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.

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. Students choose classes from 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 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 that should include mastery of two 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.

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

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

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Shauna Fisher - Ph.D. (University of Washington)
  Judicial Politics, Law and Courts, Judicial Policy-Making
- William Franko - Ph.D. (University of Iowa)
  American Politics, State and Local Politics, Public Policy
- Patrick Hickey - Ph.D. (University of Texas)
American Political Institutions, Presidency
• Jay Krehbiel - Ph.D. (Washington University)
  Comparative Politics, Judicial Politics, Comparative Political Institutions
• Mason Moseley - Ph.D (Vanderbilt University)
  Comparative Politics, Latin American Politics, Comparative Political Institutions

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 Politics, International Relations, Public Policy

Admissions
M.A. ADMISSION INFORMATION
Most applicants for the Master of Arts degree will have completed a B.A. in Political Science. However, students from other fields and disciplines are also encouraged to apply. For admission as a regular M.A. student, applicants should have an overall grade point average of 3.0 or better and should submit three letters of recommendation from faculty familiar with their work. All students wishing to be considered for departmental financial support during their first year in the program must also submit the results of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Upon request, the GRE requirement will be waived for M.A. applicants not seeking departmental financial support who have an undergraduate or graduate GPA of at least 3.5 at the time of application. Admission will be based on an overall assessment of the individual’s record.

PH.D. ADMISSION INFORMATION
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, history, psychology, engineering, social work, business, law, medicine, or journalism are encouraged to apply. For admission as a regular Ph.D. student, applicants will ideally have a grade point average of 3.5 or better. 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.

Master of Arts
Degree Requirements
• Credit Hours: Students are required to complete a minimum of 38 credit hours in POLS at the graduate level. Up to 12 credits can be at the 400 level.
• Grade Point Average: Students must earn a minimum overall GPA of 2.75, and a GPA of 3.00 in coursework applied to their graduate program.

CORE COURSES: 11

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POLS 600</td>
<td>Introduction to Political Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLS 601</td>
<td>Quantitative Political Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLS 602</td>
<td>Advanced Quantitative Methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLS 794</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
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POLITICAL SCIENCE ELECTIVES: 27

Any POLS courses at the 400-, 500-, 600-, or 700-level

Total Hours 38

* Number of credit hours may vary depending on number of semesters in residence.
** Excluding POLS 790, POLS 797 and POLS 794.
Doctor of Philosophy

Major Requirements

- **Credit Hours**: Students are required to complete a minimum of 68 credit hours in POLS at the 500, 600, or 700 level. With permission of the Graduate Director, students may also count up to 12 credits of coursework at the 400 level. Number of credit hours may vary depending on number of semesters in residence and number of research hours.

- **Grade Point Average**: Students must earn a minimum overall GPA of 2.75 and a minimum GPA of 3.00 in coursework applied to their graduate program.

**CORE COURSES:**

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<tr>
<td>POLS 600</td>
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<td>POLS 602</td>
<td>Advanced Quantitative Methods</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLS 603</td>
<td>Advanced Quantitative Analysis</td>
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<tr>
<td>POLS 794</td>
<td>Seminar</td>
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**FIELD COURSEWORK:**

Complete 12 credits in 2 field areas

- **American Politics**
  - POLS 630 Seminar: American Politics and Policy
  - POLS 710 Judicial Politics, Policy and Law
  - POLS 712 American Construction and Political Development
  - POLS 715 The American Presidency

- **Comparative Politics**
  - POLS 550 Comparative Politics
  - POLS 555 Comparative Public Policy
  - POLS 559 Contentious Politics

- **International Relations**
  - POLS 560 International Theory and Policy
  - POLS 665 Comparative Foreign Policy
  - POLS 666 National Security Policy
  - POLS 667 Foreign Policy Decision Making

- **Public Policy**
  - POLS 530 Policy Analysis
  - POLS 531 Economic Analysis of Politics
  - POLS 536 Politics of Agenda Setting
  - POLS 555 Comparative Public Policy
  - POLS 591 Advanced Topics
  - POLS 638 Seminar: Policy Implementation

- **POLITICAL SCIENCE ELECTIVES:**

Any POLS courses at 500-, 600-, and 700-level

**RESEARCH:**

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<th>Course</th>
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<tr>
<td>POLS 797</td>
<td>Research</td>
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**Total Hours**

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<th>Hours</th>
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<td>68</td>
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* Students must register for one credit of POLS 799 for each semester they are in residence. Total number of POLS 794 hours may vary.

** POLS courses excluding coursework used to satisfy another requirement, POLS 790, POLS 797 and POLS 794.

Degree Progress

The Director of Graduate studies serves as the 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/files/d/75e2c90a-944c-4b45-b75f-926c395928e3/graduate-handbook-ay-2018-2019.pdf).

Major Learning Outcomes

POLITICAL SCIENCE

1. A command of basic substantive knowledge about the basic institutions, political actors, and relevant processes in state, national, and international political systems – in particular as they apply to the student’s particular area of emphasis.

2. A knowledge of major policy issues in state, national, and international affairs and an appreciation of the complexity reflective of the uncertainties, trade-offs, and institutional/bureaucratic context of problems confronting governments.

3. An ability to think critically about political phenomena in a way that applies alternative explanatory perspectives across the major theoretical schools of thought in the political science literature.

4. A demonstrated capability to carry out systematic empirical research in political science, i.e. articulate a theoretical question, construct a rigorous research design, and analyze data or cases using appropriate methodological approaches.

5. An appreciation of the policy implications of different theoretical approaches and, more generally, how they relate to the larger ethical issues facing the West Virginia, national, and international communities.