

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON

MASTER OF ARTS

2010-2011

**Department of Political Science
Graduate Program
447 Philip G. Hoffman Hall (PGH)
Houston, TX 77204-3011
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Home page: <http://www.polsci.uh.edu/>**

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THE PROGRAMS

The Department of Political Science offers programs of study leading to the Master of Arts degree (M.A.) in Political Science and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Political Science. A Master's degree in political science can be useful for students who wish to pursue careers in government at the local, state or federal level, or who wish to work in international non-governmental agencies. Students have the opportunity to learn data analysis skills that can be useful in both the private and public sector. A Master's degree also offers excellent preparation for students who are considering pursuing doctoral studies in Political Science at the University of Houston or elsewhere

The Department of Political Science offers two tracks in its Master of Arts program:

- Plan I: Thesis Option is designed primarily for students who plan to pursue the Doctor of Philosophy degree.
- Plan II: Non-thesis Option is a terminal degree for those who decide that they do not want to continue to the level of Ph.D. It is recommended for political science and government teachers who seek advanced course work. It is also for students who desire a Master of Arts degree for personal or career development.

It is not immediately necessary for a person to declare which Master of Arts degree track they would like to pursue. This can be done at any point during their graduate program.

The 25 faculty members of the department provide a wide range of courses in the following general topics:

- AMERICAN POLITICS
- PUBLIC POLICY
- PUBLIC LAW
- COMPARATIVE POLITICS
- POLITICAL THEORY
- RESEARCH METHODS

Part-time students are admitted to all these programs and are treated in the same way as full-time students except that it is understood that they will proceed more slowly. All students must complete the Master of Arts degree in no more than five years and the Doctor of Philosophy in no more than ten years.

CONCENTRATIONS IN THE MASTER'S PROGRAM

Master's students in Political Science are encouraged to plan their studies based on one of four Concentrations: American Politics, Comparative Politics, Political Analysis, and Political Theory. Each of these is described below. Students may also create their own Concentration with the permission of the graduate director. Other graduate level

political science courses outside the Concentration may be used as electives for the remaining hours.

American Politics

This Concentration is designed for students with a particular interest in American political behavior and political institutions.

Concentration REQUIRED courses:

- 6309 Survey of American Political Behavior
- 6311 Comparative Political Analysis
- 6480 Research Design and Quantitative Methods I
- 6481 Research Design and Quantitative Methods II

Concentration ELECTIVE courses:

At least two courses from the following --

- 6349 American Political Thought
- 6354 Legislative Process
- 6356 American Constitutional Law
- 6367 American Electoral Behavior
- 6369 Presidency

Comparative Politics

This Concentration is designed for students with a particular interest in representative processes in contemporary democracies.

Concentration REQUIRED courses:

- 6309 Survey of American Political Behavior
- 6311 Comparative Political Analysis
- 6480 Research Design and Quantitative Methods I
- 6481 Research Design and Quantitative Methods II

Concentration ELECTIVE courses:

At least two courses from the following --

- 6318 Seminar in Science, Environment and Energy Policy
- 6322 Comparative Elections
- 6323 Political Parties
- 6331 Democratization
- 6396 Special Topics in Comparative Politics (for instance, Comparative Legislatures)

Political Analysis

This Concentration is designed for well-prepared and motivated students wishing to acquire political analysis skills that are highly useful in opinion and market research, legal research, and policy analysis.

Concentration REQUIRED courses:

- 6480 Research Design and Quantitative Methods I
- 6481 Research Design and Quantitative Methods II

6301 Mathematical methods
6482 Advanced Multivariate
6309 Survey of American Political Behavior

Concentration ELECTIVE courses:

at least two (2) courses from one of the following clusters:

Quantitative Analysis:

6385 Time Series
6486 Measurement Theory
6389 Public Choice Models
6394 Special Topics in Methods (for instance, Multilevel Modeling, Time Series)

Or

Public Policy:

6312 Survey of American Institutions and Policy
6314 Policy Analysis
6315 Health Care Policy
6316 Social Policy
6397 Special Topics in Policy (for instance, Environmental or Education Policy)

Or

Public Opinion:

6365 Public Opinion
6367 Electoral Behavior
6368 Psychological Approaches to Politics
6384 Survey Research

Political Theory

The Concentration is designed for students with an interest in political theory and philosophy, and in the relationship between political ideas and political practice. This track also offers excellent preparation for students who want to develop a deeper understanding of the theory and philosophies underlying political practice.

Concentration REQUIRED courses:

6343 Democratic Theory
6480 Research Design and Quantitative Methods I

Plus three (3) of these four courses:

6349 American Political Thought
6340 Ancient and Medieval Political Thought
6341 Modern Political Thought
6348 Modern/Post-Modern Political Thought

6394 Special Topics in Political Theory (for instance, Ideologies and Social Movements, Religion and Politics)

Concentration ELECTIVE courses:

At least one course from the following --

6309 Survey of American Institutions and Policy

6354 Law and Society

6356 Constitutional Law

(or the fourth course in the Required list)

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

MASTER OF ARTS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE PROGRAMS:

Applicants to the Master of Arts program must have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution, at least a 3.00(B) grade point average (A=4.00) in the last 60 hours of undergraduate or graduate course work, and have taken the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). For students fulfilling the English proficiency requirements with the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), please note that the University of Houston sets minimum standards (please consult the University's admission page for more details). Conditional admission may occasionally be granted despite a below-standard GRE score, grade point average, or TOEFL score. Applicants should prepare a one- to two-page statement of purpose and should also submit three letters of recommendation, preferably from professors directly familiar with their academic work. Go to <http://www.polsci.uh.edu/graduate/graduate.html> and click on "graduate" then "admission" for more information on admissions requirements.

Political Science students are generally admitted only in the Fall semester. However Spring admissions are decided on a space-available basis. The deadlines for submitting applications are February 15 for the Fall semester and October 1 for the Spring semester. We encourage applicants to apply in advance of these deadlines if possible. Applications are judged on a competitive basis by the department's Graduate Committee.

A student must be admitted to the graduate program in order to enroll in any graduate courses in the department. Post baccalaureate students are students who have an undergraduate degree but have not been admitted to a graduate program at the University of Houston, or other university (Rice University, for instance) with whom the Department of Political Science has a reciprocal agreement. Such students may not enroll in graduate courses offered by the political science department.

If you are an international applicant, please note that there are additional admission requirements. These can be found at http://www.polsci.uh.edu/graduate/graduate_application_requirements_intl.html

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS AND RULES

1. All Master's students must take the first semester course in quantitative analysis, POLS 6480.
2. A graduate student who receives a grade of C+ or lower in 12 semester hours of credit at this institution for application toward the graduate degree, whether or not in repeated courses, is ineligible for any advanced degree at this institution and will not be permitted to re-enroll for graduate study.
3. Students must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.00(B) for all graduate courses attempted; failure to maintain this average may result in a warning, probation or suspension. You must have at least a 3.00(B) in order to graduate. Students should understand that this is a minimum requirement, and that it is possible to maintain a GPA of 3.00 or above and still not satisfy requirements for satisfactory progress toward the degree (See "Satisfactory Progress" below).
4. In general, graduate students are expected to be enrolled in at least one course in each long semester (i.e., fall and spring semesters) until the degree program is completed and the degree is awarded. Students who cannot enroll in any given semester must apply for a leave of absence in advance in order to remain in good standing. This includes the time it takes a student to write a master's thesis or bibliographic essay. All petitions for a leave of absence must be approved by the Graduate Committee. Failure to remain continuously enrolled without prior permission for a leave of absence may terminate your studies in this program.
5. Students who are pursuing degrees in the graduate political science program cannot enroll in other graduate or professional programs. Students who do enroll in such programs will be considered to have violated departmental expectations for satisfactory progress toward a degree and will not be allowed to register for further political science credit. Doing so will also be deemed a violation of the requirement for continuous enrollment. Such students can apply for readmission to the graduate program when they are no longer enrolled in other graduate and professional programs. Readmission to the graduate program in political science will then be at the discretion of the Graduate Committee.
6. Degrees are not awarded automatically upon completion of all scholastic requirements. To be considered a candidate for a degree, the student must apply for graduation in PeopleSoft. Deadlines for filing the application for graduation are listed in the academic calendar. These deadlines usually fall within the first two weeks of the semester the student wishes to graduate. Candidates for graduation who have been previously disapproved must reapply for graduation at no additional charge.
7. Graduate students in the political science department may register for no more than six hours of independent study/readings course credit. On rare occasions, this stipulation can be waived by appeal to the Graduate Committee.

MASTER OF ARTS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

M.A. degrees are awarded to students in one of the following categories:

1. Those whose educational objective is a Master's degree and do not wish to proceed to the degree of Ph.D.;
2. Those who do not meet the requirements for the degree of Ph.D. and who are advised to obtain a terminal Master's degree;
3. Those who are proceeding towards a Ph.D. but wish the Master's credential for professional purposes.

Students must complete thirty to thirty-three semester hours of approved course work, at least 24 semester hours of which must be at the 6000 level or above. At least 27 hours of credit for the Master's degree must be earned in residence at the University of Houston campus. No more than 6 semester hours of transferred course work may be applied to the Master of Arts degree. Students who wish to transfer course work must apply to the Graduate Director to do so. Departments are only allowed to give transfer credit for courses similar to ones taught in the University of Houston's Department of Political Science. Determination of course equivalency of transferred work resides with the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Committee. No degree credit will be given for courses completed by post baccalaureate students. It is a University rule that students must complete a master's degree program within five years of the date of enrollment at the University of Houston.

There are 3 plans under which graduate students can earn a Master of Arts degree:

1. M.A. Plan I: 30 hours of coursework and 6 hours of Master's thesis hours
2. M.A. Plan II (Terminal Degree): 33 hours of coursework and 3 hours of Bibliographic Essay hours
3. M.A. by Examination: This program is designed to provide an interim professional qualification for candidates who are in the process of working towards a Ph.D. Candidates who pass the Comprehensive Examinations for the Ph.D. degree may petition to have this pass recognized as fulfilling the requirements for a Master of Arts degree.

If you are trying to decide which option is right for you, it may be helpful to consult two essays by Political Science faculty members which describe what is expected from a bibliographic essay and a master's thesis. These essays are posted on the graduate portion of the Political Science web page.

DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES, GRADUATE COMMITTEE, ADVISORS, SUPERVISORS, GRADUATE STUDENT PROGRESS REVIEW, ETC.

The point of contact between graduate students and the Department of Political Science is the Director of Graduate Studies. The Director of Graduate Studies is advised on all matters pertaining to the graduate program, from admission of students to

dispensations from specific course requirements, by a Graduate Committee consisting of tenure-track faculty members of the Political Science Department.

We recommend that each student meet with the Director of Graduate Studies and/or with a faculty advisor at least once each semester. The purpose of these meetings is to:

- A. Review the student's performance,
- B. Examine the progress in completing required courses
- C. Discuss the student's career goals
- D. Develop the degree plan,

The student is responsible for requesting advising sessions, and the appropriate faculty members are normally expected to honor such requests within one week.

The Graduate Committee evaluates all students on an annual basis. Independent of the progress review, the Director of Graduate Studies is responsible each semester for monitoring whether students are making satisfactory progress toward their degrees, discussing the situation with the student, and reporting and making recommendations to the Graduate Committee regarding any student failing to make satisfactory progress.

Any student who fails to make satisfactory progress may be suspended from the Graduate Program by the Director of Graduate Studies. A student may appeal a suspension to the Graduate Committee. All students in the Graduate Program MUST keep the Director of Graduate Studies informed about their progress, for instance when they change from full time to part time studies, or if they wish to take courses in other departments which will count towards their political science degree. Failure to consult with the Director of Graduate Studies on these matters may be interpreted as a lack of satisfactory progress.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All students are expected to read and understand the University policy on academic honesty. Part of this policy can be summarized as follows: it is a grave offense to present someone else's work as if it were your own. Cutting-and-pasting from other articles and failure to give credit to sources are forms of plagiarism. The Department of Political Science will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty. Students suspected of violating these rules will be referred to the Department's Academic Honesty Officer. Penalties will be assessed in accordance with these procedures. Penalties may range from an "F" in the course to expulsion from the University. In other words, don't do it!

http://www.uh.edu/provost/policies/Academic_Honesty/uhhonpol_article3.html

EXPENSES AND FINANCIAL AID

For current information on tuition and fees please refer to <http://www.uh.edu/financial/graduate/tuition-fees/tuition.php>.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships are awarded on a competitive basis. Priority is usually given to applicants enrolled in the Ph.D. program, but occasionally such Assistantships are awarded to Master's students. Teaching Assistants who enroll in and

complete nine of course work per semester receive a tuition rebate for a limited number of semesters. Assistantships are awarded on a year-by-year basis, and continuation is predicated on good performance as a T.A., a strong G.P.A., and continued satisfactory progress toward the degree. All students who are on financial aid from the University of Houston or the Department of Political Science must register for 9 hours each semester. If on aid for the summer, the student must register for 6 hours each summer session.

Acceptance of a graduate assistantship in the department of political science indicates the student's agreement not to accept other employment.

Further information regarding the assistantships may be available from the Graduate Advisor, Edward Manouelian (email: eemanoue@central.uh.edu). If you are interested in applying for financial aid (in the form of grants, loans, employment, etc.) through the University of Houston please be aware that the priority deadline for submission of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is April 1. (Please contact the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid www.uh.edu/finaid .)

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