

Political Science at UVM: Learning Goals for Majors

[Adapted from the departmental 'Assessment Protocol,' adopted in May of 2016.]

When they complete the major in Political Science, students are expected to have accomplished the basic goals set out in each of our four sub-fields:

IA. Master basic information about *American politics*, particularly the institutions, processes and problems of American government; develop an understanding of the nature of democracy and political conflict in the United States.

IB. Master basic issues in *political philosophy*, using both classical and contemporary sources, particularly such normative topics as freedom, equality, political obligation and dissent, justice, and the relation between morality and law.

IC. Master basic information and theoretical concepts in *international relations*, including systemic, domestic and individual-élite levels of analysis for assessing foreign policy decisions, and demonstrate a basic understanding of questions of international conflict and cooperation.

ID. Master basic information about *comparative political systems*, understanding political behavior, structures, and processes from a cross-national perspective.

Students are also expected to have mastered core skills, including:

IIA. The ability to read and comprehend complex political materials for both detail and thematic content, and to demonstrate mastery of such content such content orally and in writing.

IIB. The ability to understand and act upon general ethical principles as they relate to academic work in political science.

IIC. The ability to understand and explain political practices, arrangements, and cultures in settings other than the United States.

IID. The ability to write analytically about topics in political science, including use of appropriate methods of inquiry in the discipline.