

# GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS MAJOR

**Director of Undergraduate Studies:** David Cunningham, Ph.D.

Government and Politics is one of the largest majors on campus with over 1,000 students taking courses in American politics, international relations (formal concentration available), comparative politics, political theory, political methodology and formal theory, public law, and environmental policy. Its large and diverse group of students are mentored by faculty through a variety of in and out of classroom experiences and have been extremely successful in garnering campus and national awards, acceptance to competitive law and graduate programs, and exciting careers in all levels of government and the private sector. Courses offered by this department may be found under the acronym GVPT.

## PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Department of Government and Politics offers programs for the general student as well as for students who are interested in careers in government, the public sector, foreign service, teaching, a variety of graduate programs, and law schools. In addition to the Government and Politics general curriculum, the department offers a formal concentration in International Relations as well as combined bachelor's/master's programs with the Master of Arts in International Relations (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/international-relations-mair/>) and the Master of Science in Applied Political Analytics (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/programs/applied-political-analytics-apan/>).

The study of politics is both an ancient discipline and a modern social science. The origin of the discipline can be traced back to the earliest times when philosophers, statesmen, and citizens studied the nature of government, justice, responsibility, and the consequences of political action. More recently, the study of politics has also emphasized scientific analysis and methods of observations about politics. Today, the discipline reflects a broad effort to collect data about politics and governments utilizing relatively new techniques developed by all of the social sciences.

The Department of Government and Politics combines philosophical and scientific concerns in its overall program as well as in specific courses. It emphasizes such broad areas as political institutions, political development, policy analysis, social justice, political economy, conflict, and human rights. These broad conceptual areas are integral components of study in the discipline. The areas are commonly referred to as American government and politics; comparative politics; international relations; political theory; political methodology, and public law.

Students may choose between two curriculums, one leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree (formal concentration in International Relations available) and the other to a Bachelor of Science. The Bachelor of Arts in Government and Politics prepares students to understand and interpret political science research. The Bachelor of Science in Government and Politics is designed to provide students with the tools to produce political science research through advanced training in political methodology and data analysis.

## Program Learning Outcomes

Having completed the degree program, students should have acquired the following knowledge and skills:

1. Understand basic political science concepts including power, institutions, political systems, the state, political conflict, sovereignty, citizenship, authority, and justice.
2. Identify causes of systemic bias and discrimination against underrepresented groups, including racism against Black people and African Americans, and critically evaluate theories and evidence in this area.
3. Use political science concepts, modes of inquiry, and analytic skills to address contemporary problems, understand the politics of diversity, and encourage civic engagement.
4. B.A. track: Demonstrate familiarity with the methods, approaches, and theories used to interpret information applicable to the discipline of political science.
5. B.S. track: Understand, interpret, and produce empirical political science research using sophisticated quantitative methodology.
6. B.A. track: Communicate key arguments and ideas in political science effectively in writing and speaking.
7. B.S. track: Communicate key arguments and the results of empirical analyses effectively in writing and speaking.

## Requirements

In addition to the University's general education requirements, students must earn a minimum of 36 credit hours within GVPT (and no more than 42 credit hours) total within the major. At least 18 of the 36 credits must be in upper-level courses. Students who have completed or are in the process of completing 42 credits must get permission to take additional GVPT credits. A course used to fulfill one requirement for the major may not count towards any other GVPT major requirement. A minimum grade of "C-" is required in all major requirements.

### Benchmark Requirements

In accordance with the University's policies, the Department of Government and Politics expects students to make timely progress toward graduation. To help measure progress during the early stages of a student's studies in government and politics, students must complete all coursework designated as benchmarks within a specified number of semesters in order to continue in the major.

### Bachelor of Arts

#### Benchmark 1

Students must complete the following four courses within two semesters of entering the major:

- GVPT170 with a grade of C- or higher
- One 200-level GVPT course with a grade of C- or higher (may not be experiential learning)
- One of STAT100, MATH107, MATH120, MATH135, MATH136, or MATH140 with a grade of C- or higher
- Academic Writing with a grade of C- or higher

*Note:* At least one of the GVPT courses must not be from AP/IB/CLEP credit.

**Bachelor of Science****Benchmark 1**

Students must complete the following four courses within two semesters of entering the major:

- GVPT170 with a grade of C- or higher
- GVPT201 with a grade of C- or higher
- One of STAT100, MATH107, MATH120, MATH135, MATH136, or MATH140 with a grade of C- or higher
- Academic Writing with a grade of C- or higher

**Benchmark 2**

Students must complete the following course within one semester of completing Benchmark 1:

- GVPT320 with a grade of C- or higher

**Requirements for the Bachelor of Arts**

Course	Title	Credits
College Requirements ( <a href="https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/behavioral-social-sciences/#collegerequirementstext">https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/behavioral-social-sciences/#collegerequirementstext</a> )		
<b>Required Courses</b>		
GVPT170	American Government	3
Select one of the following:		3-4
STAT100	Elementary Statistics and Probability	
MATH107	Introduction to Math Modeling and Probability	
MATH120	Elementary Calculus I	
MATH135	Discrete Mathematics for Life Sciences	
MATH136	Calculus for Life Sciences	
MATH140	Calculus I	
<b>GVPT Theory Requirement</b>		
GVPT241	The Study of Political Philosophy: Ancient and Modern	3
<b>GVPT Methods Requirement</b>		
GVPT201	Scope and Methods for Political Science Research	3
<b>GVPT Courses of Choice</b>		
GVPT Courses of Choice (any level)		9
GVPT Courses of Choice 300-400 level		18
<b>Skills Requirement</b>		
ECON200	Principles of Microeconomics	3
Completion of a foreign language through the entire elementary level <sup>1</sup>		4-12
Quantitative Skills course <sup>2</sup>		3
Additional Skills course (Intermediate-level foreign language course or additional quantitative course from approved list <sup>1,2</sup> )		3-6
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>52-64</b>

<sup>1</sup> See GVPT website for approved foreign language course list, <https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements> (<https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements/>). Students may be eligible for exemption from the foreign language requirement(s) based on demonstrated language proficiency, see GVPT website for details.

<sup>2</sup> See GVPT website for approved Quantitative Skills course list, <https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements> (<https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements/>).

**Requirements for the International Relations Concentration**

(International Relations Concentration available with Bachelor of Arts only)

Course	Title	Credits
College Requirements ( <a href="https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/behavioral-social-sciences/#collegerequirementstext">https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/behavioral-social-sciences/#collegerequirementstext</a> )		
<b>Required Courses</b>		
GVPT170	American Government	3
Select one of the following:		3-4
STAT100	Elementary Statistics and Probability	
MATH107	Introduction to Math Modeling and Probability	
MATH120	Elementary Calculus I	
MATH135	Discrete Mathematics for Life Sciences	
MATH136	Calculus for Life Sciences	
MATH140	Calculus I	
<b>GVPT Theory Requirement</b>		
GVPT241	The Study of Political Philosophy: Ancient and Modern	3
<b>GVPT Methods Requirement</b>		
GVPT201	Scope and Methods for Political Science Research	3
<b>GVPT International Relations Foundational Courses</b>		
GVPT200	International Political Relations	3
GVPT280	The Study of Comparative Politics	3
or GVPT282	Politics and the Developing World	
<b>GVPT Courses of Choice</b>		
GVPT Course of Choice (any level)		3
GVPT Course of Choice 300-400 level (any subfield)		3
GVPT IR/Comparative Courses of Choice 300-400 level <sup>1</sup>		15
<b>Skills Requirements</b>		
ECON200	Principles of Microeconomics	3
Completion of a foreign language through the entire elementary level <sup>1,2</sup>		4-12
Quantitative Skills course <sup>3</sup>		3
Intermediate-level foreign language course <sup>2</sup>		3-6
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>52-64</b>

<sup>1</sup> See GVPT website for approved IR/Comparative course list, <https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements> (<https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements/>).

<sup>2</sup> See GVPT website for approved foreign language course list, <https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements> (<https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements/>). Students may be eligible for exemption from the foreign language requirement(s) based on demonstrated language proficiency, see GVPT website for details.

<sup>3</sup> See GVPT website for approved Quantitative Skills course list, <https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements> (<https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements/>).

## Requirements for the Bachelor of Science

Course	Title	Credits
College Requirements ( <a href="https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/behavioral-social-sciences/#collegerequirementstext">https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/colleges-schools/behavioral-social-sciences/#collegerequirementstext</a> )		
<b>Required Courses</b>		
GVPT170	American Government	3
Select one of the following:		3-4
STAT100	Elementary Statistics and Probability	
MATH107	Introduction to Math Modeling and Probability	
MATH120	Elementary Calculus I	
MATH135	Discrete Mathematics for Life Sciences	
MATH136	Calculus for Life Sciences	
MATH140	Calculus I	
GVPT201	Scope and Methods for Political Science Research	3
GVPT320	Advanced Empirical Research	3
<b>GVPT Methods Requirements</b>		
GVPT Methods Course 300-400 level <sup>1</sup>		3
GVPT Quantitative Methods Courses 300-400 level <sup>1</sup>		6
<b>GVPT Foundational Courses</b>		
Select one of the following:		3
GVPT200	International Political Relations	
GVPT280	The Study of Comparative Politics	
GVPT282	Politics and the Developing World	
<b>GVPT Courses of Choice</b>		
GVPT Courses of Choice (any level)		6
GVPT Courses of Choice 300-400 level		9
<b>Skills Requirements</b>		
ECON200	Principles of Microeconomics	3
Completion of a foreign language through the entire elementary level 4-12 <sup>2</sup>		
Quantitative Skills courses <sup>3</sup>		6

Additional information on developing a four-year academic plan can be found on the following pages:

- [4yearplans.umd.edu \(http://4yearplans.umd.edu/\)](http://4yearplans.umd.edu/)
- the Student Academic Success-Degree Completion Policy (<https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/undergraduate/registration-academic-requirements-regulations/academic-advising/>) section of this catalog

<sup>1</sup> See GVPT website for approved GVPT Methods and Quantitative Methods course options, <https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements> (<https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements-courses/>).

<sup>2</sup> See GVPT website for approved foreign language course list, <https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements> (<https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements/>). Students may be eligible for exemption from the foreign language requirement(s) based on demonstrated language proficiency, see GVPT website for details.

<sup>3</sup> See GVPT website for approved Quantitative Skills course list, <https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements> (<https://gvpt.umd.edu/undergraduate/major-requirements/>).

## Four Year Plan

Click here (<https://fellercenter.umd.edu/academic-advising/forms-policies/graduation-plans/>) for roadmaps for four-year plans in the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences.