

Political Science

College of Arts & Sciences

Admission Requirements

Candidates for admission to the graduate program in political science must apply using the Graduate College online application system, which is available at https://app.applyyourself.com/AYApplicantLogin/fl_ApplicantConnectLogin.asp?id=ukgrad. Required information includes (1) a copy of transcripts and GRE scores; (2) a one- to three-page Statement of Purpose explaining why the student wishes to pursue a Ph.D. degree; (3) three letters of recommendation from persons familiar with the applicant's academic performance; (4) a sample of writing on a topic relevant to political science; (5) a resume or curriculum vitae, and (6) TOEFL scores if the applicant's first language is not English. Applications will only be considered for the fall semester.

Applicants will be evaluated on the basis of the Department's judgment of the likelihood of their success in the program as compared with other applicants and considering the limited number of applicants accepted to the program. In evaluating candidates, the Department will consider the totality of their records, including grades, test scores, letters of recommendation, writing samples, and other relevant information. The department usually only accepts applicants to the Ph.D. program. Students who do not have political science undergraduate majors are welcome in this program.

Degree Requirements

The Political Science Department offers both the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. The M.A. degree may be earned under either of two plans: Plan A requires at least 24 hours of course work and a thesis; Plan B requires at least 30 hours of course work and examination in three fields of political science, or in two fields of political science and one outside field. Under either plan, the student must take at least two-thirds of the required semester hours in political science, and at least half of the political science work must be in courses open only to graduate students. A candidate for the Plan B master's degree must pass a foreign language requirement or an analytical skills requirement.

The Ph.D. program is divided into a general phase and a specialized phase. Entering students spend their first year in the general phase, which includes proseminars in methodology and in at least four major fields of political science. Students who have previously taken graduate work may be exempt from some of these proseminars. At the end of the first year of graduate work, the student is evaluated by a departmental committee which determines whether the general phase has been satisfactorily completed.

During the specialized phase of the graduate program, the student's work is based on a program of study prepared with their Advisory Committee. The student takes advanced work in at least two substantive fields in political science. The student completes qualifying exams prior to defending the prospectus for the dissertation. The qualifying examination in political science consists of a written and oral examination in each of the two substantive fields specified in the student's program. The examination is given by the Field or Advisory Committee. The student then writes a dissertation and defends it in a final oral examination.

Candidates for the Ph.D. in political science must demonstrate proficiency in a research skill. The required research skill will consist of additional quantitative skills or proficiency in a foreign language that is directly pertinent to the student's research interests.

Additional details about requirements may be secured from the Department of Political Science.

Course Descriptions

PS 538 CONFLICT AND COOPERATION IN LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS. (3)

An examination of (1) national development strategies as determinants of Latin American foreign policies, (2) the origins and political consequences of economic nationalism, (3) historical patterns of U.S. response to reformist and/or revolutionary change, (4) the role of extra-continental contenders for influence in the Americas, and (5) at least one contemporary foreign policy issue in inter-American relations. Prereq: PS 428G or permission of instructor.

PS 545 AMERICAN POLITICAL THOUGHT. (3)

This course explores the American tradition of political thought, its formation, and the ways it is involved in major problems of culture, political economy, ideology, and identity. Alternative ideas of work, power, political obligation, science and technology, and related issues are examined. Relationships of theory and practice, public and private, and government and society are analyzed. Prereq: UN3 status.

PS 557 KENTUCKY GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS.

A study of current political issues and institutions in Kentucky.

PS 566 CONSTITUTIONAL INTERPRETATION. (3)

A study of the political and the philosophical origins of the U.S. Constitution and of the competing and overlapping philosophies about how it should be interpreted in modern times. Prereq: One of the following: PS 461G, PS 465G, or HIS 573.

PS 572 INTRODUCTION TO QUANTITATIVE POLITICAL METHODOLOGY. (3)

Introduction to quantitative research methods used by political scientists. The course introduces students to data sets and statistical software commonly used in political science, and basic analysis techniques used to analyze political data. Prereq: For undergraduates, completion of PS 372.

PS 580 THE BUDGETARY PROCESS. (3)

A study of the development of budgetary techniques in the United States, the uses to which budgets are put, the roles of the budgetary process in budgetary politics and in the functioning of government, and the distribution of government resources through the budget.

PS 620 COMPARATIVE POLITICS: THEORY AND METHOD. (3)

A study of the evolution and development of comparative government and politics within the discipline with particular emphasis upon the formulation, application, and limitations of the theories, taxonomies and conceptual frameworks employed in comparative research.

PS 671 STRATEGIES OF INQUIRY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE. (3)

Analysis of research paradigms for political science, and investigation into the foundations of scientific inquiry. Emphasis on topics such as explanation, concept formation, the construction and function of theory, data, and verification.

PS 672 INTRODUCTION TO TECHNIQUES OF POLITICAL RESEARCH. (3)

Basic techniques of data collection, coding, and processing applicable to political research are introduced. Various statistical techniques of data analysis are discussed and applied to political data. Prereq: PS 671, familiarity with appropriate statistical methods and consent of instructor.

PS 674 PROSEMINAR IN THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS. (3)

A survey of the major theoretical approaches to the study of international systems and processes.

PS 680 PROSEMINAR IN POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND PROCESS. (3)

A thorough survey of recent literature on political institutions and the political process, including political parties and the legislative and executive processes, at the national and sub-national levels.

PS 681 AMERICAN POLITICAL BEHAVIOR. (3)

A proseminar providing a survey of major theoretical approaches and empirical research in the field of American political behavior. Intended to explore various individual-level models of behavior and then apply them to specific forms of political behavior.

PS 684 PROSEMINAR IN POLICY STUDIES. (3)

A survey of the various approaches to the study and analysis of public policy impacts. Special emphasis will be given to the normative and ethical implications of alternative conceptualizations of the policy process and the role of the policy analyst.

PS 690 PROSEMINAR IN CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL THEORY. (3)

An examination of contemporary political theories, especially their relationships to theoretical issues in policy analysis. Major problems such as inquiry and change, ideology and power, and knowledge and authority will be studied, particularly in the context of public policy.

PS 711 TOPICAL SEMINAR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE (Subtitle required). (3)

Topic and instructor will vary from semester to semester. Faculty member presents seminar on topic in which he has particular research competence or special expertise. May be repeated under different subtitle to a maximum of nine hours. Prereq: Two semesters of graduate work and consent of instructor.

PS 731 INTERNATIONAL SECURITY/CONFLICT ANALYSIS. (3)

The seminar examines international security affairs, with an emphasis on the sources and nature of conflict, and methods of conflict, the patterns of conflict, and methods of conflict resolution and regulation, both within states and among them. Prereq: Consent of instructor.

PS 732 COMPARATIVE FOREIGN POLICY (Subtitle required).

This seminar will emphasize comparative analysis of foreign policy. It will compare the foreign policies of a number of countries in order to develop propositions and arrive at generalizations regarding foreign policy process and behavior. The comparative focus will vary. May be repeated to a maximum of six credits under different subtitles.

PS 733 INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY. (3)

The course examines the contending theoretical perspectives and substantive functional issues underlying the politics of international economic relations. Special attention is paid to international trade and money, the politics of North-South relations, and comparative foreign economic policies. Prereq: Consent of instructor.

PS 734 GREAT BOOKS OF WORLD POLITICS. (3)

Overview of classic texts on war and statecraft. Prereq: Consent of instructor. (Same as DIS 710.)

PS 735 DEMOCRACY AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. (3)

Discussion of the impact of the global spread of democracy on foreign policy and war. Prereq: Graduate status and consent of instructor. (Same as DIP 715.)

#PS 736 COMPARATIVE POLITICAL BEHAVIOR. (3)

An examination of major theoretical approaches to the study of public opinion and mass behavior around the world. The course focuses on the study of the origins and consequences of citizens' political attitudes

and behaviors. Students are exposed to experimental and nonexperimental methodologies as well as statistical techniques for the analysis of survey data. Prereq: PS graduate student or consent of instructor.

PS 737 TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS AND PROCESSES. (3)

An analysis of approaches to the study of international, transnational and regional political and economic organizations and processes within the context of world politics. An examination of the impact of these activities and processes on contemporary problems of world order. Prereq: Graduate student status.

#PS 738 CIVIL CONFLICT. (3)

This seminar covers a systematic theoretical and empirical study of civil conflict. The readings are focused on the most recent empirical work in this area, though a handful of the more traditional and case-oriented research will arise throughout the course. A major component of this course is the production of a research paper, which will apply and extend the topics into an original piece of research.

#PS 739 COMPARATIVE POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS. (3)

This class provides a survey of comparative political institutions across the globe with an emphasis on the concepts used to understand how institutions structure political outcomes. Students also learn about how and why political institutions vary across the globe and the consequences of institutions for a range of political phenomena. Prereq: PS graduate student or consent of instructor.

#PS 740 HUMAN RIGHTS. (3)

This seminar examines the influence of domestic institutions and the international human rights regime on patterns of government respect for human rights cross-nationally. Prereq: PS graduate student or consent of instructor.

#PS 741 INTERNATIONAL SECURITY. (3)

This political science seminar is intended expose students to a range of scholarly literature on international security. We will discuss conflict emergence, recurrence, and resolution, with attention to the roles of tools such as arms, alliances, trade, mediation, international law, and peacekeeping. Prereq: PS graduate student or consent of instructor.

PS 748 MASTER'S THESIS RESEARCH. (0)

Half-time to full-time work on thesis. May be repeated to a maximum of six semesters. Prereq: All course work toward the degree must be completed.

PS 749 DISSERTATION RESEARCH. (0)

Half-time to full-time work on dissertation. May be repeated to a maximum of six semesters. Prereq: Registration for two full-time semesters of 769 residence credit following the successful completion of the qualifying exams.

PS 750 POLITICAL PARTIES AND ELECTIONS IN AMERICA.

A study of the organization and functions of political parties, nominations and elections, and voting alignments. Prereq: An undergraduate political parties course or consent of instructor.

PS 756 REGIONAL POLITICS (Subtitle required). (3)

This seminar focuses on the domestic politics and international relations of countries within a specific geographic region (Latin America, the Commonwealth of Independent States, Western Europe, Africa, East Asia, etc.). Theoretical foci include political economy, policymaking, regional integration and national security, development, and political culture.

PS 760 SEMINAR IN JUDICIAL PROCESS. (3)

A thorough survey of literature in judicial process, focusing largely on judicial recruitment and decision-making, litigants' strategies, the implementation and impact of judicial policies and relations between the courts and other power centers. May be repeated to a maximum of six credits.

PS 767 DISSERTATION RESIDENCY CREDIT. (2)

Residency credit for dissertation research after the qualifying examination. Students may register for this course in the semester of the qualifying examination. A minimum of two semesters are required as well as continuous enrollment (Fall and Spring) until the dissertation is completed and defended.

PS 775 SEMINAR IN PUBLIC POLICY. (3)

A political analysis of the domestic policy process including the formation, implementation, and impact of policy.

PS 778 RESEARCH PROBLEMS IN TRANSNATIONAL POLITICS. (3)

This seminar focuses on research strategies that can be utilized in dealing with problems in transnational politics. May be repeated to a maximum of six hours with consent of the instructor. Prereq: PS 620 or PS 674.

PS 780 LEGISLATIVE BEHAVIOR. (3)

A study of recent research in the legislative process emphasizing both the substantive and methodological aspects. Prereq: An upper division course in the legislative process or consent of instructor.

PS 795 SPECIAL PROBLEMS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE. (1-3)

Specific programs of readings are developed to meet the needs of individual students. May be repeated to a maximum of six credits for master's students and 12 credits for Ph.D. students. Prereq: Any 600 level course in political science or consent of the Director of Graduate Study.

PS 796 DIRECTED RESEARCH IN POLITICAL SCIENCE. (1-3)

Individual research in a particular field of political science under the supervision of selected faculty. Open to advanced graduate students who are prepared for intensive study and research beyond that offered in regular classes in each field. May be repeated to a maximum of six hours. Prereq: Consent of the instructor and the director of graduate studies.