Political Science

Degrees Offered

• Master of Arts
• Doctor of Philosophy

Nature of the Program

To give advanced training to students who desire to enter research or teaching fields relating to American politics, public policy (either U.S. domestic or international), comparative politics, and/or international politics, and to those seeking careers as policy analysts in government or the private sector.

Faculty

The Department of Political Science has nineteen full-time faculty members. The major strengths of the graduate faculty consist of American politics (specialties include political institutions, political behavior, public opinion, and judicial politics), public policy (specialties include bureaucracy, law and society, and social welfare policies), international politics (specialties include U.S. foreign policy, comparative foreign policy, international political economy, and national security policy), comparative politics (specialties include comparative political institutions, elections systems, contentious politics, and cross-national political analysis), and research methods.

Research

Graduate students have opportunities to conduct research with political science faculty. Several members of the faculty regularly co-author papers with graduate students. Some graduate students have coauthored articles and book chapters with faculty and have worked on externally-funded grant projects.

Financial Aid

The department has a number of assistantships and fellowships available for students in both the M.A. and Ph.D. programs. Students interested in financial assistance should apply directly to the Department of Political Science. Graduate assistants may enroll for no more than nine credit hours per semester (excluding colloquium).

FACULTY

CHAIR
• R. Scott Crichlow - Ph.D. (Louisiana State University)

PROFESSORS
• Joe D. Hagan - Ph.D. (University of Kentucky)
  Barnette Professor, International Relations and World Politics, Comparative Foreign Policy Analysis
• Erik Herron - Ph.D. (Michigan State University)
  Eberly Family Professor, Political Institutions, Elections, Post-Communist Europe and Eurasia
• Hong N. Kim - Ph.D. (Georgetown University)
  Comparative Politics (Asia), Comparative Public Policy
• Jeffrey S. Worsham - Ph.D. (University of Wisconsin)
  Public Policy (Regulation, Social Welfare), Bureaucratic Politics and Public Administration

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
• Neil Berch - Ph.D. (University of Washington)
  Public Policy (Political Economy), American Politics (State and Local)
• R. Scott Crichlow - Ph.D. (Louisiana State University)
  International Relations, Foreign Policy Decision-making, Middle East Politics
• Robert D. Duval - Ph.D. (Florida State University)
  Methodology, International Politics and Policy, Public Policy (Energy, Environmental, and National Security)
• John Kilwein - Ph.D. (Ohio State University)
  Associate Chair, Public Law, Judicial Politics, Public Policy, Public Administration
• Jason MacDonald - Ph.D. (The George Washington University)
  American Politics, Congress, Research Methods
• Philip Michelbach - Ph.D. (University of California)
Political Theory, American Political Thought, German Political Thought, Comparative Democratic Theory

- Trisha Phillips - Ph.D. (Rice University)
  Social and Political Philosophy, Moral Philosophy, Research Ethics

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

- Erin C. Cassese - Ph.D. (State University of New York)
  American Politics and Political Behavior; Gender, Religion, and Public Opinion; Political Psychology, Research Methods

- Christina Fattore - Ph.D. (Florida State University)
  International Relations, International Political Economy, International Organization, European Union Politics

- Shauna Fisher - Ph.D. (University of Washington)
  Judicial Politics, Law and Courts, Judicial Policy-Making

- Patrick Hickey - Ph.D. (University of Texas)
  American Political Institutions, Presidency

- Matthew Jacobsmeier - Ph.D. (University of Rochester)
  American Politics, Political Behavior, Public Opinion, Research Methods

- Cyanne Loyle - Ph.D. (University of Maryland)
  Comparative Politics (Developing Areas), Conflict, Contentious Politics, Human Rights

TEACHING ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

- David Hauser - Ph.D. (University of Pittsburgh)
  International Conflict, National Security Analysis

Master of Arts

The master of arts is designed to provide students with a broad knowledge of political science and the policy-making process. This includes the study of many over-arching factors shaping political thought, analysis, decision-making, and an examination of specific influences that shape public policies at the international, national, state, and local levels of government. A problem-analytic approach, drawn from both political science and economics, is used to develop the ability to comprehend, assess, and evaluate issues, problems, and policies in the public sector. Prospective graduates are expected to be skilled at gathering and interpreting data as well as reporting, writing, and analyzing policy options and political behaviors. Most graduates will take jobs in government or with private firms needing specialists in policy analysis; however, this degree also leaves students well-placed for further study of these issues in Ph.D. programs.

Prerequisites/Requirements

Ideally, applicants for the master of arts degree should have a B.A. in political science (with a minimum of six hours in economics). However, students from other fields and disciplines are also encouraged to apply. In addition, the applicant should have an overall grade point average of 3.0 and should submit three letters of recommendation from faculty familiar with their work. All students must also submit the results of the Graduate Record Examination.

In order to remain in good standing, students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative average and receive a 3.0 average in each semester for which they are enrolled. Students who do not maintain a 3.0 cumulative average will be placed on probation and will be suspended if they fail to regain a 3.0 cumulative average in their next nine hours of study. Admission to candidacy for the M.A. degree requires that the student complete a minimum of thirty-six hours. Students must complete work in political science methodology and statistical methods. All students must enroll in POLS 799 each semester in residence.

Doctor of Philosophy

The doctor of philosophy degree is designed for people planning careers as researchers and teachers in institutions of higher education or as policy analysts in government or the private sector. All students are expected to complete coursework in three of the four major subfields (the subfields include American politics, international politics, comparative politics, and public policy) and to pass general exams in two of them. The student’s coursework will provide them with a firm grounding in relevant literatures and prepare them to make their own contributions to the fields in which they specialize. Coursework is also available to train students as expert analysts who will leave the program with a comprehensive knowledge of policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation, as well as a thorough understanding of the dynamics of political institutions. The design of the program will ensure that our graduates are trained in research methodology and statistical techniques.

Admission

Admission to the Ph.D. program is open to students with either a bachelor’s or master’s degree. Students with degrees in political science, economics, public administration, sociology, psychology, engineering, social work, business, law, medicine, or journalism are encouraged to apply. Applicants should have a grade point average of 3.5. Some training in statistics and a strong background in written communication is desired. In addition, all
applicants must submit the results of the Graduate Record Examination and at least three letters of recommendation from faculty familiar with the applicant’s work. Applicants from foreign countries must submit the official results of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) as well. Admission will be based on an overall assessment of the individual’s record.

**Minimum Requirements**

Students must complete fifty-seven hours of coursework (fifteen hours in each of their three substantive fields plus twelve hours of research methods). In addition to their coursework, students must also pass written comprehensive examinations in two of their specialty fields and complete and defend a dissertation. All coursework completed for the M.A. at West Virginia University also counts toward the Ph.D.; coursework from other institutions will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

In order to remain in good standing, students must maintain a 3.0 cumulative average and receive a 3.0 average in each semester for which they are enrolled. Students are required to spend at least one year (two semesters) in residence and enroll in a full-time graduate program of no less than nine semester hours each semester. All graduate students must enroll in POLS 799 each semester in residence.

**COURSES**

**POLS 530. Policy Analysis. 3 Hours.**

Overview of the field of political science and the sub-field of public policy studies. Focuses on the issues and problems involved in studying policymaking, and an assessment of policy analysis as a mode of thinking and inquiry. (3 hr. seminar.)

**POLS 531. Economic Analysis of Politics. 3 Hours.**

Application of economic analysis to questions of politics and public policy. Consideration of problems of public goods, voting behavior, and legislative behavior. (3 hr. seminar.)

**POLS 536. Politics of Agenda Setting. 3 Hours.**

Examines the social, economic, institutional and political influences on the development of public problems and their placement on the policy agenda. (3 hr. seminar.)

**POLS 550. Comparative Politics. 3 Hours.**

Survey of the subfield of Comparative Politics within Political Science. Course includes an introduction to the major methods and theoretical perspectives employed in the field including an overview of rational, structural and cultural perspectives.

**POLS 555. Comparative Public Policy. 3 Hours.**

Comparison of public policy stages in several advanced industrial democracies with emphasis on various explanations of public policy in these countries in different policy areas. (3 hr. seminar.)

**POLS 559. Contentious Politics. 3 Hours.**

This is a course sub-field of political science, encompassing International Relations, Comparative and American Politics. This course presents a survey of the main concepts, theoretical debates, and methodological approaches in the field.

**POLS 560. International Theory & Policy. 3 Hours.**

Survey of theoretical approaches in the study of international relations, covering major works in the realist, neo-liberal, and foreign policy literature. Emphasis on the place of foreign policy explanations within the wider, systemic international relations literature. (3 hr. seminar.)

**POLS 591A-Z. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.**

PR: Consent. Investigation of advanced topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

**POLS 593A-Z. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.**

A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

**POLS 600. Intro to Political Research. 3 Hours.**

Introduction to the research methods and techniques used in political and policy analysis. Topics include logic of inquiry, research design, measurement, and survey and unobtrusive research.

**POLS 601. Quantitative Political Analysis. 3 Hours.**

PR: POLS 600 and STAT 511, or equivalent. Application of a range of statistical techniques in political and public policy research. Includes use of selected computer software commonly used in political science and policy analysis.

**POLS 602. Advanced Quantitative Methods. 3 Hours.**

PR: POLS 601 or equivalent advanced topics in quantitative methods for political science and policy research. Methods surveyed include multiple linear regression, time-series analysis, causal modeling, and linear programming.

**POLS 603. Adv Quantitative Analysis. 3 Hours.**

POLS 603. Advanced Quantitative Analysis. 3 hr. A survey of advanced statistical applications in political science, covering time series analysis, maximum likelihood estimation, and structural equation modeling.

**POLS 611. Intergovernmental Relations. 3 Hours.**

Examination of the politics and policy consequences of intergovernmental relations among the national, state, and local governments in the United States. Topics include the development of intergovernmental relations, regulatory federalism, and intergovernmental fiscal relations. (3 hr. seminar.)
POLS 630. Sem: American Politics/Policy. 3 Hours.
A survey of classic and contemporary literature on U.S. politics and policy. Emphasis on how various institutions and linkage mechanisms affect the policy process. (3 hr. seminar.).

POLS 635. Sem: Policy Evaluation. 3 Hours.
Methods and techniques in evaluating public policies. Topics include the relation of policy analysis to policymaking; types of evaluation; planning, evaluations; alternative evaluation designs; measuring program consequences; problems of utilization, and the setting of evaluation research. (3 hr. seminar.).

POLS 638. Sem: Policy Implementation. 3 Hours.
Research seminar focusing on how the intentions of policy- makers are transformed into programs and policies which have both intended and unintended consequences. Topics include traditional implementation studies, rational choice approaches, neo-institutionalism, and principal-agent theory. (3 hr. seminar.).

POLS 639. Research in Policy Analysis. 3 Hours.
Supervised, independent research on a policy problem utilizing the techniques and methods of quantitative policy research. Designed for advanced students, the research is conducted following the completion of the department's research methods sequence.

POLS 650. Prof Sem: Comparative Politics. 3 Hours.

POLS 660. International Pol Economy. 3 Hours.
Advanced theoretical courses in IPE. Topics include capital financial and trade liberalization, economic development, regionalism, and the intricacies between domestic governments and international economic relations.

POLS 665. Comparative Foreign Policy. 3 Hours.
Application of the comparative method of theoretically assessing the mainly domestic sources of conflict and change in foreign policy beyond the U.S. case and in cross- national and historical perspective.

POLS 666. National Security Policy. 3 Hours.
Overview of security policy issues as both foreign and domestic policy. Traces the development of defense and security, arms transfers, spending tradeoffs, deterrence, game theoretic decision models, intelligence analysis, and terrorism.

POLS 667. Forgn Policy Decisionmaking. 3 Hours.
This course examines the roots of foreign policy decision making. It examines how ideational, cultural, institutional and political variables constrain decision makers, and how the core psychological characteristics of decision makers shape their behavior.

POLS 670. Prof Sem: Political Theory. 3 Hours.

POLS 691A-Z. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. Investigation of advanced topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

POLS 703. Internship. 6-9 Hours.
per semester; students may enroll more than once. PR: Consent.

POLS 710. Judicial Politcs, Policy & Law. 3 Hours.
Judicial influence on American public policy with emphasis on the political theory of American law, the agenda of disputes, the formulation of public policy by courts, and the effects of judicial policy on politics. (3 hr. seminar.).

POLS 712. American Constrctn/Ptcl Dvlp. 3 Hours.
The development of American political institutions, with emphasis on theoretical underpinnings of American politics and the role of courts and the Constitution in defining the scope of political change in America.

POLS 715. The American Presidency. 1-6 Hours.
This course examines how the president interfaces with other power centers in the political system, and assesses the extent to which this institution is capable of meeting what we have come to expect of it.

POLS 729. Sem: State & Local Government. 3 Hours.
Examination of selected topics in state government and politics. (3 hr. seminar.).

POLS 771. Read Research Political Theory. 2-4 Hours.

POLS 779. Sem: Political Theory. 3 Hours.

POLS 790. Teaching Practicum. 1-3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Supervised practice in college teaching of political science Note: This course is intended to insure that graduate assistants are adequately prepared and supervised when they are given college teaching responsibility. It will also present a mechanism for students not on assistantships to gain teaching experience. (Grading will be P/F.).

POLS 791A-Z. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. Investigation of advanced topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

POLS 792A-Z. Directed Study. 1-6 Hours.
Directed study, reading, and/or research.
POLS 793A-Z. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.
A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

POLS 794A-Z. Seminar. 1-6 Hours.
Special seminars arranged for advanced graduate students.

POLS 795. Independent Study. 1-9 Hours.
Faculty supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.

POLS 796. Graduate Seminar. 1 Hour.
PR: Consent. Each graduate student will present at least one seminar to the assembled faculty and graduate student body of his or her program.

POLS 797. Research. 1-15 Hours.
PR: Consent. Research activities leading to thesis, problem report, research paper or equivalent scholarly project, or a dissertation. (Grading may be S/U.).

POLS 798. Dissertation. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. This is an optional course for programs that wish to provide formal supervision during the writing of students reports (698), or dissertations (798). Grading is normal.

POLS 799. Graduate Colloquium. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. For graduate students not seeking coursework credit but who wish to meet residency requirements, use of the University’s facilities, and participate in its academic and cultural programs. Note: Graduate students who are not actively involved in coursework or research are entitled, through enrollment in their department’s 699/799 Graduate Colloquium to consult with graduate faculty, participate in both formal and informal academic activities sponsored by their program, and retain all of the rights and privileges of duly enrolled students. Grading is P/F; colloquium credit may not be counted against credit requirements for masters programs. Registration for one credit of 699/799 graduate colloquium satisfies the University requirement of registration in the semester in which graduation occurs.

POLS 900. Professional Development. 1-6 Hours.
Professional development courses provide skill renewal or enhancement in a professional field or content area (e.g., education, community health, geology.) The continuing education courses are graded on a pass/fail grading scale and do not apply as graduate credit toward a degree program.

POLS 930. Professional Development. 1-6 Hours.
Professional development courses provide skill renewal or enhancement in a professional field or content area (e.g., education, community health, geology.) These tuition-waived continuing education courses are graded on a pass/fail grading scale and do not apply as graduate credit toward a degree program.