

# Graduate Handbook

2022-2023

Department of Political Science

Georgia State University

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[Political Science Graduate Catalog](#)

**PhD Guidelines by Subfield**

## **Introduction**

This Handbook describes requirements for earning advanced degrees in the Department of Political Science. Graduate students are responsible for knowing about and complying with the Department of Political Science policies and requirements described in this Handbook as well as the policies and requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences detailed in the Graduate Catalog.

### **Programs**

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The department offers four programs:

- Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science
- Master of Arts in Political Science
- Dual B.A./M.A. in Political Science
- Dual M.A. in Political Science and Master of International Business (in cooperation with the Robinson College of Business)

## **Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)**

Students who do not already hold an M.A. in political science, and who are admitted to the Ph.D. program, will receive an M.A. “in passing” as they complete the requirements for the doctoral degree. (Such students are referred to as “direct admit” Ph.D. students). The requirements for direct admit Ph.D. students are somewhat different for those students who already hold an M.A. in political science.

The Ph.D. degree can be completed on either a full-time or part-time basis. However, the Department strongly encourages students to pursue the degree full-time, and any students considering part-time study should discuss their plans with the Director of Graduate Studies.

### **First and Second Year Reviews**

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All doctoral students will be evaluated by the Department’s graduate faculty as to their performance in the program at the end of their first and second years in the program.

### **Areas**

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The department recognizes six fields in the discipline for the purposes of comprehensive exams and course requirements:

- American Politics
- Comparative Politics
- International Politics
- Political Theory
- Public Law
- Research Methods

### **Basic degree requirements**

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Please see the Graduate Catalog, reprinted below, for the specific degree requirements.

### **Qualifying Examinations**

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#### **Purpose**

One of the most important steps in the doctoral program is the qualifying examination process. Qualifying examinations or “comps” serve to demonstrate that students have

acquired the skills and knowledge necessary to function as independent scholars in political science generally and in their chosen fields of specialization. Breadth of knowledge is expected as well as a deep, critical understanding of the literature. Equally important is the ability to apply that understanding to the central, enduring and practical questions of politics and government. As the qualifying examinations constitute one of the last qualifying steps prior to the dissertation, significant emphasis is placed upon ensuring that students are well prepared to move on to the final phase of their studies.

### **Timing**

*When can you take comps?*

PhD qualifying exams are taken after all coursework is completed. With permission of the Director of Graduate Studies, students may be permitted to take qualifying exams during their final semester of formal coursework. However, students may not take doctoral exams if they have Incomplete or In Progress grades in previous courses (that is, prior to the semester in which exams are taken), which are part of their formal program of study for the doctorate. To be eligible to take the qualifying exams, students must also have an overall GPA of at least 3.4 and have taken at least three graduate courses in each of the two exam fields (no double counting of courses). In addition, students should have completed their course distribution requirement. Students are expected to take the exams after completing at least 30 hours of coursework and no more than 42 hours of coursework beyond the MA degree. To confirm eligibility to take the exams, students should meet with the Director of Graduate Studies prior to the semester in which they plan to sit for the exams. Students must enroll in POLS 8900 Qualifying Readings in the semester in which they take their exams.

Students will take two written exams (one major and one minor) in two separate fields of the discipline (choosing from American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Politics, Political Theory, Public Law, and Research Methodology). Students wishing to take a qualifying exam in Research Methodology must complete the required methods sequence, including both 8830 (Advanced Quantitative Methods) and 8840 (Advanced Qualitative Methods), as well as at least one additional methods course; the exam will cover both quantitative and qualitative methods.

*When will the exams be scheduled?*

All students taking PhD exams in a given semester will take the written exams on the dates scheduled for that semester. PhD qualifying exams will be scheduled in September and

February and of each school year. No exceptions will be made, and no exams will be scheduled in the summer. The Director of Graduate Studies will announce the scheduled dates early in each semester.

*What do the exams consist of?*

Students take a full exam for the field in which they intend to write their dissertation that consists of mandatory and/or specific questions. For their second field, students will take a shorter exam comprised of a single question from the full exam that provides the student an opportunity to display a broad understanding of the field.

In writing their qualifying exams, students are expected to demonstrate competent knowledge of major theories, methods, and substantive understandings prevalent in the discipline and in their specific fields of study.

### **Preparation**

*How should you prepare for qualifying exams?*

The purpose of a doctoral qualifying exam is to ensure that students gain sufficiently broad and deep knowledge of the literature in the fields in which they plan to teach and/or conduct research. The requisite knowledge is acquired both through coursework and through the process of preparing for the qualifying exams themselves. The student's ability to cite, synthesize, and analyze the existing literature should not be limited to textbooks or to other readings from the core courses, but should draw from readings done for research papers as well as supplemental readings that are relevant to the core courses of your exam fields. Thus the preparation process, in addition to the exam itself, represents part of the value of taking qualifying exams.

Questions will require students to demonstrate familiarity with literature of the discipline, to examine major explanatory and normative theories, and to discuss and integrate theories, ideas, and substantive information in their respective fields of study.

To prepare for qualifying exams students must consider prominent theories and ideas in their chosen fields of study, and should consult early in their preparations with faculty members in those fields to discuss expectations and essential reading. It is the student's responsibility to compile the reading list — students should not expect faculty to furnish you with a ready-made list. They can however expect faculty to offer suggestions for readings beyond their

syllabi, and to offer comments on a reading list that the student compile. Students should be sure to acquire copies of the latest syllabi from professors for the core courses of their exam fields. Students should consider making sheets summarizing briefly the main arguments of each of their readings, for quick reference when taking the exam. Most important, note that the material covered in each of your courses provides an introduction to the main topics in the particular fields, and not the totality of the essential literature; rather, students should develop a reading list early on to ensure they have adequate time to read the literature not covered in their seminars.

A file of questions posed in previous doctoral exams is also available in the department office—it is imperative that students request access to these from the Graduate Director so as to better familiarize themselves with the format, content, and style of written examinations. Students are advised to practice writing out an answer to an exam question or two, under constraints resembling those that will be encountered when taking the exam itself. This will ensure that the exam succeeds or fails based on the student’s knowledge of the relevant literature, and not on the absence of familiarity with the test format.

PhD students should set aside adequate time to study for qualifying exams; at least one semester or a summer of preparation for the exams is suggested.

### **Taking the exams**

*What can I expect during the exam week?*

Exams will be take-home and open, i.e. students can use their notes, book, and online sources. Students will receive both their first and second field exams at the same time and have 56 hours – 3 days, 2 nights – to complete them. That is, exams will be sent to students at 8am on Day 1 and will be returned to DGS by 4pm on Day 3.

Students will sign an honor pledge in advance of taking their exams stating that they agree to abide by these policies and informing them that the consequences for cheating, plagiarism or collaboration will be severe, including the possibility of dismissal from the program. All exams will be submitted to TurnItIn software to discover plagiarism, which may result in termination.

*What are the best strategies for answering the questions?*

The best advice is to answer the questions directly and fully as posed. Masterful answers that

do not actually address the questions as posed are not passing answers. Likewise, brief answers that demonstrate technical accuracy but which stop short of demonstrating the student's mastery of the field's breadth and depth are not rewarded. For an excellent (and somewhat humorous) discussion of how to avoid the pitfalls of essay exams, see Charles King, "[Battling the Six Evil Geniuses of Essay Writing.](#)" PS (March 1998). Students should also pay special attention to time management. Writing two excellent answers but failing to allot ample time to a third exam question can result in a failing grade on the overall exam. In your responses, devote special attention to demonstrating your knowledge of the relevant concepts and the supporting literature. Compare and contrast, through reference to the existing scholarly work, the different theoretical and analytical positions on the subject. Reference to a scholar and his/her work adds nothing unless it is placed in the broader context of the literature's development. It is not wrong to criticize the literature or the field, only to do so poorly. Provide answers rich with examples. Answers that have clear introductions, arguments that are logically organized, and conclusions that are persuasive are naturally advantaged.

*How are the exams graded?*

Each field has a faculty coordinator. In consultation with the graduate director, the field coordinators will appoint two additional members to each exam committee from among the graduate faculty in each field. The composition of exam committees is anonymous, and students' exams will be de-identified, as well.

Exam committee members will discuss the qualifying exams at a synchronous (virtual or in-person) meeting held for this purpose.

Exam committees will assess each exam on the following criteria:

1. Has the student answered the question asked? Has the student provided a sufficiently qualifying answer to the question or has s/he neglected to address areas of importance?
2. Has the student addressed and included the most important literature relevant to the question? If not, what is missing?
3. Has the student made factual errors in interpreting the literature? If so, what are those errors?
4. Has the student shown an appreciation of whatever controversies exist in the field or does s/he tend to present only one view?

Exam committees will submit an assessment of "Pass," "Pass with Distinction," or "Fail."

Each committee member will sign the final evaluation. Once both evaluation committees have submitted their assessments, the Graduate Director will inform the student in writing of the exam results and provide any written comments supplied by the faculty evaluators. Students and committee members shall not discuss exam results until after the Graduate Director shares the results.

*What happens if I fail one or both exam/s?*

Students will have two chances to pass each of the two exams. If the exam committee gives a failing grade, the exam will be sent to all members of the field for a final vote. Students who fail one or both exams are strongly encouraged to re-take it/them the next time they are given. Upon the second failure of either, the student will be terminated from the program. There are no appeals for failing exams outside the university's Grade Appeal Process. There will be no oral exams.

*After I pass, what's next?*

Students should immediately submit a [Report for Comprehensive and Qualifying Examinations](#) form.

Within six weeks of passing both of their qualifying exams, students should formally constitute their dissertation committees and schedule a joint meeting with their committee members to discuss the direction of the dissertation project. No later than 90 days after successfully completing the written exams, students should defend a dissertation prospectus.

## **Dissertation Procedures**

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Students are urged to begin thinking about their research topic as they progress through their coursework. When coursework and comprehensive examinations have been completed, students may register for the required number of POLS 8990 credits and begin the formal procedures for dissertation work.

### **Admission to Doctoral Candidacy**

Upon successful completion of all coursework, language/research skill requirements and comprehensive examinations, and approval of the dissertation research topic, students will be admitted to doctoral candidacy. Admission to candidacy must be achieved within four calendar years of admission to the doctoral program. Students must apply with the Graduate Office for admission.

### **Requirements for Forming the Committee**

Dissertation committees must have three members. The chair and at least one member of this committee must come from the Political Science Department's graduate faculty, but the third member may come from the graduate faculty of another department at Georgia State University. Additional members from inside or outside the department may be appointed with approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. Faculty affiliates may chair dissertation committees.

In keeping with our Vision, Mission, and Values statement, committee members from another department at GSU or another university who serve on dissertation committees must adhere to the responsibilities specified in the College of Arts and Sciences' "Guidelines for Advising and Mentoring Graduate Students" and in our department by-laws. Specifically, they should:

- Model professional behavior/ethics and communicate behavioral expectations for the mentor/mentee relationship.
- Create an environment that is free from prejudice, intolerance, intimidation, humiliation and harassment.
- Maintain professional relationships and boundaries between faculty and students at all times (e.g., do not enter into relationships, such as financial or romantic, with students that might compromise professional judgement or student success).
- Promote advisee career development and commit to an ongoing mentoring relationship beyond graduation.

### **Best Practices for Forming a Committee**

While some students reach the committee formation stage already knowing all of the faculty members they want to have on their dissertation committee, others may not have such a clear picture in advance. For some PhD students in each of these groups the process of actually forming a dissertation committee can be a source of anxiety. Following this list of Best Practices on Committee Formation should help alleviate that anxiety and ensure a successful process of forming a committee:

- 1) Identify a chair, schedule a meeting with that professor to discuss your project, and ask them if they are willing to serve as your dissertation chair. Selecting your chair is the most important process as this will be the faculty member you work most closely

with. You want to consider both the research specialization of faculty members who could potentially serve as your dissertation chair and how well you will be able to work with those faculty members.

- 2) Consult with your chair about the other faculty members you want to ask to serve on your committee. There are several things you and your chair will want to consider in making this decision, such as whether you need an expert in a specific area, topic, or methodological approach.
- 3) Once you and your chair have identified a group of faculty members who would be good committee members, you should then formally request that they serve on your committee.
- 4) Inform the director of graduate studies of the formation of your committee and submit an [Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation Committee](#) form.

### **Prospectus/Prospectus Defense**

Students will write a dissertation prospectus that outlines their proposed research design. The research design will then be orally presented and defended; the presentation session shall be open to all members of the faculty and to others. The acceptability of the prospectus shall be determined by at least a two-thirds vote of the members of the dissertation committee. Once the committee passes the prospectus, the student shall complete a [Prospectus Approval for Doctoral Dissertation](#) form.

The presentation date must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and, subsequently, scheduled with the Department Specialist. An electronic copy of the dissertation prospectus shall be made available to the Director of Graduate Studies and the dissertation committee at least two weeks in advance of the oral presentation. Members of the faculty must be notified of both the date of the oral presentation and the availability of the research design.

### **Dissertation Defense**

There shall be a final oral defense of the dissertation. The defense shall be administered by the dissertation committee and shall be open to all members of the faculty and to others. The acceptability of the dissertation shall be determined by at least a two-thirds vote of the members of the committee.

The defense date must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies and scheduled with the Department Specialist. An electronic copy of the dissertation to be defended shall be made

available to the Director of Graduate Studies and the dissertation committee at least two weeks in advance of the defense. Members of the faculty must be notified of the date of the defense and the availability of the final copies of the dissertation.

Once approved, students should submit a [Doctoral Dissertation Approval](#) form.

### **Reproduction**

The defended and approved dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate Office of the College of Arts and Sciences; for graduation purposes, the necessary last step is the formal submission of the finished thesis. Specific guidelines regarding the format and submission requirements of completed dissertations, as well as deadlines for submission, are available [here](#).

**Yearly checklist: Direct Admit Ph.D.**

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	<b>Task</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Semesters 1-4	Complete Coursework Complete M.A. in passing	Masters-in-passing must be completed by end of 33 hours of coursework
Semesters 5-6	Complete qualifying exams Defend dissertation proposal	Qualifying exams or “comps” should be taken upon completion at least 30 hours of coursework, and no more than 42 hours of coursework, beyond the MA degree.  Dissertation proposal should be defended within 90 days of comprehensive exams.
Semesters 7-8	Complete dissertation	

**Degree Requirements: Direct Admit Ph.D.**

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<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Courses</b>
Methods	12	8800, 8805, 8810, 8830/8840/85XX in consultation w/DGS
Major	12	
Minor	9	
Breadth	3	Can be waived w/DGS permission
Pedagogy	3	
Electives	3	
Master's in Passing Paper	3	
Comprehensive Readings	3	
Prospectus	0	
<b>TOTAL REQUIRED</b>	<b>48</b>	

**Yearly checklist: Post-M.A. Ph.D.**

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	<b>Task</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Semesters 1-3	Complete Coursework	36 hours of coursework beyond the M.A.
Semesters 3-5	Complete comprehensive exams Defend dissertation proposal	Comprehensive exams should be taken upon completion of 36 hours of coursework. Comps must be taken after no more than 42 hours of coursework have been completed.  Dissertation proposal should be defended within 90 days of comprehensive exams.
Semesters 6-8	Complete dissertation	

**Degree Requirements: Post-MA Ph.D.**

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<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Courses</b>
Methods	12	8800, 8805, 8810, 8830/8840/85XX in Consultation w/DGS
Major	9	
Minor	6	
Breadth	3	
Electives	3	
Comprehensive Readings	3	
<b>TOTAL REQUIRED</b>	<b>36</b>	
*Pedagogy	3	

\*Note: Pedagogy (POLS 8997) can count towards the 36 required hours if students receive at least 3 transfer credits. Transfer credits are judged on a case-by-case basis by the DGS with faculty input.

## **Master of Arts (M.A.)**

The Department of Political Science at GSU offers students the option of completing a terminal Master's degree. The Master's in Political Science is a rigorous graduate program that trains students for a career in governance as well as in social science research.

The Department offers the following concentrations and specializations of study:

- General Political Science
- American Politics
- International & Comparative Politics
- Political Science for Educators
- Professional Politics
- Public Law
- Dual B.A./M.A. Program in Political Science

Each concentration has its own requirements listed below and in the University's Graduate Catalog.

### **M.A. Final Project**

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All M.A. students must complete a final project for their degree program, either in the form of a thesis or a capstone project. The thesis is a larger project of original research which is worth 6 hours of credit, while the capstone is a smaller project – either of original research or of a more pre-professional orientation – worth 3 hours of credit. Students might choose the capstone option if they wish to consider the M.A. their terminal degree, but we encourage those students wishing to pursue the Ph.D. degree to follow the full thesis option.

### **M.A. Thesis Procedures**

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Students who choose the thesis option are urged to begin thinking about their research topic as they progress through their coursework. When courses have been completed, students may register for the required number of POLS 8990 credits and begin the formal procedures for thesis work. The following procedures have been established for the supervision,

presentation, and approval of theses.

### **Committee**

Thesis committees must have three members. The chair and at least one member of this committee must come from the department's graduate faculty, but the third member may come from the graduate faculty of another department at Georgia State University or from among the department's permanent non-graduate faculty. The Associate Dean for Research, Innovation, and Graduate Studies can make an exception for permanent non-graduate Political Science faculty members to chair a thesis committee. Additional members from inside or outside the department may be appointed with approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. Students preparing to write a thesis must meet with the Director of Graduate Studies to initiate the process of constituting a committee. For guidance on forming a MA Thesis committee, see the "Best Practices for Forming a Committee" section of the Ph.D. section of this Handbook. Once students form a committee they should submit an [Appointment of Master's Thesis Committee](#) form.

In keeping with our Vision, Mission, and Values statement, permanent non-graduate faculty and graduate faculty members from another department who chair or serve on thesis committees must adhere to the responsibilities specified in the College of Arts and Sciences' "Guidelines for Advising and Mentoring Graduate Students" and in our department by-laws. Specifically, they should:

- Model professional behavior/ethics and communicate behavioral expectations for the mentor/mentee relationship.
- Create an environment that is free from prejudice, intolerance, intimidation, humiliation and harassment.
- Maintain professional relationships and boundaries between faculty and students at all times (e.g., do not enter into relationships, such as financial or romantic, with students that might compromise professional judgement or student success).
- Promote advisee career development and commit to an ongoing mentoring relationship beyond graduation.

### **Prospectus/Prospectus Defense**

Students will write a thesis prospectus that outlines their proposed research design. The research design will then be orally presented and defended; the presentation session shall be open to all members of the faculty and to others. The acceptability of the prospectus shall be

determined by at least a two-thirds vote of the members of the thesis or dissertation committee. Two copies of the thesis prospectus shall be made available to the Graduate Director and committee members at least one week in advance of the oral presentation. Members of the faculty must be notified by the thesis committee chairperson of both the date of the oral presentation and the availability of the research design. The presentation date must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. Once the committee passes the prospectus, the student shall complete a [Prospectus Approval for Master's Thesis](#) form.

### **Thesis Expectations**

The M.A. thesis should follow the format of an article in a Political Science research journal, normally running 8,000-10,000 words (approximately 30-40 pages). It will include an abstract, introduction, literature review closely related to statement of problem, formal statement of the theory and specific hypothesis/hypotheses to be tested, description of research methods and data, findings and analysis, conclusion and bibliography. The thesis will present the results of primary research, original theoretical contribution, or creative approach to a problem. It should be of a quality suitable for submission to a professional conference or research journal.

### **Defense**

There shall be a final oral defense of the thesis. The defense shall be administered by the thesis committee and shall be open to all members of the faculty and to others. The acceptability of the thesis shall be determined by at least a two-thirds vote of the members of the committee.

The defense date must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. An electronic copy of the thesis shall be made available to the Director of Graduate Studies and the thesis committee at least one week in advance of the defense. Members of the faculty must be notified of both the date of the defense and the availability of the final typed copies of the thesis. Once approved, students should submit a [Master's Thesis Approval](#) form.

### **Reproduction**

The defended and approved thesis must be submitted to the Graduate Office of the College of Arts and Sciences; for graduation purposes, the necessary last step is the formal submission of the finished thesis. Specific guidelines regarding the thesis format and submission requirements, as well as deadlines for submission, are available [here](#).

## **MA Capstone Project Procedures**

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Students pursuing any of the M.A. curricula (general or specialized) may choose, in lieu of the thesis, to complete a capstone project, worth 3 hours of credit.

Students choosing the capstone option must take 27 hours of coursework or experiential learning (rather than the 24 hours required under the thesis option) and must register for 3 hours of capstone credit. All other course requirements are the same as under the thesis option. This is a College requirement and cannot be waived by the department.

Capstone projects may be original research papers, but shorter and more exploratory than a full thesis. They may also take another form such as the development of an innovative curriculum or the writing of a policy paper or the analysis of a bill or law. In all cases, the amount of work required for the project should be roughly similar to that required to complete a three hour course

Students are urged to begin thinking about their capstone topic as they progress through their coursework. Students who choose to complete an original research paper may build on a paper written for a course, extended and enhanced to meet the standards of a conference paper presentation. These standards include a statement of the problem, questions or hypotheses raised by the problem, and original research on that problem and relevant questions. Capstone papers are normally 20 to 30 pages in length and should address an important problem, reflect knowledge of the relevant literature as it pertains to the questions, and provide preliminary answers based on competent research to the questions raised by the problem. Other capstone projects – whether the development of a curriculum, the analysis of a policy, or something else – should be similar in length and / or effort and should reflect the standards of a conference presentation or white paper in the appropriate field.

The **Capstone Project** must be approved by a committee composed of a faculty advisor and one additional faculty member. Committee members may be chosen from among the department's graduate faculty and permanent lecturers. Second readers can also be chosen from among the graduate faculty of other departments at Georgia State University, subject to the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

The M.A program director will meet with all students registered for the capstone project at

the beginning of the semester and will ensure that they have selected and communicated with their committee members. For guidance on forming an M.A. Capstone committee, see the “Best Practices for Forming a Committee” section of the Ph.D. section of this Handbook.

At this point, it will be the responsibility of the student to continue seeking feedback from the committee and of the committee to evaluate whether the student’s work meets departmental standards. Once the committee has approved the capstone project, the student should complete the capstone approval form on the milestones website, which generates an email to the MA Program Director for confirmation,

In keeping with our Vision, Mission, and Values statement, permanent non-graduate faculty and graduate faculty members from another department who chair or serve on non-thesis committees must adhere to the responsibilities specified in the College of Arts and Sciences’ “Guidelines for Advising and Mentoring Graduate Students” and in our department by-laws. Specifically, they should:

- Model professional behavior/ethics and communicate behavioral expectations for the mentor/mentee relationship.
- Create an environment that is free from prejudice, intolerance, intimidation, humiliation and harassment.
- Maintain professional relationships and boundaries between faculty and students at all times (e.g., do not enter into relationships, such as financial or romantic, with students that might compromise professional judgement or student success).
- Promote advisee career development and commit to an ongoing mentoring relationship beyond graduation.

**Yearly checklist: M.A. Program**

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	<b>Thesis Option</b>	<b>Capstone Option</b>
Semester 1	Coursework	Coursework

Semester 2	Coursework/Experiential Learning	Coursework/Experiential Learning
	File Status Selection form (Thesis)	File Status Selection form (Non-Thesis)
	Apply for Graduation	Apply for Graduation
Semester 3	Defend thesis proposal	Consult with committee capstone project
Semester 4	Defend thesis	Complete capstone project

## Department Policies

### Evaluations

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Student progress toward the PhD will be periodically evaluated by the graduate director and the graduate committee, depending on the students' progress towards their degree and program of study.

PhD students will be evaluated at the end of their first year with the goal of assessing progress towards degree. They will also be evaluated at the end of their second year with the goal of determining whether they will be allowed to continue with the PhD program or asked to leave with a terminal MA degree. Please see 'dismissal policies' for a deeper discussion of dismissals after the second-year review.

The graduate director will periodically review PhD student progress and may request the graduate committee to formally evaluate any student found to be making unsatisfactory progress towards their degree (e.g.; low grades, dropped courses, incomplete grades, failure to complete key milestones throughout the program of study).

### Coursework

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Courses older than ten years for the PhD and seven years for the MA cannot generally be counted for the degree. Students may file a [petition for deviation from college requirements](#); petitions may be granted in exceptional cases by the Director of Graduate Studies.

No course will count in which a student receives a grade lower than a C. Students may avail themselves of the College's Repeat to Replace Policy.

### Dishonesty Policy, Dismissal and Appeals

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The department of political science takes academic honesty very seriously. Cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the College. Penalties for academic dishonesty may range from receiving a failing grade to expulsion. Academic dishonesty and punishments associated with cases of academic dishonesty are described in the GSU student [Code of Conduct](#).

### Dismissal

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Students may be terminated from the graduate program for a number of reasons, including

(but not limited to): Plagiarism and academic dishonesty, failure to progress through the program, and failure to achieve minimum grade requirements (3.0 for MA, 3.4 for PhD students).

Failure to progress in your program of study is defined by failing to meet program milestones (outlined in section 5 of this handbook). Fulltime students who are not adhering to the schedule outlined in section 5 will receive a warning from the graduate director. If they continue to fall behind, the department may terminate them from their program. Similarly, students are expected to maintain the grades necessary for their program of study. MA students falling below a 3.0 GPA will be put on probation by the university and may be terminated by the department. PhD students failing to achieve a 3.4 (the minimum GPA required to take their qualifying exams) may be terminated from the program. Finally, direct admit PhD students failing to demonstrate the necessary skills required for PhD work by the end of their second year will be advised to leave the program with their MA degree or terminated from the PhD program.

Students wishing to appeal department decisions regarding termination, grades and exam results may do so in writing to the Department Chair.

Procedures for appealing grades are described in the [GSU Code of Conduct](#).

### **Classes Outside of the Department**

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The department will accept courses outside the department (with the advanced approval of the Graduate Director). The number and content of these classes varies by degree program. See the [university catalog](#) for a description of permissible course substitutions by degree program and concentration.

## **Advising & Mentoring**

### **Overall**

The Department and its faculty and students will adhere to the responsibilities laid out in the College of Arts and Sciences' Guidelines for Advising and Mentoring Graduate Students. The complete guidelines can be read at <https://cas.gsu.edu/files/2020/03/COAS-Graduate-Advising-Mentoring-Guidelines.pdf>. Failure of faculty or students to adhere to the responsibilities laid out in these Guidelines may lead to disciplinary action.

### **Responsibilities of the Graduate Faculty**

Know the requirements, policies, and deadlines of the program, the college, and the university and assist students in meeting them.

Discuss expectations for progress through program. Meet with students on a regular and ongoing basis. Provide direct, honest, timely, and constructive feedback regarding students' progress.

Discuss expectations and policies for the sharing of authorship and/or rights to intellectual property developed in research or in other creative or artistic activity. Explain the standards and norms for authorship in one's own discipline. Clarify who owns and can access data that is being collected and discuss issues of copyright and patent agreements that might occur.

Resolve conflicts in an appropriate manner and provide advisees with resources as necessary.

Model professional behavior/ethics and communicate behavioral expectations for the mentor/mentee relationship. Create an environment that is free from prejudice, intolerance, intimidation, humiliation and harassment.

Maintain professional relationships and boundaries between faculty and students at all times (e.g., do not enter into relationships, such as financial or romantic, with students that might compromise professional judgement or student success).

Foster professional development of students by advising on matters of conference presentation, networking, and selection of appropriate publication venues for research and creative efforts.

Promote advisee career development and commit to an ongoing mentoring relationship beyond graduation.

## **Responsibilities of the Graduate Students**

Know the requirements, policies and deadlines of the program, the college, and the university and take personal responsibility for meeting them.

Take responsibility for the development of one's own educational, research, and career goals. Develop a timeline and action plan for achieving these goals and review it with advisor and/or committee (depending on the discipline) at least annually.

Seek input and advise from multiple faculty members. Understand that one is likely to receive the most well-rounded educational experience by pursuing multiple types of mentoring relationships from faculty members throughout the course of one's program.

Communicate effectively with one's advisor in a professional, consistent, and clear manner. Recognize time constraints of faculty and staff and plan accordingly. Seek regular feedback on performance and be responsive and open to constructive criticism.

Maintain ethical standards when conducting research and engaging in scholarly activities. This includes compliance with institutional and federal regulations for human subject and animal research as well as institutional/disciplinary standards for copyright and plagiarism and expectations of granting agencies when working on federal, state or foundation grants.

Be an engaged member of the graduate community. Seek opportunities for networking and socializing with peers in the department as well as the college/university. Attend department, college, and university events and take advantage of professional development offerings to build diverse skills and expand networks.

## Assistantships

### Participating in the life of the department

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The Department has made an investment in your education and professional development. We expect you to be a regular and active participant in the life of the Department. As a condition of your assistantship, you will be expected to attend job talks, lectures, and other events sponsored by the Department. In addition, you may be called upon from time to time to help with such things as the recruitment of new graduate students or undergraduate majors, etc.

### Required teaching courses

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All doctoral students on assistantship must take the “teaching” course (POLS 8997) in their first year. All other doctoral students are strongly encouraged to take this course as well. Students should also take the ‘teaching 1101’ and ‘teaching 2401’ courses.

### Hours and Pay

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You must register, and remain registered, for 12 credit hours each semester by the appropriate deadlines. These include a full course load until you have completed the coursework component of your graduate program. Thus of the 12 hours, usually nine are coursework hours and three are registered as Research and/or Teaching internship. After coursework is complete, you should register each semester for nine hours of Thesis Research and three hours of Research or Teaching internship. Please note that the application of your tuition waiver, as well as your pay, is dependent upon you registering for 12 hours. Therefore, unless advised otherwise, in semesters you are taking comprehensive exams, you should register for three hours of Comprehensive Exam readings, nine hours of Thesis Research, and six hours of Research or Teaching internship.

You will be assigned to work for a specific faculty member or be placed in the GRA Pool whereby faculty can request help for specific projects. ***You are expected to work, on average, 12 hours per week.*** You are expected to perform your duties on campus during normal working hours (Monday – Friday, 8am-5pm). Exceptions to this expectation will be made for professional and academic reasons (including, but not limited to: class schedule, conference attendance, job interviews). If you have a professional or academic conflict which will prevent you from completing your assigned GRA task, you must contact the Graduate

Director prior to the conflict to work out a solution to cover your missed work.

You are expected to keep (in real time) a record of the work you have done and the number of hours you work each week and the tasks you have completed. This will help both you and the faculty member(s) you work with assess the appropriateness of assignments and deadlines given you as well as your performance as an assistant.

**You are responsible for verifying that your paycheck accords with the paperwork that you signed at the beginning of the semester or year.** Notify the Chair and Director of Graduate Studies immediately of any discrepancies. Please note that you will be held responsible for the difference if you are incorrectly overpaid. If you are underpaid, please keep in mind that it becomes increasingly difficult to ensure that you are fully paid the more time passes from the underpayment. The university's fiscal year ends on June 30 each year.

### **Absences and Disputes**

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Disputes or problems connected to the performance of your assistantship duties should be referred to the Director of Graduate Studies.

If a student is unable to complete his or her duties due to a medical or family emergency, he or she must contact the graduate director immediately and must provide documentation of the illness or emergency.

### **Work Duties**

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There are three general types of assignments: (1) availability in the GRA pool, (2) working with a specific faculty member, (3) teaching.

#### **Teaching**

More advanced students may be asked by the Department to serve as Graduate Student Instructors, with responsibility for teaching their own section of an introductory course.

#### **The Pool**

Students in the graduate student pool will be given short term assignments to faculty members or to department projects. If you are assigned to the GRA Pool, you are expected to promptly respond to emails from the pool director letting you know about your assignments; once assigned to a professor, you are expected to check in with that faculty member regularly. Unless otherwise specified, this should be at least weekly. You are also expected to keep the

pool director and the faculty member you are currently assigned to fully informed regarding any schedule changes or unforeseen events that bear upon your ability to perform your job.

### **Full semester assignments**

Some students will be assigned to a single faculty member, or to a department project, for the entire semester. If you are assigned to work for a specific faculty member, you are expected to check in with your assigned faculty member at regular intervals. Unless otherwise specified by your faculty member, this should be at least weekly. You are also expected to keep your faculty member fully informed regarding any schedule changes or unforeseen events that bear upon your ability to perform your job.

### **Assignment, Renewal & Revocation of Assistantships**

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Students enrolling in the PhD program receive priority for Department funding opportunities. Our goal, if funds allow, is to fund qualified PhD students making good progress for 4 years (5 for Direct Admit students). For students receiving Department funding for the first time in the second or subsequent year in the program, our goal, if funds allow, is to fund qualified students making good progress through their 5<sup>th</sup> year in the program. Barring exceptional circumstances, no student will receive Departmental funding after their 6<sup>th</sup> year in the Ph.D. program.

Assistantships are reviewed at the end of each calendar year. Assistantship assignments are subject to the needs of the department, your performance as an assistant, your academic performance, your adherence to department guidelines, and budget constraints.

Students who do not complete their assigned work (and are not excused from work due to a medical or family emergency) will receive a warning. Upon the second infraction, the student will be put on probation. If the student fails to complete an assigned task a 3<sup>rd</sup> time in a single semester, the students' assistantship will be revoked.

- Students on assistantship are expected to be full-time students.
- Any employment outside the department is limited to no more than 12 hours per week.
- All students on assistantship are expected to make satisfactory progress through their program of study. Satisfactory progress includes, but is not limited to, adhering to all deadlines stipulated in the Graduate Catalog.
- All students on assistantship who have completed at least 12 hours of coursework must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.7 or better, calculated from the date when the

student was first awarded an assistantship. Students receiving less than a 3.7 will have their records reviewed by the graduate committee, and may lose their assistantship.

- Any grade below a C received in a graduate seminar will result in a revocation of the student's assistantship.
- All students on assistantship must complete the requirements for any Incomplete within the two-semester limit established by the University. Failure to complete these requirements, reflected by the Incomplete automatically converting to an F, will result in an immediate revocation of the student's assistantship.
- All students on assistantship must abide by the University's Policy on Academic Honesty. Any student found guilty of violating the Academic Honesty Policy will be immediately removed from his/her assistantship.

### **Physical Presence Requirement**

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All students on Departmental funding are required to maintain a physical presence in the Atlanta area during the periods that they are on funding. Many of the work duties assigned to students on Departmental funding cannot be done remotely. Students can make a request for a temporary exception to this physical presence requirement for the completion of fieldwork for their dissertation, due to a personal or family medical emergency, or other unforeseen circumstances. Students making such a request should provide the Director of Graduate Studies with an explanation of the nature of the request and the expected duration of the requested exemption. The decision to grant such a request will be based on both the nature of the request and the availability of work duties that can be done remotely and for which the student is qualified.

## **Teaching Assignments for Students Not on Assistantship**

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The department may hire students who are not on assistantship to teach courses. The department will determine who is invited to teach these courses based on each student's,

1. Experience in teaching.
2. Quality of teaching.
3. Progress toward degree.
4. Standing in the program.
5. Ability to teach courses that the department needs to cover.

The department will typically pay PhD students \$3500 for each course. If the student is teaching only one course in a semester, a payment of \$1000 for research assistance will be added so as to ensure that the student will receive a tuition waiver.

Master's students will be paid \$2500 for each section of POLS 2401 or POLS 1101 taught. MA students will not be asked to teach the largest core course sections.

## **Forms & Resources**

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[Policies and Procedures](#)

[Academic Progress Requirements](#)

[Required Milestones](#)

[Graduate Clearance](#)

[Graduate Assistant Resources](#)

[Wellness Resources](#)

[Quick Links](#)

# **Political Science Graduate Catalog**

## **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

The doctor of philosophy (Ph.D.) prepares students for careers in research and teaching. Students enhance their skills by furthering their knowledge of the literature of the discipline, increasing their methodological ability, and writing a publishable dissertation. The Ph.D. program produces scholars who are experts in their substantive field of study and who are able to combine theoretical sophistication with methodological rigor.

Applicants may obtain additional information about the Department of Political Science by contacting the Director of Graduate Studies at the addresses above.

## Additional Admission Requirements

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In addition to the general requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of Political Science has the following requirements for the Ph.D. program:

- Have an acceptable cumulative master's grade-point average and substantial prior coursework in political science or a related field, preferably with a thesis.
- Submit three letters of recommendation from individuals who can evaluate the applicant's potential to do graduate work in political science.
- Submit official transcripts from all colleges and/or universities attended.
- Submit a statement of research interests and goals for political science degree.
- Submit a writing sample demonstrating graduate level research capabilities
- Applicants who intend to pursue comparative politics as their major field should have at least one year of college level training in a world language.

No grade below a C may be used towards the Ph.D. degree. In addition, because the field of political science changes so quickly, the department will not normally support the use of coursework and other qualifications older than ten years towards the Ph.D.

## Methods Requirements

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- [POLS 8800 - Elements of Research Design](#) **3 Credit Hours**
- [POLS 8805 - Introduction to Quantitative Analysis](#) **3 Credit Hours**
- [POLS 8810 - Uses of Intermediate Statistical Methods in Political Science Research](#) **3 Credit Hours**
- [POLS 8830 - Advanced Quantitative Methods](#) **3 Credit Hours**
- or
- [POLS 8840 - Qualitative Research Methods](#) **3 Credit Hours**
- Students intending to write their dissertations in Political Theory may make a request to the departmental Director of Graduate Studies that up to two of the four courses in the required methods sequence be waived. After consulting with the Director of Graduate Studies, students may also replace either POLS 8830 or 8840 with a doctoral-level political theory course.

## Remaining Doctoral Coursework

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An additional twenty-four hours of coursework beyond the M.A. (excluding the required methods sequence). For students without an M.A. in hand, thirty-six hours of coursework must be completed (excluding the required methods sequence).

Only 8000-level coursework in political science will be counted towards this requirement, unless other courses are specifically allowed by the Director of Graduate Studies.

## Distribution Requirement

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To ensure a broad knowledge of the discipline of Political Science, all students must take at least one course in a field that will not serve as a qualifying exam field. For the purposes of this requirement, the fields are: American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Politics, Political Theory, and Public Law. Students who wish to have their distribution requirement waived may appeal to the Director of Graduate Studies if they can show that an extra major field, minor field, or methods course is critical to their professional development. Students should choose their remaining courses in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies in accordance with the student's planned qualifying exam fields ([POLS 8100](#) to [POLS 8980](#)).

## Students without MA

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Students admitted to the program without a previously earned MA will earn an ‘MA in passing’ consisting of a rigorous research paper. Students completing this requirement will receive three (3) hours of degree credit under [POLS 8996](#) Research Internship. This requirement must be met by the completion of 33 hours of coursework.

## Qualifying Exams

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- All doctoral students must pass a written examination in one major and one minor field. For the purposes of this requirement, the fields are: American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Politics, Political Theory, Public Law, and Research Methods. All students are expected to take their qualifying exams after completing no more than 42 credit hours of coursework in political science at Georgia State beyond the M.A. In order to take these exams, a student must have a 3.4 grade-point average in political science courses taken in the Ph.D. program at Georgia State

University. Students who do not have the required 3.4 GPA for graduate Political Science courses taken at Georgia State after 36 hours will be issued a *scholastic warning*. Students who have failed to achieve the required 3.4 GPA to take the qualifying exams after 42 hours will be subject to *scholastic termination*. Direct-admit doctoral students must have taken at least four (4) courses in their major field and at least three (3) courses in their minor field. Post-MA doctoral students must have taken at least three (3) courses in their major field and at least two (2) course in their minor field. (Students taking Qualifying Exams in Research Methods may not count POLS 8800, 8805, or 8810 towards the three-course requirement). Students must register for three (3) hours of [POLS 8900](#) Comprehensive Readings during the semester of the exams, and these hours will count towards their degree. Students may take the exams twice if necessary.

## Professionalization/ Research Presentation Requirement

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All doctoral students will be required by the time they have completed 36 hours of coursework to present a major research paper at the annual GSA Graduate Student Conference or another conference approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. Doctoral students will also be expected to attend Departmental colloquia, workshops, and other events and presentations on a regular basis as part of their ongoing professionalization activities.

## Research Course Requirement

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- At least twenty hours of [POLS 8999 - Thesis Research](#) 1 to 17 Credit Hours

## Dissertation Proposal

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Students must defend their dissertation proposal no later than 90 days after having completed the qualifying exams.

## Dissertation

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Dissertation written and approved by a three-member faculty committee. The chair and at least one member of this committee must come from the department's graduate faculty, but the third member may come from the graduate faculty of another department at Georgia State University. Subject to the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, additional

members beyond the required three may also come from outside the university, normally among members of the political science graduate faculty at a Ph.D. granting institution.

## Mentoring and Evaluation

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- **First Year Review:** Based on each first year doctoral student's research interests, he or she will be assigned a faculty mentor in that area. All doctoral students will be evaluated at the end of their first year by the Department's graduate faculty as to their performance in the program to date. An unsatisfactory review may result in dismissal from the program.
- **Second Year Review:** All doctoral students will again be evaluated at the end of their second year by the Department's graduate faculty as to their performance in the program to date. An unsatisfactory review may result in dismissal from the program.

## Online Coursework Approval

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Ph.D. students must have approval from the Director of Graduate Studies to count online courses towards their degree.

## Graduate Assistants

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Graduate assistants are required to enroll for a minimum of 12 credit hours each for the fall/spring semesters and 9 credit hours for the summer semester. These credit hours will consist of courses required for the prescribed program of study, as well as additional hours of [POLS 8996](#), [POLS 8997](#), [POLS 8998](#), and [POLS 8999](#).

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# **Political Science Graduate Catalog**

## **MASTERS OF ARTS**

The purpose of the Master of Arts (M.A.) degree program is to guide students in the development of analytical and critical capabilities through inquiry into political and governmental processes. The objective of the program is to provide education for persons interested in pursuing careers in research, teaching, or the professional practice of public service and politics. Students can choose a degree program that will provide them with a general knowledge of the discipline, or one that will provide them with a specialization in American politics, international and comparative politics, or the professional practices of government and politics.

Applicants may obtain additional information about the Department of Political Science by contacting the Director of Graduate Studies at the addresses above.

## Additional Admission Requirements

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In addition to the general requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of Political Science has the following requirements for the M.A. program:

- Have an acceptable cumulative undergraduate grade-point average and the equivalent of at least a minor in political science.
- Submit two letters of recommendation from individuals who can evaluate the applicant's potential to do graduate work in political science or a related field.
- Submit official transcripts from all colleges and/or universities applicant has attended.
- Submit a statement of research interest and goals for political science degree.
- Submit a writing sample demonstrating graduate level research capabilities

No grade below a C may be used towards the M.A. degree. In addition, because the field of political science changes so quickly, the department will not normally support the use of coursework and other qualifications older than seven years towards the M.A.

## Degree Requirements

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Both masters and doctoral students must be registered for a minimum of three (3) semester hours the semester of completion of all degree requirements.

## Methods Sequence

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Students should select from the following two methods tracks. Those planning to apply for a PhD should strongly consider the advanced track.

a. Regular methods track:

1. [POLS 6800](#) Research Design and Applied Data Analysis (3)

b. Advanced methods track:

1. [POLS 6800 /POLS 8800](#) Elements of Research Design (3)
2. [POLS 8805](#) Introduction to Quantitative Analysis (3)
3. Either [POLS 8810](#) Uses of Intermediate Statistical Methods in Political Science Research or [POLS 8840](#) Qualitative Research Methods (3).

## Experiential Learning Project (3, 6, or 9 hours)

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- a. Students may elect to complete one internship or other experiential learning module for up to 9 credit hours.
- b. This experience is a core element of the professional politics concentration, but students in other concentrations may substitute it for two elective courses.
- c. Experiential learning projects must receive the advance permission of the departmental M.A. Director or the Director of Graduate Studies.
- d. Each three hour segment of Experiential Learning requires the equivalent of 10-15 hours per week of work for one semester. This can be in the form of an internship or employment acquired by the student, a project through the Georgia Municipal Association, a study abroad program, or other relevant experience.
- e. Students should select a faculty advisor for their project and complete the required experiential learning form. Faculty advisors will generally require students to keep a journal of the work that they are performing and/or to complete a paper.
- f. Students will register for [POLS 8995](#) Administrative & Policy Internship the semester they complete this project.
- g. Students may also partially fulfill the requirement by taking [PMAP 8900](#), the project consulting-based capstone course in the Andrew Young School's M.P.P. degree program.

## **M.A. Final Project (3 or 6 hours)**

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All M.A. students must complete a final project for their degree program, either in the form of a thesis or a capstone project. The thesis is a larger project of original research which is worth 6 hours of credit, while the capstone is a smaller project - either of original research or of a more pre-professional orientation - worth 3 hours of credit.

### **Thesis (6 hours)**

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A thesis project in which the student will complete a piece of original research under the supervision of three or more faculty members. Thesis projects will require a formal defense of both the prospectus and the final paper. This option is strongly recommended for students considering a Ph.D.

### **Capstone Project (3 hours)**

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A capstone project in which the student will complete a project under the supervision of two or more faculty members. This project may constitute a research paper completed according to departmental guidelines, or it may be a more practical project such as the development of a new curriculum or a policy analysis paper. This requirement is worth three hours of credit. Student wishing to complete a full thesis are exempt.

# Concentration Requirements

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## Political Science, M.A., American Politics Concentration

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Required for concentration in American Politics

- a. [POLS 6100 / POLS 8100](#)
- b. Additional graduate Political Science courses required to complete 30 total hours of coursework. The number of courses needed will vary depending on the student's methods track and completion of experiential learning or thesis hours. All but one course should be chosen from American politics or public law offerings. One course should be chosen from another sub-field as a distribution requirement.

## Political Science, M.A., General Political Science

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Required for concentration in General Political Science

- c. [POLS 6100 /POLS 8100, POLS 6200/POLS 8200, or POLS 6400/POLS 8400.](#)
- d. Additional graduate Political Science courses required to complete 30 total hours of coursework. The number of courses needed will vary depending on the student's methods track and completion of experiential learning or thesis hours. Students should take one course in three of the five major areas of study. These areas include American government and politics, comparative politics, international politics, political theory and public law.

## Political Science, M.A., International and Comparative Politics Concentration

Required for concentration in International & Comparative Politics

- e. [POLS 6200/POLS 8200](#)
- f. [POLS 6400/POLS 8400](#)
- g. Additional graduate Political Science courses required to complete 30 total hours of coursework. The number of courses needed will vary depending on the student's methods track and completion of experiential learning or thesis hours. All but one course should be chosen from the areas of comparative and international politics. One course should be chosen from another sub-field as a distribution requirement.

# Political Science, M.A., Political Science for Educators Concentration

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Required for concentration in Political Science for Educators

- h. Core seminars in a sub-fields of political science. Choose one:
  - i. [POLS 6100/POLS 8100](#) American Politics (3)
  - ii. [POLS 6200/POLS 8200](#) Comparative Politics (3)
  - iii. [POLS 6400/POLS 8400](#) International Politics (3)
- i. Courses in the teaching of political science
  - i. [POLS 6987](#) Teaching Politics with Simulations (3)
  - ii. [POLS 6988](#) Teaching American Citizenship (3)

- j. Additional graduate Political Science courses in at least two sub-fields to complete 30 total hours of coursework. The number of courses needed will vary depending on the student's methods track and completion of experiential learning or thesis hours.
- k. A capstone project under the supervision of two faculty members (3 hours).
  - i. This project should include a “deliverable,” which may be a research paper, a policy memo, an innovation teaching strategy, or something else.
  - ii. Students undertaking this project should register for [POLS 8990](#): Capstone Project.

## Political Science, M.A., Professional Politics Concentration

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Required for concentration in Professional Politics

- a. [POLS 6100/POLS 8100](#) Seminar in American Politics (3)
- b. Select one course:
  - i. [POLS 8110](#) State Politics (3)
  - ii. [POLS 6158](#) Campaign Organization and Management (3)
  - iii. [POLS 6139](#) Interbranch Politics (3)

- iv. Necessary substitutions can be made with the advance permission of the Director of Graduate Studies.
- c. Select one course:
  - i. [POLS 6200/POLS 8200](#) Seminar in Comparative Politics (3)
  - ii. [POLS 6400/POLS 8400](#) Seminar in International Politics (3)  
Necessary substitutions can be made with the advance permission of the Director of Graduate Studies.
- d. Additional graduate Political Science courses in at least two sub-fields to complete 30 total hours of coursework. The number of courses needed will vary depending on the student's methods track and completion of experiential learning or thesis hours. The courses should be selected to strengthen knowledge of practice areas related to a student's professional goals.
- e. A capstone project under the supervision of two faculty members (3 hours).
  - i. This project should include a "deliverable," which may be a research paper, a policy memo, an innovation teaching strategy, or something else.
  - ii. Students undertaking this project should register for [POLS 8990](#): Capstone Project.

## Concentration Requirements (Minimum of 30 Credit Hours)

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This concentration provides the professional skills needed by those pursuing career paths in public service, politics, lobbying and advocacy. It is offered as a terminal degree with a non-thesis option and can be undertaken in a traditional classroom setting, fully online, or hybridized.

## Methods Sequence

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Students may choose between a regular and an advanced methods track.

### Regular Methods Track

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- [POLS 6800 - Research Design](#) **3 Credit Hours**

### Advanced Methods Track

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- [POLS 6800 - Research Design](#) **3 Credit Hours**
- *or*
- [POLS 8800 - Elements of Research Design](#) **3 Credit Hours**

- [POLS 8805 - Introduction to Quantitative Analysis](#) **3 Credit Hours**
- [POLS 8810 - Uses of Intermediate Statistical Methods in Political Science Research](#) **3 Credit Hours**  
*or*
- [POLS 8840 - Qualitative Research Methods](#) **3 Credit Hours**

## Required Course

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- [POLS 6100 - Seminar in American Politics](#) **3 Credit Hours**

## Select One Course

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- [POLS 8110 - State Politics](#) **3 Credit Hours**
- [POLS 6158 - Campaigns and Elections](#) **3 Credit Hours**
- [POLS 6139 - Separation of Powers](#) **3 Credit Hours**

## Select One Course

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Necessary substitutions can be made with the advance permission of the Director of Graduate Studies.

- [POLS 6200 - Comparative Politics Analysis](#) 3 Credit Hours
- [POLS 6400 - International Politics](#) 3 Credit Hours

## Additional Graduate Courses (9 Hours)

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Three additional graduate Political Science courses (9 hours) for students on the regular methods track. One additional graduate Political Science course (3 hours) for students on the advanced methods track. These should be selected to strengthen knowledge of practice areas related to a student's professional goals.

## Experiential Learning Project (up to 9 Hours)

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Students must complete one experiential learning project for up to 9 credit hours; students may choose to find an internship with an organization or political campaign or create another experiential learning project related to their main practice area. All experiential learning projects must receive the advance permission of the Director of Graduate Studies before students will be allowed to register for [POLS 8995 - Administrative/Policy Internship](#) hours. Student progress will be monitored by a faculty member through regular reports and a final paper. Students may choose to take an additional 3 hours of experiential learning as a substitute for one graduate course with the advance permission of the Director of Graduate Studies.

## Up to Two Courses (6 Hours)

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Up to two courses (6 hours) in departments outside of Political Science may be used if relevant and with advance permission of the Director of Graduate Studies.

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## Political Science, M.A., Public Law Specialization

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Required for specialization in Public Law

- a. [POLS 6100/POLS 8100, POLS 6200/POLS 8200](#) or [POLS 6400/POLS 8400](#)
- b. [POLS 8140](#)
- c. [POLS 8145](#)
- d. Additional graduate Political Science courses required to complete 30 total hours of coursework. The number of courses needed will vary depending on the student's methods track and completion of experiential learning or thesis hours. All but one course should be taken in public law or in public law related fields. One course should be chosen from another sub-field as a distribution requirement.

## Political Science, B.A./M.A.

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The department offers a dual Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in Political Science. The dual degree opportunity enables qualified students to enroll in graduate courses late in their undergraduate program and

apply the coursework toward both the bachelor's and master's programs. Typically, students apply four graduate Political Science courses (12 hours) to their undergraduate degree requirements in Area H.

Students must be formally accepted into the dual degree program by the department and College of Arts and Sciences to be able to take graduate courses as an undergraduate. Additionally, acceptance into the dual program does not constitute admission to the master's program. Students must fulfill regular graduate admissions requirements and apply for the master's program following college processes. Once admitted, they will need to fulfill the regular M.A. requirements listed above for each concentration, though they may take up to 9 experiential learning hours ([POLS 8995 - Administrative/Policy Internship](#)) as a substitute for general required courses.

Information about the dual program, including application instructions and program requirements, can be found at [cas.gsu.edu/dual-degrees/](https://cas.gsu.edu/dual-degrees/).

# PhD Qualifying Exam Guidelines by Subfield

*Note: These guidelines are subject to change. Please check with a faculty member in the relevant subfield for advisement.*

## **International Politics**

Students must take:

1. POLS 8400: International Politics
2. One course in two (for the major) or one (for the minor) of the following subfields:
  - a. International Governance (POLS 8421: International Organizations and Institutions, 8422: NGOs and World Politics, POLS 8427: Politics of Human Rights, or POLS 8490: International Law)
  - b. International Political Economy (POLS 8430: International Political Economy)
  - c. International Security (POLS 8470: Military Conflict and International Security or POLS 8490: Conflict and Development)
  - d. International Political Culture (POLS 8490: Constructivism or POLS 8485: Ethics of International Relations)
  - e. Foreign Policy (POLS 8490: Foreign Policy or POLS 8490: Domestic Politics and International Relations)

To complete their sequences, students may take:

Any additional POLS 84XX course.

Structure of the Comprehensive Exam:

Major Field: Choice of one out of two questions covering the core theories of IR (Part 1) Choice of two questions from a list of multiple options (Part 2). The questions answered should cover different subfields, and the committee

will ask one question related to each IR graduate course in a subfield taken by the students being tested in a given semester.

Minor Field: Choice of one out of two questions covering the core theories of IR.

### **Political Theory**

Students must take:

POLS 8560: Classical and Early Modern Political Thought  
POLS 8570: Modern Political Thought

To complete their sequences, students may take:

Any additional graduate Political Theory courses.

### **American Politics**

Students must take:

POLS 8100: American Political Behavior  
POLS 8105: American Political Institutions

To complete their sequences, students may take:

Any additional graduate American Politics courses

Structure of the Comprehensive Exam:

Major Field: 3 questions: Choose 1 broad question (out of 2), then choose 1 institutions question (out of 2), and 1 behavior question (out of 2).

Minor Field: 1 question: Choose 1 broad question (out of 2) to answer.

### **Comparative Politics**

Students must take:

POLS8200: Comparative Political Analysis

POLS8205: Comparative Political Change

To complete their sequences, students may take:

POLS8210: Democratic Construction and Decay

POLS8220: Authoritarian Survival and Collapse

POLS8230: Political Violence and Regime Transition

POLS8240: Comparative Political Behavior

POLS8250: Comparative Political Economy

Any other graduate course in Comparative Politics, including POLS8290: Studies in Comparative Politics

Structure of the Comprehensive Exam:

Major Field: 3 questions: answer 1 broad mandatory question (out of 1), and then chose 2 additional questions from a list of at least 5 questions from core courses of the comparative curriculum.

Minor Field: 1 questions: answer 1 broad mandatory question (out of 1).

### **Public Law**

Students must take:

POLS8140: Judicial Process  
POLS8145: Law, Courts, and Policy

To complete their sequences, students may take:

Any other graduate courses in Judicial Politics

Structure of the Comprehensive Exam:

Major Field: 3 questions: answer 1 broad mandatory question (out of 1), then choose 2 additional questions from a list of at least 3 questions.

Minor Field: 1 question: answer 1 broad mandatory question (out of 1).

### **Research Methods**

Students must take:

POLS 8800: Research Design  
POLS 8805: Introduction to Quantitative Research  
POLS 8810: Regression Analysis  
POLS 8830: Advanced Quantitative

**POLS 8840: Advanced Qualitative**

To complete their sequence, students may take:

Any additional graduate Research methods course; courses outside the department may be substituted with Graduate Director approval

Structure of the Comprehensive Exam:

Major Field: Students may not take Research Methods as their major field

Minor Field: 2 questions. Students must answer one broad question that covers theoretical material relevant to multiple courses in the field, then choose one out of two more specific questions to answer.