DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD) DEGREE IN THE FIELD OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Program Learning Outcomes for the MA and PhD Degrees in the field of Political Science

Upon completing the MA and PhD degrees in the field of Political Science, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate advanced knowledge of theoretical and empirical research in two of the following three sub-fields of Political Science: American politics, comparative politics, and international relations.
2. Apply social science research design and methodologies, including advanced statistical techniques.
3. Demonstrate the ability to communicate their research effectively through multiple mediums including scholarly writing, oral presentation, and poster sessions.
4. Demonstrate their competence as political scientists through research, teaching, and professional development activities.

Requirements for the MA and PhD Degrees in the field of Political Science

MA Degree Program

The MA degree is a non-thesis master’s degree. For general university requirements, please see Non-Thesis Master's Degrees. For additional requirements, regulations, and procedures for all graduate programs, please see All Graduate Students. The Master of Arts degree requires 30 semester hours of coursework, all of which must be taken at the graduate level (500-level or above except with permission of the Director of Graduate Studies), and the completion of two research papers in seminars taken over the course of study. A minimum GPA of 3.00 is required for awarding the MA degree.

The Political Science Department requires that not more than 3 years elapse between the time the student is admitted to the graduate program and the completion of the MA degree, unless an extension is approved by the Graduate Studies Committee.

Requirements for the PhD Degree in the field of Political Science

PhD Degree Program

For general university requirements, please see Doctoral Degrees. For additional requirements, regulations, and procedures for all graduate programs, please see All Graduate Students. The PhD degree in the field of Political Science requires that not more than 3 years elapse between the time the student is admitted to the graduate program and the completion of the MA degree, unless an extension is approved by the Graduate Studies Committee. A student must complete successfully 54 credit hours of advanced coursework. This must include the core courses in each of 3 fields, 3 courses beyond the core in the major field, 2 courses beyond the core in the minor field, POLI 500, POLI 502, POLI 506, POLI 511, and 1 additional course that meets the research tools requirement.

Exams

A student must pass two Preliminary Examinations (a general exam in the major field and a pre-dissertation exam), a thesis prospectus defense, and a thesis defense.

Maintenance of Good Academic Standing

A student must remain in good academic standing with the university and with the department. Remaining in good academic standing with the department requires a GPA of at least 3.33, satisfactory evaluations for work as a research and/or teaching mentee, and satisfactory participation in professional development activities.

Policies for the PhD Degree in the field of Political Science

Department of Political Science Graduate Program Handbook

The General Announcements (GA) is the official Rice curriculum. As an additional resource for students, the department of Political Science publishes a graduate program handbook, which can be found here: https://gradhandbooks.rice.edu/2021_22/POLITICAL_SCIENCE_GRADUATE_HANDBOOK.pdf

Transfer Credit

For Rice University’s policy regarding transfer credit, see Transfer Credit. Some departments and programs have additional restrictions on transfer credit. Students are encouraged to meet with their academic program’s advisor when considering transfer credit possibilities.

Departmental Transfer Credit Guidelines

Students pursuing the PhD degree in the field of Political Science should be aware of the following departmental transfer credit guidelines:

- Requests for transfer credit will be considered by the program director on an individual case-by-case basis.

Additional Information

For additional information, please see the Political Science website: https://politicalscience.rice.edu/
Opportunities for the PhD Degree in the field of Political Science

Requirements for the Coordinated PhD/MA Degree Program in Political Science and Statistics

The coordinated PhD/MA requires that a student fulfill all requirements for the PhD program in Political Science and satisfy the general university requirements for residency and total hours to receive a second non-thesis MA degree. The Statistics MA degree shall not be conferred prior to conferral of the PhD in Political Science. No course may count for credit for both MA degrees; however, POLI 504, POLI 505, POLI 506, and POLI 507 will continue to count toward the hours required for a PhD degree in Political Science when used to fulfill the requirements for an MA in Statistics.

To earn a non-thesis MA in Statistics, students in the PhD program in Political Science must additionally:

• Obtain written approval from the head of the Methods field and the Director of Graduate Studies in the Political Science department.
• Have their plan of study for the MA in Statistics pre-approved by the Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Statistics (or another person designated by the chairperson of the Statistics department). Note: A maximum of ten Political Science PhD students will be allowed to enroll in the MA in Statistics program at one time.
• Earn a grade of 'B+' or better in four courses in statistical methodology in the Political Science department, which must include POLI 504, POLI 505, POLI 506, and POLI 507.
• Earn a grade of 'B' or better in each of six courses from the Department of Statistics. Four of these courses must be STAT 605, STAT 518, STAT 519, and STAT 615. Other acceptable courses are STAT 616 and courses at the 500-level and above, subject to the approval by the Director of Graduate studies in the Department of Statistics (or another person designated by the chairperson of the Statistics department). Courses that are jointly listed between two departments (cross-listed) are counted as a course in the home department. Note: completion of POLI 504 and POLI 505 will be considered as meeting the prerequisite requirements for STAT 519.
• Complete a major project that has strong statistical content. The project may be directed by faculty in Political Science, but must be pre-approved by the Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Statistics (or another person designated by the chairperson of the Statistics department). The doctoral proposal in Political Science may satisfy this requirement, but must be successfully defended.

Additional Information

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