking 3000-level field requirements, but talented students may be ready during the first-semester of their sophomore year. Many students complete their Experiential Learning requirements during their junior year, and complete the Capstone Course requirement (PLS 4600) in their senior year.

More information on registration is available at

http://www.eiu.edu/polisci/Registration_Tips_for_Political_Science_Majors.pdf.

The department's academic advisor, Mr. Morris, will offer advice to keep you on track for graduation, but you will be responsible for setting up your schedule. Seek out Mr. Morris or a faculty mentor for help if necessary.

A Minor in another field of study is not required for graduation. However, after adding the number of hours needed to fulfill the General Education requirements and the number of hours required for a Political Science major, you may still need to take 25-30 semester hours to meet the 120-hour graduation requirement. Thus, choosing a Minor can help guide the selection of these remaining courses for graduation. Furthermore, if you plan to go into a particular field of Political Science, having a Minor can be helpful. For example, a Minor in

Business Administration may be wise if you plan to go into corporate-government relations.

Political Science faculty may not be familiar with other departments' minor requirements and thus may not be able to advise you beyond what is already stated in the online catalog. If you have questions about requirements for a minor, we encourage you to ask the department that offers the minor.

Common minors for Political Science majors at EIU include:

- Foreign language
- Sociology
- Criminology
- Environmental Studies
- Pre-law
- Geographic Information Systems
- Philosophy
- Psychology
- English
- History
- Communication Studies
- Business Administration
- Economics
- Women's Studies
- Africana Studies
- Latin American Studies
- Asian Studies

Political Science majors may also complete a Public Administration Concentration, within the Political Science Department, requiring 12 additional hours focusing on Public Administration and Public Policy. This concentration can provide a practical skill set for students interested in working in a variety of government jobs. Political Science majors can also double-major in a variety of other programs. Common choices include Foreign Languages; other social sciences such as Sociology or Economics; History; Philosophy; and English.

Transfer Students

Which classes will transfer to EIU?

The Illinois Articulation Initiative specifies which courses will transfer among Illinois colleges and universities. This ensures that quality coursework is maintained and that courses will be accepted by other institutions who have agreed to participate in the initiative. You can find out which courses will transfer to/from EIU, including Political Science courses, by accessing the u.select at <http://www.itransfer.org/uselect/>. You also can contact the Department Chair (Dr. Wandling) or our Academic Advisor (Mr. Morris) with questions about questions about transferability of political science courses taken at the community college level, since you may have taken a course that doesn't seem to readily fit within the IAI framework. The Department is committed to working with incoming transfer students to facilitate their transition to EIU.

When transferring community college Political Science courses to EIU, you will not receive upper-division credit (i.e., 3000 or 4000 level credit) for those courses, even though EIU may offer an upper-division course by the same title. The transferred course(s) will count towards the number of hours required for graduation, but EIU generally does not consider courses taught at the community college level to have the same rigor and demands of upper-division courses taught at EIU. If you are transferring from another four-year institution, you may receive credit at the upper division level, depending on the course. We may request a course syllabus and course description, which you can request from the professor who taught your course at your previous institution.

Experiential Learning Requirement & the Political Science Capstone

All Political Science majors must complete at least 3 credits of an experiential learning requirement. Programs which fulfill this requirement include Undergraduate Internships, Independent Study, Departmental Honors, Model Illinois Government, Moot Court, and Study Abroad.

Undergraduate Internship (PLS 4275)

Internships are useful to developing your educational and professional credentials for life after graduation, from preparing for graduate studies (e.g., law school or public administration studies) to equipping you with practical knowledge and skills directly relevant to employment in the public, private or non-profit sectors. Completion of an undergraduate internship has improved students' chances of admission to graduate programs, law school, and employment opportunities. You may enroll in an internship after earning 32 hours, though most students wait until their junior or senior year to take an internship. One reason for this is that internship credit is at the 4000 level, which normally means that a student has at least junior-level status.

For Pre-Law internships (e.g., State's Attorney, Public Defender, and Private Law Offices), please see Dr. Karen Swenson in Coleman Hall 2321 (581-6964; kbswenson@eiu.edu). For other Political Science internships (e.g., legislative offices, political campaigns, public administration, and interest groups), please see Mr. John Morris in Coleman Hall 3861 (581-5989; jsmorris@eiu.edu).

Credit is available for PLS 4275 only after completion of the Internship Agreement forms with signatures of approval from the student, the internship coordinator and the department chair. The application must specify the duties of the proposed internship and the internship coordinator/department chairperson will determine credit allowed for each internship. All internship proposals must be submitted prior to the start of the semester and completion of all requirements by the date specified (usually the end of finals week). Undergraduates may earn 1 semester hour of academic credit, to a maximum of 12 semester hours, for every 40 hours of work during an approved internship. In addition, applicants for pre-legal internships must meet requirements set by the Dr. Karen Swenson.

Methods of academic evaluation by the internship coordinator will consist of an analytical journal, an analytical paper, and a letter of evaluation from the internship site supervisor. Part of the internship experience is to practice professional behavior. The professionals at the internship site, and your instructor, expect you to demonstrate qualities such as reliability in working the days and times agreed to with your supervisor; dependability in performing the work

assigned; maintenance of confidentiality with respect to office business and activity, including information on clients or constituents; and the ability to work well with others at the internship site. A student who lapses in his or her professionalism damages the opportunities of using his or her supervisor as a job reference, and a problematic internship performance may jeopardize the internship site for future students.

Independent Study (PLS 4503)

Independent study is typically for students who want to pursue a topic of particular interest that is not covered by a regularly scheduled class or seminar. For example, a student may be interested in studying women and politics, or the politics of human rights, or a specific public policy issue. Under the direction of a faculty member, the student may be given a list of special readings or be asked to do a literature review and write a paper about the topic. The independent study also is a great opportunity for a student to carry out a research project that culminates in a proposal for a research competition or presentation at a Political Science conference. Alternatively, some faculty use independent study as a way for students to gain experience assisting a faculty member in their research. A typical independent study would include between 24 to 30 pages of writing and regular meetings with your faculty supervisor.

Independent studies are excellent means for students to personalize their course of study through intensive exploration of a topic that is of particular interest to them. Many students report this to be a highlight of their college experience. In addition, students seeking admission to graduate school can expect a graduate admissions committee to value the ambition and intellectual curiosity demonstrated by supervised research. Independent study allows students to have more extensive and personalized attention from their faculty supervisor than can be obtained in the classroom. Since a letter of recommendation is strongest when a faculty member can report knowing the student quite well, this more extensive contact with a professor can result in a particularly strong letter of recommendation. Additionally, students can win research grants to assist to assist them in their work. Students can also present their research at campus events and Political Science conferences. In a few cases, our students have used research in independent studies that later resulted in published articles.

If you plan to use the experience to strengthen your application to graduate school, you should start during your junior year (as long as your coursework meets the requirements of the individual faculty member). Graduate school applications and letters of recommendation are often due by January of your senior year, so it is better to have a good start on your undergraduate research experience prior to this.

You should decide which faculty member you would like to have supervise your research. Before approaching this faculty member, you should have some idea of the research topic that you are interested in pursuing so the faculty member can decide if he or she feels comfortable supervising the project. The department chair must approve all independent studies, and will enroll you in the course after the necessary approvals.

Departmental Honors

Students who complete departmental honors will have that designation on their transcript. Employers, law schools and graduate schools value departmental honors for the critical thinking and writing skills and research skills you gain while completing these requirements. Additionally, students can win research grants to assist them in their work. Students can also present their research at campus events, as well as at PLS conferences. As a departmental honors student, you will gain all the benefits of EIU's Honors College, including priority registration.

An honors thesis consists of about 50-60 pages of original research, including a literature review, and applying a social science research method. Examples of departmental honors theses include education reform in Illinois, a case study of U.S. ambassadors, Congress and education policy, gender and gubernatorial elections, and state legislative behavior.

Students may enroll in departmental honors if they have maintained a 3.5 gpa, completed most of their introductory PLS coursework, and have junior standing. Students typically begin during the junior year, and no later than the summer after their junior year. Students must have the permission of the Department Honors Coordinator (Dr. Melinda Mueller at mamueller@eiu.edu) and the Department Chair (Dr. Richard Wandling) to enroll.

Requirements for Departmental Honors include:

- PLS 4444/Honors Independent Study (junior year)
 - Students usually work on developing a thesis proposal during this course. They also read and develop a literature review on the scholarly literature related to their thesis project.
 - Students typically meet weekly with their faculty mentor to discuss their writing.
 - Writing assignments are expected on a regular basis.
- PLS 4555/Honors Research (junior or senior year)
 - Students will often work on either data collection, or the first 2-3 chapters of their thesis.
 - Weekly meetings with their faculty mentor are expected, along with regular writing assignments.
- PLS 4644/Honors Thesis (senior year)

- Students complete their thesis, culminating in a thesis defense before their faculty mentor and two other thesis committee members.
- Weekly meetings are expected throughout the semester.
- One 5000-level PLS graduate seminar (senior year)
 - Students will complete one PLS graduate course, preferably in a field related to their thesis.

Study Abroad (PLS 3970)

A variety of Study Abroad opportunities exist at EIU. Students who enroll in at least 3 credit hours of Study Abroad can use those hours to count towards the Political Science Experiential Learning requirement, and coursework through Study Abroad programs can also be used to meet other university requirements. Study Abroad can develop and reinforce students' language skills, cultural awareness, and knowledge of international affairs. Above all, please note that the Political Science department is fully committed to working with students in bringing back credit for the major through EIU-recognized Study Abroad programs. Details on EIU's study abroad opportunities are found at <http://castle.eiu.edu/edabroad/>.

Model Illinois Government (PLS 2611)

Have you ever wanted to debate on the floor of the General assembly? Have you ever felt like you could do a better job with crafting the state's budget than those currently in power? This is your chance! Model Illinois Government (commonly known as MIG) students are given the opportunity to play the role of legislator, lobbyist, or journalist in an annual simulation that meets over a four day period in Springfield, Illinois. Model Illinois government has been around for over thirty years and draws support from well over twenty-five universities and community colleges throughout Illinois. The best part is that the simulation makes full use of state government facilities, such as the House and Senate chambers to provide a realistic basis for learning about state government and politics. Students who have been part of the delegation have had a great time, learned a lot in the process, and often make connections with alumni in Springfield. Students at all levels can get enroll in Model Illinois Government. The course associated with this simulation is PLS 2611, a 1 credit hour course, and may be repeated. Three credit hours can count towards the PLS major Experiential Learning requirement. Dr. Jeffrey (jsashley@eiu.edu) is the course instructor and advisor, and is happy to meet with students to provide more information.

Moot Court

Moot Court is connected to a 3 credit course, Legal Research and Argument (PLS 2503), which can be repeated twice. Only the first 3 hours will count towards the Political Science major, fulfilling the experiential learning

requirement. Students also may enroll in the 1 credit version of Moot Court (PLS 2513), which is offered in spring semesters and may be repeated twice for academic credit. This course is focused on preparing students for the Moot Court simulation that is held in conjunction with Model Illinois Government.

Moot Court is a simulation of an appellate court proceeding—it is also known as Mock Supreme Court or Supreme Court Simulation. Students act as attorneys and make an argument on behalf of their client. The Supreme Court Justices can and will interrupt the argument with questions. Moot Court is part of a national organization, the American Collegiate Moot Court Association; see the ACMA website at <http://falcon.fsc.edu/mootcourt/index.html>.

In the United States, Moot Court is almost universally required in J.D. (Juris Doctorate) law school programs. Over the past decade, a number of undergraduate moot court activities have been developed in American colleges and universities. Moot Court is open to any student who wanting to build skills in legal argument. Most, but not all, mooters hope to attend law school and/or are pre-law minors.

Moot Court builds your skills in speaking, argument, and thinking quickly on your feet. And, importantly, build self-confidence in these skills. You will learn how to read and analyze Supreme Court cases and congressional statutes, and have a better understanding of how the Supreme Court functions. Additionally, Moot Court looks great on a law school application. You will also have a leg up on fellow law students when it comes time to do Moot Court in law school. You can also develop a relationship with fellow EIU mooters, your moot court partner, and the moot court facilitator (who is also the pre-law advisor). If you want more information about taking the Moot Court challenge, contact the Moot Court facilitator, Dr. Karen Swenson, at 581-6964 or kbswenson@eiu.edu

Political Science Capstone (PLS 4600)

All majors are required to complete the capstone course (PLS 4600), which will be taken no earlier than the 2nd semester of their junior year. All introductory core courses and at least 9 hours of Field Requirements in the major must be completed before enrolling in the capstone. This seminar provides undergraduates with a culminating experience for the PLS major. You will integrate what you've learned as an undergraduate, to better understand the major questions formulated and studied by Political Scientists. You will also carry out a major research project and presentation, and serve as the editorial board for our department's undergraduate journal, *The EIU Political Science Review*.

Undergraduate Research in Political Science

Located within the College of Sciences, the Department of Political Science places special emphasis on developing undergraduate research skills. Students will gain the skills to write an undergraduate research paper, involving qualitative or quantitative methods. Through upper division courses, independent studies, and departmental Honors, students can pursue many research opportunities. Research skills are very important not only for graduate and law school studies, but also for building employment skills, and can improve your professional resume. Students involved in undergraduate research develop excellent problem-solving, writing, and communication skills, all of which are very important skills in a competitive job market

Opportunities exist to present research on campus. All majors will present their capstone project, either during the last week of classes for the fall semester, or at the PLS Spring banquet for the spring capstone students. The department recognizes outstanding student research writing at the annual spring banquet. Students may also apply for a Scholars in Undergraduate Research at Eastern (SURE) Award through the College of Sciences or one of the Social Science Writing Award. Some of our students present their research at various conferences, including the Illinois State University Conference for Students of Political Science, Butler University's Undergraduate Research Conference, and at annual meetings of the Illinois Political Science Association and the Midwest Political Science Association.

Social Science Writing Award

The Departments of Economics, History, Political Science, Psychology and Sociology-Anthropology of Eastern Illinois University invite students to participate in the Annual Social Science Writing Awards competition. Regardless of major, undergraduate students who write research papers as a regular assignment in all social science courses may submit them for recognition and one of the cash awards. The award process is coordinated through the College of Sciences, and winners are recognized at the annual Sciencefest program.

Student Research Support Fund-Department of Political Science

This fund provides travel support for EIU Political Science juniors, seniors, and graduate students who have papers accepted for presentation at regional, state, national or international conferences between July 1 and June 30 of the current fiscal year. The fund provides reimbursement of documented travel expenses up to \$400. To be eligible for this fund, the recipient must be a junior, senior or graduate Political Science major who is enrolled at the university during the term the paper was or will be presented. Students with questions on this fund should contact the Department Chair.

Scholars in Undergraduate Research at Eastern (SURE Awards)

The Scholars in Undergraduate Research at Eastern (SURE) Award fosters undergraduate research participation for students in the various majors of the College of Sciences. Undergraduate involvement in research with mentoring professors is a rewarding experience for students. The goal of the SURE program is to facilitate research activities in all departments in the College through incentives that feature a monetary award and recognition at the annual Sciencefest program. The SURE awards are awarded to undergraduate students in their junior or senior years. Appropriate student research may be qualitative or quantitative projects in which students gather and synthesize data and which can be written and presented in a poster format. Students who have completed independent studies, research courses, Honors theses or other scholarly projects are strongly encouraged to apply.

The EIU Political Science Review

Each year the capstone course students serve as an editorial board for an on-line journal of Political Science undergraduate research. Papers written in any PLS 3000 and 4000-level course may be submitted to the editorial board for peer review. Getting published here is a way for you to demonstrate strong writing and analytical skills. Published students are recognized at the spring banquet. More information on the journal is available here:

http://www.eiu.edu/polisci/eiu_poli_sci_review.php.

Scholarships for Political Science Students

Over three dozen scholarships are available to Political Science majors, at all levels of study. You can conduct a major-specific scholarship search here: <http://eiu.edu/~scholars/search.php?year=&major=18&county=&activity=&keyword=&submitweb.x=50&submitweb.y=21>

Some of the key scholarships available to Political Science majors include:

James E and Joseph T Connelly Scholarship

The recipient must be a political science major at Eastern Illinois University, must be either a junior or a second semester sophomore, and must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 and a grade point average of 3.0 in three or more political science courses. The recipient must have a record of community or university service, and must write a 300-500 word essay that illustrates a "social conscience approach" to a governmental problem. The award shall be announced each Spring and issued the following Fall semester. Applications are available in the department office.

Andrew Galo Scholarship for International Studies

Established in 2012, this scholarship was established in memory of Mr. Andrew Galo and commemorates Andrew's keen interest in political science and international studies, along with his care and concern for individuals who may lack the financial support to pursue such studies. Eligibility criteria for this scholarship is as follows: the recipient must be a full-time student majoring in Political Science accepted to Eastern Illinois University with an overall GPA of 3.0 or better and must be either a domestic student undertaking a study abroad program or an international student coming from abroad. Financial need is a consideration. The award shall be announced in the spring and paid in the following fall to Eastern Illinois University to be first applied against costs (tuition, fees, housing, etc.) associated with the recipient attending Eastern Illinois University. Any remaining amount will be disbursed to the recipient.

C.A. Hollister Pre-Law Award

The award recipient shall be a Junior or Senior with a cumulative GPA of 3.25 or more. The recipient shall be a member of Sigma Iota Lambda, the pre-legal fraternity at EIU, for a minimum period of one year. The recipient shall have passed at least four courses in the Pre-Legal Program. The recipient shall have passed at least one course in public law offered by the Political Science Department. The recipient shall have shown interest in the community by serving in a law-related internship at EIU or by some other form of community service.

Elisha Baumgartner Scholarship

The award shall be made to four full-time students of the following departments: Economics, History, Political Science or Sociology. The recipient shall be a sophomore with a "C" cumulative grade point average (2.0 on a 4.0 scale). The recipient shall be able to demonstrate financial need as determined by the Financial Aid Office at Eastern Illinois University. Recipient shall remain eligible to receive the award in subsequent years provided he or she maintains a "C" average. The award shall be paid in equal installments for each of the terms in the regular academic year following confirmation that the student is officially enrolled and in attendance in the classes in each term. This scholarship is announced in the Spring, and paid 1/2 in both the Fall and Spring semesters of the following year.

J. Y. Kelly Scholarship

The recipient must be a Pre-Legal Studies major in the Political Science Department, enrolled at Eastern Illinois University. Outstanding scholarship and leadership must be considered in the selection of the recipient. The award shall be announced in the Spring Semester and paid in the following Fall Semester.

Warner/Brainard Presidential Award in Pre-Legal Studies

The recipient shall be a Junior or Senior majoring in Pre-Legal Studies within the Political Science Department. The recipient must show outstanding scholastic achievement, with a minimum of a "B" average. The recipient shall be a person of outstanding character whose actions and conduct reflect with credit upon EIU. Financial need is a consideration, but only after the number of recipients is reduced to three choices. This award is issued in the Spring Semester.

Outstanding First Year Political Science Student Scholarship

The recipient of this award shall meet the following criteria: maintain a GPA of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale, demonstrate eligibility for financial aid, have six completed credit hours in Political Science courses and have an overall of 26 to 36 semester hours completed at EIU. The recipient will be nominated by a Political Science faculty member, and be asked to fill out an application form to be submitted to the department scholarships and awards committee for review.

Political Science Outstanding Senior Scholarship Award

Recipients must be accepted to Eastern Illinois University as a full-time student majoring in Political Science. Students must be nominated by a faculty member in the Department of Political Science. A 3.5 GPA and senior status is required. The recipient must submit two papers, from different courses, an application form, and a letter of nomination from their faculty sponsor.

Robert F. Glover Student Leadership Scholarship

This scholarship was created for the purpose of attracting academically talented students who have an interest in government or business leadership at Eastern Illinois University and further strengthen their academic credentials. The recipient(s) must be a full-time student, majoring or minoring in Political Science, accepted to Eastern Illinois University, with a minimum of 9 credit hours in political science completed. The recipient(s) must maintain a minimum of 2.75 GPA. The recipient(s) must demonstrate leadership in one or more of the following campus organizations/associations: Student Senate and/or Student Government; Student Supreme Court; University Board; EIU Residence Hall Association; and/or organizations formally listed under the Academic, Multicultural and Service RSO categories by the Eastern Illinois University Student Life Office. In the case of two finalists, financial need will be considered. The recipient(s) may be eligible to receive the award again provided he/she continues to meet criteria. The award(s) shall be announced in the Spring and paid in the Fall to Eastern Illinois University to first be applied against costs (tuition, fees, housing, etc.) associated with the recipient(s) attending Eastern Illinois University.

Political Science Honors Scholarship

At the time of selection, the recipient(s) must be a graduating high school senior who has been accepted to EIU. The recipient(s) must qualify for admission to the Honors College as follows: ACT composite score of 26 or higher or SAT of 1100 or higher, plus graduation in the upper 10% of his/her high school class or a 3.5 high school GPA. The recipient(s) must major in Political Science. As part of the application process, the applicant shall submit an essay stating educational plans and career aspirations.

Birdina Gregg Annual Scholarship

Established in 2012 to honor the memory of Birdina Gregg, this scholarship was created to recognize a member of the Campus Democrats, a Registered Student Organization (RSO), who has actively served that organization, as well as the local Democratic Party and some combination of the community/university. Criteria for selection are as follows: The recipient must be an active member of the EIU Campus Democrats (RSO) with a record of involvement in that organization as well as in the local Democratic party and some combination of community and university service; and must be a full-time student enrolled at EIU as a sophomore, junior or senior with a GPA of 2.8 or higher. Financial need is not a consideration and the recipient may receive the award more than one time if he/she continues to meet the criteria. The recipient must apply for the award through the prescribed application process, which will include a requirement for providing two letters of recommendation.

Watson Memorial Scholarship Endowment Fund in Memory of Dallas, Hazel, and Leland Watson.

Established in 2001, this scholarship serves as a memorial for Charleston residents Dallas and Hazel Watson, and their son, Leland. It recognizes the Watson family's lifetime interests and careers in business (Dallas), Republican politics at the local, state, and national levels (Hazel) and theatrical lighting including technical lighting for forty-two Broadway productions (Leland). It is intended to help qualified students pursue an education which will lead them into productive careers. It is the hope of the donors that each recipient will, during his or her career, make contributions to the community in which they live and that they will work toward being an active member of the community. The scholarship shall rotate annually between the areas of Business (FY 14, FY 17), Theatre (FY 13, FY 16), and Political Science (FY 12, FY 15) respectively. The recipient must be a full-time or part-time undergraduate student currently accepted and enrolled at Eastern Illinois University for a minimum of 6 semester hours of instruction. The recipient must major in one of the following areas: pre-business or business, political science or theatre with preference given to theatrical lighting. The recipient must have an overall GPA of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. The recipient must display a need for financial aid. The recipient must demonstrate a high quality of character as demonstrated through academic (e.g. student academic organizations) or community activities. The recipient must submit a one-page personal letter setting forth the reason for applying and stating future goals. The recipient must be a resident of Illinois with priority given to a resident of Coles County. If no applicant from Coles County should exist, then selection can be based upon state-wide residency. The recipient may be eligible to apply for, and receive, the award one additional time provided he/she continues to meet the stated criteria. The minimum award shall be \$500 with multiple awards given as funding allows. The award shall be announced in the Fall and paid in the Fall to Eastern Illinois University to be first applied against costs (tuition, fees, housing, etc.) associated with the recipient attending Eastern Illinois University. Any remaining amount will be disbursed to the recipient.

Getting Involved on Campus and in the Department

We highly recommend that you get involved in leadership and volunteer activities related to your major. Besides registered student organizations, we also encourage you to attend department-sponsored events, such as the annual picnic, traditionally held the Friday after Labor Day, as well as speakers and panel discussions. Naturally, you must put your academics first, but extracurricular activities can complement your academics too. Recommended organizations include:

The Political Science Association

The Political Science Association (PSA) provides political science students with the opportunity to engage in discussions of political issues, to assist students in learning about political science careers, and to encourage student participation in political activities. This group is open to all majors and minors of Political Science as well as any other students interested in Political Science. It is also a great way to meet others who share an interest in Political Science. Though the organization attempts to analyze events from an objective viewpoint, individual political views inevitably present themselves and have in the past led to some very productive informal debates on the implications of certain events and issues. Thus, this organization should appeal to anyone seeking to analyze the world of politics and government and debate political questions and policy issues in an informal setting (e.g., the meaning of the 2012 Presidential election results; fairness in federal taxes and spending; education reform; U.S. defense policy strategies; the debate over laws and regulations concerning access to and use of guns, etc.). Additionally, the PSA has organized and participated in many events that aim to inform the general student body about political science and various issues in the world of politics. Additionally, the PSA sponsors career and major oriented panels for students. The PSA typically meets weekly in one of the Coleman PLS classrooms, during the early evening. Any student interested in joining may contact the Faculty Advisor, [Dr. Richard Wandling \(rawandling@eiu.edu\)](mailto:Dr. Richard Wandling (rawandling@eiu.edu)).

Pi Sigma Alpha

Pi Sigma Alpha, the National Political Science Honor Society, is the only honor society for college students of political science and government in the United States. The Articles of Incorporation of Pi Sigma Alpha state as one of its purposes "to stimulate scholarship and intelligent interest in political science." At EIU, membership is open to students with a 3.0-or-better GPA in Political Science classes, as well as overall, and the completion of at least three political science courses, at least one of which must be at the 3000 level or higher. Students are invited to join the Honor Society each year when they meet the requirements for membership.

Pi Sigma Alpha members at EIU have participated in diverse intellectual activities, including panel discussions in observance of Constitution Day and political debates surrounding local, state and national elections. Members have also traveled to political science conferences and presented research papers produced in classes. They have also reached out to the community by sponsoring Political Science Essay contests at the high school level to increase awareness and interest in political issues. If you are interested in being considered for membership in Pi Sigma Alpha, please contact the Faculty Advisor in the Political Science Department, Dr. Melinda Mueller (mamueller@eiu.edu). Students are also invited to visit the national Pi Sigma Alpha website at <http://www.apsanet.org/~psa/>.

Pre Law Society/Phi Alpha Delta

Some members of the Eastern Illinois University Pre-Law Society are also members of Phi Alpha Delta (PAD), an international legal fraternal organization, www.pad.org. Membership in P.A.D. requires an additional fee and is optional. The Pre-Law Society/P.A.D. is a registered student organization with the Office of Student Life. Activities include sponsoring speakers, organizing visits to law schools, fund raising and charity events, sponsoring a Mock LSAT, social events, and organizing a trip to the U of I for the MAPLA Law School Caravan. For more information, contact Dr. Karen Swenson (kbswenson@eiu.edu).

Other organizations to consider include:

- Student Government
- College Democrats and Republicans
- Criminal Justice Club
- Association of Honors Students
- Association of International Students
- EIU Pride
- Women's Empowerment League
- African Students Association
- Asian American Association
- Black Student Union
- Latin American Student Association
- Habitat for Humanity
- Students and Veterans of Eastern

Additionally, many volunteer opportunities exist at EIU. Details can be found at the office of Student Community Service (<http://www.eiu.edu/volunteer/>). More opportunities are available through EIU's Newman Center, which coordinates the alternative spring break program, Fair Trade for Global Justice, and the Haiti Connection program (www.eiunewman.org/svc/index.html). Although the Newman Center has a religious affiliation, its affiliated groups such as the Haiti Connection are open to all students, regardless of their spiritual inclinations.

Applying for Graduation

Students may apply for graduation when they have completed 60 semester hours. It is strongly recommended that you apply for graduation no later than one full year before you plan on graduating in order to ensure that you will meet all of the graduation requirements during your last two semesters on campus. This is especially true for students who have transferred hours from other institutions to EIU.

Currently, you may apply for graduation through the PAWS System. When you submit your application for graduation, your billing account will automatically be charged the \$25 application fee. See the Records Office web site for additional information on deadlines for application, Cap & Gown, Diploma Covers, and Reapplication for Graduation.

A few weeks after you have applied for graduation, a staff member from the College of Sciences Dean's office will contact you about scheduling a time to go over your degree audit. This audit includes an evaluation of your overall progress toward graduation, as well as a review of the remaining courses and requirements that must be completed. You will be provided with a written statement of the requirements you still need to complete prior to graduation, as well as an opportunity to ask any questions about the graduation requirements that pertain to you.

Should I go to Graduate School in Political Science?

If upon your undergraduate education you still have a strong interest in Political Science, you should consider getting a Master's or Ph.D.

Master's degrees can typically be earned in 1.5 years. You will have the opportunity to develop and enhance your research interests, and your professional prospects will be enhanced considerably.

Graduate degrees can offer:

- Increased employment opportunities; the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that the average employment rate for those with master's degrees is better than those with only bachelor's degrees. In the area of Political Science, we also know that many government and research-related jobs often favor applicants with Master's degrees.
- Increased financial earnings: the Bureau of Labor Statistics also reports that those with master's degree have significantly higher lifetime financial earnings when compared to students with master's degrees.
- Admittance into PhD programs or Law Schools: a master's degree can help prepare you for the further study, and often significantly improve your prospects of gaining admittance to PhD and Law Schools. Master's graduate training significantly improves your writing, research and speaking skills.

How do I Pay for Graduate School?

This is a major area of concern for those entering graduate school. The best way to pay for graduate school is by acquiring a "graduate assistantship." Assistants often provide completion tuition waivers (yes---you do not pay tuition), and a monthly stipend to cover your basic expenses. In exchange, you will work in an academic department or some other academic unit as a research or teaching assistant.

Many universities also provide fellowships, which may permit the student to pay no university expenses, and scholarships are available too in many Departments.

You should know that MANY people do not pay tuition for their graduate education, so please do not rule out graduate school because of the potential financial expenses. Graduate assistantships, scholarships and fellowship are competitive, but financial opportunities are there if your previous record is good.

Overview for Applying to Graduate School in Political Science

What are the basic steps involved in deciding and applying for graduate school in Political Science? What timeline should you follow? Many students do not realize that the process of deciding and applying for graduate school requires advance planning. In fact, one should plan at least a full year in advance if possible. Most of the preparation work should begin as early as your junior year or even possibly your sophomore year.

The application process has three major components. The first consists of all the steps you have to take from deciding whether you would like to go to graduate school, to completing the application packet, to finally receiving your admissions letters. For very detailed discussion and helpful advice concerning these steps, consult the references listed below and speak with faculty members in the Political Science department. Likewise, read the section on asking for recommendation letters found in this handbook. The second major component is preparing for and taking the GRE tests. Besides the references provided below, consult the handbook's section on the GRE tests. The third component refers to other preparations you can take to improve your chances for admission to graduate school. Because you will be asking for recommendation letters from faculty during your senior year, they should have the opportunity to get to know you well before that. Involvement in research will enhance your credentials and are often the bases for recommendation, and should be engaged in as early as your junior year. Thus, completing the research methods courses before or early in your junior year is recommended. For more advice, see the websites below.

<http://www.gradschools.com>

At this site, you can search programs by field of study, subject, and location. It also includes information about how to fund your graduate education.

<http://www.admissionsboard.com>

This site features an "ask the expert" forum for graduate school admissions. You can ask such questions as. "Is it good to put certain types of information in my personal statement?" Or "Can I still get into graduate school with a mediocre GPA and a mediocre GRE score?"

<http://graduate-school.phds.org>

This is a useful search engine based on degree specialty, setting, location, cost, financial aid, outcomes, size, diversity, selectivity, etc.

How do I get letters of recommendation from faculty?

Graduate admissions committees take letters of recommendation seriously because they provide information about you beyond the objective information

they glean from your GRE scores and grades. These letters offer an overall account of your academic abilities and promise, and may weigh in a lot in the committees' decisions for admitting you. They ought to speak about a host of factors that indicate your potential for graduate school work such as your intellectual ability, motivation, integrity, work ethic, creativity, capacity for independent thought, communication skills, research experience, general and special knowledge, leadership, and ability to work with others. As such, it is very important to choose recommenders who can describe you extensively and very positively on those elements. They must have had considerable contact with you and have been involved closely in your education, research activities, or internships. Do not ask letters of recommendation from those who hardly know you academically, or those whose involvements with you are not within the academic context, including public officials, ministers, or therapists. Likewise, avoid those who will be perceived as being unable to give an objective portrayal of you, such as family, relatives, or friends. Lastly, do not ask letters from those who you anticipate will not give you a positive evaluation, or those who you believe will only harm your application. In most cases, it is highly advisable that the letters be written by a faculty member who knows you well.

Once you have picked out potential references, do not simply ask if they are willing to write a letter of recommendation for you. Ask if they believe they know you enough to write a strong one for you. Give your letter writers adequate advance notice of any letters you request, relative to submission deadlines, so they have enough time to write the letters. Furthermore, graduate schools vary on how they would like to receive the recommendation letters. Some require that the recommenders send the letters directly to them while others request that you include those letters in your application packet. Your references may also request that you provide them with a resume so that they are able to write as comprehensively as possible about the full range of your activities and achievements on and off campus.

When should I take the GRE?

Most graduate admissions committees require that you submit scores from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). The GRE consists of the following: a General Test with three parts (verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing). It is very important to do well on these exams since they are often used as a predictor of your success in graduate school. Many graduate schools will tell you what minimum scores they require for admission. Most doctoral programs expect a combined score of 1200 on the verbal and quantitative sections of the General Test, while master's programs often require a combined score of 1000. For detailed information about the content of the tests, check www.gre.org.

Because some deadlines for graduate school application begin as early as December, plan to take the GRE in October or November at the latest. It takes 10 – 15 days after taking the test for graduate schools to receive your General Test scores, while it takes about six weeks after taking the test for the Subject Test scores to be reported to you and to the schools. You must make sure that your scores will be available in time for your earliest admissions deadline in order to be considered for scholarships and awards.

The GRE test can also be taken more than once. If you did not do well on the exams, you can certainly try again. This is why you should take the test even earlier than October or November to give you time to prepare should you decide to have a retest. You can re-take the General Test only one time per month, and only five times in a year. Below is an example of a timeline for studying and taking the GRE tests that you can follow.

With regards to registering for the exams, do so early enough so that you have more freedom to choose test dates. November, December, and January are considered as the busiest testing periods. Note that you need to register at least six weeks in advance for the Subject Test. For more specific information about registering for the tests, check www.gre.org.

How do I prepare for the GRE?

Probably the first thing you should do, if you haven't already done so, is thoroughly review the GRE website. If you go to www.ets.org/gre/general/prepare, you'll see that they have a lot of free prep materials, as well as some materials that you can buy. There's also a link to strategies and tips for taking the test. The most popular sources for GRE prep information are the Princeton Review (www.princetonreview.com), Kaplan (www.kaptest.com/GRE/Home/index.html), and PowerScore (www.powerscore.com/index.htm). One of the more highly recommended books is "Barron's GRE," which sells for about \$10.50 at Amazon.com, not a bad price for a book that's over 500 pages long!

Timeline for Graduate School Preparation

Junior Year

- Consider whether you need to go to graduate school for an MA or PhD, and consider on area of specialization in PLS.
- Research various graduate programs and identify faculty you might like to work with. Research financial aid information.
- Gain undergraduate research experience.
- If GRE testing is required, begin studying, and register for the test.
- Take the GRE in the summer before your senior year.

Senior

- Decide on schools and begin the application process.
- Ask faculty for recommendation letters.
- Request copies of transcripts.
- Write your personal statement or statement of interest. If necessary, choose a writing sample.
- Take or re-take the GRE in the fall.
- Gain undergraduate research experience
- Send off applications on time.

Staying at Eastern for Your Master's in Political Science

If you would like to stay at Eastern for your graduate degree, please meet with our Department's graduate coordinator, Professor Ryan Hendrickson (rchendrickson@eiu.edu) in Coleman 2325. Our program has received a "First Choice Distinction," which indicates its excellence in graduate education.

Our Department offers concentration in three areas of Political Science

- American Government and Politics
- Comparative Politics and International Relations
- Public Administration/Public Policy

We also have a number of graduate assistantships that help cover many of our financial costs, including tuition in the fall, spring and summer semesters. We also have some scholarships.

Our department also has an exceptional record of encouraging and then supporting students who wish to attend research conferences to present their papers. We have found financial opportunities to help students pay all of their travel costs. We also have a strong publication record with our students; you may be able to publish your own research, a book review, or a short essay with our help, which is very usual for a master's program.

Planning for Law School

Students considering attending law school should strongly consider the Pre-Law minor. This interdisciplinary minor provides a strong foundation for advanced legal studies. You can learn more about this minor here: <http://castle.eiu.edu/prelaw/index.php>.

The Pre-Law webpage also provides tips for law school preparation, including a planning schedule, and tips for LSAT preparation.