

The background is a high-angle photograph of a mountain range. In the foreground, a steep, rocky slope is covered with dense evergreen trees. The middle ground shows a series of ridges and valleys, with some peaks appearing more rugged and rocky. In the far distance, more mountain ranges are visible under a clear, pale blue sky. A semi-transparent, rounded rectangular box is centered over the middle of the image, containing the text 'PSCI Roadmap' in a white, serif font.

# *PSCI Roadmap*

# Home

Welcome!

Here you can explore the CU Boulder Political Science Department. We offer courses in the following six subfields led by our award-winning faculty:

- [American Politics](#)
- [International Relations](#)
- [Political Theory](#)
- [Methodology](#)
- [Comparative Politics](#)
- [Public Policy](#)

Or you can go through our interactive roadmap, simulating what the next four years may look for you! [PSCI Choose Your Own Adventure](#)

# American Politics

This field focuses on the domestic politics of the United States, ranging from constitutional law to judicial law to campaign policy.

We offer a wide range of courses in this area, including (but not limited to):

- Introduction to American Politics
- The American Presidency and the Executive Branch
- U.S. Campaigns and Elections
- The American Congress
- National Security Organizations and Policy Making
- The Politics of Economic Inequality in the United States
- Gender, Sexuality, and the U.S. Law
- Political Parties and Interest Groups
- Law and Society: Legal Institutions and Human Behavior
- Political Psychology

[Next](#)

[Home](#)



# American Politics

CU faculty who  
specialize in this are:

Vanessa Baird



Kenneth Bickers



Nancy Billica



Janet Donovan



Srinivas Parinandi



Anand Sokhey



Joshua Strayhorn



[Back](#)

[Home](#)

[Next](#)

# International Relations

This field focuses on how countries interact with each other and the broader global community, focusing on issues like diplomacy, conflict, cooperation, and international organizations.

We offer a wide range of courses in this area, including (but not limited to):

- Introduction to International Relations
- War, Peace, and Strategic Defense
- Current Affairs in International Relations
- International Law
- International Political Economy
- International Migration and Policy
- International Law
- International Behavior
- Europe and the International System
- International Organizations

[Next](#)

[Home](#)

# International Relations

CU faculty who  
specialize in this are:

Aysegul Aydin



Carew Boulding



Joe Jupille



Clara Park



Megan Shannon



Adrian Shin



Jaroslav Tir



[Back](#)

[Home](#)

[Next](#)

# Political Theory

This field focuses on how ideas and concepts shape politics, including justice, power, and governance. It explores various ideologies and theories to understand political systems and behavior.

We offer a wide range of courses in this area, including (but not limited to):

- Survey of Western Political Thought
- American Political Thought
- Sex, Power, and Politics
- Race, Power, and Politics
- Capitalism and It's Critics
- Free Speech and Dangerous Ideas
- Liberalism and It's Critics
- Theory of Identity
- Environmental Political Theory
- Politics and Literature

[Next](#)

[Home](#)

# Political Theory

CU faculty who  
specialize in this are:

Janet Donovan



Michaelaele Ferguson



Tamar Malloy



Steve Vanderheiden



[Back](#)

[Home](#)

[Next](#)



# Methodology

This field focuses on how to develop and apply different research methods to study political phenomena, using techniques like statistics and experiments to understand political behavior and institutions.

We offer a wide range of courses in this area, including (but not limited to):

- Quantitative Research Methods
- Applied Political Science Research
- Designing Social Inquiry
- Survey Design and Analysis
- Undergraduate Research Fellowship
- Strategy and Politics
- Honors Seminar in Political Science
- Political Science Honors Thesis
- Advance Political Data Analysis
- Qualitative Methods

[Next](#)

[Home](#)

# Methodology

CU faculty who  
specialize in this are:

Vanessa Baird



Andrew Philips



Alexandra Siegel



Anand Sokhey



Joshua Strayhorn



[Back](#)

[Home](#)

[Next](#)

# Comparative Politics

This field focuses on how to develop and apply different research methods to study political phenomena, using techniques like statistics and experiments to understand political behavior and institutions.

We offer a wide range of courses in this area, including (but not limited to):

- Quantitative Research Methods
- Applied Political Science Research
- Designing Social Inquiry
- Survey Design and Analysis
- Undergraduate Research Fellowship
- Strategy and Politics
- Honors Seminar in Political Science
- Political Science Honors Thesis
- Advance Political Data Analysis
- Qualitative Methods

[Next](#)

[Home](#)

# Comparative Politics

CU faculty who  
specialize in this are:

Vanessa Baird



Carew Boulding



Jennifer Fitzgerald



Joe Jupille



Andrew Philips



Sarah Sokhey



[Back](#)

[Home](#)

[Next](#)



# Public Policy

This field focuses on how governments tackle societal issues through decision-making, implementation, and evaluation, drawing from multiple disciplines to inform governance.

We offer a wide range of courses in this area, including (but not limited to):

- Introduction to Public Policy
- Introduction to Environmental Policy
- Environment and Public Policy
- Politics of Social Policy
- Inequality and Public Policy in the US and Europe

[Next](#)

[Home](#)

# Public Policy

CU faculty who  
specialize in this are:

Kenneth Bickers



Srinivas Parinandi



Adrian Shin



Steve Vanderheiden



[Back](#)

[Home](#)

# Choose Your Own Adventure

Congratulations on joining CU as a political science major! We are so excited to have you. Here is a choose-your own adventure game featuring your next four years at CU!

[Onwards!](#)

[Home](#)

# Terms to Know

Before you start, here's some helpful terminology!

- Lower-division courses: courses that begin with 1000 or 2000, typically taken by freshmen and sophomores
- Upper-division courses: courses that begin with 3000 or 4000, typically taken by juniors and senior
- Credits: “points” that count towards your degree. PSCI classes are worth 3 credits; you need 42 PSCI credits to major, and 120 credits to graduate. These are based on the number of hours spent in class during the week. Also referred to as credit hours.
- Recitation: Supplementary class to main lecture.

Gold underlined text will lead you to a different place in the pathway. Gray underlined text will take you to an external site.

Freshman Year

Home



# Freshman Year

Freshman year for most political science majors will look relatively similar. There are five required lower-division classes for the political science major:

- PSCI 1101: Intro to American Politics
- PSCI 2012: Intro to Comparative Politics
- PSCI 2223: Introduction to International Relations
- PSCI 2004: Survey of Western Political Thought
- PSCI 2075: Quantitative Research Methods

You may take these in any order at any point you wish, but it's generally recommended you have completed these by the end of your sophomore year, as many upper-division classes require these as prerequisites. These classes also have a recitation component besides the large lecture.

[Next](#)

[Home](#)

# Freshman Year

Additionally, you will most likely need to take general education requirements in the following areas:

- World Language
- Quantitative Reasoning and Mathematical Skills
- Written Communication (upper and lower division)
- Arts and Humanities (12 credits)
- Natural Sciences (12 credits including a lab)
- Social Sciences (12 credits)
- U.S. Perspective (3 credits)
- Global Perspective (3 credits)

These can be completed via transfer credits (AP/IB, community college, etc)! In addition, some courses count for both the PSCI major and gen ed requirements. The remaining credits are a great way to learn more and gain skills outside the PSCI field!

[Next](#)

[Home](#)

# Freshman Year

Don't forget to get involved on campus! Clubs and extracurriculars are a great way to find like-minded people on campus. In addition, they look great on college resumes. We offer multiple political science-focused clubs, plus many more!

[CU Political Science Club](#)

[Pi Sigma Alpha](#)

[Colorado Political Science Review](#)

[CSI Be Involved Club List](#)

[Sophomore Year](#)

[Home](#)

# Sophomore Year

This year, you may continue to finish your required classes as well as continue knocking out some more gen eds. People often pick up a minor at this point as well. In addition, students are able to continue applying to scholarships through the CU Boulder Scholarship Application.

[Minors](#)

[Scholarships](#)

[Junior Year](#)

[Home](#)





# Junior Year

This year, you are beginning to focus more on a field you're interested in, as well as the different careers you may want after school. Were you particularly engaged by Dr. Tir's intro to international relations course? Take an upper division course! Are looking for more research experience? Take one of our methods classes. Make sure to consider outside experiences, like and internship or study abroad course.

[Internships](#)

[Study Abroad](#)

[Senior Year](#)

[Home](#)



# Senior Year

Congrats, you made it! Graduation is closing in. Make sure you check your degree audit in BuffPortal to see what classes you have left to take.

It's time to decide what you want to do after graduation. Enter the workforce? Go to law school or grad school? Take a gap year?

[Next](#)

[Home](#)

# Senior Year

Don't worry, we are here to help! Check out the following sites for inspiration for life after graduation:

[Pathways of Political Science](#)

[Next](#)

[Home](#)

# Congratulations!

You made it to the end! You are now a college graduate with a B.A. in Political Science. It's time for you to go forth in the world and do great things.

This is the end of this adventure, however. Click 'Home' to return to the main page and explore some of the other features.

[Home](#)



# CU Political Science Club

The CU Political Science Club is a place for students to meet and discuss national, state, and local politics. Meetings feature lively discussions of current events, and we frequently host guest speakers from local and statewide offices, as well as campaign operatives and political appointees. This is a great place to meet your fellow students and we welcome anybody with views all across the political spectrum.

Find more here: [CU PSCI Club](#)

[Back](#)

# Pi Sigma Alpha

Pi Sigma Alpha is the National Political Science Honors Society. A 100 year old organization, Pi Sigma Alpha has over 800 chapters across the United States. One president, three Supreme Court Justices and dozens of congresspeople have been a part of the organization.

Both Political Science majors and minors are eligible for membership. By joining, you are given access to a number of resources such as scholarship opportunities, leadership opportunities, recognition of academic excellence and much more!

Find more here: [CU Pi Sigma Alpha](#)

[Back](#)

# Colorado Political Science Review

*CPSR* is a student-written and student-edited journal bringing political science perspectives to important issues of the day. The opinions and perspectives in the *CPSR* are those of the individual authors. We seek to generate thoughtful discussion and analysis rooted in social science theory and supported by research and data. The *CPSR* is housed in the Political Science Department at the University of Colorado Boulder and is supported by the American Politics Research Lab and the LeRoy Keller Center for the Study of the First Amendment.

Find more here: [Colorado Political Science Review](#)

[Back](#)

# CSI Be Involved Club List

The CU Boulder Center for Student Involvement maintains a directory of all student organizations and involvement opportunities here: [Involvement Directory](#)

[Back](#)