

GOVERNMENT MAJOR

MAJOR DESCRIPTION

The Major in Government provides students with a broad knowledge of political science, or the cultural issues and social structures that determine how and why power is distributed, decisions are made, and policies are implemented. Government majors choose a concentration area for in-depth study—either American politics, comparative politics, international relations, or political theory. Each concentration has its own introductory course, survey courses, and advanced seminars.

Students who are drawn to the study of government and political science are typically fascinated with the dynamics of power, authority, and governance at local, national, and international levels. They may have a keen interest in current events and global affairs, or bring a passion for social issues, public service, and activism.

Government majors are prepared to pursue various career paths including public service, government relations, diplomacy, law, education, research, business and corporate sector, non-profits and NGOs, journalism, political campaign consulting, communications, and fundraising.

ADMISSION TO THE MAJOR

To be admitted as a government major, your academic history must show that you have completed at least one government course with a grade of B- or better.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

BASIC REQUIREMENTS

- To complete the major requires nine approved government credits
- You may count toward the major only one introductory course (GOVT151, GOVT155, GOVT157, or GOVT159)
- Five of the eight remaining courses must be upper-level Wesleyan **GOVT** courses in the range **201-399**
- The remaining three courses numbered **201** or higher may be:
 - Tutorials in the Government Department (maximum two; only one thesis tutorial may count)
 - A course in a “cognate” discipline (maximum one; must be approved by your GOVT advisor)
 - Political science courses at other U.S. institutions or abroad (maximum two; or three in a year of study abroad)
 - Additional Wesleyan government courses in the range **201-399**

THE FOLLOWING MAY NOT COUNT TOWARD THE MAJOR:

- Student forum courses
- Teaching apprenticeships
- First-year seminars except FYS versions of GOVT151, GOVT155, GOVT157, or GOVT159, which count the same as the regular versions of each course
- Internships either in the United States or abroad
- The Government Department does not grant credit or waive prerequisites for Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or courses taken on ad-hoc programs (e.g., summer study abroad) prior to matriculation

at Wesleyan. The only pre-matriculation credits that the department will accept are the government (political science, politics, etc.) credits that the University has authorized from a transfer student's previous full-time institution.

MAJORS MUST CHOOSE AND COMPLETE A CONCENTRATION:

- Four courses, at least three of which must be taken at Wesleyan, complete a concentration. (American Politics, International Relations, Comparative Politics, or Political Theory.)

BREADTH ACROSS THE DISCIPLINE:

- In addition to taking four courses within the chosen concentration, majors are required to take at least one course each in at least two of the three subfields outside the concentration. This requirement assures that majors acquire breadth across the discipline as well as depth in at least one subfield.

GENERAL EDUCATION EXPECTATIONS

- **Stage 2** must be complete to receive honors in government.

PACING

- Majors with fewer than four Government courses by the end of the junior year must drop the major.

For more information, please visit the department's majoring page (http://www.wesleyan.edu/gov/about_major/majoring.html).

COURSES FOR NON-MAJORS

Many students take government courses without majoring in government. Sometimes First-Year Seminars (FYS) are offered, but demand for our regular courses is high, so we cannot offer as many FYS courses as we would like. First-year students and sophomores are welcome, however, to take the introductory courses we offer in each of our four concentrations. Another option is QAC201, the social science methodology course that is offered by the Quantitative Analysis Center and that is cross-listed as GOVT201 (it counts toward the government major). Most of our survey courses are open to first-year students and sophomores, although majors usually have preference.

GENERAL EDUCATION

- **Stage 2** must be complete to receive honors in government.
- For more information about Government Department regulations involving the General Education Expectations, please visit the Government Department's majoring page. (http://www.wesleyan.edu/gov/about_major/majoring.html)

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS

Students who complete the government major should be able to explore systematically a range of political issues and modes of argumentation, drawing on the knowledge, analytical abilities, and quantitative or qualitative skills they have acquired through their courses. They should also be better prepared to think critically, write clearly, and speak effectively. By acquiring these

capabilities, government majors prepare themselves for lives of contribution in public service, education, law, business, journalism, and other fields.

STUDY ABROAD

For more information about deciding to study abroad, applying to study abroad, and getting faculty preapproval for study-abroad courses, please visit the department's study abroad page (http://www.wesleyan.edu/gov/department_policies/studyabroad.html).

Up to two courses on an approved one-semester study-abroad program may count toward the major. Majors on full-year programs may count a third course with the approval of their major advisor. A student seeking major or University credit for a study abroad course must give the **preapproving** faculty member a course title and a written course description **before** the first meeting of the study-abroad course, either in person before departing (preferable) or by e-mail from abroad (if the title and course description are unavailable before departure).

No credit will be approved toward the major for internships, introductory courses, or certain School for International Training courses.

Students may count toward the major no more than two credits earned in courses taken away from Wesleyan, whether in a study-abroad program or in another U.S. institution, except in the case of a full year of study abroad, in which case the faculty advisor has full discretion on whether to authorize credit for a third course toward the major.

Independent study projects conducted abroad may be included among the two study-abroad courses that may be counted toward the government major (up to three for a student studying abroad for a whole year). A student's major advisor may choose to give tentative approval for an independent study project, subject to a review of the written work after the student's return.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT

The Government Department does not grant credit or waive prerequisites for Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, or courses taken on ad-hoc programs (e.g., summer study abroad) prior to matriculation at Wesleyan. The only pre-matriculation credits that the department will accept are the government (political science, politics, etc.) credits that the University has authorized from a transfer student's previous full-time institution.

PRIZES

In addition to honors and Phi Beta Kappa nomination, the department offers six prizes to students who excel in the government major. These prizes are listed on the Wesleyan Government Department website.

Davenport Prize: To senior majors who show excellence in the study of political science

Parker Prize: To a sophomore or junior who excels in public speaking

Rich Prize: To a senior whose orations are judged best in composition and delivery

Skirm Prize: To the best research or writing project completed by a government major in his or her junior year

Titus Prize: To support the summer studies of a deserving Wesleyan junior majoring in government, the College of East Asian Studies, or the College of Social Studies

White Fellowship: To majors who show excellence in the study of political science

The department is also formally represented in the Public Affairs Center (<http://www.wesleyan.edu/pac/>) on committees that award Davenport Grants and the Hallowell Prize in the study of social science, as well as on the committee that awards the Carol A. Baker '81 Memorial Prize for the development and recognition of the accomplishments of junior faculty.

TRANSFER CREDIT

For information on how to apply for Government Department authorization to transfer credit from U.S. academic institutions, please visit the department's transfer of credit page (http://www.wesleyan.edu/gov/department_policies/transfercredit.html). For information on how to apply for Government Department authorization to transfer credit from approved study-abroad programs, please visit the department's study abroad page (http://www.wesleyan.edu/gov/department_policies/studyabroad.html).

Requests for Government Department-approved transfer of credit from U.S. academic institutions must be made before the first class meeting of the course whose credit you wish to transfer.

Approval will be granted if, and only if, the course for which you wish to transfer credit is

- Upper level. Introductory courses may not be counted.
- In the field of government (political science, politics).
- Equivalent in terms of contact hours, content, and requirements to Wesleyan courses.
- Offered at a four-year, accredited institution.
- Graded. Credit/no credit courses may not be transferred.

RELATED PROGRAMS OR CERTIFICATES

- Civic Engagement Minor
- Environmental Studies Minor
- Global Engagement Minor
- Human Rights Advocacy Minor

For a full list of all minors and certificates, please visit Wesleyan's course listing (WesMaps (<http://www.wesleyan.edu/wesmaps/>)). Government courses count toward several of them, and Government Department faculty are involved in several minors and certificates in addition to those listed above.

HONORS

For more information on honors at Wesleyan in general, University Honors regulations, evaluation of honors theses, and recipients of honors in government in previous years, please visit the department's Honors page (http://www.wesleyan.edu/gov/about_major/honors.html).

To be eligible for honors in government you must (1) be a government major on track to complete the major requirements in a timely fashion; and (2) have completed Stage I of the General Education Expectations.

To become a candidate for honors in government, you must meet the two eligibility conditions, submit the Thesis Application Form (<http://www.wesleyan.edu/gov/forms/GOVTThesisApplication.pdf>), and have your application accepted by the Government Department. As a general minimum guideline for Government Department acceptance at the time of application, candidates should at least have completed or be enrolled in five government courses and have a grade point average of 91.7 in all government courses.

Optimally, you will meet with a potential tutor (tenured, tenure-track, or full-time visitor in the Government Department) and discuss a thesis project prior to submitting an application. After the Government Department faculty review the applications, you will be notified as to whether you will be a candidate for honors, and as to the name of the faculty member who will serve as your tutor.

If you have become a candidate for honors, you must enroll during the drop/add period of the fall semester of your senior year in GOVT 409, "Senior Thesis Tutorial." You cannot include this tutorial in course planning during pre-registration; you have to add it during the in-semester drop/add period. You add the tutorial electronically, following instructions in the Tutorial Manual on the Tutorial Registration page on the website of the office of the Registrar. Enrolling in GOVT 409 will indicate to the Honors Coordinator in the Office of the Registrar that you are an honors candidate from the standpoint of the University as well as the department.

Before the end of the fall semester, you must submit to your tutor a thesis chapter and thesis outline. The Government Department faculty will review your progress in the honors program. If you are making satisfactory progress you will be approved to continue your honors thesis by enrolling in GOVT 410. If you are making unsatisfactory progress on your honors thesis you will be informed that you will not be able to continue in the honors program. In this case, alternative options, such as completing the project as a senior capstone, will be identified.

Then, during the drop/add period of the spring semester of your senior year, you must enroll electronically (using the same procedure described above) in a second tutorial, GOVT 410, which is also entitled "Senior Thesis Tutorial." Enrolling in GOVT 410 will indicate to the Honors Coordinator in the Office of the Registrar that, just over half-way into your senior year at Wesleyan, you remain in good standing as an Honors Candidate from the standpoint of the University as well as the department. You may count either GOVT 409 or GOVT 410, but not both, toward the eight upper-division courses you need to complete the government major. Only one thesis tutorial credit may count toward the major.

Finally, to actually *receive* honors in government, you must (1) complete the government major; (2) complete both Stage I and Stage II of the General Education Expectations; and (3) write a thesis judged to be of honors quality.

CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

There are several opportunities for Government majors to pursue an optional capstone.

A government thesis involves one-on-one tutorials (GOVT409/GOVT410) with a supervising faculty member for a full year, culminating in the submission of an honors thesis, many of which are about 100 pages long.

Seniors seeking a capstone experience lasting a single semester can choose either an individual undergraduate tutorial (GOVT401/GOVT402) or a survey course or seminar that requires a final independent research paper at least 15 pages in length whose topic is chosen by the student. It is not unusual for

students to take several such courses during their junior and senior years, sometimes exploring related topics from several different angles. In some advanced survey courses or seminars, students may engage in a capstone experience that culminates in a work of nontraditional scholarship—service learning, public blogs, civic engagement, etc.—rather than a standard research paper.