

BHA-Politics & Public Policy

Fall 2025

Bachelor of Humanities and Arts (BHA)

Dietrich College (DC) Concentration in Politics & Public Policy

81 units (minimum)

Advisor: Emily Half, Posner Hall 391, 412-268-7082, ehalf@andrew.cmu.edu

Rooted in the discipline of political science, the concentration in Politics and Public Policy investigates US public policy issues and matters of American politics and law while providing students hands-on and practical learning experiences. Students pursuing the Politics and Public Policy concentration must participate in the [Carnegie Mellon University Washington Semester Program \(CMU/WSP\)](#) for one semester during their undergraduate years.

The CMU/WSP, sponsored by the Carnegie Mellon Institute for Strategy and Technology (CMIST), is a semester-long program in which students live, intern, and take CMU classes in Washington, DC. Students earn 48 units for the Carnegie Mellon University Washington Semester Program, interning about twenty-four hours per week in any sector or field of interest within Washington, DC, while taking classes on American politics, public policy, and law taught by Carnegie Mellon faculty.

From embassies to nongovernmental organizations, think tanks to advocacy organizations, government agencies to congressional offices, and consulting firms to media outlets, Washington, DC, is the center of US political, international, and public policy activities. Students in the program come into direct contact with policymakers, Congressmen, think tank leaders, and business leaders, and through hands-on experience learn about the most pressing policy issues of the day.

Through this experiential learning program, CMU/WSP participants develop professional and networking skills, explore how coursework connects to the real world, learn to give and receive constructive feedback in the workplace and classroom, and intentionally reflect on their learning and growth. Every CMU/WSP student is paired with a Washington, DC-based alumni mentor to share career advice and tips about life in DC. CMIST also sponsors events and policy-oriented opportunities in Washington for students participating in the program to further enrich their experience and enhance their understanding of how Washington functions as a hub of international and domestic policy decision making.

BHA students take at least 9 courses in their DC concentration, for a minimum of 81 units. A completed DC Concentration Declaration Sheet must be approved by the concentration advisor and submitted to the BXA office by spring mid-semester break of the student's sophomore year. BHA students who are admitted through internal transfer must have chosen a DC concentration at the time of their application, which serves as declaration.

Foundational Course

(1 course, 9 units)

Students must complete the following course:

84-104 Decision Processes in American Political Institutions

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Economics or Data Science Course

(1 course, 9 units)

Students must complete one of the following courses:

84-110 The Economics of Politics, Policy, and Technology
or 73-102 Principles of Microeconomics
or 73-103 Principles of Macroeconomics
or 36-202 Methods for Statistics & Data Science

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CMU/WSP Seminars in Washington, DC

(4 courses, 48 units)

Students must complete the following courses while participating in the CMU/WSP:

84-360 CMU/WSP: Internship Seminar
84-336 Implementing Public Policy: From Good Idea to Reality
or 84-339 Seminar in Public Policy Research
84-332 Contemporary US Constitutional Law Issues
84-338 Analysis of US Presidential Powers

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American Politics Courses in Pittsburgh

(2 courses, 15 units minimum)

Students must complete two courses (15 units minimum) from the below list of electives taught in Pittsburgh.

84-120 Introduction to US Constitutional Law
84-250 Writing for Political Science and Policy
84-252 Briefing in the Policy World
84-280 Popcorn and Politics: American Foreign Policy at the Movies
84-304 In the News: Analysis of Current US National Security Priorities
84-309 American Political Divides and Great Debates
84-319 Civil-Military Relations

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84-325	Contemporary American Foreign Policy	9
84-327	Who Really Runs America?: Subnational Governance & Policymaking	9
84-331	Technology, Law, and Democracy	6
84-333	Law of US Democracy	9
84-352	Representation and Voting Rights	9
84-355	Democracy's Data: Analytics and Insights into American Elections	9
84-358	Money, Connections, and Power: Interests and Influence in the US	9
84-362	Diplomacy and Statecraft	9
84-365	The Politics of Fake News and Misinformation	9
84-366	The 21st-Century Presidency: Expanding Powers, New Challenges	9
84-367	The Politics of Antisemitism	9
84-373	International Law	9
84-380	US Grand Strategy	9
84-393	US Congress: Legislative Progress or Paralysis?	9