

*Political science is the study of politics and government. While the field dates back to the ancient Greeks, political scientists examine a timely and continually changing set of current events and phenomena. By tackling big questions like how to best reconcile individual desires and community needs or whether citizens can possess freedom and equality or how to choose between competing interests, students of politics learn to examine and critically analyze political ideas, behavior, culture, institutions, and legal systems.*

#### THE PROGRAM

Virginia Wesleyan University, located in the international port of Hampton Roads, provides students with professional experiences without ever having to leave the region. With Fortune 500 companies, military installations, NASA, and governmental offices all close by, Virginia Wesleyan provides students with unique opportunities to take their political science coursework outside the classroom. Many students study abroad, work in internships, or complete independent research as part of their political science degrees.

#### THE MAJOR

Students majoring in political science complete 48 hours in specified course work. Drawing together ideas from economics, psychology, biology, sociology, philosophy, and history, the political science major complements the liberal arts curriculum. Students can choose to focus on public policy and administration, comparative politics, international relations, American government, pre-law, or can tailor their own unique study experience by selecting some combination of all five areas. Real-life international experiences with internship, study abroad, or simulations supplement classroom study.

#### THE COURSES

Classes at VWU are small and interactive. Some of the courses within the political science program include: State and Local Politics and Government,

Urban Politics, Elections in American Politics, Feminist Political Thought, and Politics and the Media, and special topics courses such as the Politics of the Middle East and North Africa or Political Satire in American Politics.

#### INTERNSHIPS/UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

Students may elect to complement the classroom experience with an internship opportunity. Internships allow students to gain supervised experience in applying knowledge from the major in real-world settings and in developing professional skills, providing students with the opportunity to expand their intellectual horizons. Internships provide students a “competitive edge” in the job market or when applying for admission in postgraduate degree programs.

#### BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Political science majors leave Virginia Wesleyan with excellent critical thinking and communication skills, in addition to a broad understanding of culture and history. The skills that students gain through the political science program prepare them for effective citizen participation in the political process. These skills also enable students to pursue careers in a wide array of areas, including work with governments, non-profit organizations, law, international organizations, and private businesses. In addition, a number of graduates seek postgraduate degrees such as J.D., M.A., Ph.D., M.P.A., and M.B.A. degrees.

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