

Master of Arts in Political Science

Why study political science?

Because political science advances our understanding of politics, power, governance, and public policy in the United States and across the globe. In the broadest sense, political science is the study of governments and governmental procedures. Political science is as old as civilization, because people always have been interested in their government and in their leaders. But political science as it is thought of today, as one of the social sciences, is a comparatively new discipline. It developed in the United States during the last century as political scientists developed an ability to make increasingly scientific observations of government. Political scientists are concerned with the origins and sources of governmental organizations, their growth, and their decline, as well as with the processes and structure of government.

What's special about the Political Science graduate program?

Our medium size allows faculty to teach seminars on a variety of topics with individualized mentoring in and out of the classroom. Graduate students work closely with faculty on research and themselves publish independent papers and win fellowships and awards. This productivity is complemented by a diverse group of students, many coming from around the world. In addition, by the time of graduation most of our graduate students will teach their own classes. We believe teaching is important part of a graduate education and serves our students well in an increasingly competitive job market. Our unique Thompson Summer Scholarship Research Program offers students the opportunity to engage in a genuine collaborative research project with selected faculty. Working with faculty on a variety of research topics, students maximize their potential by earning a competitive stipend and sharpening their research skills across the summer months. The program has generated many conference papers and publications as well. Our department therefore offers unparalleled access to our faculty and valuable opportunities in both research and teaching.

Admission to Graduate Studies

Admission Requirements

- All applicants must meet the requirements outlined in the Admission to Graduate Study (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/admission-to-graduate-study/>) policy.
- Bachelor's degree: A copy of official transcripts showing proof of a bachelor's degree (and any post-bachelor's coursework or degrees) from a regionally accredited institution, or a foreign university with equivalent bachelor's degree requirements is required.
- English proficiency: Proof of English proficiency (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>) for non-native or non-native-like English speakers is required. There are two bands of English proficiency, including Admission and Full proficiency. For applicants to online programs, Full proficiency is required.

Graduate Admission

The MA program in Political Science accepts applications for the fall and spring semesters. Applications and all required supplemental materials must be submitted by the deadlines listed on the program's website (<https://kups.ku.edu/admissions/>) to be considered for admission.

Application Materials

Applicants should upload the supporting application documents listed below to the online application (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/apply/>). There is no need to send copies of application materials directly to the Department of Political Science.

- Copy of official transcripts (<http://graduate.ku.edu/transcripts/>) from all colleges or universities attended
- Statement of purpose (no longer than two pages, single spaced)
- Resume or CV

Contact

Visit the Admissions (<https://kups.ku.edu/admissions/>) page on the Department of Political Science website for detailed information about the application process.

M.A. in Political Science Degree Requirements

At least 50% of the coursework counted toward the degree must be 700 level or above.

Code	Title	Hours
Core Courses		
POLS 705	Research Design for Political Science	3
POLS 810	American Politics	3
POLS 850	Introduction to Comparative Politics	3
POLS 870	International Relations	3
Electives		18
Students must take at least one course from each of the following areas:		
American Politics & Policy		
POLS 719	Topics in the American Political Institutions: _____	
POLS 812	Political Psychology	
POLS 820	Policy Formulation and Adoption	
POLS 913	State and Local Politics	
POLS 915	American Political Parties	
Comparative Politics		
POLS 769	Topics in Comparative Politics: _____	
POLS 851	Comparative Institutions and Government	
POLS 857	Comparative Political Behavior	
POLS 878	Conducting and Analyzing Fieldwork in Developing Countries	
POLS 954	Politics in Post-Soviet States	
POLS 955	Politics of Advanced Industrial Societies	
POLS 959	Advanced Topics in Comparative Politics: _____	
International Relations		
POLS 782	Transnational Terrorism	
POLS 789	Topics in International Relations: _____	

POLS 970	Foreign Policy Analysis	
POLS 972	Theories of International Conflict	
POLS 973	International Political Economy	
POLS 977	Ethics in International Relations Theory	
Total Hours		30

Directed readings courses in excess of 5 hours cannot be counted toward the 30 hours required for the degree. With prior written approval, candidates may count up to 6 graduate hours taken outside the department (either at KU or via transfer credit from another regionally accredited institution) toward the 30 hours required for the degree.

Culminating Effort

For the Online M.A. program, a digital portfolio will be required to complete the degree.

For the In Person M.A. program, a written final research paper or written exam as well as an oral exam is required to complete the degree.

At the completion of this program, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a broad base of relevant knowledge in the field including theories, research design and methods. Identify and describe disciplinary divides and debates; identify significant topics in the field that warrant further study. Apply disciplinary knowledge and tools of analysis to defend a research topic and disseminate new ideas.
- Clearly and effectively articulate thoughts, make arguments, and communicate ideas supported by evidence in a range of contexts using a variety of means and modalities, including in virtual and in-class debates, forums, and during peer review. Articulate feedback on peers' ideas, develop effective skills in narrating constructive criticism, in written and oratory formats, practice responding to and incorporating feedback from mentors and peers.
- Use qualitative and/or quantitative information to identify patterns, evaluate arguments and theories, test hypotheses, and/or formulate and support interpretations. Identify, describe, apply, and analyze the tools of political inquiry necessary for consuming and producing knowledge in the field.
- Develop critical and reflective awareness of standards of ethical conduct in teaching and research and responsible practices of inquiry and dissemination of knowledge, engage in professional socialization activities. Identify and explain the importance of protection of human subjects and the role of the internal review board (IRB) process in maintaining protection. Develop critical awareness of issues pertaining to responsible scholarship including: authorship, copyright, collaboration, peer review, data confidentiality and management.