

POLITICAL SCIENCE

The Political Science Department at Benedictine College seeks to cultivate tomorrow's leaders by immersing them in what Aristotle called the architectonic study. Here the timeless questions of political life meet the current debates. Through the study of primary texts as well as contemporary sources, students will learn about their own political community: its history, founding, principles, institutions, laws, challenges, and how these have been met. In addition, they will discover the political communities of others and the institutions and principles by which these interact with our own. What sets our program apart from other politics programs grounded in the Western tradition is its alignment with the Catholic education Benedictine College offers. Our students do not check their faith at the door but are taught to bring it—and the Church's two thousand years of experience of the interacting with the state—into the conversation as a guiding light.

The Department takes seriously Benedictine College's mission to Transform Culture in America. In her 2021 Convocation Address, Vice President and Executive Director of the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty Montse Alvarado told students that it is only a matter of time before a Benedictine alumnus/alumna becomes President of the United States. Whether as presidents, lawyers, representatives, administrators, or as leaders in their communities, our students will be prepared for their vocations.

Internship/Service Learning

The department recommends that every major in political science completes at least one guided, practical program, such as a local internship; a structured service-learning experience; a semester in Washington, D.C.; an international travel program; or placement with a state or local agency or an administrative, legislative, or judicial assignment. The department will help to match students with these opportunities.

Travel Opportunities

The department conducts travel experiences that advance discovery learning. Students have attended the American Political Science Association annual meeting; presented papers at regional and national conferences; immersed themselves in presidential politics at the Iowa caucuses since 2000; taken trips to Washington, D.C.; toured and conducted research at presidential libraries; and attended a presidential inauguration. Departmental faculty coordinates and supervises these experiences.

Law School and Graduate Study

The Politics and Government major is an excellent preparatory course for the student seeking admission to law school. The combination of constitutional and policy studies with foundational texts and critical thinking helps prepare students not only to be successful applicants but also successful law students.

For students interested in pursuing graduate studies in Political Science, the department also offers mentorship and opportunities for advanced research.

Career Paths for the Politics and Government Majors

Political science is an excellent portal to many careers. These include foreign service, public administration, law, policy advocacy for corporations and tax-exempt organizations, management within industries that are highly globalized or regulated, teaching, and administration in trade and professional associations.

Programs

Bachelor

- Politics and Government (BA)

Bachelor with Specialization

- Politics and Government (BA) - Pre-Law Specialization

Minor

- Political Economy Minor
- Politics and Government Minor

Dr. Nathan Orlando, Assistant Professor and Chair

Ph.D., Political Science, Baylor University (2019)

Dr. Kimberly Shankman, Professor & Provost

Ph.D., Political Science, Northern Illinois University (1990)

Dr. Kevin Burns, Associate Professor

Ph.D., Political Science, Baylor University (2017)