

# Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

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## 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 PhD program in Political Science accepts applications for the fall semester only. Applications and all required supplemental materials must be submitted by the deadlines listed on the program's website (<https://kups.ku.edu/political-science-graduate-program/>) 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
- Official GRE score report no more than five years old
- Three letters of recommendation (preferably from faculty members)

## Contact

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

## Ph.D. in Political Science Degree Requirements

The following courses are required for all students in the Political Science Ph.D. Note that these are minimum requirements to be approved to move forward to the oral comprehensive exam.

Courses are determined in consultation with faculty of the program in which the student is enrolled as part of the process of development of an individualized program. The student selects a principal advisor from the Graduate Faculty by the end of the first year.

## Prerequisite Courses

Students entering the program without an M.A. degree in Political Science must complete the following coursework at a satisfactory level within 2 years of first enrollment:

1. 30 semester hours of graduate credit, 21 of which must be earned in courses at the 700 level or above; including
2. POLS 705 and POLS 706

Directed readings courses in excess of 5 hours cannot be counted toward the 30 hours.

Students entering the program already in possession of an M.A. degree in Political Science may, at the discretion of the program, have some or all of the above requirements waived.

## Required Courses

Code	Title	Hours
<b>Methods Courses</b>		
POLS 705	Research Design for Political Science	3
POLS 706	Research Methods I	3

POLS 707	Research Methods II	3
<b>Core Courses</b>		
POLS 850	Introduction to Comparative Politics	3
POLS 870	International Relations	3
POLS 810	American Politics	3
or POLS 720	The Scope of Public Policy	
POLS 997	Preparation for the Comprehensive Examination	1
<b>Concentration Course Work</b>		
Students complete 3 courses from their chosen concentration		9
<b>Electives</b>		
3 Electives in an area other than the concentration		9
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>37</b>

## Concentrations

Students must choose one of the three concentrations: American Politics and Public Policy; Comparative Politics; and International Relations. Before the written preliminary examination all doctoral students must complete the methods, core, and concentration coursework listed above. Students should consult their faculty advisor to plan a schedule of courses in their concentration to provide adequate preparation for the written preliminary examination based on the requirements outlined below.

### American Politics and Public Policy

Code	Title	Hours
3 elective courses selected in consultation with faculty advisor		9
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	
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>9</b>

### Comparative Politics

Code	Title	Hours
POLS 851	Comparative Institutions and Government	3
POLS 857	Comparative Political Behavior	3
One elective course selected in consultation with faculty advisor		3
POLS 769	Topics in Comparative Politics: _____	
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: _____	
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>9</b>

### International Relations

Code	Title	Hours
POLS 972	Theories of International Conflict	3
POLS 973	International Political Economy	3
One elective course selected in consultation with faculty advisor		3
POLS 782	Transnational Terrorism	
POLS 789	Topics in International Relations: _____	
POLS 970	Foreign Policy Analysis	

POLS 977	Ethics in International Relations Theory	
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### Total Hours

9

## Other Requirements

In addition to coursework requirements, the following requirements apply to all students in the Political Science Ph.D.

## Research Skills & Responsible Scholarship

The University requires that every doctoral student receive training in responsible scholarship pertinent to the field of research and obtain research skills pertinent to the doctoral level of research in their field(s). These requirements must be completed by the end of the semester that the student takes the oral comprehensive exam. For students in Political Science, this requirement is satisfied by completion of:

1. POLS 705
2. POLS 706
3. POLS 707

Additionally, doctoral students must supplement this coursework with one of the following options, to be approved at any time prior to registering for written preliminary examinations:

- An additional research methods course selected in consultation with their faculty advisor
- Proficiency in a foreign language approved by the student's faculty advisor and the director of graduate studies as demonstrated by one of the following options
  - Two semesters of a single foreign language completed no more than five years prior to the time of approval
  - Native speaker of a foreign language

## Written Preliminary Examination and Research Paper

All doctoral students are required to complete a written preliminary examination in the concentration of their choice and submit a research paper prior to completing their comprehensive oral examination. Students must complete all required methods, core, and concentration coursework, the doctoral residency requirement, have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher in their PhD coursework, and resolve any grades of Incomplete before registering for the written preliminary examinations.

Students who complete the written and oral examination are also fulfilling the requirements for a Masters of Arts degree and upon satisfactory completion will be awarded. At this time, students who are no longer able or wish to continue the Ph.D. program may choose to leave with their M.A. A student must pass the written preliminary examinations before taking the comprehensive oral examination.

## Comprehensive Oral Examination

The comprehensive oral examination covers the entire field of Political Science, with emphasis in the subfields of the student's intensive study. The exam will be administered by a faculty committee. The committee must meet the requirements specified in the Office of Graduate Studies' Doctoral Student Oral Exam Committee Composition policy (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/oral-exam-committee->

composition/). Students must attempt the comprehensive oral examination in the same semester in which the final written preliminary examination is passed.

## Post Comprehensive Exam Requirements

Upon passing the comprehensive examination, the student becomes a candidate for the Ph.D. degree and is approved to proceed with their dissertation research and project. Starting the semester following successful completion of the oral comprehensive exam, students must enroll in accordance with the Office of Graduate Studies' Doctoral Candidacy policy (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-candidacy/>). This enrollment includes, but is not limited to, at least 1 dissertation hour every semester until graduation. See the Doctoral Candidacy policy for more information about this University level requirement.

## Dissertation Prospectus

All Ph.D. students who have passed their comprehensive examinations must, within six months of such completion, successfully defend a prospectus of the dissertation. Successful defense of the prospectus is required to retain a status of "reasonable progress toward the Ph.D." and to be eligible for further departmental funding. The defense will be conducted before the student's dissertation committee.

## Dissertation Defense

The dissertation must be an original work of research that advances the field of Political Science and complies with the Office of Graduate Studies' Doctoral Dissertation policy (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-dissertation/>). Upon approval by the students committee that the student's dissertation research and written document is complete, the student must defend the dissertation before all committee members in the "final oral examination," or dissertation defense. The final dissertation defense includes a public presentation of the dissertation research by the candidate and concludes with a period of questioning by the committee. After posing questions to the student about the dissertation work, committee members deliberate and vote on a grade of Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. A grade of Satisfactory requires a majority vote, and may be contingent on the completion of specific revisions by a designated due date.

## Additional Information

Additional information about the Political Science doctoral program is located in the department's graduate student handbook (<https://kups.ku.edu/political-science-graduate-student-handbook/>) for reference.

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.