POLITICAL SCIENCE, PHD

The Department of Political Science offers graduate study leading to the doctor of philosophy in political science. The department admits students only for the PhD program, but a master's degree may be obtained en route to the PhD.

The PhD is earned through a combination of coursework and dissertation. The program is designed to provide students with both general training in political science and the opportunity to specialize in their areas of interest.

The subfields of political science found in our department are American politics (https://polisci.wisc.edu/american-politics/), comparative politics (https://polisci.wisc.edu/comparative-politics/), political theory (https://polisci.wisc.edu/political-theory/), international relations (https://polisci.wisc.edu/international-relations/), and political methodology (https://polisci.wisc.edu/political-methodology/). The department has a national and international reputation for the high quality of its faculty and the diversity of their approaches and interests. It has long been recognized for an acceptance of varied approaches to the study of politics and for its collegiality. The Political Science Department shares faculty with the Robert M. La Follette School of Public Affairs (http://www.lafollette.wisc.edu/), the Law School (http://www.law.wisc.edu/), and the Department of Gender and Women's Studies (http://womenstudies.wisc.edu/). The presence of programs and centers such as the African Studies Program (http://africa.wisc.edu/), the Center for European Studies (https://europe.wisc.edu/), the Center for Jewish Studies (http://jewishstudies.wisc.edu/), the Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia (CREECA) (http://www.creeca.wisc.edu/), Integrated Liberal Studies (http://ils.wisc.edu/), the International Studies major (BA (https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/letters-science/institute-regional-international-studies/international-studies-ba/) and BS (https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/letters-science/institute-regional-international-studies/international-studies-bs/)), Latin American, Caribbean and Iberian Studies (http://www.lacis.wisc.edu/), and others is also beneficial to our graduate students, providing opportunities for the advancement of interdisciplinary approaches in student research.

ADMISSIONS

ADMISSIONS

Please consult the table below for key information about this degree program's admissions requirements. The program may have more detailed admissions requirements, which can be found below the table or on the program's website.

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic programs and the Graduate School. ***Applicants must meet* the minimum requirements *(https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/requirements/) of the Graduate School as well as the program(s).*** Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/).

Requirements	Detail
Fall Deadline	December 15
Spring Deadline	The program does not admit in the spring.
Summer Deadline	The program does not admit in the summer.
GRE (Graduate Record Examinations)	Not required.
English Proficiency Test	Every applicant whose native language is not English, or whose undergraduate instruction was not exclusively in English, must provide a minimum TOEFL (iBT) test score of 100 earned within two years of the anticipated term of enrollment. International applicants will only be admitted if they meet this minimum proficiency requirement.
Other Test(s) (e.g., GMAT, MCAT)	n/a
Letters of Recommendation Required	3

Applicants to the Political Science PhD program must apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/apply/) by the deadline for admission the following fall. The online application requires you to complete the Graduate School application, Political Science supplemental application, and provide the names and email addresses of three references who can attest to your success as a graduate student. In addition, you must also upload a statement of reasons for graduate study that is two pages in length, a resume or CV, scanned unofficial transcripts, and one research paper with an abstract.

It is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that all materials are delivered on time.

FUNDING

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GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding/) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and restrictions related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

The department currently guarantees at least five years of financial support to all students admitted to the doctoral program, assuming they are making satisfactory progress toward their degrees. This funding may be in the form of fellowships, teaching assistantships, or project assistantships. All appointments receive valuable benefits such as tuition remission and eligibility for excellent health insurance.

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/

#policiesandrequirementstext), in addition to the program requirements listed below.

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Face to Face	Evening/ Weekend	Online	Hybrid	Accelerated
Yes	No	No	No	No

Mode of Instruction Definitions

Accelerated: Accelerated programs are offered at a fast pace that condenses the time to completion. Students typically take enough credits aimed at completing the program in a year or two.

Evening/Weekend: Courses meet on the UW–Madison campus only in evenings and/or on weekends to accommodate typical business schedules. Students have the advantages of face-to-face courses with the flexibility to keep work and other life commitments.

Face-to-Face: Courses typically meet during weekdays on the UW-Madison Campus.

Hybrid: These programs combine face-to-face and online learning formats. Contact the program for more specific information.

Online: These programs are offered 100% online. Some programs may require an on-campus orientation or residency experience, but the courses will be facilitated in an online format.

CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS

Requirement	Detail
Minimum Credit Requirement	51 credits
Minimum Residence Credit Requirement	51 credits
Minimum Graduate Coursework Requirement	26 credits must be graduate-level coursework. Refer to the Graduate School: Minimum Graduate Coursework (50%) Requirement policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1244/).
Overall Graduate GPA Requirement	3.00 GPA required. Refer to the Graduate School: Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1203/).
Other Grade Requirements	No other grade requirements.
Assessments and Examinations	Take and pass two general prelims from the specified list (International Relations, American Politics, Comparative Politics, Political Theory, Political Methodology) in June following your fourth semester. Doctoral students must complete exams in two subfields before the end of the sixth semester. Produce an approved dissertation proposal before the start of the seventh semester, which must be defended prior to the start of the seventh semester in the program. Write, defend and deposit a dissertation of an acceptable standard that makes an original contribution to knowledge.
Language Requirements	No language requirements.
Graduate School Breadth Requirement	All doctoral students are required to complete a doctoral minor or graduate/professional certificate. Refer to the Graduate School: Breadth Requirement in Doctoral Training policy: https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1200 (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1200/). Students are expected to consult with their advisors concerning the breadth requirement. At the time the student requests the preliminary exam warrant, a summary should be prepared of the effort in interdisciplinary coursework and training. All Option B minors require the approval of the student's advisor and the associate chair. With program approval, students may be allowed to count 9 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions toward fulfillment of the minor Option B requirement.

REQUIRED COURSES

The PhD is earned through a combination of coursework and dissertation. The program is designed to provide students with both a general training in political science and the opportunity to specialize in their areas of interest. The subfields of political science found in our department are American politics (https://polisci.wisc.edu/american-politics/), comparative politics (https://polisci.wisc.edu/comparative-politics/), political theory and philosophy (https://polisci.wisc.edu/political-theory/), international relations (https://polisci.wisc.edu/international-relations/), and political methodology (https://polisci.wisc.edu/political-methodology/). Each student will select a first field and a second field. The first field is the field within which the student expects to write a doctoral dissertation. The second field complements and supports the first field and the student's intellectual and research interests.

Code	Title	Credits
Core		
Students must complete the following courses.		

POLI SCI 800	Political Science as a Discipline and Profession (Must be done in the first semester)	1
POLI SCI 817	Empirical Methods of Political Inquiry	3
POLI SCI 801	Dissertation Proposal Research and Writing Seminar	3
Statistical Methodology Coursework-Graduate Level		**3**
While POLI SCI 812 is the course usually completed to satisfy this requirement, in consultation with the Department and Methods Field Chair, these credits may be taken in another department.		
Breadth Requirement		**9**
Workshops		
Students must complete any requirements specificed by the student's primary subfield, like presenting at a workshop. Depending on the subfield, students may enroll in the following courses, which may be applied toward the minimum credit requirement.		
POLI SCI 986	Political Theory Workshop	1-3
POLI SCI 987	Comparative Politics Colloquium	1-3
POLI SCI 988	International Relations Colloquium	1-3
POLI SCI 989	American Politics Workshop	1

First Year Assessment

Students must meet with advisor to discuss the faculty's First Year Assessment of your progress in the program by the start of the third semester.

Dissertation Idea Presentations

Students must present one or more possible dissertation ideas to a committee with a minimum of two faculty members no later than September 15th of the fifth semester.

Conference Level Research Paper

Students must submit a conference level research paper for review by January 15 before start of sixth semester.

POLICIES

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School's Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions

With program approval, students may be allowed to count prior coursework from other institutions toward fulfillment of courses used to meet the breadth requirement. While satisfying the breadth requirement, these courses will not count toward meeting the minimum credit requirement. Coursework earned ten years or more prior to admission to a doctoral degree is not allowed to satisfy requirements.

Undergraduate Credits Earned at Other Institutions or UW-Madison

No credits from an undergraduate degree are allowed to transfer.

Credits Earned as a Professional Student at UW-Madison (Law, Medicine, Pharmacy, and Veterinary careers)

No credits from a UW–Madison Professional Special student career are allowed to transfer.

Credits Earned as a University Special Student at UW–Madison

No credits from a UW–Madison University Special student career are allowed to transfer.

PROBATION

Refer to the Graduate School: Probation (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1217/) policy.

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE

All students are required to meet with their advisor to discuss the first-year review and must meet with their advisor at the start of each semester.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED

15 credits

TIME LIMITS

Refer to the Graduate School: Time Limits (https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1221/) policy. There are also time limits related to preliminary examinations and other program requirements that are documented in the Graduate Program Handbook (see Contact Information box).

GRIEVANCES AND APPEALS

These resources may be helpful in addressing your concerns:

- Bias or Hate Reporting (https://doso.students.wisc.edu/bias-or-hate-reporting/)
- Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp/#grievance-procedure)
- Hostile and Intimidating Behavior Policies and Procedures (https://hr.wisc.edu/hib/)
  - Office of the Provost for Faculty and Staff Affairs (https://facstaff.provost.wisc.edu/)
- Employee Assistance (http://www.eao.wisc.edu/) (for personal counseling and workplace consultation around communication and conflict involving graduate assistants and other employees, post-doctoral students, faculty and staff)
- Employee Disability Resource Office (https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/) (for qualified employees or applicants with disabilities to have equal employment opportunities)
- Graduate School (https://grad.wisc.edu/) (for informal advice at any level of review and for official appeals of program/departmental or school/college grievance decisions)
- Office of Compliance (https://compliance.wisc.edu/) (for class harassment and discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence)
- Office Student Assistance and Support (OSAS) (https://osas.wisc.edu/) (for all students to seek grievance assistance and support)

- Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/) (for conflicts involving students)
- Ombuds Office for Faculty and Staff (http://www.ombuds.wisc.edu/) (for employed graduate students and post-docs, as well as faculty and staff)
- Title IX (https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/) (for concerns about discrimination)

Students should contact the department chair or program director with questions about grievances. They may also contact the L&S Academic Divisional Associate Deans, the L&S Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning Administration, or the L&S Director of Human Resources.

OTHER

The department currently guarantees at least five years of financial support to all students admitted to the doctoral program, assuming they are making satisfactory progress toward their degrees. This funding may be in the form of fellowships, teaching assistantships, or project assistantships. All appointments receive valuable fringe benefits such as excellent health insurance and tuition remission.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Take advantage of the Graduate School's professional development resources (https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Department of Political Science PhD students are encouraged to participate in our weekly workshops and colloquia. The workshops and colloquia offered in the department are the American Politics Workshop (https://sites.google.com/view/uwpolisciapw/home/), Comparative Politics Colloquium (https://sites.google.com/wisc.edu/cpcwisc/home/), International Relations Colloquium (https://sites.google.com/view/ircwisc/), Political Economy Colloquium (https://sites.google.com/wisc.edu/pecwisc/home/), MEAD – Models and Data Workshop (https://sites.google.com/view/meadwisc/home/), and the Political Theory Workshop (https://sites.google.com/view/uwmadisonptw/home/).

Workshops are one of the most important intellectual spaces in the department, providing an opportunity to become exposed to cutting-edge research and a chance to meet with scholars from other universities. In addition to featuring faculty papers and outside speakers, the workshops are an integral part of graduate training, serving as a place for students to present papers, as well as dissertation prospectuses, grant proposals, dissertation chapters, and practice job talks.

The department also hosts the Political Science Graduate Workshop (PSGW), which focuses on personal and professional development for graduate students in the department. The PSGW's mission is to "foster communication and information-sharing among the grad students and faculty members of the political science department and to promote professional development opportunities for the grad students." The topics covered in PSGW range from topics in graduate life (health and balance, financial life) to discipline professional development (publishing, communications). This workshop convenes several times per semester each academic year.

The department also actively supports our students throughout their job search. The Director of Graduate Studies and the major advisors review all job market materials such as CVs, writing samples, and diversity and teaching statements. In addition, the department arranges special informational sessions, mock interviews, and practice job talks to prepare students for the kinds of questions they will face from potential employers. This support complements other departmental activities designed to professionalize graduate students, including brown bag discussions about attending professional conferences, publishing opportunities, and seeking grant funding.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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1. Master the state of existing research in two or more subfields of political science.
2. Acquire expert knowledge of methods of political inquiry.
3. Design, conduct, and complete original research of substantive value to the field of political science that makes and original contribution to knowledge.
4. Master the communication of complex concepts to a range of audiences.
5. Demonstrate and foster ethical and professional conduct in research, teaching, and service.

PEOPLE

PEOPLE

For a complete faculty directory, visit our website (https://polisci.wisc.edu/faculty-2/).