Political Science

Degrees Offered

- Master of Arts
- Doctor of Philosophy

Nature of the Program

The graduate program is designed to provide 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.

The Master of Arts program 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. Students choose from classes offered in the fields of American politics, comparative politics, international relations, and public policy in addition to taking three classes in political methodology designed to ensure students possess expertise in how to conduct systematic quantitative research. 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.

The Doctor of Philosophy program 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 that leads to mastery of two of the four available areas of emphasis -- American politics, comparative politics, international 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.

FACULTY

CHAIR

- John Kilwein - Ph.D. (Ohio State University)
  Associate Professor, Public Law, Judicial Politics, Public Policy, Public Administration

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
- Sam Workman - Ph.D. (University of Washington)
  Director - Institute for Policy Research and Public Affairs, John D. "Jay" Rockefeller School of Policy and Politics

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- R. Scott Crichlow - Ph.D. (Louisiana State University)
  International Relations, Foreign Policy Decision-making, Middle East Politics
- Christina Fattore - Ph.D. (Florida State University)
  International Political Economy, International Organization, European Union Politics
- William Franko - Ph.D. (University of Iowa)
  American Politics, State and Local Politics, Public Policy
- Matthew Jacobsmeier - Ph.D. (University of Rochester)
  American Politics, Political Behavior, Public Opinion, Research Methods
- 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
- Mason Moseley - Ph.D. (Vanderbilt University)
  Comparative Politics, Latin American Politics, Comparative Political Institutions

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

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Jay Krehbiel - Ph.D. (Washington University)
  Comparative Politics, Judicial Politics, Comparative Political Institutions
- Herschel Thomas - Ph.D. (University of Texas)
  Public Policy, Interest Groups

TEACHING ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- Boris Barkanov - Ph.D. (University of California, Berkeley)
  Comparative Politics, International Relations
- Clarissa Estep - Ph.D. (West Virginia University)
  International Relations
- David Hauser - Ph.D. (University of Pittsburgh)
  International Conflict, National Security Analysis

SERVICE ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Samantha Godbey - Ph.D. (West Virginia University)
  Director of Debate, Comparative Poltics, International Relations, Public Policy

Admissions

M.A. IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

In addition to the university requirements for admission (http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduateeducationatwestvirginiauniversity/#classificationstext), applicants to the master's program must have an overall undergraduate and/or graduate grade point average of 3.0 or better to be considered for admission as a regular graduate student. Applicants typically have completed a B.A. in Political Science, but students from other fields and disciplines are also encouraged to apply.

PH.D. IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Admission to the doctoral program in Political Science is open to applicants with either a bachelor's or master's degree. In addition to the university requirements for admission (http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduateeducationatwestvirginiauniversity/#classificationstext), applicants to the Ph.D. program must have an overall undergraduate and/or graduate grade point average of 3.0 or better to be considered for admission as a regular graduate student. Admission to the Ph.D. is competitive; on average, successful applicants typically have earned a 3.5 or better GPA. Applicants to the Ph.D. program typically have completed a degree in Political Science, but students from other fields and disciplines are also encouraged to apply. Some training in statistics and a strong background in written communication is desired.

Admission Requirements for both programs:

- See the steps to apply for admissions and access the application here (https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/).
- Transcripts from all institutions attended.
- Three letters of recommendation from professors well#positioned to assess the applicant's potential for success in graduate school. A recommendation from a supervisor from the applicant's employment history who is well#positioned to discuss intellectual potential may be appropriate as well.
- A statement of purpose (200-500 words in length) that describes the applicant's intellectual and career goals and how the program (M.A. or Ph.D.) will help achieve those goals.
- GRE General Test Scores (Ph.D. applicants only).

International Applicants:

- See the steps to apply for admissions and access the application here (https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/).
- International applicants should view additional requirements here (http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduateeducationatwestvirginiauniversity/#internationaltext) and here (https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/information-for/international-students/).
- Language proficiency is required in order to hold a graduate teaching assistantship. See here (https://elli.wvu.edu/testing-resources/english-proficiency-gtas/).

Application Deadlines:

- The Political Science graduate programs admit for the Fall semester and consider applicants for that term on a rolling basis. Applicants for the spring semester are only considered in exceptional circumstances.
- Applicants who wish to be considered for graduate assistantships and/or tuition support should submit a complete application by January 15th.

- The department may review applications after the January 15th deadline, but applicants applying after this date may not receive full consideration for support.
- Exceptional Ph.D. applicants who apply by January 15th may be nominated by the Political Science program for competitive University Fellowships. Qualified applicants will be notified if they are nominated. More information on WVU fellowships can be found here (https://graduateeducation.wvu.edu/finances/fellowships/).

For more information please contact: politicalscience@mail.wvu.edu (politicalscience@mail.wvu.edu)

Certain application requirements may be waived based on a preliminary review of an application by the program.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS 2024-2025

The Admission Requirements above will be the same for the 2024-2025 Academic Year.

M.A. and Ph.D. Major Code: 1464

For specific information on the following program, please see the link to the right:

- Political Science, M.A.

For specific information on the following program, please see the link to the right:

- Political Science, Ph.D.

Degree Progress

The Director of Graduate studies serves as the initial advisor for all incoming graduate students. Each student will have a plan of study by the conclusion of the first semester of residence. At least once each academic year, all students will receive an evaluation reviewed by the graduate faculty.

M.A. PROGRAM

Regular graduate students should be able to complete the MA in four semesters, provided they enter the program in the fall semester and have sufficient background in statistics and political science. See the section of the catalog on time limits (http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/advisingcoursesdegrees/degree_regulations/#timelimitstext) for additional information.

PH.D. PROGRAM

After the first year in residence, each PhD student should select a permanent faculty advisor.

In addition to the required coursework, Ph.D. students must successfully complete the following tasks prior to graduation:

- Comprehensive Exam in Field 1
- Comprehensive Exam in Field 2
- Dissertation Prospectus Defense
- Dissertation Defense
- Submission of Approved Dissertation to ETD

More information can be found in the Political Science Department Graduate Student Handbook (https://politicalscience.wvu.edu/graduate/resources/handbook-for-graduate-study/).