

SOCIAL SCIENCES, BSGS

Curriculum

In curriculum taught by Northwestern University faculty, social sciences disciplines are equally represented in the core courses, while research and methods courses foster engagement with key texts, scholarly sources, and the gathering and analysis of evidence. Advanced elective courses offer the opportunity to emphasize certain academic subjects and engage in exploring others including African American studies, economics, history, and international studies.

The bachelor's degree requirements are 45 units total and include distribution, writing, and elective courses, and the major requirements.

Social Sciences Major Requirements

Course Title

Four Core Courses

Anthropology

One of the following:

ANTHRO 211-CN	Culture and Society
ANTHRO 213-CN	Human Origins
ANTHRO 214-CN	Archaeology: Unearthing History
ANTHRO 215-CN	The Study of Culture Through Language

Political Science

One of the following:

POLI_SCI 201-A	Introduction to Political Theory
POLI_SCI 220-CN	American Government and Politics
POLI_SCI 230-CN	Law in the Political Arena
POLI_SCI 240-CN	Introduction to International Relations
POLI_SCI 250-CN	Introduction to Comparative Politics

Psychology

PSYCH 110-CN	Introduction to Psychology
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Sociology

One 100-or 200-level Sociology course ¹

Research/Methods Courses

Statistics

STAT 202-CN	Introduction to Statistics and Data Science
or PSYCH 201-CN	Statistical Methods in Psychology

Methods and Analysis

One of the following:

ANTHRO 389-0	Ethnographic Methods and Analysis
POLI_SCI 210-0	Introduction to Empirical Methods in Political Science
SOCIOL 226-CN	Sociological Analysis

Research Seminar

One of the following:

ANTHRO 398-0	Senior Seminar
POLI_SCI 395-CN	Political Research Seminar
SOCIOL 329-0	Field Research and Methods of Data Collection
SOCIOL 398-1	Senior Research Seminar

Electives

Five 300-level courses in anthropology, political science, psychology or sociology ²

¹ Excluding SOCIOL 226-CN Sociological Analysis.

² Courses must be selected from at least two subjects. Up to two 200-level courses may be included with academic adviser approval. An additional research seminar may be counted as an elective.

Degree Requirements

SPS programs lead to one of three Northwestern University bachelor's degrees: the bachelor of philosophy (BPhil), the bachelor of science in general studies (BSGS), and the bachelor of philosophy in communication (BPhilCom), which is conferred by the School of Communication (<https://www.communication.northwestern.edu/>).

The bachelor of philosophy (BPhil) and the bachelor of science in general studies (BSGS) degrees are conferred by the Judd A. and Marjorie Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences (<https://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/>). The primary difference between the two degrees is that the BPhil includes a language requirement. Some majors offer a choice of the BPhil or the BSGS degree.

Bachelor of Science in General Studies

To earn the BSGS degree, students must complete 45 units, including a writing requirement, distribution requirements, a major, and electives. Minors are optional.

Courses	Units Earned
English 111 or 205 and 113	2
Humanities	4
Science	4
Social Sciences	4
Major Requirements	10-20
Electives	Up to 21
Total	45

About the Writing Requirement

The writing requirement ensures that students have the skills necessary to meet the rigorous writing demands of subsequent SPS courses in all majors and disciplines. The expository writing courses provide the tools to meet the demands of advanced academic writing; the courses may not be audited or taken on a pass/no credit basis.

Transfer and performance-based admission students must fulfill the writing requirement through one of two options:

Option 1: Complete an English composition course at SPS.

Demonstrate successful completion of English 111 or 205. A grade of C or higher is required.

Option 2: Successfully appeal the writing requirement via the Student Affairs Petition Form (<https://sps.northwestern.edu/main/login.php>).

Students who believe they have the writing skills necessary for university-level research and analytical papers may appeal the SPS writing requirement.

A successful appeal does not result in credit for the writing course. Students must complete another course in its place according to the needs and guidelines of their program. Writing will be evaluated for standards of good expository writing, including: a fully developed thesis; sound logic and adequate evidence in support of the thesis; effective organization, coherent structure and an overall unity; correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

Appeal materials must be submitted by the quarter deadline (<https://sps.northwestern.edu/part-time-undergraduate/important-dates.php>) before entry.

About the Distribution Requirements

Students complete course work in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences to obtain a broad experience in the liberal arts. Courses that satisfy these distribution requirements include the following areas:

Humanities

Art history, classics, comparative literary studies, English literature, languages other than English (up to two units), history, music history, philosophy, religion, and some courses in African American studies, languages with literature, gender studies, performance studies, radio/television/film, and theatre.

Sciences

Astronomy, biological sciences, chemistry, earth and planetary sciences, engineering, geography, information systems, mathematics, physics and some courses in anthropology, communication sciences and disorders, psychology, radio/television/film, and statistics.

Social Sciences

Anthropology, economics, history, linguistics, political science, sociology, and some courses in African American studies, communication sciences and disorders, gender studies, psychology, and statistics.