

Doctor of Philosophy 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

An applicant seeking to pursue graduate study in the College may be admitted as either a degree-seeking or non-degree seeking student. Policies and procedures of Graduate Studies govern the process of Graduate admission. These may be found in the Graduate Studies (<http://catalog.ku.edu/graduate-studies>) section of the online catalog.

Please consult the Departments & Programs (<http://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences>) section of the online catalog for information regarding program-specific admissions criteria and requirements. Special admissions requirements pertain to Interdisciplinary Studies degrees, which may be found in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.

Graduate Admission

Applications for the fall semester are due no later than January 7th to be considered for departmental funding in the form of a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA). Applications for the fall semester will be accepted until April 15th but will not be considered for departmental funding if submitted after January 7th.

Application Materials

Applicants should upload the supporting application documents listed below to the online application (<https://graduate.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
- GRE scores (no more than five years old)
- Three letters of recommendation (preferably from faculty members)

Non-native speakers of English must meet English proficiency requirements as described here (<http://graduate.ku.edu/english-proficiency-requirements>).

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. Degree Requirements

Students who complete the Master of Arts degree may be eligible to pursue the Ph.D. degree. The Ph.D. program requires work in 2 major subfields and 1 minor subfield.

The major fields must be drawn from those offered by the division (see Fields of Graduate Study). Before their first attempt at the written preliminary examination in any subfield, all Ph.D. students must complete at least 4 courses in that field, 3 of which are at the 700 level or above. Enrollment in directed research covering a particular subfield may be substituted for one of the four courses/seminars.

The minor field may be another of the subfields, a related field from an outside department, or an interdisciplinary program. If the choice is not 1 of the subfields, the student must obtain written approval of the advisor and the graduate studies director. The courses for the minor field must follow the same structure as outlined above for the major fields. Courses for the minor field may not be applied to another examination field.

Students should consult their major advisors to plan a schedule of course work and seminar preparation in each of these subfields to provide adequate preparation for the written preliminary examination. Students must complete the majority of courses in their major fields, the research skills and responsible scholarship requirement, the Ph.D. residency requirement, and resolve any grades of incomplete before registering for preliminary examinations. The research skills and responsible scholarship requirement includes

Option 1: Research Methods

Code	Title	Hours
POLS 706	Research Methods I	3
POLS 707	Research Methods II	3

Select 1 research methods course approved by the major advisor and the graduate director

Option 2: Research Methods and Foreign Language

Code	Title	Hours
POLS 706	Research Methods I	3
POLS 707	Research Methods II	3

Select 1 of the following choices in a language approved by the student's advisor as well as the graduate director:

2 semesters of a single foreign language no more than 5 years old at the time of certification

Demonstrated reading knowledge of a single foreign language

Native speaker

Note: Contact your department or program for more information about research skills and responsible scholarship, and the current requirements for doctoral students. Current policies on Doctoral Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship are listed in the KU Policy Library.

To become a Ph.D. candidate, the student must satisfactorily complete a comprehensive oral examination. No student may attempt the comprehensive oral examination until the 2 written preliminary examinations have been passed and the requirements of the minor subfield have been completed.

After passing the comprehensive oral examination, the doctoral candidate must write a dissertation approved by a departmental dissertation committee and pass a final oral defense of the dissertation to qualify for the Ph.D. degree.