POLITICAL SCIENCE (MA)

The Master of Arts in Political Science provides students with a general, political science graduate education that trains students in methodological techniques and research design, and provides training in at least three fields of political science.

The MA in Political Science offers students:

- An overview of the theories and scholarly literature devoted to four major subfields within the discipline of Political Science:
  - American Politics (study of U.S. institutions and political processes).
  - Comparative Politics (study of political regimes, including the state, development and modernization, political, economic, and social movements).
  - International Relations (study of global processes throughout the international system).
  - Political Theory (study of political philosophy ranging from Ancient to Modern and Contemporary political thought).
- Extensive methods training, including research design and statistical analysis, that will enable the successful candidate to effectively design and conduct research.
- Enhanced ability to express their thoughts in writing (all Political Science graduate classes include a significant writing component).
- Preparation for purposeful careers in politics, government, international affairs, law, the non-profit world, journalism, business, education, social services, and other professions, as well as for further graduate (PhD) study at professional schools and institutions of higher learning, both in the U.S. and abroad.

We also encourage our MA students to take advantage of additional learning opportunities through numerous Political Science-sponsored programs:

- Advanced methodological training
- Advanced language training/proficiency in a language other than English
- Advanced research skills
- International, cross-cultural experience
- Professional development and experience
- Networking opportunities

Curriculum

The Master of Arts in Political Science requires 30 hours of coursework. Students are required to take 3 methods courses and a combination of courses in the sub-fields of American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Theory. Students may complete an internship, write an MA thesis, or take comprehensive exams to fulfill their degree requirements.

Course Requirements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 401</td>
<td>Intro to Research Design &amp; Method</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 475</td>
<td>Political Analysis I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 476</td>
<td>Political Analysis II</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seven Electives from Two Subfields</td>
<td>21</td>
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1. Seven elective courses should be chosen from at least two subfields: International Relations, Comparative Politics, American Politics, or Political Theory. With approval of the Graduate Program Director, up to six (6) hours may be at the graduate level in related disciplines.

Thesis, Comprehensive Exams, or Internship

Thesis

Students may satisfy six hours (2 courses) by writing a thesis. Students who choose this option will take PLSC 596 Thesis Research for two semesters (a total of 6 credit hours, which count as electives) and take PLSC 595 Thesis Supervision until they are done with the thesis.
All PhD students and students in thesis-based Master’s degree programs must successfully complete UNIV 370 Responsible Conduct in Research and Scholarship or other approved coursework in responsible conduct of research as part of the degree requirements. It is strongly recommended that students complete this two-day training before beginning the dissertation/thesis stage of the program.

Comprehensive Exam

MA students can choose to take a written comprehensive examination. The student will select five courses from the substantive courses they have taken on which they will be tested. Prior to taking the exam students must finish all incompletes. Students may be currently registered for courses necessary for the degree in the semester in which they take the exam. If the student has fulfilled all degree requirements except for the comprehensive exams, they should register for PLSC 605 Master’s Study in the semesters leading up to and including the exam. Students taking comprehensive examinations at the master’s degree level are expected to answer theoretical and substantive questions from a range of five courses they have taken in their coursework. Once a student knows that s/he will take the exam in a particular semester, we highly recommend that they discuss the exam with the faculty members with whom they have taken the five chosen courses. Comprehensive exams will take place during the second half of the fall and spring semesters. Students will answer three questions over a weekend, receiving the exam on a Friday at 5:00 PM and returning the completed examination the following Monday, at 9:00 AM. All three answers must be written during the specified weekend with no outside assistance. Students will write a maximum of 21, double-spaced pages (normal formatting: 1” margins, Times New Roman, 12 pitch font). Each answer should be approximately six or seven pages. Prior to taking comprehensive exams, students must submit to the Graduate Program Director a departmental “MA Requirements and Comprehensive Examination Form” that lists all of the courses the student has taken and identifies on which courses the student would like to be tested. At the beginning of each semester the Graduate Program Director will distribute this form to all students who will take the exam.

Internship

PLSC 470 Fieldwork in PLSC-Internship offers academic credit toward your major or minor while interning and gaining professional experience at one of several organizations, either here in Chicago or elsewhere. The intent is for students to 1) apply their education to date in a professional setting, 2) gain valuable experience at the start of their professional careers, 3) to explore a particular area of professional interest before embarking on their careers, and 4) to potentially “get a foot in the door” within a particular field or employer with the hope of landing a permanent position upon graduation. While past interns have received job offers from organization where they have interned, there are no guarantees or promises of employment that accompany taking this course.

Graduate & Professional Standards and Regulations

Students in graduate and professional programs can find their Academic Policies in Graduate and Professional Academic Standards and Regulations (https://catalog.luc.edu/graduate-professional-academic-standards-regulations/) under their school. Any additional University Policies supercede school policies.