

POLITICAL SCIENCE



INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Department of Political Science and International Relations

Student Handbook for Political Science Majors

“The mind is a fire to be lighted, not a vessel to be filled”
(Plutarch)

Department of Political Science and International Relations
Middle Tennessee State University
Peck Hall 209
Murfreesboro, TN 37132
(615) 898-2708
www.mtsu.edu/politicalscience

2015-16 Edition

**MIDDLE
TENNESSEE**
STATE UNIVERSITY

Middle Tennessee State University
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE and INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INFORMATION FOR MAJORS

This document contains information for majors in Political Science. It includes basic information on policies, procedures, forms, the various degree programs, courses, and other relevant information to help students achieve their academic goals.

Mission of the Department of Political Science and International Relations

The Department of Political Science and International Relations strives to provide students with a basic understanding of government, the political process, and global affairs while cultivating competencies related to thinking, communicating, and interacting logically, critically, and creatively with others. Through a diverse offering of courses, active learning programs and outside activities, special concentrations in pre-law and public administration, a teacher certification program, and degrees in both political science and international relations, the Department prepares graduates for civic participation, for careers in these specialized areas or for graduate study.

Lines of Communication

E-mail: This is still the medium of choice for instructors to communicate with their students, and through email lists, the department to communicate with all majors. The department will use email to share information regarding internship opportunities, special and upcoming events, etc., so please check your MTSU email regularly.

Bulletin Boards: The bulletin boards outside the office present information on internships, graduate schools, mock trial, international relations, international affairs society, etc.

Brochure Stands: The brochure stands outside the department offices include program brochures, the Newsletter, this and other information guides. The brochure stand inside the faculty offices holds Upper Division Forms.

Newsletter: The Department Newsletter, produced once a semester and available on-line and from the brochure stand, contains updates from students, student organizations, faculty, and alumni, as well as general information for majors about upcoming events. If you have anything to submit for inclusion in the Newsletter, please send to sdmorris@mtsu.edu.

Web Page: The webpage (www.mtsu.edu/politicalscience) contains news, upcoming events, and updated information about the department's academic programs, courses, faculty, student organizations, alumni, and forms.

Facebook: The department uses Facebook to inform students of opportunities and events. Students can also use this medium to communicate with one another.

The Department Office is open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday-Friday.

PS & IR Student Services Portal
<http://www.mtsu.edu/politicalscience/>
Under Student Resources



[**information on:** Academic Help Resources, Career and Jobs, Internship Opportunities, Study Abroad, Research Opportunities, Law Schools, Grad Schools, Getting Involved in the Community, Getting Involved on Campus]

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Section A: Programs in the Department

A.1. Degree Programs and Requirements.

The Department offers both BA (Bachelor of Arts) and BS (Bachelor of Science) degrees in: **Political Science.**

Students select from among 4 tracks:

- General focus,
- Pre-law concentration,
- Public Administration concentration, or
- Teaching licensure.

All students must complete the **General Education** requirements of the University (41 credit hours)

- ENGL 1010, 1020
- COMM 2200
- 2 of the following: HIST 2010, 2020, 2030
- ENGL 2020, 2030, or HUM 2610
- 6 Hours Humanities
- 3 Hours Mathematics
- 8 Hours of Natural Science
- 3 Hours Social Science other than PS 1005 or PS 1010

General Focus (B.A. or B.S.) (37 credit hours)

- PS 1005, 1010, 2000, 3001, 4800
- One of the following: PS 3050, 3060, 3250, 3330, or 3370
- One of the following: PS 3210 or 3220
- One of the following: PS 4230, 4700, 4920, or 4930
- 15 hours of electives

Pre-Law Concentration (B.A. or B.S.) (37 credit hours)

- PS 1005, 1010, 2000, 2440, 3770, 3780, 4800
- Two of the following: PS 3001, 4230, 4700, 4920, 4930
- 12 hours of electives (with at least one course in four of the following areas: American Government, Public Administration, Comparative Government, International Relations, and Political Theory)

Pre-Law Cognate (these courses take the place of one minor)

- PHIL 2110
- COMM 4650 or ENGL 4785
- ECON 2410 or 2420
- PS 3530 or ENGL 4605
- PHIL 3150
- One of the following: PS 3010, 3490, 3500, 4040, 4590

Public Administration Concentration (B.A. or B.S.) (37 credit hours)

- PS 1005, 1010, 2000, 3001, 3250, 4290, 4800
- Select two from each of the following groups:
 - > PS 3440, 4590, 4630
 - > PS 2020, 2440, 3400, 3490, 4120
- 6 hours of electives (from the following sub-fields: American Government, Comparative Government, International Relations, Political Theory)

Public Administration Cognate (these courses take the place of one minor)

Complete 6 of the following in consultation with advisor:

- ACCT 3020
- BCEN 4680
- COMM 3220
- ECON 2410, 2420, 4390, 4420, 4510
- MGMT 3610, 4200, 4680
- LEST 3010
- OROC 3240, 3250, 3500, 3650
- PSY 4380

Teaching Licensure (36 hours)

- PS 1005, 1010, 3001
- PS 3210
- PS 3220
- Three of the following: PS 3050, 3060, 3330, 3370
- One of the following: PS 4230, 4700 (recommended), 4930
- 12 hours of electives in PS

Students who want to teach government in high school should minor in Secondary Education; complete 12 hours of history (may include General Education requirements); minor in

History (highly recommended), Economics, or Geography. Students must also complete additional teacher licensure requirements including COMM 2200 and either HIST 1010, 1020, 1110, or 1120.

A.2. List of Courses by Number

All classes are 3 credit hours (cr) unless noted otherwise

PS 1005 Introduction to American Politics
PS 1010 Introduction to Global Politics
PS 2000 Political Science and International Relations as a Profession (1 cr)
PS 2020 State and Local Government
PS 2100 Legal Courtroom Proc. (*Mock Trial*) (1 cr) (may be repeated for credit)
PS 2110 Moot Court (1 cr) (may be repeated for credit)
PS 2120 Mediation Procedure (1cr) (may be repeated for credit)
PS 2130 Model UN (1cr) (may be repeated for credit)
PS 2440 Law & Legal System
PS 3001 Research Methods in PS
PS 3010 Women & Law
PS 3050 US Presidency
PS 3060 US Congress
PS 3100 Politics & Film
PS 3160 American Public Policy
PS 3170 Civil Rights
PS 3200 British Government & Film
PS 3210 International Relations
PS 3220 Comparative Politics
PS 3270 NGOs and Non-profits
PS 3250 Public Administration
PS 3320 Public Opinion
PS 3330 Political Parties
PS 3340 Campaign Management
PS 3350 Interest Groups & Social Change
PS 3370 American Constitutional Law I
PS 3380 American Constitutional Law II
PS 3400 Municipal Government
PS 3420 African American Politics
PS 3440 Budgeting & Finance
PS 3490 Alternative Dispute Resolution
PS 3500 International Law
PS 3510 International Political Economy
PS 3530 Legal Writing & Research
PS 3550 Democratic Partic./ Civic Advocacy
PS 3780 Study Abroad

PS 3910 International Organizations
PS 4030 Human Rights
PS 4040 Pre-law Internship (1-9 cr)
PS 4070 Political Violence & Terrorism
PS 4120 Tennessee Government
PS 4180 African Politics
PS 4190 Middle East Politics
PS 4200 Problems in Gov't (Directed Studies)
PS 4210 International Conflict
PS 4220 World Politics
PS 4230 Classical Theory
PS 4240 American Foreign Policy
PS 4260 Women & the World
PS 4270 Campaign Internship (1-9 cr)
PS 4280 Washington Experience (internship) (12 cr)
PS 4290 Public Service Internship (1-9 cr)
PS 4300 Comparative European Politics
PS 4310 Comparative Asian Politics
PS 4360 Legislative Internship
PS 4390 Special Topics
PS 4590 Administrative Law
PS 4630 Personnel Management
PS 4690 Int. Relations of the Middle East
PS 4700 American Political Thought
PS 4770 Russian Politics
PS 4800 Senior Seminar
PS 4801 Senior Seminar for Int. Relations
PS 4820 Adv Studies in American Politics (content varies and may be repeated for credit)
PS 4850 Adv Studies in Comparative Politics (content varies and may be repeated for credit)
PS 4860 Adv Studies in IR (content varies and may be repeated for credit)
PS 4870 Adv Studies in Political Theory (content varies and may be repeated for credit)
PS 4900 Latin American Politics
PS 4920 Modern Political Thought
PS 4930 Contemporary Political Thought
PS 4950: Community-Based Research (1-6 cr)
PS 4970 Undergraduate Research (1-6 cr)

Paralegal

PLEG 3010 Litigation
PLEG 3410 Family Law
PLEG 3420 Torts
PLEG 4010 Paralegal Interns

A.3. Minors in the Department

The Department of Political Science and International Relations offers minors in:
> Political Science

- > Public Administration
- > International Relations, and
- > Political and Civic Engagement (see below)

and coordinates interdisciplinary minors in:

- > African Studies
- > Paralegal Studies
- > Russian Studies, and
- > Urban Studies.

Specific requirements for these minors can be found on the department's web page.

A.4. Minor in Political and Civic Engagement

- PS 1005 (if not a political science major)
- 1 of the following: PS 3270, 3430, 3550
- 12 hours from among the following: EXL 2030, 3020, 3030; PS 2100, 2100, 2120, 2130, 2140, 3780, 4040, 4270, 4280, 4290, 4360, 4950

A maximum of 6 hours for any one of these internships may be counted toward the minor (if the internship is for 9 or 12 hours, it may be possible to apply the additional hours to your major). Discuss this with your faculty adviser.

A.5. Doing a Minor within the Department.

Students majoring in Political Science can complete a minor in the department (e.g. International Relations or Political and Civic Engagement), but PS courses cannot be used to satisfy a requirement in both the major and minor (in other words, the courses cannot double count toward both the major and the minor). This means you have to take enough courses to meet the credit hour requirements separately.

A.6. Double Major in Political Science and International Relations.

Though possible, it is not a good idea to double major in Political Science and International Relations. Since you cannot double count any classes, a student would need 72 hours of PS courses and it is not a good idea to take more than half the hours required for graduation from one department.

Section B: Student Advising Information

B.1. Keys to advising

> Purpose of Advising / Role of Advisors. The main purpose of advising is to make sure you understand the requirements for your degree and that you are taking the appropriate classes to graduate. *Your advisor will not be able to tell you exactly which courses to take each semester. That is really up to you.* In addition, your faculty advisor can provide information about the profession, graduate school, how to handle special situations, and anything that might come up during your time here.

> Understand your Program Requirements. This is the key. Information on the requirements for your program can be found:

- a) in section A.1 of this Handbook.
- b) on the Department's web page,
- b) on the *Upper Division Form* (accessible online and in the Department), and/or
- c) in the catalog (though there may be changes). NOTE that changes are sometimes made, but you are bound to the requirements in place when you entered MTSU. If changes have been made afterwards, they do not apply to you UNLESS you decide to pursue the new program. This is your choice. Please make sure that you use the correct Upper Division Form. The catalog year is shown on the top of each form.

> Understanding the 4 Levels of Requirements.

There are 4 levels or sets of requirements:

- a) **GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS** (see A.1.)
- b) **MAJOR REQUIREMENTS** (see A.1.)
- c) **MINOR REQUIREMENTS.** A Bachelor of Science (BS) degree requires 2 minors; a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree requires 1 minor plus 12 hours of foreign language. Most minors require 18 credit hours. You should consult the Minor department for the specific requirements and advising.
- d) **UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS.** Overall, you need a minimum of 120 semester hours to graduate with at least 42 of those hours in 3000

or 4000 level courses with an average grade of “C” or better.

> Keep up With Your Progress. Though you do not have to officially submit the **Upper Division Form** until you earn 75 hours, it is a good idea to use the form to keep track of your progress. You can easily check off the requirements as you complete the courses.

> Check your Progress and what you need to take using the *On-Line Degree Evaluation* on RaiderNet. This simple task compares the courses you have taken or are registered for against the requirements for your program and identifies what requirements you have met and what requirements you have not met. Simply click on *generate a degree evaluation* and then select a summary or a detailed analysis. This is a good way to check where you stand and to make sure that you have your major and minors listed correctly.

> Assistance. If you need assistance, contact your college or faculty advisor or Pam Davis (Peck Hall Room 209).

B.2. The Shape of the Academic Year

The academic year is divided into two terms. Fall semester runs from late August to mid-December. Spring semester goes from January to May. The Summer term is split into:

- > “1-Full term” (May to August);
- > “S1-May” (aka “Maymester”) (3 weeks);
- > “S2-June” (5 weeks);
- > S3-July” (5 weeks); and
- > “S4-June/July” (8 weeks).

B.3. Course Numbers and Online Courses

1000 and 2000 level courses are lower level courses, while 3000-4000 level courses are upper division courses. 5000 level courses and above are graduate courses. Remember that the BA/BS degree requires 42 credit hours of 3000-4000 level courses.

The Department offers a number of online courses. Online courses are indicated in the schedule with a ‘D’ or an ‘R’ in the Section column. RODP (‘R’) courses can be found under

the heading of ‘Political Science (RODP) in the Subject heading. Students not enrolled in the RODP program may still take RODP courses, but to do so, you must first complete the RODP Authorization form at www.mtsu.edu/learn/online/rodp_authorization.shtml.

B.4. Registration/ Drop-Add.

The schedule of classes is available online on RaiderNet. There are two priority registration periods each year -- in April for Summer and Fall registration, and in November for Spring registration – for currently enrolled MTSU students, re-enrolling MTSU students, graduate students, and transfer students who have already earned a bachelor's degree. New students start registration about a week after the priority period ends. Speak with your advisor before you register for classes.

You register for classes online (RaiderNet) by entering the "call number" (CRN) for each class, as given in the schedule. You will be informed whether seats are available in each class, and if there are no more available seats, you will be told what other sections of that course still do have seats. You can also access RaiderNet to get your current account balance, and pay tuition.

I've already registered, how do I add/drop classes? Schedule changes can be done using RaiderNet up until classes start. Once classes start, there are still a few days for adding/dropping classes but to do so you must complete the drop/add slip and have it signed by the instructor and the chair. The form is available in the main office.

Late Registration. All late registration must be processed in the Scheduling Center. Students must submit a drop/add form (available in the department office) signed by the instructor to the Scheduling Center to add a class if they already have a schedule. Students may pay at the Business Office until 4:30 p.m.

B.5. Withdrawing from (Dropping) a Class

The academic calendar will tell you the deadlines for adding classes, dropping classes

with no grade, and dropping classes with a "W" (Withdrawn) grade. Dropping a class can be done through [RaiderNet](#). Know that dropping a class will impact your progression in the program and can delay graduation. It is best to consult the instructor before dropping a course. Dropping a course can also impact your eligibility for financial aid. Please consult the financial aid office for more information.

B.6. Semester Hour Load (*How many hours can I take in a semester?*)

15-16 hours is considered a normal load for students who wish to graduate in four years (most classes are 3 credit hours). 18 hours is the maximum. Students wishing to take more than 18 hours in a semester must obtain permission at least two weeks prior to registering for classes from their advisor and the dean of the college. Such permission is given to students for the following reasons: GPA above 3.5, candidate for degree at next convocation, student is repeating hours, or other extenuating circumstances.

B.7. Declaring and/or Changing your Major or Minor.

Students register a change of major, declare or change minors on the [Change of Major/Program](#) form online at [RaiderNet](#). It is recommended that students discuss changes with their advisor.

B.8. Advising (*getting an advisor, finding who your advisor is, seeing your advisor*)

College Advisor and Faculty Advisor

Every PS major has a College Advisor and a Faculty Advisor. Your **COLLEGE ADVISOR** can help you with basic questions about academic programs, scheduling, general education requirements, and the more technical-related questions. Your **FACULTY ADVISOR** can help you with career planning; incorporating internships, independent research or study abroad into your program; graduate school or law school; and other more professionally-related questions.

Your [College Advisor](#) is either JaNet Davis (Jones Hall Room 117) (last names A-J) or Yuchun Schmidt (Jones Hall Room 108) (last names K-Z).

You are assigned a [Faculty Advisor](#). You can go into your Pipeline page and it will say who your adviser is. If you do not already have a faculty adviser, simply stop by the main Political Science Department office in Peck 209 and ask Pam Davis for an adviser. Easy.

When Should You Talk To Your Faculty Adviser?

Seriously, the correct answer is "often." Don't allow questions and problems to fester and get worse; as issues arise, see your adviser. Even if there are no unique problems, it is wise to see your faculty adviser at least once a semester when you are selecting courses prior to registration.

This may seem trite, but it is true: NO student has ever had a problem because she/he talked to their adviser too often, but LOTS of students have faced entirely avoidable problems because they didn't talk to their adviser often enough.

How to Contact Your Faculty Adviser

Every faculty adviser has regular office hours each week. Barring meetings, professional trips, or emergencies, they will be available in their offices at these times. Their office hours are posted on their doors each semester.

Beyond official office hours, you can make an appointment when you are both free, or, depending on the type of issue and the adviser's preferences, phone calls and emails are available. Some people use email much more than others, so simply ask your adviser how she/he prefers to be contacted.

Faculty members, like you, have classes and meetings, and so they may not be available between your classes in Peck on MWF, but if you make an appointment they will be happy to meet with you.

B.9. Upper Division Form and Intent to Graduate Form.

The [Upper Division Form](#) lays out all the requirements needed for you to complete your degree program. It shows a) General Education requirements; b) requirements for the major; and c) blank spaces where you write in the courses

taken to fulfill the minors. This is an important and useful form.

Students must submit a completed Upper Division Form and Intent to Graduate Form to the Graduate Analyst in the College of Liberal Arts **upon completion of 75 credit hours.** Both forms are available in the Department and online at http://www.mtsu.edu/politicalscience/ud_forms.php. The Upper Division Form will require the signatures of your advisors in your major and each minor. Your advisor will not complete this form for you. It is your responsibility to complete the form prior to obtaining signatures. Again, be sure to select the correct Upper Division Form relating to your Catalog year.

Which Upper Division Form Should I use?

Upper Division Forms are by academic year. You should use the form showing the year you started at MTSU. You may use any form for a year after that, but that is your option. The year refers to the catalog requirements you will need to meet. When program requirements change, these are reflected in the catalog and the new Upper Division Forms. As always, talk to your college or faculty advisor about this.

B.10. The Academic Map

An Academic Map lays out a program of study for a particular program on a semester-by-semester basis. It includes all courses to complete the degree in 4 years. The map will show a course of study with or without the summer semester.

Academic maps for all our programs are available on-line.

B. 11. Virtual Mentoring Program



Alums from our Department have volunteered to serve as Virtual Mentors for current students. The mentors span all of our different programs and are now working in

administrative and government positions, in business and consulting, in legal professions, or with non-governmental organizations, or are in law school or graduate school. They are more than willing to help you with school and, especially, **career advice.**

They have already made the successful transition from college to a professional career—exactly what you want to do—so make use of this resource to help yourself <http://www.mtsu.edu/politicalscience/virtualmentoring.php>

B.12. Major Field Test.

All graduating seniors complete various assessment activities specific to their major field of study. Prior to graduating, all PS and IR majors must take the Area Concentration Achievement Test (ACAT). The purpose of the test is to evaluate students' knowledge in their major field and assess the curriculum. The 84-minute exam tests knowledge in 4 areas: a) American Studies, b) International Politics/Comparative Governments, c) Normative and Empirical Theory, and d) Public Administration

MTSU presents the Academic Performance Award to departments if at least 55% of the major's scores are greater than the major's national norm. The award consists of a plaque and a monetary award (usually \$2,500.00) for the department's travel budget. Academic Performance Awards are also given each year to the two departments whose students achieve the highest averages for the year on the general education exit exam. Special preparation is provided during the Senior Seminar.

B.13. Scholarship Programs.

University-wide programs

- **McNair Scholarship** The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Program is a federal program designed to prepare low-income, first-generation college students and students from underrepresented groups in graduate education for doctoral level study. Benefits include working with a faculty mentor, travel and summer research funding, and assistance in preparing for graduate

school. For more information and application forms go to:

www.frank.mtsu.edu/~mcnair/index.htm

- **The Harry S. Truman Scholarship** (open to all majors) is given to students who wish to attend graduate school in preparation for careers in government or elsewhere in public service. Students receive leadership training, graduate school counseling, preferential admission, and merit based aid to some premier graduate institutions, and internship opportunities with federal agencies. Scholars are required to work in public service for three of seven years following completion of a Foundation funded graduate degree program as a condition of receiving funding. For more information, consult www.truman.gov. The Undergraduate Fellowship Office in the Honors College will assist you with applications for the Truman Scholarship and other national scholarships. Contact Laura Clippard for more information.
- **Washington Center Scholarship** (open to all majors) is a TBR funded scholarship for MTSU students to work and study in Washington, D.C. See 'Internships' on our web site.

Department Scholarships

- **The Joann Arnold Memorial Scholarship** was established in memory of Joann Arnold by the Rutherford/Cannon County Bar Association for the purpose of providing a scholarship for students who intend to go to law school. To be eligible for consideration, a student must be a permanent resident of Rutherford or Cannon counties and studying law. Preference shall be given to Pre-Law students, but will not be limited to Political Science majors.
- **The Jane Duke Memorial Scholarship** was established in memory of Jane Henegar Duke by the Rutherford County Legal Professionals for the purpose of providing a scholarship for students in Political Science at MTSU. To be eligible for consideration, a student must be a permanent resident of Tennessee, a junior or senior majoring in Political Science with a minimum GPA of

2.50, and enrolled full-time. The student should also be able to demonstrate financial need as determined by the office of Financial Aid. Preference will be given to female students.

- **The James C. Free Endowed Scholarship** was established by Jim Free to assist students majoring in Political Science at MTSU. To be considered eligible for this scholarship, a student must be majoring in Political Science and have financial need as defined by the Financial Aid office. Should all criteria be relatively equal, students who have graduated from a Maury County, Tennessee high school will have first preference.
- **The Norman Parks Scholarship** was established to honor a former chair of the Department of Political Science and International Relations who taught at MTSU from 1953 to 1974. The purpose of the scholarship is to promote and encourage the study of law. The student selected for the scholarship will be awarded \$900.00 toward tuition and fees for the first semester of study at MTSU. Any graduating high school senior is eligible to apply. Applicants will be judged on the basis of high school scholastic record, ACT score, desire to study law, and need for financial support. The scholarship recipient must agree to attend MTSU and major in Political Science with a concentration in Pre-Law during the first semester of study.
- **The Charles R. Ray Pre-Law Scholarship** was originally funded by a prominent graduate of Franklin-Simpson High School in Franklin, Kentucky. Mr. Ray completed a pre-law degree at MTSU, a law degree at Vanderbilt University, and went on to distinguish himself in legal practice in Nashville, Tennessee. The purpose of the scholarship is to promote and encourage the study of law. The student selected for the scholarship will be awarded at least \$500.00 toward college expenses for each successful semester of full-time study (up to eight semesters) at MTSU (maintaining a 2.50 GPA) in preparation of for law school. Any graduating high school senior is eligible to

apply. Preference will be given to students from Franklin-Simpson High School in Franklin, Kentucky. Applicants will be judged on the basis of high school scholastic record, ACT score, desire to study law, and need for financial support. The scholarship recipient must agree to attend MTSU and major in Political Science with a concentration in Pre-Law.

- **The Gene H. Sloan Scholarship** is awarded to Junior or Senior majoring in Pre-law or Journalism with a minor in Business Law.
- **The George and Cynthia Vernardakis Scholarship** is awarded to an International Student whose field of study is in the Political Science Department. Preference is given to majors of Public Administration and Political Science. First preference goes to a student from the Republic of Cyprus.

All applications materials are online and must be submitted by April 1.

For more information or to apply, please contact the Political Science department at (615) 898-2708 or visit us online.

B.14. Department Academic Awards.

- **Norman L. Parks Award**
This award goes to the Pre-Law major with the highest, overall G.P.A.
- **C. C. Sims Award**
This award goes to the student with the highest overall G.P.A. other than the winner of the Parks Award.
- **John W. Burgess Award**
This award goes to the student with the next highest overall G.P.A. (after the Parks and Sims Awards have been determined).
- **Jack Justin Turner Award**
This award goes to the International Relations major with the highest, overall G.P.A.
- **Meritorious Service Award**
This award goes to the student who has been recognized as providing meritorious service to one or more of the following: Mock

Trial, Mock Mediation, Society of International Affairs (Model U.N.) or other student organization.

All award candidates must have *at least* an overall G.P.A. of **3.5** and a minimum of 18 hours in Political Science *at MTSU*.

If there is a tie in the above awards, the Political Science G.P.A. will serve to break the tie.

Section C: Careers and Career Planning (by David Carleton)

C.1. What can you do with a Degree in Political Science?

Regardless of whether you pursue a General Political Science degree or a concentration in Pre-law, Public Administration, or Teaching Licensure, a degree in Political Science provides you with a set of skills and a range of potential careers.

Skills

Earning a degree in political science develops valuable skills that are transferable to many public and private careers, even outside of politics. Consider the following list, from the University of Michigan, on the transferable skills garnered from a PS degree:

Planning and Development Skills

Making projections
Organizing people / ideas
Thinking logically
Conceptualizing and implementing projects
Decision-making

Research and Quantitative Skills

Developing research designs and models
Programming and systems analysis
Utilizing survey research methods
Developing data
Comparing / contrasting ideas and information

Analytical Skills

Understanding components of complex problems

Interpreting data
Offering relevant perspectives
Synthesizing themes from complex issues

Communication Skills

Presenting ideas and data clearly
Influencing and persuading people / groups
Mediating / negotiating conflicts
Public speaking
Critical listening

Potential Careers

The following is an alphabetized list of political science careers compiled by the American Political Science Association (APSA):

Activist, Advocate/Organizer
Administration, Corporate, Government, Non-Profit, etc.
Archivist, Online Political Data
Budget Examiner or Analyst
Attorney
Banking Analyst or Executive
Campaign Operative
Career Counselor
CIA Analyst or Agent
City Planner
City Housing Administrator
Congressional Office/Committee Staffer
Coordinator of Federal or State Aid
Communications Director
Corporate Analyst
Corporate Public Affairs Advisor
Corporate Economist
Corporate Manager
Corporate Information Analyst
Corporate Adviser for Gov't'l. Relations
Corporate Executive
Corporation Legislative Issues Manager
Editor, Online Political Journal
Entrepreneur
Federal Government Analyst
Financial Consultant
Foreign Service Officer
Foundation President
Free-lance writer
High School Government Teacher
Immigration Officer
Information Manager
Intelligence Officer
International Agency Officer

International Research Specialist
Issues Analyst, Corporate Social Policy Div.
Journalist
Juvenile Justice Specialist
Labor Relations Specialist
Legislative Analyst / Coordinator
Lobbyist
Management Analyst
Mediator
Plans and Review Officer, USIA
Policy Analyst
Political Commentator
Pollster
Public Affairs Research Analyst
Public Opinion Analyst
Publisher
Research Analyst
State Legislator
Survey Analyst
Systems Analyst
Teacher
University Administrator
University Professor
Urban Policy Planner
Web Content Editor

For More information on careers:

The Bureau of Labor Statistics Summary of Job Outlook for Political Science provides forecasts of job availability and median earnings in different fields; this is a summary of the job outlook/prospects for different career areas pursued by students majoring in political science and international relations.
<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/life-physical-and-social-science/political-scientists.htm>

	<p>From the American Political Science Association "This updated career guide explores the many career options available to political science students and emphasizes the value of political science training. In addition to providing specific information about various career paths, this guide will help students examine their own career preferences in the context of new technologies and global</p>
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networks."

A copy is available in the Department of Political Science and International Relations office in Peck 209, and copies can be ordered from the APSA for \$6, available at: <http://www.apsanet.org/content.asp?admin=Y&contentid=184>

More information on careers is available on the [Student Services Portal](#) on the Department's Web Page.

What Can You Do With a Concentration in Pre-Law?

In addition to the skills and careers discussed above for all PS majors, PS: Pre-Law students mainly pursue law and law-related careers. Many/most Pre-Law Concentration students are interested in going to law school. See "How to Prepare for Law School" under **Section C. 11**.

If you are interested in the law, however, and are worried about law school admission or costs or time needed to earn the degree, recognize that there are a number of law-related career paths that do not require a law degree. Visit: "Law Related Career Opportunities" at <http://legalcareers.about.com/od/careerprofiles/a/legalcareers.htm>.

What Can You Do With a Concentration in Public Administration?

In addition to the skills and careers discussed above for all PS majors, PS: Public Administration students mainly pursue government and/or non-profit careers. Many Public Administration Concentration students are interested in working in government, whether at the local, state, or federal level. 'Government,' of course, covers many different types of jobs and functional specialties-- city management, urban planning, public health and hospital administration, budget and finance, human resource and personnel administration, public works, and much, much more. Visit <https://www.governmentjobs.com/> to see a list of possibilities.

The non-profit sector is expanding rapidly and public administration students develop the skills

non-profits need and demand for professional positions.

What Can You Do With Your Political Science Teacher Licensure Degree?

In addition to the skills and careers discussed above for all PS majors, PS Teacher Licensure students mainly pursue grades 6-12 teaching positions, either in public or private schools. You will finish your degree having earned a Tennessee license to teach government classes in grades 6-12. As a practical matter, most of the jobs available combine teaching government with history classes as well. Thus, we strongly recommend you minor in History and select courses in the minor that prepare you to take the Praxis test in History, which you will take to earn an add-on endorsement to teach history courses. For an overview of the Praxis, visit <https://www.ets.org/praxis/about/praxisii>.

If you are interested in education, but not classroom instruction, there are possible careers in both educational policy and educational administration. For more information, visit "Breaking into Educational Policy and Research at

<http://www.alleducationschools.com/education-careers/school-leadership/educational-research-policy/> or "Guide for Educational

Administration" at

<http://www.worldwidelearn.com/online-education-guide/education/educational-administration-major.htm>

C. 2. Career Planning

If you only start to think about jobs, a career, and your own future, a few months before graduation, you are asking for an extremely difficult path. Finding a professional job and career is itself a job, i.e., you need to work at it. A professional career does not spontaneously generate; you need to plan for and build your own career path. The time to start planning for **YOUR** professional career and success is **RIGHT NOW**.

The sooner you think about the type of career and life you want, and what types of skills and experiences you will need to achieve this career

and life, the sooner you can start laying the basis for real personal success. This will take some time and reflection-- reading through the information here and in the career guides, and talking to your faculty adviser, and thinking about what you both enjoy and excel at-- and so it is never too soon to get started.

Step 1: Career-- What Career?

The first step in building the professional career you want is knowing what type of career you in fact do want. Knowing that 'you really like politics,' or you 'really like the law,' or you 'really like international relations' is a starting point, but it is only a start. You need to ask yourself some really hard questions, and don't be satisfied until you have really specific answers to these types of questions. So, ask yourself these types of questions:

- What is it about politics/law/international relations that you really enjoy?
- What types of careers are available that tap these aspects of the field that you really enjoy?
- What types of skills and experiences-- beyond just earning the degree-- are needed for these careers?
- Are there are reasonable number of jobs in these areas each year?
- What are the salary ranges for these types of jobs?
- Starting with these jobs, what are the opportunities for career advancement?

Finding answers to these types of questions will not happen spontaneously. You will need to take some time and really work at it-- use the resources here, talk again and again to your faculty adviser, talk to individual professors who work in areas where you have career interests, and **think hard about what you want**.

Knowing where you want to go in your own career, as early in your academic years as possible, helps you build the professional career and success that you really want.

What Are Your Plan B and Plan C?

You should **ALWAYS** have a Plan B and a Plan C for your career. Aim for Plan A, of course, but sometimes Plan A doesn't materialize-- things happen-- and you thus need to have meaningful

fall back plans, just in case. Maybe you want to be a corporate lawyer (this is Plan A) and you prepare for this plan. BUT, maybe life or kids intervene or there are financial or gpa concerns that make going directly on to law school a problem. Prepare for Plan B and Plan C now-- "I really want to be a corporate lawyer, but I could also have a meaningful and successful and happy life doing X and Y too"-- and prepare for these options as well.

Step 2: Doing More Than Just Completing Your Courses

Completing your required courses and earning your degree will be essential to your professional goals. BUT often very particular skills or experiences are needed to land jobs in particular fields. Maybe these are specific communication or financial skills, or relevant internship experiences, that will help you get selected from among the other applicants and actually hired. Going to classes and doing pretty well is the **MINIMUM** to your being successful; to improve your odds of success, you need to do more.

C. 3. Opportunities at MTSU to Make Yourself Stand Out

There are many opportunities to do 'other things' here at MTSU-- some within our Department and some at the University level-- that will make you stand out and be more competitive and more successful after you earn your degree, including internships, study abroad, research, student organizations, relevant minors, public service, and EXL courses and program.

C. 4. INTERNSHIPS

Why Internships Are Valuable

Internships allow you to do several things, each important:

- 1- **You Can Apply the Concepts and Theories from Your Classes.** Internships give you an opportunity to see and apply the ideas discussed and learned in class in the field directly.
- 2- **You Can Test Run a Couple of Different**

Career Paths. Internships let you try a few different career paths, get a first-hand sense of what the work and career is like, and know you are on the right path for personal success.

-3- You Can Gain Practical Work

Experience. You will be working in a professional office in your preferred career path, and will gain experience with the skills needed-- research, report and memo writing, working with the public and clients, and so on. The more experience the better when you are interviewing for positions in a couple of years.

-4- You Can Gain Professional

Experience. Beyond specific work skills, you gain proven experience simply working in a professional setting. Potential employers worry whether recent graduates understand professional dress, etiquette, and so on; successful internship experiences demonstrate to them that you know and understand professional behavior.

-5- You Can Establish Valuable Contacts. In your internship, you will meet co-workers and clients who are in the career path you are interested in pursuing too. This is networking 1010; you meet, talk to (and hopefully impress) folks, and they can be very helpful down the road with career tips and advice, job leads, and additional contacts.

Types of Internship Opportunities

The Department offers six different internship programs:

- **PS 4040: Pre-Law Internship:**
The Pre-Law Internship is available for students who want to gain practical experience in private law offices, as well as the offices of prosecuting attorneys, public defenders, and judges.
- **PS 4270: Political Campaign Internship:**
The Political Campaign Internship is available for students who want to work for a political campaign to experience the elements of campaigning for public office.
- **PS 4290: Public Service Internship:**
The Public Service Internship program is available for students who want to work for a governmental agency at the

national, state or local level. Some internship experiences with private (non-government) organizations are acceptable if both the organization and the job that the intern is to carry out deals substantially with government agencies or government policies.

- **PS 4280: Washington Internship:**
The Washington Internship involves spending a semester with The Washington Center in Washington D.C. and includes a Tennessee Board of Regents scholarship to cover the differences in program costs between being at MTSU and at The Washington Center. Students complete a 12 credit hour internship (tailored to each student's career goals), and a 3 credit seminar. Selection is competitive.
- **PS 4360: Tennessee Legislative Internship:**
The Tennessee Legislative Internship is available for students to work full time each Spring semester with the Tennessee Legislature. Students work either in a member's legislative office or as a staff member for standing committee. This is a **PAID** internship and selection is competitive. Applications are accepted early each Fall semester for placement in the Spring semester.

For questions on PS 4040, 4270, and 4290, contact: Dr. Lisa Langenbach / Peck Hall 252 / 898-2710 / lisa.langenbach@mtsu.edu. For questions on PS 4280 and PS 4360, contact: Dr. David Carleton / Peck Hall 245 / 898-5461 / carleton@mtsu.edu

You Can Do An Internship Abroad Too
Today, study abroad programs include options for internships abroad, public service work abroad, and field research. You can find exactly the type of experience YOU want and will benefit from the most. MTSU, for instance, is affiliated with [ISA Service Learning](#), which offers structured internship and service learning opportunities year-round, in a variety of fields,

yielding valuable personal and professional experience. ISA allows you to combine going abroad with an internship experience and civic engagement. ISA offers overseas internship programs in Latin America, Europe, Asia, and North Africa. If you are interested in this type of hands-on, internship experience overseas, look at the ISA web site and talk to MTAbsroad in Peck 209.

Where Can Internships Fit In Your Program?

All internships give you credit toward your degree and are graded. There are several places where internship credits can be applied to your degree, so talk to your faculty adviser about what option is best for you. Every degree in the Department has some elective hours, and these can be used for internship credits. Additionally, outside of your major and minors, you have some general elective hours, and they can be used for internship hours. Finally, and what is strongly recommended, you can use one of your minors for the Political and Civic Engagement (POCE) minor, which automatically builds twelve credit hours into your program for internships and other forms of experiential learning.

How Do You Locate An Internship?

a) For PS 4040, PS 4270, PS 4290, and PLEG 4010:

- i) locate one yourself. Just think about the types of experiences you want, use Google or the phone book, call people, and ask. Politely explain you are an MTSU student, very briefly why you are interested, and ask if it would be possible to do an internship with them-- all they can say is 'no.' But, it doesn't usually take more than a few calls to locate a good opportunity, and, having you locate your placement means you have control over it and only work someplace where you want to work.
- ii) check the [List of Internship Opportunities](#) on our webpage;
- iii) see the postings on our bulletin board outside the main office;
- iv) internship opportunities are also posted on

our Facebook Page and sent to all students via email.

b) For PS 4360: *Tennessee Legislative Internship*, once you are selected for the program, placements are made at the State level.

c) For PS 4280: *Washington Internship*, once you are selected for the program, The Washington Center assigns you an adviser and he/she interviews you on the type of experience you are looking for, and they then generate several options from which you can choose.

C.5. Study Abroad Opportunities

Studying abroad is extraordinarily valuable, increasingly easy at MTSU, and something every student should aim to do. This is particularly true for International Relations majors, but it is true for all majors.

What Statistics Show about Study Abroad Students Study Abroad and Careers, Salaries, and Job Skills

97% > of study abroad students found employment within 12 months of graduation, when only 49% of college graduates found employment in the same period. That means they were twice as likely to find a job. Among study abroad alumni, 90% landed a job within 6 months.

25% > higher starting salaries: that's how much more study abroad students earn than those college graduates who do not study abroad. A British study found their study abroad graduates out-earned their peers by 17%. This equates to approx. \$7,000 annually for US students and £3,120 for UK students. Maintaining this earning advantage translates to earning an extra \$567,500 over one's career in the US.

90%	> of study abroad alumni who applied got into their 1st or 2nd choice grad school.
84%	> of study abroad alumni felt their studies abroad helped them build valuable skills for the job market. A second study confirms this at 85%.
80%	> of study abroad students reported that study abroad allowed them to better adapt better to diverse work environments.
70%	> of study abroad alumni claimed that because of study abroad they were more satisfied with their jobs.
59%	> of employers said study abroad would be valuable in an individual's career later on with their organization.
34%	> of study abroad alumni claimed that study abroad helped them choose their career field.
<i>Study Abroad and Graduation and Academic Performance</i>	
100%	> greater improvement in GPA post-study abroad. Student GPAs tend to rise as they approach the completion of their undergraduate degree. Students who studied abroad saw their GPAs rise twice as quickly as a result of going abroad compared to students who stayed in town according to a Georgia study.
19%	> more likely to graduate: that describes how study abroad participants are more likely to graduate than non-participants by six years. Even at four years,

study abroad participants are 15% more likely to graduate based on a UC San Diego study. UT Austin and Georgia data show a similar trend.

Source: <http://studyabroad.ucmerced.edu/study-abroad-statistics/statistics-study-abroad>

Study Abroad Today Can Be About More than Taking Courses

Traditionally, study abroad programs involved taking university classes while living in another country and culture. And, there are still many opportunities to do this—if it is what you want. Today, however, study abroad programs also include other options, such as internships abroad, public service work abroad, and field research. You can find exactly the type of experience YOU want and will benefit from the most.

MTSU, for instance, is affiliated with **ISA Service Learning**, which offers structured internship and service learning opportunities year-round, in a variety of fields, yielding valuable personal and professional experience. ISA allows you to combine going abroad with an internship experience and civic engagement. ISA offers overseas internship programs in Latin America, Europe, Asia, and North Africa. If you are interested in this type of hands-on, internship experience overseas, look at the ISA web site <http://studiesabroad.com/elap/> and talk to Study Abroad Advisors in the Study Abroad Office in Peck Hall 207.

How to Arrange a Study Abroad Opportunity

MTSU makes going abroad very easy. The MTAbroad office is right down the hall from the Department in Peck 207. Programs are available to go almost anywhere you might want to go in the world. And, there are dedicated scholarship funds available to help you go abroad. Go talk to the MTAbroad staff about all the opportunities available to MTSU students, where you would like to go and when, and scholarship information.

Where Can Study Abroad Fit In Your Program?

All study abroad opportunities can give you credit toward your degree. There are several places where internship credits can be applied to your degree, so talk to your faculty adviser about what option is best for you. Just talk to your academic advisor beforehand about where the study abroad credit hours can apply in your program. We have PS 3780: Study Abroad to give you a vehicle to earn credits within the Department. Every degree in the Department has some elective hours, and these can be used for study abroad credits. Additionally, outside of your major and minors, you have some general elective hours, and they can be used for study abroad hours. Finally, and what is strongly recommended, you can use one of your minors for the Political and Civic Engagement (POCE) minor, which automatically builds twelve credit hours into your program for experiential learning, including study abroad.

C.6. Research Opportunities

As a Political Science major, you have the opportunity to become an independent researcher and take part in original intellectual work. Nothing shows potential employers, law schools, and graduate schools your mastery of key skills and the ability to act independently than completing your own research. You have multiple opportunities to craft and conduct research on your own ideas, and to both present and publish your work.

With undergraduate research, you work on a topic and project of your own design over the course of one or two semesters. You will work with a faculty mentor who works in the same general area; the mentor provides guidance and feedback, but the research is YOURS. Taking the opportunity to pursue your own research ideas offers many benefits. By participating in undergraduate research you will:

- Develop a one-on-one mentoring relationship with a faculty member;
- Clarify your academic and career interests and goals;

- Acquire knowledge in your academic field that transcends classroom study;
- Enhance critical skills in communication, independent thinking, creativity and problem-solving; and,
- Enhance professional and academic credentials to support your applications for scholarships, awards, jobs and entry into graduate and professional schools;

Research, in short, helps you learn how to apply the concepts learned in class and demonstrate to others that you have the skills and independence to act on your own ideas.

Opportunities in the Department for Undergraduate Research

The Department has two research courses you can arrange for any fall, spring, or summer term. Simple talk to faculty members who work in the area where you want to do your own research, discuss a project, and they will almost always agree to mentor a project.

- **PS 4970: Undergraduate Research**
One to six credits. Students pursue their own topics and fields of concentration under the supervision of a political science faculty member. Working with the faculty member, the student will design and conduct independent research, with the final paper presented at a conference or a public forum on campus.
- **PS 4950: Community-Based Research Practicum**
One to six credits. Students are given supervision in planning and carrying out an applied social research project that is defined in partnership with a local civic group, nonprofit agency, or public department. Students may work individually or in groups of up to six. A final report is presented to the community partner at the end of the course. Projects must be approved prior to enrollment.

MTSU Undergraduate Research Center

The URC promotes undergraduate research and helps students fund and present their research. Three URC programs are noteworthy:

- **Undergraduate Research Experience and Creative Activity Grants.** Rather than earning credits for your research, through PS 4970 or PS 4950, you can apply for a URECA grant and be paid up to \$3,500 for your research project (plus supplies and travel).
- **Travel Support to Present Research.** If you have completed a research project and want to present your work at a regional, national, or international conference, these grants are available to help you do so.
- **Scholars Week.** Late every fall, students can submit short abstracts of their work-- either an independent research project or work completed in a course-- for presentation at Scholars Week the following March. Scholars Week is a week-long and campus wide opportunity for students to present a research paper or a research poster in a low pressure environment, gaining both valuable experience and a line on their resume.

For more information, go to:

<http://www.mtsu.edu/urc>

National Science Foundation REUs

The National Science Foundation (NSF) funds a large number of Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REUs) "An REU Site consists of a group of ten or so undergraduates who work in the research programs of the host institution. Each student is associated with a specific research project, where he/she works closely with the faculty and other researchers. Students are granted stipends and, in many cases, assistance with housing and travel." In other words, REUs are summer opportunities to work at another institution around the country, in a very prestigious program, and be paid quite well for the experience. REUs are highly competitive, but they are amazing opportunities for high performing students. Search for an REU Site at http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/reu_search.jsp. This site is continually updated with projects, but most start getting posted in late fall and application materials are commonly due in early January. Click on a general area and then all

specific projects in that area are listed, with considerable detail on the majors and skills they are looking for, and how to apply.

Undergraduate Research Journals

There are now a substantial number of undergraduate journals where you can submit your work for publication; your submissions will only be in competition with those from other undergraduates, and it is an excellent opportunity to learn about the publication process and build your resume.

MTSU publishes an undergraduate research journal-- *Scientia et Humanitas*-- and you can submit your work here or at any of the journals listed at the links below.

For a list of undergraduate journals visit:
http://www.cur.org/resources/students/undergraduate_journals/

C.7. Student Organizations and Pre-Professional Activities

The Department sponsors several pre-professional activities you can participate in, and there are also many dozens of student organizations you can join and lead. Both are valuable ways to meet other students with similar interests, gain and demonstrate leadership, planning, budgeting, and managerial skills for a stronger resume and stronger interview responses.

Why Should You Join Student Organizations?

There are many reasons why one should join a student organization. Some help you with career, some help you with social skills and some help you with personality development.

Networking: The easy and best way to network with students who have similar interests is joining a student organizations. It can help you with you career, hobby or anything that you are passionate about.

Social Skills: As a student you want to learn how to talk to other people from different cultures and countries. As an international

student, it is your opportunity to build some social skills.

Professional experience: If you join professional chapter student organizations, you will get exposed to lot of professional career and help you build professionally. For instance, if you are a marketing major, joining American Marketing Association will help you get a feel of your professional career.

Leadership Skills: If you become part of the executive board, you take up the responsibility or challenge to be a leader and you learn what it takes to be a leader. The schools help you by giving you training and instilling those good leadership skills.

Alumni Networking: Student organizations usually try to bring in alumni and ask them to share their experiences. It is a wonderful opportunity for you learn from seniors who have graduated and get connected to them. It helps you with job search and mentoring. I got my internship through alumni networking.

Organization and Management Skills: Many of us are not familiar how an organization works and how to manage everything. If you are on the executive board you get to learn how fundraising works, how finances work, how to market for event, How to work as a team. It helps you in the long run for your job or if you are opening your own business.

Source: <http://redbus2us.com/8-reasons-why-should-you-join-student-organizations-in-us-universities-how-many-to-join-what-kind-of-student-organizations-to-join/>

Department Pre-Professional Activities

The Department sponsors different pre-professional activities that allow you to both gain practical experience and skills, get a better sense of what some careers involve, and earn credits.

Mock Trial.

MTSU Mock Trial is a student organization that teaches the basics of trial courts. Students

participate as either witnesses or lawyers. Participants learn to prepare and deliver opening and closing statements, and direct and cross-examinations, and learn how to argue evidentiary objections. Students also become familiar with more subtle aspects of trial work such as courtroom appearance and demeanor. MTSU teams participate in regional and national conferences with most expenses covered by the institution or the department. To participate, register for **PS 2100: Legal Courtroom Procedure**. This is a one credit course that can be taken up to three times. For more information see the Department's website.

Mediation.

The MTSU Mediation Association is a student organization that examines the theoretical basis of mediation and how it works as an alternative to litigation, arbitration, negotiation and other adversarial methods of dispute resolution. They learn and practice specific mediation skills (as mediator and as clients-advocate in mediation) and the details of different mediation approaches, including Restorative Justice. Members may participate in the National Intercollegiate Mediation Association's (NIMA) regional mediation tournament and the annual mediation tournament. Participants register for **PS 2120: Mediation Procedure**. This is a one credit course that can be taken up to four times. For more information see the Department's website.

Model United Nations.

The Model United Nations is a realistic simulation of the actual United Nations and other international crisis management bodies. MTSU's Model United Nations team attends competitive conferences where dozens of top universities each represent one or more countries, with each country sending delegates to various committees and councils. Some delegates may also participate in specialized bodies that address specific world crisis situations. In conjunction with Mock Trial, students can take **PS 2130: Model United Nations/Crisis Simulation**; this is a one credit course that can be taken up to four times. For

more information contact Dr. Lefler at vanessa.lefler@mtsu.edu.

MTSU Student Organizations

There are literally hundreds of student organizations at MTSU, and many of them are relevant to political science and international relations. There are organizations for Republicans, Democrats, Libertarians, and others, organizations that deal with voter registration and local issues related to poverty, immigration, education, and organizations that deal with human rights, development, and a wide range of global issues. Joining, participating in, and possibly leading some of these organizations ties you into areas of personal interest and gives you hands-on experience in leadership, planning, and management: skills that help build a better resume.

For more information, visit MTSU's Student Organizations and Services Office. Their "Organizational Director" at <https://mtsu.collegiatelink.net/Organizations> lists all MTSU student organizations alphabetically and by category, and provides a short description about what each group does, and contact information. And if there isn't an organization that you would like and think is needed, but doesn't yet exist, it is pretty easy to create whatever organization you want on campus. See the Student Organizations and Services Office's "Guidelines to Register a New Organization."

C.8. Political and Civic Engagement (POCE) and Other Relevant Minors.

Depending on your major in the Department, you will need to choose either one or two minors.

"What Should I Minor In?"

This is a near universal question students ask their advisers at some point. There is no one answer that applies to every student, but:

- College is about more than building a career; it is also about having a full and rewarding life. So, if you have a passion—"I want to work

in X field, but I've always been fascinated by... learning Chinese...or painting... or history... or something"—use one of your minors to pursue your passion. This is a good thing.

- If you know exactly the career you want and there is a minor that would obviously help you achieve it—say you want to be a political writer, and so a minor in journalism makes sense, or you are a public administration major and know you want to work in finance, then a minor in accounting makes sense—you should follow this course with one of your minors. Simply talk to your faculty adviser about these types of career-relevant minors.

- If, like many or most students, you do not fall into either of the two previous groups, adopting **Political and Civic Engagement (POCE)** as one of your minors makes a tremendous amount of sense.

The Political and Civic Engagement (POCE) Minor.

Students always understand the value of internship, study abroad, research, and pre-professional courses, but they often have a hard time fitting them into a program with all of their General Education, major and minor requirements. With a POCE minor, you *can mix and match the types of experiences and skills you want*, combining internships, study abroad, community based research, and pre-professional courses. For example, a **Pre-Law major** might intern in a prosecutor's office one semester and a public defender's office the next semester, along with participating in Mock Trial and/or Mediation. A **Public Administration major** might combine a series of internships, working in different areas of government administration--finance, planning, public safety, and so on. A **General PS major** might study abroad one term, intern with a statewide political campaign another, and complete a community based research project.

For list of requirements for the POCE minor see Section A.4.

C. 9. Public Service Opportunities

Community involvement is an essential value in a free, open, and democratic society. Students who get involved in the community while in college report deep satisfaction and a deep sense of purpose, and are far more likely to be active in their communities after college too. In short, you grow as a person. Public service also brings immediate personal benefits, allowing you to demonstrate professional habits, boost your resume, and build important contacts. Both the Department and University offer a number of opportunities for valuable public service experiences.

The Positive Effects of Service

The Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA conducted a large-scale study of the effects of public service on college students. The study included over 22,000 students, and concluded:

"Service participation shows significant positive effects on all 11 outcome measures: academic performance (GPA, writing skills, critical thinking skills), values (commitment to activism and to promoting racial understanding), self-efficacy, leadership (leadership activities, self-rated leadership ability, interpersonal skills), choice of a service career, and plans to participate in service after college."

- improved GPA's
- improved writing skills
- improved critical thinking skills
- improved self-efficacy
- improved leadership
- improved interpersonal skills

When students are active in public service, in other words, they realize positive effects both on the community and themselves. These are meaningful and valuable experiences you should take advantage of.

Volunteerism

There are many opportunities for you to gain experiences and do valuable volunteer work in the community. You can do this volunteer work as a part of your course work, through the EXL program or as PS 4290: Public Service Internship, or outside of your courses. Either way, these are meaningful, valuable, and useful experiences.

The EXL Program has developed partnerships with nonprofit organizations in the area and maintains a Database of Volunteer Opportunities at <http://www.mtsu.edu/cgi-bin/users/webprod/EXL/EXLLogin.cgi>

This innovative database can be viewed in various ways and is very easy to use. It offers a direct way to connect with community partners. The database can be sorted by the type of services provided by each organization as well as by the various learning opportunities available and relevant areas of study for each volunteer position. It simple requires your Pipeline username and password to use.

Community Based Research Practicum

For additional service learning opportunities, you can take PS 4950: Community Based Research Practicum. In PS 4950, students are given supervision in planning and carrying out an applied social research project that is defined in partnership with a local civic group, nonprofit agency, or public department. Students may work individually or in groups of up to six. A final report is presented to the community partner at the end of the course. Projects must be approved prior to enrollment. Depending on the size of the project, from one to six credits are earned.

Service Learning Overseas

There are many opportunities now available for you to do service overseas, in conjunction with study abroad. Where study abroad programs traditionally involved taking university classes while living in another country and culture, study abroad opportunities are now much broader. There are still many opportunities to take courses overseas, but study abroad programs also include other options, such as

internships, public service, and service learning abroad. MTSU, for instance, is affiliated with [ISA Service Learning](#), which offers structured internship and service learning opportunities year-round, in a variety of fields, yielding valuable personal and professional experience. ISA allows you to combine going abroad with an internship experience and civic engagement. ISA offers overseas internship programs in Latin America, Europe, Asia, and North Africa. If you are interested in this type of hands-on, internship experience overseas, look at the ISA web site and talk to [MTAbroad](#) in Peck Hall 207.

C.10. EXL (Experiential Learning) Courses and Program.

MTSU believes in the value of applied knowledge, and through the EXL program, students, faculty and local businesses and organizations find valuable ways to interact and encourage collaboration between MTSU and the community, merging classroom knowledge with real-world work environments. Experiential Learning will provide you with hands-on experience in and outside the classroom. You can take individual EXL courses or, as an **EXL Scholar**, you will have an EXL designation on your diploma and will receive an EXL Scholars certificate. EXL gives you the opportunity to give back something to the community and, in turn, that experience will benefit you personally and professionally.

To earn the EXL designation on your diploma, you need to complete 16-18 credit hours in EXL designated courses. These can be completed across all of your course work, but it is made easier by the fact that our Department has many EXL designated courses. Among the benefits of the EXL program: sample a career field / hone skills and apply theories / broaden career horizons / network in the field / gain professional work experience / increase self-confidence / enhance resume / possibly get a job offer.

For detailed information on the EXL program, visit <http://www.mtsu.edu/exl>

EXL-designated Courses in the Department

Our Department has many EXL designated courses. If you take advantage of our Internship Opportunities and/or Study Abroad Opportunities and/or many of Student Organizations and Pre-Professional Activities and/or minor in Political and Civic Engagement, you will meet a lot of the EXL programs requirements in the process. The additional work needed to earn the EXL Scholar designation is very manageable.

Some or all of the sections of the following Department courses are offered with EXL designation.

PS 1005: American Politics
PS 2100: Legal Courtroom Procedure
PS 2120: Mediation Procedure
PS 2130: Model United Nations
PS 3170: Civil Rights Policy
PS 3330: Political Parties and Elections
PS 3440: Political Campaign Management
PS 3490: Alternative Dispute Resolution
PS 3550: Democratic Participation
PS 3780: Study Abroad
PS 4040: Pre-Law Internship
PS 4270: Political Campaign Internship
PS 4280: The Washington Experience
PS 4290: Public Service Internship
PS 4360: Legislative Internship
PS 4800: Senior Seminar

C. 11. Preparing for Professional Jobs

It is an old line, but "looking for a job is a job itself." If you want to graduate and move directly into a professional job, you will need to work at it to be successful.

From: How College Students Can Prepare to Be Job Ready

"Before graduation, students need to know that a college degree might get you in the door for an interview and increase your earning potential, but it's only part of the employment equation. To land the job, employers aren't only looking at what you know; they want to know what you can do. After all, they have a big pool to choose from..."

According to data collected in a recent [Forbes article](#), 88 percent of employers are looking for a cultural fit in a prospective employee, rather than a particular skill set. The vast majority of employers aren't asking the applicant if they have mastered their company's systems, but rather: Does this person exude professionalism? Are they excited about the company? Are they confident? Do they crave challenge? Will they self-motivate and self-monitor? Do they have the potential to become an asset to the company? Unfortunately for students, these skills are largely developed through experience in real life learning labs -- such as a part-time job, an internship, volunteer work, and campus activities..."

Preparing, Year-By-Year

The work involved in a successful job/career search is more intense in your junior and especially senior year, but there are things to do from the start:

Freshman Year.

- a) You want to think about your interests, think about possible careers, think about what skills and experience you already have, and think about the skills and experience you will need by the time you start applying for jobs in your senior year. You started this here with Worksheet 1.
- b) You want to start a portfolio, collecting papers, projects, presentations, and work samples that you can use later on to demonstrate your skills and experiences. You will start this in the one credit hour course: PS 2000 Political Science and International Relations as a Profession.
- c) You want to start a resume, one that can be added to and modified as your skills and experiences expand each year.
- d) Take advantage of University Career Planning Services and meet a Career Counselor.

Sophomore and Junior Years.

- a) These are your primary years to fill in the gaps in your current skills and experiences. If you need practical experience in a professional

office, or leadership experience, or supervisory skills, and so on, this is the time to utilize internships, study abroad, independent research, and pre-professional activities and student organizations to fill these gaps. You can't do this all at once, but you can gradually build and expand your skills and experiences over these two years.

- b) As you meet people in your internships, when abroad, when doing research, in pre-professional activities, start to network-- people you can reach out to later for advice and tips and leads. To learn more about networking, visit: <https://www.candidcareer.com/video-networking+101,1e866306e9b5f012419c,MTSU>
- c) Update your resume every semester.
- d) Add new papers, projects, presentations, and work samples to your ePortfolio every semester.

Senior Year.

- a) Start seriously putting together a list of potential employers, public, private, and non-profit. Work with your faculty adviser and the Career Development Center.
- b) Finalize your resume; use the "Resume Writing Guide" from the Career Development Center website.
- c) Finalize your ePortfolio. Up to now, you have been collecting information on your skills and experience, and now you can create a final portfolio with a URL that you can include on your resume and allow potential employers to look-- you can sell yourself. You can create several permutations of your portfolio, targeting different types of employers and jobs.
- d) Practice writing good cover letters; use the "Cover Letter Writing Guide" from the Career Development Center website.
- e) Learn and practice interview skills using the "InterviewStream" system at the Career Development Center.
- f) Line up good reference letters. For more information visit, "How to Get Good Letters of Recommendations" at <\\d21\common\dialogs\quickLink\quickLink.d21>.
- g) Start applying for positions several months prior to your graduation. Follow up with each, and always send thank you messages to anyone who takes the time to speak with you or interview you.

MTSU Career Development Center

"The Career Development Center is a comprehensive Center serving all departments and colleges of MTSU. Our mission is to provide innovative technology, resources, and programs that educate and engage students in a targeted, self-directed job search process and create opportunities for students and employers to connect."

They provide a lot of services to help you be successful. **USE THEM**

C.12. Preparing for Law School

According to the American Bar Association's Section on Legal Education

(http://www.americanbar.org/groups/legal_education/resources/pre_law.html), "there are

important skills, values, knowledge, and experience that you can acquire prior to law school and that will provide a sound foundation for a legal education. If you wish to prepare adequately for a legal education, and for a career in law or for other professional service that involves the use of lawyering skills, you should seek educational, extra-curricular, and life experiences that will assist you in developing those attributes." They explain the Core Skills, Values, Knowledge, and Experience as:

Problem Solving. You should seek courses and other experiences that will engage you in critical thinking about important issues, challenge your beliefs and improve your tolerance for uncertainty and criticism. Your legal education will demand that you structure and evaluate arguments for and against propositions that are susceptible to reasoned debate. Good legal education will teach you to "think like a lawyer", but the analytic and problem solving skills required of lawyers are not fundamentally different from those employed by other professionals. Your law school experience will develop and refine those crucial skills, but you must enter law school with a reasonably well developed set of analytic and problem solving abilities.

Critical Reading. Preparation for legal education should include substantial experience at close reading and critical analysis of complex textual material, for much of what you will do as a law student and lawyer involves careful reading and comprehension of judicial opinions, statutes, documents, and other written materials. You can develop your critical reading ability in a wide range of experiences, including the close reading of complex material in literature, political or economic theory, philosophy, or history. The particular nature of the materials examined is not crucial; what is important is that law school should not be the first time that you are rigorously engaged in the enterprise of carefully reading and understanding, and critically analyzing, complex written material of substantial length.

Writing and Editing. As you seek to prepare for a legal education, you should develop a high degree of skill at written communication. Language is the most important tool of a lawyer, and lawyers must learn to express themselves clearly and concisely. Legal education will provide you with good training in writing, and particularly in the specific techniques and forms of written expression that are common in the law. Fundamental writing skills, however, must be acquired and refined before you enter law school. You should seek as many experiences as possible that will require rigorous and analytical writing, including preparing original pieces of substantial length and revising written work in response to constructive criticism.

Oral Communication and Listening. The ability to speak clearly and persuasively is another skill that is essential to your success in law school and the practice of law. You must also have excellent listening skills if you are to understand your clients and others with whom you will interact daily. As with writing skills, legal education provides excellent opportunities for refining oral communication skills, and particularly for practicing the forms and techniques of oral expression that are most common in the practice of law. Before coming to law school, however, you should seek to

develop your basic speaking and listening skills, such as by engaging in debate, making formal presentations in class, or speaking before groups in school, the community, or the workplace.

Research. Although there are many research sources and techniques that are specific to the law, you do not have to have developed any familiarity with these specific skills or materials before entering law school. However, it would be to your advantage to come to law school having had the experience of undertaking a project that requires significant library research and the analysis of large amounts of information obtained from that research.

Organization and Management. To study and practice law, you are going to need to be able to organize large amounts of information, identify objectives, and create a structure for applying that information in an efficient way in order to achieve desired results. Many law school courses, for example, are graded primarily on the basis of one examination at the end of the course, and many projects in the practice of law require the compilation of large amounts of information from a wide variety of sources. You are going to need to be able to prepare and assimilate large amounts of information in an effective and efficient manner. Some of the requisite experience can be obtained through undertaking school projects that require substantial research and writing, or through the preparation of major reports for an employer, a school, or a civic organization.

Public Service and Promoting Justice. Each member of the legal profession should be dedicated both to the objectives of serving others honestly, competently, and responsibly, and to the goals of improving fairness and the quality of justice in the legal system. If you are thinking of entering the legal profession, you should seek some significant experience, before coming to law school, in which you may devote substantial effort toward assisting others. Participation in public service projects or similar efforts at achieving objectives established for common purposes can be particularly helpful."

Make Sure You Want To Go To Law School

Law school involves a significant commitment of both time and money, and it is important to be sure it is a career you want prior to committing the time and money. Law, like all careers, offers both pros and cons.

Pros: *Challenging Work / The Chance for a Good Salary / Responsibility / Helping People*

Cons: *Long Hours / The Demand for Billable Hours / Deadlines / Sometimes Tedious*

The main thing is to talk to lawyers-- family friends, at events, on internships-- about their career, what they do on a typical day, what they like about being a lawyer, what they dislike about it.

Preparing Year-by-Year for Law School

Freshman and Sophomore Years

- a) Study hard. The best law school prep is earning the best grades possible, as your GPA will weigh heavily in admissions decisions.
- b) Choose challenging courses, particularly those with writing, speaking, and analytical reasoning components.
- c) Speak to a pre-law advisor and learn as much as you can about the legal profession, the admissions process, and the LSAT.
- d) Find a summer or part-time job or internship related to the legal profession to give you a better idea on whether you're making the right decision to pursue law school.
- e) Update your resume every semester.
- f) Add new papers, projects, presentations, and work samples to your ePortfolio every semester.

Junior Year:

- a) Keep studying. Your junior year grades will be the last ones on your transcript submitted to law schools, so make them strong.
- b) Update your resume every semester.
- c) Add new papers, projects, presentations, and work samples to your ePortfolio every semester.
- d) Visit the Law School Admissions Council website, register with the LSDAS service and read up on the LSAT, admissions procedure, and

law schools.

e) Begin looking at law schools. For more information on useful criteria to select a law school, see “10 criteria for choosing a law school” at

<http://lawschool.about.com/od/choosingalawschool/a/chooselawschool.htm>

f) Take a practice LSAT test and consider taking the June LSAT (in which case you'd have an opportunity to retake it in October). If so, register and start studying!

g) Think about who you'll ask for letters of recommendation; keep in mind that asking potential referees before summer break will give them plenty of time to write something.

f) If possible, secure summer employment or an internship in the legal field.

Senior Year:

a) Take the LSAT in June and/or register and prepare for the October LSAT.

b) Prepare your personal statement and ask family, friends, and anyone else with great writing skills for feedback.

c) Get your resume in top shape; use the “Resume Writing Guide” from the Career Development Office

d) Finalize your ePortfolio. Up to now, you have been collecting information on your skills and experience, and now you can create a final portfolio with a URL that you can include on your resume and allow potential employers to look-- you can sell yourself. You can create several permutations of your portfolio, targeting it to different types of employers and jobs.

e) Research financial aid options.

f) If possible, visit law schools that you are considering.

g) Select the law schools to which you will apply, preferably with the help of a pre-law advisor, and request application materials. Get financial aid forms ready.

h) Have a copy of your transcript forwarded from the Registrar's Office to LSDAS, which will send it to the schools you are applying to.

i) Submit your applications as early as possible, before Thanksgiving break is preferable.

Financing Law School

It is an absolute necessity to get some serious advice on law school financing. Major debt can be a big impediment to getting on with life after law school, and thus it is essential to get clear information and have a sound plan before starting. The resources below are a start, but are not a substitute for discussions with professionals.

“Will You Make a Secure, Affluent Living in the Law?”

<http://www.shouldyoubealawyer.com/WillYouMakeASecureSalary.htm>

“Law School Rankings by Median Salaries”

<https://www.ilrg.com/rankings/law/median.php/1/desc/MSPivate>

Part I-“The Key to Handling Law School Debt: Make it Worth It”

<http://blueprintprep.com/lsatblog/law-school-advice/the-key-to-handling-law-school-debt-make-it-worth-it/>

Part II- “Handling Law School Debt: A Conversation”

<http://blueprintprep.com/lsatblog/law-school-advice/handling-law-school-debt-ii-a-conversation/>

“The Law-School Debt Trap: Here's How to Escape It and Have a Career in Public Service Law”

http://www.slate.com/articles/life/my_goodness/2009/01/the_lawschool_debt_trap.html

C. 13. Preparing for Graduate School

'Graduate' programs come in different forms, but when people say they are "planning on going to grad school," they usually mean they want to go into a Ph.D. program, and this is the focus of this section. The next section discusses Career-Oriented Masters and Certificate Programs; these are also graduate programs, but their focus, purpose, and duration are very different than Ph.D. programs.

Ph.D. programs are essential for anyone

interested in an academic or university career. They can also be a valuable preparation for careers in government, think tanks, advocacy, and politically oriented non-profit or non-governmental organizations, but most Ph.D. students are aiming for an academic career.

Should You Pursue a Ph.D. Program?

Ph.D. graduate programs are not places to go to hide out from the job market. Make sure that your reasons for pursuing a Ph.D. are clear, and that they are consistent with your career goals. Here are some important points:

- Is a Ph.D. consistent with your career goals?
- Ph.D. programs are much more focused than undergraduate degrees, and require you to have an in-depth understanding of your interests and goals prior to even applying; have you thought about the subfield and specific issues that interest you?
- Ph.D. programs are heavily focused on theories and research; are these your interests and are these areas of strength?
- Ph.D. programs typically take five to six years to complete; can you make this commitment?
- Have you talked to several faculty members (who all have a Ph.D. and been through the process) about the points above?

Theory and Research Matter

Again, Ph.D. programs focus on theory and research, and, thus, as an undergraduate, these things matter.

A) Read real political science and international relations work. Textbooks have a role to play in many classes, but they summarize original work and are not a substitute for reading the original work. Your first year or two in a Ph.D. program will be much smoother if you have read more original works and research articles.

B) Do undergraduate research of some kind; see “Research Opportunities.” Doing some of your own research and presenting it will help you know if it is something you enjoy and shows admissions committee some tangible evidence that you have some interest and skill at research.

Finding Ph.D. Programs That Are a Good Fit For You

First, think about, talk to faculty, and decide which subfield(s) you are most interested in. Second, get actual or at least practice GRE test scores. Then with your GRE and GPA scores in mind, start identifying the programs that are strongest in the areas you are interested and where you have a competitive chance of getting accepted. You can start with links like these:

> American Political Science Association (http://apsanet.org/content_6947.cfm)

provides links to all Ph.D.-granting institutions in political science in the United States

> Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs

(<http://www.apsia.org/apsia/search/schoolSearch.php>) provides links to graduate programs in international affairs

> Princeton Review

(http://www.princetonreview.com/grad/research/programs/lists/political_science_and_government.asp) summarizes information on graduate programs in political science

> Association of Public Policy Analysis and Management

(<http://www.appam.org/membership/institutional/search.asp>) offers a directory of public policy graduate programs

> Public Policy and International Affairs consortium

(<http://www.ppiaprogram.org/consortium/>) is a search engine for graduate programs

Once you have put together a list of possible programs, start looking at their websites-- check out the areas of specialization of the faculty. Are there some who share your interests? Have you read any of their work or have a sense that you might find their ideas stimulating? In a Ph.D. program you will be specializing much more than you did as an undergraduate, so it is important to pick a program where there is a community of scholars who focus on your areas of interest.

Most students apply to about a half dozen graduate programs.

Preparing, Year-by-Year

Freshman and Sophomore Years:

- a) Study hard. The best Ph.D. prep is earning the best grades possible, as your GPA will weigh heavily in admissions decisions.
- b) Choose challenging courses, particularly those covering theories, using original source materials, and emphasizing research.
- c) Speak to your faculty adviser and learn as much as you can about Ph.D. programs, the admissions process, and the GRE.
- d) Take advantage of research opportunities in the department and get as much experience doing and presenting research as possible.
- e) Update your resume every semester.
- f) Add new papers, projects, presentations, and work samples to your ePortfolio every semester.

Junior Year:

- a) Keep taking rigorous courses and keep studying. Your junior year grades will be the last ones on your transcript submitted to grad schools, so make them strong.
- b) Update your resume every semester.
- c) Add new papers, projects, presentations, and work samples to your ePortfolio every semester.
- d) Try and get experiences going to academic conferences, presenting your work and possibly undergraduate publication.
- e) Begin looking at Ph.D. programs.
- f) Take a practice GRE test and, study in any areas of weakness, and schedule when you will take the GRE for real-- late in your junior year to early in your senior year.
- g) Think about who you'll ask for letters of recommendation; keep in mind that asking potential referees before summer break will give them plenty of time to write something.

Senior Year:

- a) Take the GRE no later the start of the year, to ensure scores are in in time for applications.
- b) Prepare your personal statement and ask family, friends, and anyone else with great writing skills for feedback.
- c) Get your resume in top shape; use the Career Development Center's online "Resume Writing Guide"

(<http://www.mtsu.edu/career/documents/ResumeGuideNew.pdf>)

- d) Finalise your ePortfolio. Up to now, you have been collecting information on your skills and experience, and now you can create a final portfolio with a url that you can include on your resume and allow potential employers to look-- you can sell yourself. You can create several permutations of your portfolio, targetting to different types of employers and jobs. Look again at
- e) Research financial aid options.
- f) If possible, visit schools that you are considering.
- g) Select the Ph.D. programs to which you will apply, preferably with the help of a faculty adviser, and request application materials. Get financial aid forms ready.
- h) Submit your applications as early as possible, before Thanksgiving break is preferable.

How to Pay for a Ph.D. Program

Grad school is expensive, but you won't (shouldn't, really) pay for it. If you were to take out loans to pay full freight for a Ph.D. program, it is very unlikely that the higher earnings from having the Ph.D. would ever pay off the costs; it would not be a financially sound decision.

Graduate schools only accept a limited number of applicants, so if they accept you and really want you, they will put together a financial package to make it possible. Most go to a Ph.D. program with an assistantship, which covers tuition and fees and offers a monthly stipend to live on (not luxuriously, but eat and have a roof over your head) in return for work as a teaching or research assistant. *Aim to attend the **best program you can get into** in your area of interest **where they will pay you.***

C. 14. Preparing for a Career-Oriented Masters and Certificate Programs

Often, people think the only graduate education option as Political Science and International Relations majors is to go into a Ph.D. program, but **there are many graduate options for people who want to work as practitioners and**

specialists in the field. Many schools offer 1 or 2 year career-oriented programs. These programs are much more targeted, practitioner-oriented, and shorter than law school or a Ph.D. Unlike Ph.D. programs, these programs are less theory and research oriented, and aim to equip people to work as high-level specialists in some aspect of the field. Building on your undergraduate degree, you can get a specialized certificate or master's degree in environmental policy or health care policy or international human rights or homeland security, or.... many other areas relevant to political science and international relations majors.

Some people enter programs such as these immediately after completing their undergraduate degree, to hone a specialty and enter the field at a higher level. Others take an entry-level professional position and after a year or two complete a program like these, in order to advance and move up in the field.

Because these are shorter and practitioner-oriented, the admission criteria are generally lower for these programs than for Ph.D. programs, making them accessible to more students.

Finding Career-Oriented Programs

There are many different types of programs in such specialized areas as public administration, public policy, political campaign management, environmental policy, security, conflict resolution, education policy, urban and regional planning, non-profit management, international affairs, health policy, homeland security, human rights, among many others. We have direct links on our webpage to help you find programs. *Talk to your faculty advisor.*

C. 15. A Gap Year

Instead of directly pursuing employment or graduate or law school after graduation, some students choose to engage in a gap year program. A gap year is an opportunity to gain professional or personal experience, accomplish goals, and/or explore one's interests in the year following graduation. Gap years can range from

a number of different experiences, including a career-oriented position within a company to expand career development, a year of travel abroad to build cultural knowledge, or a financed research project of one's own design. Gap Year Programs can involve work in the U.S. or abroad in a wide variety of fields such as teaching, advocacy, community development, health care, immigrant services, social work, or sustainable development. Programs frequently emphasize philosophies of service to others, peace and justice, enhancing international relationships, and/or "the road less traveled."

Gap years can be taken between high school and college or between college and career/law school/graduate school. Gap Years originally started in the United Kingdom in the 1970's as a way to contribute to the development of the students through an extended international experience. Gap Years came to the United States in the early 1980's and now embody every manner of program and opportunity imaginable, both domestically and internationally, all with the shared purpose of increasing self-awareness, learning about different cultural perspectives, and experimenting with future possible careers.

Why a Gap Year?

There are a number of possible reasons to consider taking a gap year. Maybe you want a break from formal schooling before moving on to a Ph.D. or career-oriented masters/certificate program. Maybe you want to explore additional career options before finalizing your career plans. Maybe you want to gain new experiences. Maybe you are graduating in December and your graduate program or law school doesn't begin until the following September, and you want to do something meaningful in the interim.

These short-term experiences can help you explore a potential career path, gain experience and credentials that could contribute to graduate/professional school, develop cognitively, socially, and emotionally, and connect with professionals in areas of potential interest. In some cases, these short-term experiences will turn into longer-term professions.

Students participate in gap year programs for a variety of reasons:

- to "give back" or be of service to communities in need
- to experience immersion in a new culture (ethnic, geographic, or socioeconomic)
- to gain insight or address issues impacting a specific community of people
- to see a part of the world from a "local" perspective
- to acquire professional skills in a challenging work environment
- to do meaningful, interesting, or different types of work before career-related employment or graduate school

Planning a Gap Year

A gap year is not simply 'bumming around' for a six months or a year after graduation from MTSU. As defined by the American Gap Association, "A Gap Year is a structured period of time when students take a break from formal education to increase self-awareness, challenge comfort zones, and experiment with possible careers. Typically these are achieved by a combination of traveling, volunteering, interning, or working. A gap year experience can last from two months up to two years and is taken between high school graduation and the Junior year of their higher degree." The key word in this definition is "structured."

You want to participate in a gap year program, whether it involves work, an internship, service, or travel, that helps you explore and/or develop career relevant experiences. This takes some time and planning. There are a great many gap year organizations and programs available, as a simple Google search will demonstrate. The Department does not endorse any specific programs, but as a way to just get starting in looking at program options, examine some of the larger organizations and then move on from there. You might look at:

> the [American Gap Association](http://www.americangap.org/about.php) (<http://www.americangap.org/about.php>) and its

list of [Accredited Gap Year Organizations](http://www.americangap.org/gap-year-programs.php) (<http://www.americangap.org/gap-year-programs.php>)

> the [Center for Interim Programs](http://www.interimprograms.com/) (<http://www.interimprograms.com/>)

> the program search function at [GapYear.com](http://www.gapyear.com)

C. 16. Career Search Skills: Professional Social Etiquette

You've perfected your resume. Your cover letters are persuasive. Your interview skills are polished. You are ready to pursue career opportunities. However, before you do, make sure you understand the importance of social etiquette. Your behavior during meals and receptions can advance or hurt your candidacy for a job. Take a look at the following common-sense tips that will serve you well in your job search and in life.

When an employer invites you to an event:

- Be on time
- RSVP whether you are able to attend or not
- Do not cancel without a good reason
- Dress with care; clarify appropriate attire
- The person who extends the invitation pays the bill
- Place your nametag on the upper-right side of your clothing
- Avoid inappropriate language
- Learn to discuss any topic including those that do not interest you
- Tell jokes only if they are appropriate
- Always send a thank you note within 24 to 48 hours

How to introduce people:

- Introduce the most important person first
- Introduce a younger person to an older person
- Introduce a peer in your own company to a peer in another company
- Introduce a nonofficial to an official person
- If you are not immediately introduced, introduce yourself when appropriate
- Responding to introductions—shake hands, make eye contact, and say "hello" or "nice to meet you"

When you are at an employer reception and don't know anyone:

- Be the one to start the conversation
- Look for a shared or common interest
- Be a good listener; ask open-ended questions
- Avoid controversial or unsuitable subjects
- Make sure that your cell phone or pager will not interrupt the conversation
- Don't gossip or preach
- Avoid fidgeting and extreme nervousness
- Smile; shake hands firmly; have good eye contact; send out positive signals
- Don't repeat; don't ramble; modulate your voice
- If all else fails, bring up the weather

Dining with success:

- Place your napkin onto your lap immediately; if you leave your chair, place your napkin onto your chair not onto the table
- Silverware is used from the outside moving in
- Once a utensil is used, it should not rest on the table again
- Keep purses, brief cases, cell phones, keys, etc., off the table
- Food, condiments, etc. are passed in a counterclockwise direction around the table
- Do not stack your plates after you've finished your meal

The Most Common Etiquette Mistakes:

- No advance preparation
- Inappropriate dress or grooming; unprofessional image
- Late arrival
- Negative body language or poor posture
- Dishonesty
- Lack of self-confidence
- Inability to communicate strengths
- Embarrassing dining skills
- Poor telephone or Netiquette skills
- Failure to follow up or express gratitude

Email Etiquette

While we may be unguarded in our tone when we email friends, a professional tone should be maintained when communicating with prospective employers, law schools, and graduate schools. Use email wisely, and you will shine; use it improperly, and you will be seen as immature and unprofessional. Try to be succinct in getting your point across—then end the email.

General Guidelines

- Use a meaningful subject header—one that is appropriate to the topic.
- Be professional. Address the person as Mr., Ms. or Dr. unless told to call them by their first name previously, and definitely verify the correct spelling.
- Sign your email with your full name.
- Be brief and don't overload the employer/admissions personnel with lots of questions.
- Ditch the emoticons and abbreviations like J/K or LOL, which are best reserved for family and friends.
- Don't use strange fonts, wallpapers or multicolored backgrounds.
- Avoid using slang.
- As with everything in the job search, proofread and check spelling.

In conclusion, when you're dealing with employers, there is no such thing as an inconsequential communication. Your emails say far more about you than you might realize. If you are sloppy and careless, a seemingly trivial communication will stick out like a sore thumb.

Getting Good Letters of Recommendation

You are going to want good letters of recommendation. Students often ask "Can you write me a letter?" when what they really want to know is "Can you write me a good letter?" Most faculty will tell you if they don't think they can write a good, positive letter, but ask if they are comfortable writing a strong letter.

General Guidelines

1. Give some real thought in deciding which professor(s) might write a recommendation on your behalf. As part of your considerations, ask yourself:

- Has this professor seen my recent work?
- Have I taken more than one class with this professor?
- Does this professor know my strengths from experiences both inside and outside the classroom?
- Have I done well in this professor's courses?
- Have I always acted professionally and ethically in regards to this professor and her or his class?
- Can this professor comment upon my intellectual development and achievement of skills?

If you answered yes to all of these questions, ask this professor.

-2-. A month or so before recommendation is needed: Ask the professor either in office hours or by email if the professor is comfortable writing to recommend you for your given context, e.g. graduate school, a job, a scholarship.

-3-. If the professor agrees to your request, talk to the professor about your specific plans and prepare a folder/email for the professor that includes:

- Your transcript;
- Your resume;
- A list of dates and addresses; indicate which recommendations are to be done on-line and which in paper.
- If you are requesting a paper recommendation, make sure you have filled out the information you must submit and included envelopes and postage. If you are requesting on-line submissions, make sure that you register the professor with the recommended portfolio/application service.

-4-. In most instances, it is recommended that you waive the right to read the letter.

-5-. One week before the recommendation is due: You may remind the professor via email.

-6-. If the deadline passes and the professor has not submitted the recommendation, a follow-up email or visit to the professor's office is in order.

Interview Skills

Very few people are naturals when it comes to interviewing well; it takes practice. So, learn and practice interview skills using

the [InterviewStream](#) system at the Career Development Center.

General Guidelines

- Know yourself. Be ready to sell your skills. Your resume cannot talk for you.
- Be on time. Give yourself 10 to 15 minutes to relax and get composed. Be late, and lose the job.
- Be friendly to everyone. Acknowledge all individuals with a smile and a firm handshake.
- Research the company. Know who, what, when, where.
- Dress for the interview, not the job. If you know the standards of the organization, please dress appropriately. If not, be conservative.
- Bring a resume. Bring any pertinent recommendations.
- Go alone. Leave friends and relatives at home.
- Remember the interviewer's name. People like to be recognized. Use his/her name as often as possible. Do not use his/her first name only, unless you have been authorized to do so.
- Be a good listener. Do not think of your response while the interviewer is talking. You want to make sure you hear the question correctly.
- Stand until invited to sit. Follow the interviewer's lead. If he/she removes his/her jacket, you can ask if it's OK to do so.
- Be aware of body language. Appearance is 55 percent of the first impression; 35 percent is body language, tone of voice, facial expressions, mannerisms, posture; what you say is only 10 percent.
- Remember your manners. Look the interviewer in the eye (this builds trust).
- Show your enthusiasm. Eighty percent of success in the workplace is based on attitudes; 20 percent is job skills.
- Be positive. Don't criticize others or put anyone down.
- Express yourself. Do not use slang, ramble or mumble.
- Be yourself. It is extremely important to be genuine and sincere.
- Maintain your health. Get a good night's sleep.
- Follow up. Always send a thank you letter.

Thank People

All throughout the job search and law school or

graduate school admissions process (and in life, really)... THANK PEOPLE. People are going to answer your calls, answer your emails, give you tours of facilities, interview you, take you to meals, etc. Always thank them-- in person, like you mean it, and/or with a follow up note or email within 48 hours.

C. 17. Career Search Skills: Career Counselors

MTSU provides you with a large, active [Career Development Center](#) with career counselors who can help you examine potential careers, and help with interviewing skills, resume and cover letter writing, personal statements, and much more. They are there for you, and you should meet with them and use their services can offer guidance and advice as you proceed.

C. 18. Career Search Skills: Mentors

Believe it or not, this is not as difficult as it might sound. A career mentor is someone who voluntarily provides career advice and assistance; mentors can help you set career goals, resolve difficult problems, and make sound career decisions. The relationship with your mentor is ongoing and your mentor can guide you throughout your career. A mentor can be indispensable both when you're starting out and when you're moving up the career ladder. Why would they want to help you? The answer is easy: people like helping other people! And, by asking a prospective mentor for help, they are being told they are admired for what they do, their career is in demand, and their experiences and insights are valuable to others. Not everyone will see it this way, but once you start asking, you'll be surprised how receptive people are.

Mentors are in the field you want to be in, i.e., they have successfully made it through their undergraduate program and successfully managed a job search in your chosen field, and/or successfully got into and through law school, and/or got into and through graduate school. They have first-hand experience doing the things you want to do. If you can tap into

their experiences for advice and tips and insights, you should.

Tips for Finding a Good Mentor:

- Research the field and find out about the people who are in it.
 - Create a list of people who seem like good fits with you
 - Start contacting them slowly at first - a polite and formal email, for example - and see who responds. In your initial contact, send an email asking to meet up for coffee, in their office, or a phone call. Conduct this initial meeting like an informational interview: ask some specific questions about their career path and experiences. Note: If the person is slow to respond, or gives vague answers, perhaps it's not a good time for them to be a mentor. Don't take it personally!
 - Try to form a relationship, and get to know their personalities even as you try to exhibit yours. Like so many other things, when you find the right mentor, you'll know it.
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C. 19. Career Search Skills: Virtual Mentoring Program

The Departments Virtual Mentoring Program provides contacts (former alums) who can provide career advice. See **Section B.11** or visit the website at

<http://www.mtsu.edu/politicalscience/virtualmentoring.php>

Section D: Tips for Student Success

D. 1. Maintaining a Solid GPA

Doing well in your classes and maintaining a solid GPA obviously play a role in successfully achieving your career goals. A solid GPA will make things easier:

- law school admissions committees are definitely going to look at your GPA when deciding whether to admit you or not
- graduate school admissions committees are definitely going to look at your GPA when deciding whether to admit you or not
- when applying for your first professional job, an increasing number of employers want to

know your GPA

- with a solid GPA, you can advertise it on your resume

If you currently have a 3.5 or higher, you have clearly figured out how to handle college-level work and expectations well; keep it up. If you have a GPA lower than this it doesn't mean you are doing terrible, but it does mean there are probably some areas where you could make some adjustments and do better. And, if your GPA is indeed quite low, then you really want to address whatever the issues may be as soon as possible.

There are lots of reasons why someone might have a less than ideal GPA, including time management issues, writing issues, note-taking issues, test prep and stress issues, reading comprehension issues, personal issues and pressures, and so on. There is not one problem that impacts everyone. So, you want to talk to the professors you have in class, talk to your advisers, and, especially, think about and be honest about what areas you might need some help and some work.

Everyone struggles somewhere, sometime, with something. Maybe you would do better in classes if... you knew how to take better notes, OR had better study skills, OR knew how to get key information out of textbooks, OR wrote better test essays, OR knew how to properly cite resources, OR had a better idea on how to locate research materials, OR managed your time more effectively, OR... again, any number of things. Pride is your enemy: There are almost always people and resources to use to help with whatever you need help with. The main problem is that students rarely use the resources that are here. And, the main reason for this is pride, a reluctance to ask for help. You want to do well and we really want you to do well. So, whether you have small issues here or there or some big issues, get over the pride factor and get the help you need. Do not let problems fester—tap into the resources that are available and make college really successful.

Talk to Your Professors

Your single best resource is the professor in a class where you may need help with some skill. Whether you are having an issue with something related to the specific class or some general skill needed in the class, your professor can usually help. Students who talk to their professors do better than those who do not. Some students are very reluctant to go to a professor's office and simply talk to them about issues, but it turns out that nine out of ten professors do not bite—so go and talk to them.

Question: When Should You Go Talk To Your Professor?

Answer: As soon as there is an issue or problem. Do not wait for two or three bad grades to stack up in a course before talking to your professor. Talk to her/him BEFORE you find yourself in a deep hole. When you get one bad grade or first realize you are lost on some concept, go talk to your professor immediately. Do not allow small problems to escalate into major problems. If you get a "D" or an "F" on an assignment, these are bad grades and you should absolutely go talk to your professor. But, if you get a "C" and really hope to be a "B" student, or you get a "B" and really hope to be an "A" student, then these are also "bad grades" in terms of your personal goals, and so go talk to your professor. Talk to them about your issues, listen to what they say, and act on their advice. Do this, and you will almost certainly do better in and get much more out of your courses.

Talk to Your Faculty and College Advisers

Some issues are not specific to a particular course, such as recurring problems with writing or note taking, or personal traumas that are undermining your performance in most or all classes. For such issues, go and talk to your faculty or college adviser. She or he can probably help with many of these issues, and, if they cannot, they can put you in touch with people who can help.

D.2. Information on writing a research paper.

(from "How to Write an A+ Research Paper," www.aresearchguide.com/1steps.html accessed June 21, 2010).

STEP 1. CHOOSE A TOPIC

- Choose a topic which interests and challenges you. Your attitude towards the topic may well determine the amount of effort and enthusiasm you put into your research.
- Focus on a limited aspect, e.g. narrow it down from "Religion" to "World Religion" to "Buddhism". Obtain teacher approval for your topic before embarking on a full-scale research. If you are uncertain as to what is expected of you in completing the assignment or project, re-read your assignment sheet carefully or ASK your teacher.
- Select a subject you can manage. Avoid subjects that are too technical, learned, or specialized. Avoid topics that have only a very narrow range of source materials.

STEP 2. FIND INFORMATION

- Surf the Net.
- For general or background information, check out useful URLs, general information online, almanacs or encyclopedias online. Use search engines and other search tools as a starting point.
- Pay attention to domain name extensions, e.g., .edu (educational institution), .gov (government), or .org (non-profit organization). These sites represent institutions and tend to be more reliable,, but be watchful of possible political bias in some government sites. Be selective of .com (commercial) sites. Many .com sites are excellent; however, a large number of them contain advertisements for products and nothing else. Network Solutions provides a link where you can find out what some of the other extensions stand for. Be wary of the millions of personal home pages on the Net. The quality of these personal homepages vary greatly. Learning how to evaluate websites critically and to search effectively on the Internet can help you eliminate irrelevant sites and waste less of your time.
- Check out books and other print materials available in the Library, including:
 - Almanacs, Atlases, AV Catalogs
 - Encyclopedias and Dictionaries
 - Government Publications, Guides, Reports
 - Magazines, Newspapers
 - Vertical Files
- Check out online resources, Web based information services, or special resource

materials on CD or Subject Specific software (e.g. discovering authors, exploring Shakespeare, etc.)

- Read and evaluate. Bookmark your favorite Internet sites. Printout, photocopy, and take notes of relevant information.
- As you gather your resources, jot down full bibliographical information (author, title, place of publication, publisher, date of publication, page numbers, URLs, creation or modification dates on Web pages, and your date of access) on your work sheet, printout, or enter the information on your laptop or desktop computer for later retrieval. If printing from the Internet, it is wise to set up the browser to print the URL and date of access for every page. Remember that an article without bibliographical information is useless since you cannot cite its source.

STEP 3. STATE YOUR THESIS

- Do some critical thinking and write your thesis statement down in one sentence. Your thesis statement is like a declaration of your belief. The main portion of your essay will consist of arguments to support and defend this belief.

STEP 4. MAKE A TENTATIVE OUTLINE

- The purpose of an outline is to help you think through your topic carefully and organize it logically before you start writing. A good outline is the most important step in writing a good paper. Check your outline to make sure that the points covered flow logically from one to the other. Include in your outline an INTRODUCTION, a BODY, and a CONCLUSION. Make the first outline tentative.

INTRODUCTION - State your thesis and the purpose of your research paper clearly. What is the chief reason you are writing the paper? State also how you plan to approach your topic. Is this a factual report, a book review, a comparison, or an analysis of a problem? Explain briefly the major points you plan to cover in your paper and why readers should be interested in your topic.

BODY - This is where you present your arguments to support your thesis statement. Remember the Rule of 3, i.e. find 3 supporting arguments for each position you take. Begin with a strong argument, then use a stronger one, and end with the strongest argument for your final point.

CONCLUSION - Restate or reword your thesis. Summarize your arguments. Explain why you have come to this particular conclusion.

STEP 5. ORGANIZE YOUR NOTES

- Organize all the information you have gathered according to your outline. Critically analyze your research data. Using the best available sources, check for accuracy and verify that the information is factual, up-to-date, and correct. Opposing views should also be noted if they help to support your thesis. This is the most important stage in writing a research paper. Here you will analyze, synthesize, sort, and digest the information you have gathered and hopefully learn something about your topic which is the real purpose of doing a research paper in the first place. You must also be able to effectively communicate your thoughts, ideas, insights, and research findings to others through written words as in a report, an essay, a research or term paper, or through spoken words as in an oral or multimedia presentation with audio-visual aids.
- Do not include any information that is not relevant to your topic, and do not include information that you do not understand. Make sure the information that you have noted is carefully recorded and in your own words, if possible. Plagiarism is definitely out of the question. Document all ideas borrowed or quotes used very accurately. As you organize your notes, jot down detailed bibliographical information for each cited paragraph and have it ready to transfer to your works cited page.
- Devise your own method to organize your notes.
- Group your notes following the outline codes you have assigned to your notes, e.g., IA2, IA3, IA4, etc. This method will enable you to quickly put all your resources in the right place as you organize your notes according to your outline.

STEP 6. WRITE YOUR FIRST DRAFT

- Start with the first topic in your outline. Read all the relevant notes you have gathered that have been marked, e.g. with the capital Roman numeral I.
- Summarize, paraphrase or quote directly for each idea you plan to use in your essay. Use a technique that suits you, e.g. write summaries, paraphrases or quotations on note cards, or separate sheets of lined paper. Mark each card or sheet of paper clearly with your outline code or reference, e.g., IB2a or IIC, etc.
- Put all your note cards or paper in the order of your outline, e.g. IA, IB, IC. If using a word

processor, create meaningful filenames that match your outline codes for easy cut and paste as you type up your final paper, e.g. cut first Introduction paragraph and paste it to IA. Before you know it, you have a well organized term paper completed exactly as outlined.

- If it is helpful to you, use a symbol such as "#" to mark the spot where you would like to check back later to edit a paragraph. The unusual symbol will make it easy for you to find the exact location again. Delete the symbol once editing is completed.

STEP 7. REVISE YOUR OUTLINE AND DRAFT

- Read your paper for any content errors. Double check the facts and figures. Arrange and rearrange ideas to follow your outline. Reorganize your outline if necessary, but always keep the purpose of your paper and your readers in mind.



CHECKLIST ONE:

1. Is my thesis statement concise and clear?
 2. Did I follow my outline? Did I miss anything?
 3. Are my arguments presented in a logical sequence?
 4. Are all sources properly cited to ensure that I am not plagiarizing?
 5. Have I proved my thesis with strong supporting arguments?
 6. Have I made my intentions and points clear in the essay?
- Re-read your paper for grammatical errors. Use a dictionary or a thesaurus as needed. Do a spell check. Correct all errors that you can spot and improve the overall quality of the paper to the best of your ability. Get someone else to read it over. Sometimes a second pair of eyes can see mistakes that you missed.



CHECKLIST TWO:

1. Did I begin each paragraph with a proper topic sentence?
2. Have I supported my arguments with documented proof or examples?
3. Any run-on or unfinished sentences?
4. Any unnecessary or repetitious words?
5. Varying lengths of sentences?
6. Does one paragraph or idea flow smoothly into the next?
7. Any spelling or grammatical errors?

8. Quotes accurate in source, spelling, and punctuation?
9. Are all my citations accurate and in correct format?
10. Did I avoid using contractions? Use "cannot" instead of "can't", "do not" instead of "don't"?
11. Did I use third person as much as possible? Avoid using phrases such as "I think", "I guess", "I suppose"
12. Have I made my points clear and interesting but remained objective?
13. Did I leave a sense of completion for my reader(s) at the end of the paper?

STEP 8. TYPE FINAL PAPER

- All formal reports or essays should be typewritten and printed, preferably on a good quality printer.
- Read the assignment sheet again to be sure that you understand fully what is expected of you, and that your essay meets the requirements as specified by your teacher. Know how your essay will be evaluated.
- Proofread final paper carefully for spelling, punctuation, missing or duplicated words. Make the effort to ensure that your final paper is clean, tidy, neat, and attractive.
- Aim to have your final paper ready a day or two before the deadline. This gives you peace of mind and a chance to triple check. Before handing in your assignment for marking, ask yourself: "Is this the VERY BEST that I can do?"

D.3. Advice on Essay Exams (by John Maynor)

When taking an exam or test that requires you to write an essay (or long form answers) remember -- The text you write to answer exam questions should be good essays. In particular, they should be written in good, clear English; they should be well organized; they should avoid dogmatism (evidence, reasons, analyses, justifications, arguments, objections, and the like should be provided); they should be relevant (their content should comprise all and only what is needed to answer the question); they should display understanding and knowledge of the subject matter; they should avoid jargon, repetition, mere paraphrase of the views of others, and (of course) they should avoid falsity and invalidity and should be legible.

In some cases your professor may have given you advice on the range of topics to be covered

and the kinds of question you might expect. Select three or four of these to work up in preparation. Do not just prepare two topics for a two-answer unseen exam. Since one or more of the topics in question may not come up, or may come up in a form which you do not know how to answer, to do so is to take a big gamble with your overall module mark. In preparing a topic it can be helpful to assemble a variety of essay components (explanations of important doctrines or ideas, outlines of important arguments, developed criticisms or arguments of your own, examples, etc.) which you can then assemble in a variety of different ways in answering the actual question set.

Exam techniques:

There are a number of simple Do's and Don'ts that should be observed when sitting any exam:

- As far as possible allot the same amount of time to questions that have the same weight. For example, if your exam is two hours and you must answer two questions allow exactly one hour to each of the two questions.
- Answer the question! Irrelevance will be severely penalized. If I had a penny for every exam answer that tried to change the set question into what is discussed in the essay I would be living on my own private island in the Caribbean jetting back and forth to classes.
- Do not use the same material twice in answers to different questions.
- Make sure your handwriting is as clear as possible. A script which is barely-legible will tend to seem unclear too, and is apt to make markers less sympathetic. As a general rule, if the marker cannot read what you have written, you have not said it. And if you don't say the right things, you will be marked down.
- If you incorporate quotations or other material from the writings of others or from lecture handouts, these must be explicitly acknowledged as such. It is important to note that the rules about plagiarism (see above) apply in exams too!

- Read the instructions at the head of the examination paper carefully, and follow them absolutely.
- Read and give a little thought to every question on the paper, before attempting to answer any one of them. If you have options, make sure that you select the questions which will enable you best to display your skills and understanding of the subject matter. Sometimes this will not be the question you know the most about. Remember in an exam you are in a controlled situation (number of questions to answer, time limit, etc.) so you need to pick your question with these restrictions in mind.

In order to do well in an exam you must not only know your material, have a capacity to argue cogently, and so on — you must also have the capacity to think quickly, to organize a complex body of material so as to answer a specific questions, and to plan and write a good essay in just one hour (or other time limit set). These are skills which you should practice in advance. The best way to combat nervousness about exams is to be prepared and to know your stuff!

EXAM FAQs

Why do we have to take an Exam?

Exams test both the breadth and depth of your knowledge. They allow you the opportunity to demonstrate that you have mastered the subject at hand. They allow us to assess whether or not you have achieved an independent understanding and critical awareness of the Module. They also test certain transferable skill such as structure and organization and presentation under certain controlled situations.

How do I do it?

The first thing to always remember is ANSWER THE QUESTION. An exam is not asking you to tell us everything you know about the subject matter. It is much more specific than that. You are being asked to take the knowledge that you have and apply it to a specific theme in an analytical and coherent manner.

Ok, so how do I go about doing that?

Always take time to read each question and ask yourself NOT which question you know most about but RATHER which question can you answer the best given the situation (limited time, nervousness, etc.). It is always a good idea to read each question carefully before making up your mind about which one you will do. Remember we give you choices for a reason. Take advantage of this!

Great, so now I've decided which question to answer but how do I go about structuring my response?

After deciding which question(s) you will answer make a plan. Remember to structure your argument with the question in mind. Take the question apart for clues how to proceed analytically.

- Introduction - set out clearly what you will do and how you will proceed. Show the marker that you know your stuff and want to lead him/her through your answer. Let the marker know the general theme of your answer.
- Structure – Make sure that you weigh up each part of your argument and give your points their due. Also, strive for coherency – ask yourself if your argument is always moving forward. Don't go off on one into the other. Keep reminding yourself that you are not telling the marker everything you know about the topic, but rather are just answering the question.
- Examples – When applicable it is always a good idea to support your argument with an example. However, there is always a danger that your example either doesn't really fit (and many students go off on one trying to make it fit) or you spend too much time discussing your example, which robs you of time to continue your argument. My advice to you is if you are going to give an example, make sure it fits and does not require a great deal of explanation. In the final analysis, I want an argument supported by an example (or two) not an example supported by an argument.
- Conclusion – Never a place to introduce new material. If you have something new to

say near the end of your essay, put it in its own section where you can develop it properly. Think of the conclusion as only a place to say where you have been and a final opportunity to tell the marker how your argument fits in to the general theme you identified in your introduction. Make sure that you can draw a line back into your argument for every point you make in the conclusion.

- Presentation and Grammar – Make sure that the marker can read your writing. If he/she cannot, then you have not communicated to them that you know your stuff. If they cannot read it, you have not said it! Also, poor writing and grammar looks sloppy and can be off-putting to the marker and they may lose interest in your efforts.

How should I prepare for an exam?

Study early and study often. Never wait until the last minute. Some might be able to pull this off but it is difficult and most often fails to convince. Also, why cause yourself the grief and anxiety? If you study a little bit early enough you'll find that you don't have the worries since you have been progressive and mature about your approach.

Again, keep in mind that the exam is not about everything you know. It is about taking what you know and organizing it into a coherent and analytical argument that answers the question. Blitzing through pages and pages of text is not helpful. What is helpful is identifying certain themes that are likely to appear (past exam papers are a good start. So is the syllabus. Class notes, etc.) and organizing your studying around these. Also, take some time before the exam sitting in a dark room (or someplace you are not going to be distracted) and thinking about accessing the information in your brain. If you have studied, it is there. The question becomes can you get it out. Take some time to think about what you know and let it flow through your brain and into your mouth (mumble to yourself) or hand (free-write what you know).

And of course read this guide from the beginning again and study, study, study!

D.3. Information on plagiarism.

How Not to Plagiarize

Written by Margaret Procter, Writing Support

You've already heard the warnings about plagiarism. Obviously it's against the rules to buy essays or copy chunks from your friend's homework, and it's also plagiarism to borrow passages from books or articles or Web sites without identifying them. You know that the purpose of any paper is to show your own thinking, not create a patchwork of borrowed ideas. But you may still be wondering how you're supposed to give proper references to all the reading you've done and all the ideas you've encountered.

The point of documenting sources in academic papers is not just to avoid unpleasant visits to the Dean's office, but to demonstrate that you know what is going on in your field of study. It's also a courtesy to your readers because it helps them consult the material you've found. That's especially important for Internet sources. So mentioning what others have said doesn't lessen the credit you get for your own thinking—in fact, it adds to your credibility.

That's not to say that questions about ownership of ideas are simple. For one thing, the different systems for typing up references are admittedly a nuisance. But the real challenge is establishing the relationship of your thinking to the reading you've done (yes, that includes the Internet). Here are some common questions and basic answers.

• **Can't I avoid problems just by listing every source in the bibliography?** No, you need to integrate your acknowledgements into what you're saying. Give the reference as soon as you've mentioned the idea you're using, not just at the end of the paragraph. It's often a good idea to name the authors ("X says" and "Y argues against X,") and then indicate your own stand ("A more inclusive perspective, however, . . ."). The examples in this file and the one on Standard Documentation Formats show various wordings. Have a look at journal articles in your discipline to see how they refer to their sources.

• **If I put the ideas into my own words, do I still have to clog up my pages with all those names and**

numbers? Sorry—yes, you do. In academic papers, you need to keep mentioning authors and pages and dates to show how your ideas are related to those of the experts. It's sensible to use your own words because that saves space and lets you connect ideas smoothly. But whether you quote a passage directly in quotation marks, paraphrase it closely in your own words, or just summarize it rapidly, you need to identify the source then and there. (That applies to Internet sources too: you still need author and date as well as title and URL. The handout Standard Documentation Formats gives examples for a range of types.)

•But I didn't know anything about the subject until I started this paper. Do I have to give an acknowledgement for every point I make? You're safer to over-reference than to skimp. But you can cut down the clutter by recognizing that some ideas are "common knowledge" in the field—that is, taken for granted by people knowledgeable about the topic. Facts easily found in standard reference books are considered common knowledge: the date of the Armistice for World War I, for example, or the present population of Canada. You don't need to name a specific source for them, even if you learned them only when doing your research. In some disciplines, information covered in class lectures doesn't need acknowledgement. Some interpretive ideas may also be so well accepted that they don't need referencing: that Picasso is a distinguished modernist painter, for instance, or that smoking is harmful to health. Check with your professor or TA if you're in doubt whether a specific point is considered common knowledge in your field.

•How can I tell what's my own idea and what has come from somebody else? Careful record-keeping helps. Always write down the author, title and publication information (including the URL and other identifying information for web pages) so you can attach names and dates to specific ideas. Taking good notes is also essential. Don't paste passages from webpages into your draft: that's asking for trouble. As you read any text—online or on the page—summarize useful points in your own words. If you record a phrase or sentence you might want to quote, put quotation marks around it in your notes to remind yourself that you're copying the author's exact words. And make a deliberate effort as you read to notice connections among ideas, especially contrasts and disagreements, and also to jot down questions or thoughts of your own. If you find as you write that you're following one or two of your sources too closely, deliberately look back in your notes for other

sources that take different views; then write about the differences and why they exist.

• So what exactly do I have to document? With experience reading academic prose, you'll soon get used to the ways writers in your field refer to their sources. Here are the main times you should give acknowledgements.

- Quotations, paraphrases, or summaries: If you use the author's exact words, enclose them in quotation marks, or indent passages of more than four lines. But it's seldom worthwhile to use long quotations. In literary studies, quote a few words of the work you're analysing and comment on them. In other disciplines, quote only when the original words are especially memorable. In most cases, use your own words to paraphrase or summarize the idea you want to discuss, emphasizing the points relevant to your argument. But be sure to name sources even when you are not using the exact original words. As in the examples below, it's often a good idea to mention the author's name. Mentioning the author's name indicates where the borrowing starts and stops and gains you some reflected glory for responding to the experts.
- e.g. As Morris puts it in *The Human Zoo* (1983), "we can always be sure that today's daring innovation will be tomorrow's respectability" (p. 189). [APA system]
- e.g. Northrop Frye discusses comedy in terms of the spring spirit, which he defines as the infusion of new life and hope into human awareness of universal problems (*Anatomy* 163). The ending of *The Tempest* fits this pattern. [new MLA system—short title to distinguish among different works by same author].
- Specific facts used as evidence for your argument or interpretation: First consider whether the facts you're mentioning are "common knowledge" according to the definition in point 3 above; if so, you may not need to give a reference. But when you're relying on facts that might be disputed within your discipline—perhaps newly published data—establish that they're trustworthy by showing that you got them from an authoritative source.
- e.g. In September 1914, more than 1300 skirmishes were recorded on the Western Front.⁸ [traditional endnote/footnote system]
- e.g. Other recent researchers (4, 11, 12) confirm the findings that drug treatment has little effect in the treatment of pancreatic pseudocysts. [numbered-note system for biomedical sciences]

- Distinctive or authoritative ideas, whether you agree with them or not: The way you introduce a reference can indicate your attitude and lead into your own argument.
- e.g. Writing in 1966, Ramsay Cook asserted that Canada was in a period of critical instability (174). That period is not yet over, judging by the same criteria of electoral changeability, economic uncertainty, and confusion in policy decisions. [new MLA system]
- e.g. One writer (Von Daniken, 1970) even argues that the Great Pyramid was built for the practical purpose of guiding navigation. [APA system]

D.5. Online Tools to Improve Specific Skills

There are many web sites available with good tips on specific academic skills you may need help with. Whether you use some of the examples below or others you find, you should talk to professors about the advice and if it will be useful in their classes.

Time Management Skills

- > “Managing Time for Success in College”
<https://www.uwgb.edu/tutoring/resources/managing.asp>
- > “Time Management Basics for College Students”
<http://www.collegeatlas.org/college-student-time-management-basics.html>

Note-Taking Skills

- > “Note-Taking”
<https://pennstatelearning.psu.edu/note-taking>
- > “Note Taking Techniques”
<http://www.academictips.org/acad/literature/notetaking.html>

Textbook Reading Skills

- > “Reading a Textbook for True Understanding”
<http://www.cornellcollege.edu/academic-support-and-advising/study-tips/reading-textbooks.shtml>
- > “How To Read Textbooks”
<http://www.aims.edu/student/learning-commons/study/textbooks>

Study Skills

- > “Improve Study Skills”
<http://www.gcsu.edu/success/improve.htm>

- > “Test-Taking Strategies”
http://www.d.umn.edu/kmc/student/loon/acad/strat/test_take.html

Writing Good Essays on Exams

- > “Tips on Writing the Essay-type Examination”
<http://www.csbsju.edu/academic-advising/study-skills-guide/essay-exam>

Writing in Political Science

- > “A Guide to Developing and Writing Research Papers in Political Science” by Scott Minkoff
- > “Writing Political Science Papers”
http://qcpages.qc.edu/Political_Science/tips.html

D.6. Campus Support Services

MTSU provides a range of resources for different student needs and problems. They are there to be used, so, get over the pride issue and use the resources that you need to do the best you can.

MTSU Writing Center	For help with individual assignments, or help with general skills, set up an appointment and get help with all forms of writing.
TRiO Student Support Services	Many MTSU students are eligible for TRiO tutoring and advising assistance. Just click over to the site and see if you are eligible.
MTSU Tutoring Resources	These tutoring opportunities are for specific courses that many students struggle with, so look at the courses they work with and use them if you are in one of these courses.
MTSU Research Librarians	The Library has full-time research Librarians to help students with the research process and finding materials. If you are lost trying to find materials, talk to them.
MTSU Disability and Access	If some form of disability is impacting your performance in classes, talk to DSS and see what

Center	can be done to address the problem.
MTSU Counseling Services	If you are experiencing loss or grief or depression or other emotional issues that impacting your performance in classes, talk to counseling and get assistance.
MTSU Student Health Services	If you are experiencing health problems that are impacting your performance in classes, go to Health Services.

D. 7. Journals in Political Science

- *American Political Science Review* (American Political Science Association-APSA)
- *Perspectives in Politics* (APSA)
- *PS: Political Science and Politics* (APSA)
- *Legislative Studies Quarterly* (APSA section)
- *American Journal of Political Science* (Midwest Political Science Association)
- *British Journal of Political Science*
- *Journal of Politics* (Southern Political Science Association)
- *Political Science Quarterly* (published by the American Academy of Political Science)
- *Political Research Quarterly* (Western Political Science Association)
- *Polity*(Northeastern Political Science Association)
- *Politics and Gender*
- *American Review of Public Administration*
- *Public Administration Review*
- *Presidential Studies Quarterly*
- *White House Studies*
- *Legislative Studies*
- *Race and Society*
- *Foreign Affairs* (Council on Foreign Relations)
- *Foreign Policy*
- *Human Rights Quarterly* (Johns Hopkins)
- *International Studies Quarterly* (International Studies Association)
- *International Organization*
- *World Politics*
- *Comparative Politics* (City University of New York)

- *Comparative Political Studies*
- *Journal of Democracy*
- *Nations and Nationalism*
- *Peace and Conflict Studies*
- *International Journal of Middle East Studies*
- *Journal of Modern African Studies*
- *Latin American Research Review* (Latin American Studies Association)
- *The Latin Americanist* (Southeastern Council of Latin American Studies)
- *Studies in Comparative International Development*
- *Third World Quarterly*
- *Contemporary Political Theory*
- *Journal of Political Philosophy*
- *Politics and Society*

For a complete listing visit:
www.apsanet.org/content_5352.cfm.

Section E: About the Faculty

E.1. Faculty

Mark Byrnes, Dean, College of Liberal Arts, Professor (Ph.D. Vanderbilt)
 Office: 231 Todd; mark.byrnes@mtsu.edu
 An MTSU graduate, Dr. Byrnes joined the faculty in 1991 and became Associate Dean of the College of Liberal Arts in 2007 and Dean in 2010. Dr. Brynes still teaches Politics and Film and coordinates the legislative internship program for the department. He is the author of *James K. Polk: A Biographical Companion* (2001), series editor for *The President's Position: Debating the Issues*, among others.

David Carleton, Associate Professor (Ph.D. Purdue)
 Office: 245 Peck Hall; david.carleton@mtsu.edu
 Dr. Carleton joined MTSU in 1994 after working a number of years in public administration. He teaches American Politics and Government, Foundations of Government, Research Methods, Political Violence and Terrorism, and courses in public administration.

Dr. Carleton also coordinates the Washington Experience and the legislative internship program. He is the author of *Landmark Congressional Laws in Education* (2001).

Sekou Franklin, Associate Professor (Ph.D. Howard University)

Office: 246 Peck Hall;

sekou.franklin@mtsu.edu

Dr. Franklin joined MTSU in 2003. His teaching and research centers on American Politics, Pressure Groups, Urban Politics, African-American Politics, Racial/Ethnic Politics, American and Comparative Social Movements and Citizen Participation, and Civil Rights Policy and Politics His most recent book is *After the Rebellion: Social Movement Action and Popular Mobilization among the Post-Civil Rights Generation..* Dr. Franklin coordinates the interdisciplinary minor in Urban Studies.

Andrei Korobkov, Professor (Ph.D. in Economics, Russian Academy of Sciences and Ph.D. in Political Science, University of Alabama)

Office: 249 Peck Hall;

andrei.korobkov@mtsu.edu

Dr. Korobkov came to MTSU in 2000. He teaches Foundations of Government, International Law, European Politics, Russian Politics, World Politics, American Foreign Policy. He is the author of numerous articles and monographs on Russian politics and Russian immigration in such journals as *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* and *International Migration Trends*. Dr. Korobkov chair's the post-communist section of the International Studies Association, and coordinates the minor in Russian Studies.

Lisa Langenbach, Associate Professor (Ph.D. Purdue)

Office: 252 Peck Hall;

lisa.llangenbach@mtsu.edu

Dr. Langenbach came to MTSU in 1993. She teaches American Politics, Political Parties, Interest Groups, Public Opinion, and State and Local Government, many of these for for MTSU and the RODP's online program. She has

published on American political issues in the *Canadian Review of American Studies*, *Polity*, *Women and Politics*, among other journals. She serves as a faculty mentor for the RODP program, and coordinates the department's internship programs.

Vanessa Lefler, Assistant Professor (Ph.D. University of Iowa)

Office: 251 Peck Hall;

Vanessa.Lefler@mtsu.edu

Dr. Lefler arrived at MTSU in 2012 with a specialization in international relations and the study of conflict and conflict resolution. Her dissertation was entitled *Bargain Shopping for Peace? Strategies in Interstate Conflict Management*. . Dr. Lefler teaches international relations, conflict studies, and peace resolution.

Steve Livingston, Professor (Ph.D. Harvard)

Office: BAS N203A;

steven.livingston@mtsu.edu

Dr. Livingston teaches International Political Economy, International Relations, American Foreign Policy, International Organizations, International Law, US Congress, and Research Methods in PS. Dr. Livingston is also Senior Research Associate, Business and Economic Research Center at MTSU and the editor of *Global Commerce: Tennessee in the International Economy*. He is the author of *American Social Insurance: Social Security and Welfare* (2002) and numerous journal articles and book chapters on public policy.

John Maynor, Professor (D. Phil. University of York, England)

Office: 244 Peck Hall; john.maynor@mtsu.edu

Dr. Maynor joined MTSU in 2004, specializing in political theory. He is the author of *Republicanism in the Modern World* and associate editor of the journal *Contemporary Political Theory*. He teaches the Senior Seminar, Human Rights, Classical Political Theory, Modern Political Theory, and Cotemporary Political Philosophy.

Robb McDaniel, Associate Professor (Ph.D. Vanderbilt)

Office: 256 Peck Hall; robb.mcdaniel@mtsu.edu

Dr. McDaniel began at MTSU in 1998 and teaches American Politics, courses in political theory and philosophy (Classical Political Theory, Modern Political Theory, Contemporary Political Philosophy, and American Thought), and the Senior Seminar. He received MTSU's Outstanding Teaching Award in 2004 and Outstanding Advisor in 2003. He serves as the faculty advisor for Pi Sigma Alpha Honor Society and the College Democrats.

Stephen Morris, Professor (Ph.D. University of Arizona)

Office: 209-A Peck Hall;

stephen.morris@mtsu.edu

Dr. Morris directed the international studies program and taught political science at the University of South Alabama for 20 years before joining MTSU in 2009 as department chair. He teaches courses in comparative politics, research methods, Latin American politics, and political corruption. His research focuses primarily on Mexico. His most recent books include *Political Corruption in Mexico* (2009), and *Corruption and Politics in Latin America* (co-edited with Charles Blake, 2010).

Karen Petersen, Associate Dean, College of Liberal Arts, Associate Professor, (Ph.D. Vanderbilt)

Office: 231 Todd; karen.petersen@mtsu.edu

Dr. Petersen joined MTSU in 2005 after completing her Ph.D. at Vanderbilt. She is the co-author (with Stephen R. Saunders) of *Prospects for Political Stability in a Democratic Iraq: A Study of the Clusters of Conflict* (2009). In 2014 she became the associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts.

Kent Syler, Assistant Professor (MA MTSU)

Office: COE 390; kent.syler@mtsu.edu. Mr Syler has been involved in Tennessee politics for over 30 years. Starting as a campaign "sound truck"; driver in 1978, Kent has gone on to become one of Tennessee's most respected political strategists. He managed Congressman Bart Gordon's first campaign in 1984 and his tough re-election campaigns in 1994 and 1996. He served as Gordon's Tennessee Chief of Staff from 1985 until his retirement in 2011. Kent has

been actively involved with dozens of other campaigns ranging from city council to governor and U.S. Senate. He teaches Intro. To American Government and course on Political Campaigns, Advertising, and Communications.

Moses Tesi, Professor (Ph.D. Vanderbilt)

Office: 247 Peck Hall; moses.tesi@mtsu.edu

Dr. Tesi joined MTSU in 1990. He teaches International Political Economy, International Relations, Middle Eastern politics, African politics, and Foundations of Government. He received a Fulbright award in 2002, teaching at the University of Dschang in Cameroon. Dr. Tesi has numerous publications on African politics and development, including *The Environment and Development in Africa*. He also edits the *Journal of African Policy Studies*, and coordinates the interdisciplinary minor in African Studies.

George Vernardakis, Professor (Ph.D.

University of Michigan)

Office: 254 Peck Hall;

george.vernardakis@mtsu.edu

Dr. Vernardakis has been with MTSU since 1969. He teaches British Politics and Film, Public Administration, International Organizations, and Foundations of Government. He is the author of *Graduate Education in Government in England, France, and the United States* (1999) and numerous articles on public administration in France and Greece.

Zhen Wang, Assistant Professor (Ph.D.

University of Minnesota)

Office: 250; zhen.wang@mtsu.edu

Dr. Wang came to MTSU in 2013 after completing her Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota. She specializes in Chinese politics and teaches courses in comparative politics, and Asian politics. She will also be teaching courses in Global Studies. Her dissertation was titled *Career Ambition and Local Compliance: The Political Logic of Tourism Development Policy Implementation in China*.

Clyde Willis, Professor (J.D., Ph.D. University of Tennessee)

Office: 255 Peck Hall; clyde.willis@mtsu.edu

Dr. Willis joined MTSU in 2002 following a distinguished career as a practicing attorney. He teaches courses in public law, including: Mediation Procedure, Law and the Legal System, Alternative Dispute Resolution, and Legal Writing and Research. He is the author of *Landmark Congressional Laws on the First Amendment* (2002), *The Hermeneutics in Judicial Decision-Making* (1991) and various articles on civil liberties and the law. He is member of the National Intercollegiate Mediation Association Board of Directors, and coordinates MTSU's Mediation Program.

G.2. Adjunct Instructors.

Some of your courses in the Department are taught by adjuncts. Adjuncts have at least a Masters degree in the field, many hold doctoral degrees, and usually have practical experience. For example, some of our law-related courses are taught by practicing attorneys.

Unfortunately, adjuncts are not given much in the way of office space to meet with students, but they do keep regular office hours to consult with students. Adjuncts bring a wide range of experiences to the classroom and enrich our course offerings.

G.3. Staff

Pam Davis serves as the Department's Executive Aide. She can be reached at (615) 898-2708 or at pam.davis@mtsu.edu. Ms Davis holds a Master's in Education and is extremely knowledgeable about the Department and MTSU. She provides invaluable assistance to students and can usually answer your questions or help you find the answer.

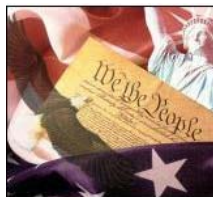
G.4. Some Recommended Readings from the Faculty

Allison, Graham and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision* (2nd ed) (KP)
Arendt, Hannah, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. (KP)
Bercovitch, Jacob, *Resolving International Conflicts: The Theory and Practice of Mediation*. (VL)

Bremmer, Ian. *The End of the Free Market: Who Wins the War Between States and Corporations?* (ZW)
Carr, E.H., *The Twenty Years' Crisis*. (KP)
Collins, *When Everything Changed: The Amazing Journey of American Women from 1960 to the Present*. (LL)
Fortna, Virginia Page, *Does Peacekeeping Work? Shaping Belligerents' Choices After Civil War* (VL)
Friedman, Thomas, *The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-first Century*. (ZW)
Gillespie, Andra, ed. *Whose Black Politics: Cases in Post-Racial Black Leadership*. (SF)
Goldhagen, Daniel Jonah, *Worse Than War: Genocide, Eliminationism, and the Ongoing Assault on Humanity*. (DC)
Gottlieb, Anthony, *The Dream of Reason* (RM)
Harris, Bob, *Who Hates Whom* . (KP)
Hoffer, Eric, *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements*. (DC)
Hoffman, Bruce, *Inside Terrorism*. (KP)
Horowitz, Irving Louis, *Taking Lives: Genocide and State Power*. (DC)
Hunter, Tera, *To Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors After the Civil War*. (SF)
Huntington, Samuel, *Political Order in Changing Societies*. (KP)
Kennedy, David, *The American People in the Great Depression*. (LL)
Kymlicka, Will, *Contemporary Political Philosophy* (JM)
Mendelberg, Tali, *The Race Card: Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages, and the Norm of Equality*. (SF)
Morgenthau, Hans *Politics Among Nations*. (KP)
Mortenson, Greg and David Oliver Relin, *Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Mission to Promote Peace...One School at a Time*. (LL)
O'Donnell, Guillermo and Philippe Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*. (KP)
Nye, Joseph, *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics*. (DC)
Pettit, Philip, *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government* (JM)

Power, Samantha, *The Problem from Hell: America in the Age of Genocide*. (DC)
 Rakove, Jack, *Original Meanings* (RM)
 Rawls, John, *Political Liberalism* (JM)
 Russett, Bruce and John O'Neal, *Triangulating Peace*. (KP)
 Said, Edward, *Orientalism*. (SM)
 Seierstad, Asne, *The Bookseller of Kabul*. (LL)
 Schelling, Thomas, *The Strategy of Conflict* (VL)
 Singer, Peter, *One World*. (ZW)
 Stiglitz, Joseph, *Globalization and Its Discontents*. (DC)
 Tinder, Glenn, *Political Thinking* (RM)
 Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*. (DC)
 Vasquez, John, *Classics of International Relations*. (KP)
 Walters, Ronald, *White Nationalism, Black Interests: Conservative Public Policy and the Black Community*. (SF)
 Walton, Hanes, and Robert C. Smith, *American Politics and the Quest for Universal Freedom*. (SF)
 Walzer, Michael, *Just and Unjust Wars*. (DC)
 Wilson, Edmund, *To the Finland Station*. (DC)
 Zinn, Howard, *A People's History of the United States* (SM)

Section F: Student Learning Outcomes for PS Majors



knowledge

- ✓ Political Science (General Focus) majors will acquire a working knowledge of the related fields of American government, public administration, comparative political systems, international relations, and political theory.
- ✓ Pre-Law majors will acquire a working knowledge of American politics and a basic understanding of the American judicial system and decision-making.

- ✓ Public Administration majors will acquire a working knowledge of American politics and public administration.
- ✓ Teaching Licensure students will acquire the knowledge and skills to teach at the high school level.
- ✓ All majors will integrate knowledge of the various subfields of political science consistent with their particular program and concentration through critical reflection on politics, law, ideology, and culture from a domestic and/or a global perspective.

skills

- ✓ All majors will be able to produce written work consistent with that required for entry level jobs or graduate study in political science.
- ✓ All majors will understand the principles of the scientific method of inquiry, and be able to interpret research in the discipline, and plan and conduct basic research.
- ✓ All majors will be able to critically analyze arguments and will have developed a basic level of information literacy.

Values

- ✓ All majors will develop an understanding of a diversity of views, of different cultures and values, and recognize ethnocentrism.
- ✓ All majors will develop a sense of public and civic responsibility at the local or global level.
- ✓ All majors will learn to work in collaboration with others.

Advice from students and faculty...

- Get involved
- Do public service
- Do an internship (junior/senior year)
- Become part of the Department
- Study abroad
- Work to see the relevance of what you study
- See your advisor
- Live on campus
- Go to class (try not to miss too many)
- Do research
- Distinguish yourself from others
- Make use of services like Career Development Center and the Writing Center
- Nurture your curiosity
- Take responsibility
- Make college your priority
- If you need help, ask
- Always strive to improve
- Study hard
- Have fun

Department of Political Science and International Relations



Stay Informed and Stay Connected



Students who are the most successful—in their courses, graduating on time, finding jobs and developing careers in the field, getting into law school and graduate school, and just getting the most out of their college years—are those that stay informed about all of the opportunities and events they can take advantage of, and stay connected to the Department and other students.

Please use these resources to both stay informed and stay connected—and succeed.

MTSU Political Science Facebook Page

We use Facebook to notify our students of upcoming events and opportunities for PS and IR majors and minors.

Please “like” the page so you are always in the loop.



(search for MTSU political science)

Department of Political Science and International Relations Web Page

This is a huge resource of information on majors, minors, program requirements, faculty contacts, the Student Handbook, Newsletters, and much more.

Please bookmark the site and check it often and whenever you have questions.

<http://www.mtsu.edu/politicalscience/>

PS / IR Student Services Portal

This site provides easy access to info on advising, law school, grad school, careers and job search, study abroad, internships, and much more to help you succeed.

Please bookmark the site and really use it to get the most out of your time in the Department.

Under Student Resources on the web page

Low-Tech, Physical Communication

Much of this information—program requirements, Student Handbook, Newsletters, upcoming events, and so on—are available on the racks and bulletin board outside the Departmental Office in Peck 209.

And always check your MTSU email