

FAQs

How find an advisor for a social science major?

You can either:

- Make arrangements directly with a faculty member of choice
- Contact the option representative for your major

Who are the option representatives?

- BEM: Jaksa Cvitanic (cvitanic@caltech.edu)
- Economics: Kota Saito (saito@caltech.edu)
- Political Science: Michael Alvarez (rma@hss.caltech.edu)

Who do I contact for other questions related to social science academics or research opportunities?

Our faculty is flexible and student friendly. Contact any of our faculty with any questions. They will be able to answer you or direct you to the right person.

More importantly, do not hesitate to explore ways to maximize your academic experience in the division.

How popular are the social science majors?

They are quite popular, especially as a double major.

On average over the last five years, every graduating class has had 19 BEM majors, 4 econ majors, and 2 political science majors.

Can I do a minor in a social science option?

No

Can I design an Independent Student Program major with a focus on social science?

Yes, and you would not be the first student to do so.

See the information on the Caltech Catalog for details on process and requirements.

Where can I find more information about specific courses?

This page maintains a list of active and past courses w/ links to their syllabi:

<http://www.hss.caltech.edu/courses/department/SS>

Can I get credit for social science courses taken elsewhere (e.g., during a study abroad program)? How?

In general, Caltech students should fulfill Caltech course requirements by taking courses at Caltech. Students are expected to have a well-reasoned educational goal for taking classes elsewhere. The only exceptions are transfer students admitted to advanced standing.

Credit for comparable work done at other institutions with similar academic standards is not granted automatically.

Students who wish to take courses elsewhere (whether on leave, in the summer, or during the academic year) should consult, in advance, with the executive officer for the humanities or the executive officer for the social sciences, or their designees, to minimize any misunderstanding regarding the nature of credit they may receive.

Upon completion of the course, the student must obtain an Allowance of Credit form from the registrar, obtain the signed approval of the executive officer, or his or her designee, for transfer credit, and return the completed form to the Registrar's Office.

The executive officers are the final authority in the allowance of credit in HSS courses. Guidelines and specific information about allowance of credit are available from the Division of the Humanities and Social Sciences.

Executive officer for Social Sciences: Robert Sherman (Sherman @hss.caltech.edu)

Can I get credit for AP social science courses?

No. Courses at Caltech are significantly more advanced than any AP course that you might have taken in high-school.

Are there any social science undergraduate student prizes?

Currently, we have the following two prizes:

David M. Grether Prize in Social Science. Established in 2012 and awarded by a committee of social science faculty, the David M. Grether Prize in Social Science rewards outstanding performance and creativity by a Caltech undergraduate who completes one of the social science options. It is funded by Susan G. Davis in recognition of David M. Grether's contributions to econometrics and experimental economics and his service to HSS.

Eleanor Searle Prize in Law, Politics, and Institutions. Established in 1999 by friends and colleagues in honor of Eleanor Searle—who was the Edie and Lew Wasserman Professor of

History at Caltech—the Eleanor Searle Prize is awarded to an undergraduate or graduate student whose work in history or the social sciences exemplifies Searle's interests in the use of power, government, and law.

See <http://hss.divisions.caltech.edu/about/honors-and-awards/student-prizes> for an up-to-date list of HSS undergraduate student prizes

How can I learn more about research opportunities in social science?

We are happy you asked, since there is a long history of Caltech undergraduate engagement in research.

Here are some suggestions:

- Attend one of our seminar series: you wouldn't be the first undergraduate to do so. See <http://hss.divisions.caltech.edu/news-and-events/master-calendar/week> for an up-to-date calendar and/or sign for the email list.
- Discuss research ideas and opportunities with one of your professors.