

POLITICAL SCIENCE (MA)



Master of Arts in Political Science

Unit: College of Arts and Sciences (<https://louisville.edu/artsandsciences/intro/>) (GA)

Department: Political Science (<https://louisville.edu/politicalscience/>)
Program Website (<https://louisville.edu/politicalscience/graduate-studies-2/>)

Academic Plan Code(s): POLSMA, POLSMA_ACC

Program Information

The Department of Political Science, in the College of Arts and Sciences, offers graduate training leading to the Master of Arts degree. In addition, the Department participates in a joint degree program with the Brandeis School of Law.

The MA is designed to allow a student to pursue a degree either full or part time. Most graduate-level courses are offered in the evening. The MA is oriented toward those who wish to pursue advanced training in political science or a position in the public, private, or non-profit sector.

The Department of Political Science is especially strong in two fields of study: International Politics and American Politics. Students are encouraged to concentrate their coursework in one of these fields.

The field of International Politics includes comparative politics and international relations. Members of the Department faculty are experts in the politics of Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, Asia, North America, and Europe; they also study human rights, international law, diplomacy, religion and political violence, and climate change, among many other areas. The Center for Asian Democracy also has dedicated faculty and post-doctoral students who lend their expertise to the Department and organize public events.

The field of American Politics involves the study of U.S. political institutions, political behavior, and public policy. Members of the Department faculty possess expertise in law and public policy, political psychology, race and American politics, judicial decision making, religion and democracy, environmental policy, gender, sexuality, and politics, and urban politics.

Accelerated BA-BS/MA

The Department of Political Science also offers its undergraduate majors an opportunity to earn both a BA (or BS) degree and an MA degree at an accelerated pace. This program allows students to complete nine (9) credit hours of graduate coursework while enrolled as undergraduate

students. With instructor permission, additional graduate courses beyond the 9 hours may be taken but may only count for one degree (either the BA/BS or the MA).

Interested students should apply to the program during their Junior year (i.e., when they have accumulated 60-90 hours of credit). Students must be political science majors with a GPA of approximately 3.2 or higher.

To apply, students must obtain two letters of recommendation from faculty attesting to their ability to do high-quality academic work at the graduate level. Students must also write a personal statement where they describe their professional or occupational objectives, areas of interest in political science, and how the department's program (and specific faculty) will help to achieve those objectives. The GRE is not required.

Joint MA/JD Program

The Department of Political Science offers a joint MA/JD program in partnership with the Brandeis School of Law. This program generally allows the student to obtain the MA and JD degrees in a four-year course of study.

Student participating in the dual degree program will be able to combine Law courses and Political Science courses to create well-defined concentrations of study. Examples include environmental law and politics, negotiations and dispute resolution, administrative law and politics, federalism, international law and politics, comparative law and politics, civil rights and liberties, constitutional law and politics, and race, law, and politics.

Students in the JD/MA program must complete 81 hours in the JD curriculum (instead of the normal 90 hours) and either 21 hours in the MA curriculum (instead of the normal 30 hours) for the Thesis Option or 27 hours in the MA curriculum (instead of the normal 36 hours) for the Non-thesis Option.

To be admitted into the program, the student must (1) apply to, (2) meet the admission requirements of, and (3) be accepted by both the Brandeis School of Law and the Department of Political Science.

Admission Requirements

Admission into the MA program is competitive.

The procedures for admission into the MA program are as follows:

- Submit a completed graduate application (<http://louisville.edu/graduate/futurestudents/apply-materials/application/>) and application fee to the Graduate School. Priority application deadlines and assistantship deadlines may vary from year to year, but are posted on the Department of Political Science Graduate Program website (<https://louisville.edu/politicalscience/graduate-studies-2/>).
- Forward official transcripts verifying the receipt of a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution to the Graduate School. An applicant must hold a BA or BS (or foreign equivalent) before admission to the program can be granted. Applicants selected for the program have generally earned a 3.0 undergraduate GPA overall or a 3.2 undergraduate GPA in the last 60 credit hours or the equivalent.
- Provide two letters of recommendation from individuals familiar with the applicant's academic performance. Professional letters from employers are acceptable only when a substantial time has elapsed since the applicant has attended an academic institution.

- d. A typed personal statement of about 300-500 words is required. Please explain your reasons for applying to the master's program in political science at the University of Louisville. Discuss your professional or occupational objectives and how you envision the department's program fitting into those objectives. Describe the areas of political science you find especially interesting for study and/or research and identify the political science faculty with whom you might be interested in working.
- e. International applicants are required to take the TOEFL, IELTS or Duolingo examination if English is not the native language. TOEFL scores of 79 or higher on the internet-based test, 213 or higher on the computer-based test. English proficiency can also be met by submitting official IELTS scores of at least 6.5 overall band score from the academic module exam or official Duolingo overall score of 105. Students holding a bachelor's or advanced degree from an accredited institution in the United States may be exempt from this requirement.

The Department may accept applicants who do not meet these requirements on a conditional basis if sufficient additional evidence of promise of success in the graduate program can be shown. No student will be admitted unconditionally until all materials listed above have been received.

Program Requirements

Students may select from one of three options for their graduate studies:

- The general MA in Political Science (thesis),
- The general MA in Political Science (non-thesis)

The curricula for these options are described below.

Thesis Option

Code	Title	Hours
POLS 670	Research Design	3
POLS 671	Introduction to Data Analysis	3
POLS 619	Seminar in Public Policy	3
POLS 629	Seminar in American Politics	3
POLS 639	Seminar in International Relations	3
POLS 649	Seminar in Comparative Politics	3
Electives *		6
POLS 699	Thesis Guidance	6
Minimum Total Hours		30

- * From Political Science or other departments. Up to six (6) elective credit hours may be at the 500-level. Up to three (3) credit hours may be independent study.

Non-Thesis Option

Code	Title	Hours
POLS 670	Research Design	3
POLS 671	Introduction to Data Analysis	3
POLS 619	Seminar in Public Policy	3
POLS 629	Seminar in American Politics	3

POLS 639	Seminar in International Relations	3
POLS 649	Seminar in Comparative Politics	3
Electives **		15
POLS 695	Directed Research	3
Minimum Total Hours		36

- ** From Political Science and other departments. Up to six (6) elective credit hours may be taken outside of Political Science. Up to nine (9) elective credit hours may be taken at the 500-level. Up to three (3) credit hours may be independent study credit.