

Prospective Majors FAQ

UBC Department of Political Science



MAJOR PROGRAM

To be considered for admission into our Major Program, a student must:

- be enrolled in the Faculty of Arts;
- have completed at least **54 credits** of course work;
- have completed at least **9 credits** of our 12-credit lower-level POLI requirement (POLI 100/101/110/240) prior to admission into our program—any remaining lower-level POLI credits must be completed as soon as possible once accepted into the program and prior to graduation; and
- have attained the minimum grade-point average established by the Department (this year, our minimum GPA requirement is **65%**).
 - Selection for admission into the Major Program will be based on the average grade for all post-secondary work completed to date with the exception of 12 credits which may be excluded from the calculation. The average will be calculated on at least 48 credits, including all courses taken in POLI.

Students hoping to enter the Major Program during the 2023W admissions cycle must meet the above requirements by **August 31, 2023**.

CAN I APPLY FOR THIS PROGRAM IF I HAVEN'T YET COMPLETED THE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS BUT PLAN TO DO SO OVER THE SUMMER?

Yes. Students in this position will likely be offered a provisional acceptance. A student who is offered a provisional acceptance will need to follow up with the Undergraduate Advisor (poli.advising@ubc.ca) once their 2023S grades are published. The Undergraduate Advisor will then review said student's records and determine if admission is appropriate. All outstanding admission requirements must be completed by **August 31st**.

Because year-level promotion reviews only officially happen once per year, students who will be completing their 54-credit requirement over the summer will need to complete a **year-level promotion request** via Arts Advising before they can be added to our Major Program.

Please note: Term 2 summer session grades are often published at one of the busiest times of the year for undergraduate advising. Therefore, you should not expect an immediate response from the Undergraduate Advisor regarding your provisional acceptance and may not receive a response until after the 2023W1 add/drop deadline. This may impact your ability to register in some of our upper-level POLI courses during 2023W1. Please plan for this accordingly.

DO I NEED TO TAKE POLI 220 OR POLI 260 IN ORDER TO BE ACCEPTED INTO THE PROGRAM?

No. That being said, POLI 220 provides a helpful foundation in Comparative Politics (CP) for students who are unfamiliar with this POLI sub-discipline; POLI 260 does the same for International Relations (IR). We strongly recommend that students complete these two courses before they join our Major Program, as, in doing so, they will:

- improve their capacity to take on our upper-level CP and IR courses; and
- expand their understanding of POLI's sub-disciplines (which will, in turn, better prepare them for the decision of whether or not POLI is the right field for them).

WHAT IF MY AVERAGE IS BELOW YOUR GPA THRESHOLD? CAN I STILL APPLY?

If you find yourself in this position, get in touch with the Undergraduate Advisor (poli.advising@ubc.ca) to talk through your options.

WHERE DO I APPLY? WHEN IS THE APPLICATION DEADLINE?

You will be able to apply for our Major Program on our [website](#). Our application portal will open on **Friday 3 February** and will close on **Monday 15 May**.

WHEN CAN I EXPECT TO HEAR BACK ABOUT MY APPLICATION?

Early June.

CAN I APPLY FOR YOUR MAJOR PROGRAM IF I AM ALREADY IN MY 4TH/5TH YEAR?

Yes, but this changes how we calculate your average.* Additionally, depending on how many upper-level POLI classes you have already taken, it can be quite difficult to complete your upper-level POLI requirements within one academic year. Please feel free to request an appointment with the Undergraduate Advisor (poli.advising@ubc.ca) to talk through your learning and graduation goals. Together, we can develop a course plan which will integrate both these goals and the requirements of the Major Program.

*We will calculate your average based on “the best 72 credits earned to date toward the Bachelor of Arts. These 72 credits must include all Political Science courses and the first component of the Writing and Research Requirement.”

HOW DO I ENTER THE POLI MAJOR CODE ON THE SSC?

The Department’s undergraduate advising team will add the POLI Major specialization to your student profile in early June.

DO YOU ACCEPT LATE APPLICATIONS?

No. If you miss our application deadline and still wish to be a POLI Major, you will need to apply during next year's application cycle (February – May 2024).

- **Please note:** the Faculty of Arts requires that students have a Major specialization declared by the beginning of their third year. If you miss our application deadline and don't have a back-up Major option, please connect with Arts Advising as soon as possible.

CAN I MAJOR IN POLI AND ANOTHER MAJOR?

Yes, but students in this position should ensure that they are aware of UBC's **double-counting requirements** and **double major degree requirements**. If you are considering this option, we recommend proactively booking an appointment with Arts Advising in order to make a course plan.

DO YOU COUNT IB/AP CREDITS IN YOUR GPA CALCULATION? HOW ABOUT TRANSFER CREDITS FROM OTHER POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS?

We exclude IB/AP credits from our GPA calculation.

If you were granted transfer credits from your previous post-secondary institution(s), we may use them when calculating your average.

HOW DO I SEND YOU COPIES OF MY TRANSCRIPT(S) FROM MY PREVIOUS POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION(S)?

There will be an option to upload your transcript(s) from your previous post-secondary institution(s) within our application portal. Students do not need to upload their UBC transcript.

CAN I RE-APPLY NEXT YEAR IF I AM NOT ACCEPTED THIS YEAR?

In principle, yes—as long as you satisfy our admission requirements. However, if your GPA is significantly below our minimum GPA requirement, we recommend looking into other Major program options—especially since, as stated above, the Faculty of Arts requires that students have a Major specialization declared by the beginning of their third year.

One option which you may wish to consider is the **US Studies Program**—an interdisciplinary program which focuses specifically on the politics, economics, and history of the United States. Students in this program take courses in POLI, HIST, and ECON and are able to declare the USST Major directly via the Student Service Centre (there are no special admission requirements for this program). The Undergraduate Advisor for Political Science is also the Undergraduate Advisor for US Studies. If you are curious about this program, please send an e-mail to poli.advising@ubc.ca.

COMBINED MAJOR PROGRAMS

Combined Major in Philosophy and Political Science (PHPO Program)

The admission requirements for this program are the same as those for our Major Program.

Combined Major in Economics and Political Science (ECPO Program)

In order to be considered for admission into our ECPO Program, a student must meet the **admission requirements for the Major in Economics** as well as the following requirements:

- be enrolled in the Faculty of Arts;
- have completed at least **54 credits** of post-secondary course work;
- have completed at least **9 credits** of our 12-credit lower-level requirement (**POLI 100/101/ 240/3 credits chosen from POLI 220 or POLI 260**)—any outstanding credits must be completed as soon as possible and prior to graduation; and
- have attained the minimum grade-point average established by the Department (this year, our minimum GPA requirement is **65%**).

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Selection for admission to the Combined Major will be based on the average grade for all post-secondary work attempted to date, with the exception of 12 credits which may be excluded from the calculation. The average will be calculated on at least 48 credits, including all courses taken in POLI.

Students who are applying for the ECPO Program **must** submit applications to both POLI and ECON during their respective admissions cycles.

WHERE DO I APPLY? WHEN IS THE APPLICATION DEADLINE?

For the PHPO Program, you will only need to submit one application via our website. Our application portal will open on Friday 3 February and will close on Monday 15 May.

For the ECPO Program, you will need to submit two applications—one via our website (application deadlines above) and another via the Vancouver School of Economics' website. ECON's application details are forthcoming.

The folks who are managing admissions for ECON and POLI will work together to determine whether or not applicants have met both ECON's and POLI's admission requirements.

IF I AM ACCEPTED INTO THE ECPO/PHPO COMBINED MAJOR PROGRAM BUT DECIDE THAT I WOULD RATHER COMPLETE A POLI MAJOR, IS IT POSSIBLE TO SWITCH PROGRAMS?

If you find yourself in this situation, please e-mail poli.advising@ubc.ca.

HONOURS PROGRAM

To be considered for admission into our Honours Program, a student must:

- be enrolled in the Faculty of Arts;
- have completed at least **54 credits** of course work;
- have completed at least **9 credits** of the 12-credit lower-level POLI requirement (POLI 100/101/110/240) prior to admission into our program—any remaining lower-level POLI credits must be completed as soon as possible once accepted into the program and prior to graduation; and
- have attained a minimum grade-point average of **80%** in their post-secondary studies to date.
 - **Please note:** 80% is our minimum GPA requirement; achieving a GPA of 85% or higher will greatly improve your chances of being accepted into the program.

In addition to the standard program application form, Honours applicants must also provide the department with the following supplementary materials:

- a brief resumé (no more than two pages); and
- a 250-word description of their special interests in political science, their interests outside of the discipline (including outside reading), and their career goals.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Honours applicants also have the option of submitting an additional statement with their application in which they can provide context about their academic history which we will not see by looking at their transcript alone.

DO YOU COUNT IB/AP CREDITS IN YOUR GPA CALCULATION? HOW ABOUT TRANSFER CREDITS FROM OTHER POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS?

We exclude IB/AP credits from our GPA calculation.

If you were granted transfer credits from your previous post-secondary institution(s), we will use them when calculating your average.

CAN I APPLY EVEN IF I AM IN MY 4TH/5TH YEAR?

Yes, but POLI HONS is a two-year, cohort-based program in which the content of the first year lays the foundation for the second. All of this to say: we typically do not allow students to complete this program in a single year. A student who attempted this would need to complete their Honours seminar and thesis simultaneously, which defeats the foundational purpose of the seminar and would, undoubtedly, be an immense workload for the student. Therefore, you are welcome to apply for our Honours Program as a fourth- or fifth-year student, but you must commit to two full academic years of study in order to complete the program's requirements.

WHERE DO I APPLY? WHEN IS THE APPLICATION DEADLINE?

You will be able to apply for our Honours Program on our [website](#). Our application portal will open on **Wednesday 1 February** and will close on **Monday 15 May**.

THE CALENDAR SAYS THAT, “OCCASIONALLY, OUTSTANDING STUDENTS FROM THE THIRD-YEAR MAJOR PROGRAM MAY BE ADMITTED DIRECTLY TO FOURTH-YEAR HONOURS.” DOES THIS MEAN THAT I CAN SKIP TAKING THE THIRD-YEAR HONOURS PROGRAM SEMINAR AND HEAD STRAIGHT INTO WRITING MY THESIS?

No. Students who enter the Honours Program with 4th-year standing will still be required to complete all of our Honours Program requirements, including POLI 390.

DO YOU HAVE ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HOW TO FORMAT THE PERSONAL STATEMENT/RESUMÉ PORTION OF THE HONOURS APPLICATION?

We ask that your resumé be no longer than two pages; beyond this, we do not have any specific formatting requirements. (This resource may be useful to you.) When it comes to your personal statement, please be mindful of the word count (no more than 250 words). Other than this, we have no specific formatting requirements.

WHAT IF MY AVERAGE IS BELOW YOUR GPA THRESHOLD? CAN I STILL APPLY?

If you find yourself in this position, get in touch with the Undergraduate Advisor (poli.advising@ubc.ca) to talk through your options.

CAN I MAJOR IN POLI HONS AND ANOTHER MAJOR?

Technically, yes, but students in this position should ensure that they are aware of UBC's **double-counting requirements** and **double major degree requirements**.

Additionally, our Honours Program comes with some hefty requirements. Therefore, if you are considering this option, we recommend proactively booking an appointment with Arts Advising in order to put together a degree plan. Once this plan is assembled, we recommend reviewing it with the Political Science Undergraduate Advisor (poli.advising@ubc.ca).

DO YOU ACCEPT LATE APPLICATIONS?

No. If you miss our application deadline and still wish to be a POLI Honours student, you will need to apply during next year's application cycle (February – May 2024).

Please note: the Faculty of Arts requires that students have a Major specialization declared by the beginning of their third year. If you miss our application deadline and don't have a back-up Major option, please connect with Arts Advising as soon as possible.

WHEN CAN I EXPECT TO HEAR BACK ABOUT MY APPLICATION?

Early June.

CAN I RE-APPLY NEXT YEAR IF I AM NOT ACCEPTED THIS YEAR?

In principle, yes—as long as you satisfy our admission requirements. However, if your GPA is equal to or below our minimum GPA requirement (80%), we recommend considering other specialization options.

- **Please note:** a student who is unsuccessful in their application for our Honours Program but meets our POLI Major admission requirements will be offered admission into our POLI Major Program.

HOW DO I SEND YOU COPIES OF MY TRANSCRIPT(S) FROM MY PREVIOUS POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTION(S)?

There will be an option to upload your transcript(s) from your previous post-secondary institution(s) within our application portal. Students do not need to upload their UBC transcript.

HONOURS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE WITH INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (PSIR) PROGRAM

To be considered for admission into our PSIR Program, a student must:

- be enrolled in the Faculty of Arts;
 - have completed at least **54 credits** of course work;
 - have attained a minimum grade-point average of **80%** in their post-secondary studies to date.
- **Please note:** 80% is our minimum GPA requirement; achieving a GPA of 85% or higher will greatly improve your chances of being accepted into the program.

The PSIR Program's lower-level requirements are as follows:

- POLI 100, POLI 101, POLI 110, POLI 240, and POLI 260;
- ECON 101 and 102;
- HIST 102 or 103; and
- It is also advisable for students to have started on their IR language requirement, but this can be completed in their 3rd or 4th year.

We strongly advise that students complete **all three lower-level requirements (POLI, ECON, and HIST)** prior to applying. Doing so will allow students to focus on the hefty upper-level course load which awaits them should they be accepted into the program.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Generally speaking, students should **not** apply for the PSIR Program unless they have completed POLI 260 and at least two of the following: POLI 100, 101, 110, or 240. If students have not yet completed all of their lower-level POLI credits but have completed their lower-level ECON and/or HIST credits, they may still be eligible for admission. Please get in touch with the Undergraduate Advisor (poli.advising@ubc.ca) if you have questions regarding your eligibility for the program.

In addition to the standard program application form, PSIR applicants must also provide the department with the following supplementary materials:

- a brief resumé (no more than two pages); and
- a 250-word description of their special interests in political science, their interests outside of the discipline (including outside reading), and their career goals.

PSIR applicants also have the option of submitting an additional statement with their application in which they can provide context about their academic history which we will not see by looking at their transcript alone.

CAN IB/AP ECON 1ST, HIST 1ST, OR POLI 1ST CREDITS BE APPLIED TO LOWER-LEVEL PSIR REQUIREMENTS?

No.

CAN I APPLY IF I HAVEN'T COMPLETED ALL OF THE PREREQUISITES?

While it is advisable to complete all of our admission requirements prior to one's entry into our PSIR Program, students are able to complete some of these requirements post-admission—keeping in mind that, because of the interdisciplinary nature of IR, a student who has not yet taken their HIST, POLI, or ECON requirement may not yet fully have a sense of whether or not IR (built, as it is, on the three pillars of HIST, POLI, and ECON) is a good fit for them.

CAN I RE-APPLY NEXT YEAR IF I AM NOT ACCEPTED THIS YEAR?

In principle, yes—as long as you satisfy our admission requirements. However, if your GPA is equal to or below our minimum GPA requirement (80%), we recommend considering other specialization options.

- **Please note:** a student who is unsuccessful in their application to PSIR but meets our POLI Major admission requirements will be offered admission into our POLI Major Program.

USEFUL RESOURCES

- Our Website
- Political Science Curriculum Guide
- Political Science Students' Association
- Calendar Requirements: POLI Major, HONS, PSIR
- Calendar Requirements: PHPO
- Calendar Requirements: ECPO

DROP-IN ADVISING HOURS: PROSPECTIVE MAJORS, HONOURS, COMBINED MAJORS

- Tuesday 21 February, 9:00 - 10:30 AM (Pacific)
- Thursday 23 March, 9:00 - 10:30 AM (Pacific)
- Wednesday 12 April, 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM (Pacific)
- Monday 8 May, 9:00 - 10:30 AM (Pacific)

Zoom Details:

- Link: <https://ubc.zoom.us/j/69912289250?pwd=YnpIc0ZFMllpQmhrM3Y2Zm9Gd2RmUT09>
- Meeting ID: 699 1228 9250
- Passcode: 717613

USEFUL CONTACTS

- Jillian Read, Undergraduate Advisor:
poli.advising@ubc.ca
- Andrew Owen, Undergraduate Program Chair:
andrew.owen@ubc.ca
- Political Science Students' Association:
info.ubcpssa@gmail.com
- Adam Jelley, IR Program Manager:
irmajor.program@ubc.ca
- ECON Admissions: vse.undergrad@ubc.ca
- Dr. Kimberley Brownlee (PHIL), Philosophy and
Political Science Faculty Advisor:
kimberley.brownlee@ubc.ca