

Master of Arts in Political Science

The Master of Arts in Political Science delves into popular topics including American government theory and process, comparative politics, contemporary political institutions, defense and security, domestic and foreign policy, legislative behavior, and political philosophy. In this era of polarization in government, there is a great demand for people who possess knowledge of how government works, as well as the research, writing, and analytical skills needed to evaluate domestic policies at all levels of government. Knowledge gained in this online program provides an advanced foundation for those interested in fields such as government, military, the gaining and holding of elected positions, nonprofit administration, or other professions including academia or law where strong interpersonal and communication skills are required.

Degree Program Objectives

In addition to the institutional and degree level learning objectives, graduates of this program are expected to achieve these learning outcomes:

- Analyze the fundamental theories and philosophies of government, governance, economy, and civil society and apply them to contemporary political systems.
- Evaluate the political elements of representative democracy, and compare and contrast those elements with other political systems.
- Assemble and evaluate the appropriate information and data used in the social, economic, foreign affairs, and security policy-making realm.
- Assess the actors and processes involved in policymaking and evaluate policy implementation outcomes in various sectors to include the social, economic, foreign policy, and security policy domains.

Degree at a Glance

Code	Title	Semester Hours
	Core Requirements	18
	Select one of the following concentrations:	12
	American Politics and Government (p. 1)	
	Comparative Government and Development (p. 2)	
	International Relations (p. 2)	
	Public Policy (p. 3)	
	Final Program Requirements	0-3

Elective Requirements	3-6
Total Semester Hours	36

Degree Program Requirements

Core Requirements (18 semester hours)

Code	Title	Semester Hours
POLS510	The U.S. Presidency, Congress, & Bureaucracy ¹	3
POLS501	Political Philosophy	3
IRLS502	International Political Systems	3
PADM530	Public Policy	3
POLS512	Diversity in American Politics	3
SSGS500	Research Design and Methods	3
Total Semester Hours		18

¹ Required as the first course in this program.

Students must choose a concentration for this degree program and may select from a Concentration in American Politics and Government, Concentration in Comparative Government and Development, Concentration in International Relations, or Concentration in Public Policy.

Concentration in American Politics and Government (12 semester hours)

Provides insight into the democratic process of government in the U.S. Topics include all three branches of government, as well as freedoms protected by the Constitution, the role of women in changing public policy, and the division of power between federal and state governments.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this concentration, the student will be able to:

- Interpret the philosophical theories of constitutional democracy and federalist principles that form the basis of the U.S. political structure.
- Analyze the three institutions of government that create and implement federal policy.
- Assess why the American system of local, state, and federal government and their intergovernmental relations is an invitation to struggle.
- Evaluate the evolution of interest groups in the United States and their various roles assumed in both historical and modern democratic processes.

- Analyze the perspectives of political parties and their impact on federal, state, and local government.
- Judge the emerging impact of gender, race, language, ethnic traditions, sexual orientation, and moral principles on federal, state, and local government.

Concentration Requirements (12 semester hours)

Code	Title	Semester Hours
Select 4 courses from the following:		12
HIST556	U.S. Constitutional History	
MATH530	Applied Statistics	
POLS511	Political Parties and Interest Group Behavior	
POLS620	Legislatures and Legislative Behavior	
POLS630	The Presidency: Institution and Performance	
POLS640	Judicial Politics, Process, and Policy Making	
POLS650	Federalism: The American Governance Process	
Total Semester Hours		12

Concentration in Comparative Government and Development (12 semester hours)

Uses the comparative method of analysis to study democracies, monarchies, dictatorships, and authoritarian forms of government. Topics include Al Qaeda, the relationship between military and government affairs, mediation between opposing factions, and economics, including the readings of Karl Marx.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this concentration, the student will be able to:

- Evaluate the "national interest" and how it is formulated through a comparative studies approach.
- Assess the role of culture, politics, economics, the defense establishment, and domestic constraints in decision making and policy making in various political regimes.
- Analyze the impact of foreign policy on domestic decisions as well as domestic considerations on foreign policy.
- Critically assess the unique principles, structure, and organization of the major international organizations.
- Evaluate the role of international organizations in addressing issues of economic development, free and unrestricted trade, capital investment, conflict resolution, threats to international order, terrorism, and war crimes.

- Assess the economic and political processes in international development; diagnose social issues in international development; appraise the need for sustainable international development.
- Examine the prospects of governance by international organizations.
- Evaluate the multidimensional effects of globalization.
- Assess alternatives to current policies in the post-Cold War era and examine their impact on the United States, its allies, regional powers, and the international system.

Concentration Requirements (12 semester hours)

Code	Title	Semester Hours
IRLS501	Comparative Political Systems	3
Select 3 courses from the following:		9
HUMN561	Society, Class and Wealth	
IRLS603	Politics and War	
IRLS613	International Negotiation	
MATH530	Applied Statistics	
NSEC608	Regional Security Cooperation	
SCMT529	International Terrorism	
Total Semester Hours		12

Concentration in International Relations (12 semester hours)

Discusses various international issues through coverage of international organizations like the Red Cross and the United Nations, as well as the governments of Latin America, Korea, and the Middle East and the use of modern statistical methods and models to solve problems.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this concentration, the student will be able to:

- Construct a theory about the distinct nature of conflict in the post-Cold War era.
- Assess the norms and purposes of international structures and regimes.
- Critique the political, economic, military, and cultural differences between the Northeast Asian, Latin American, and Middle Eastern regions.
- Analyze global military developments since the mid-twentieth century.

Concentration Requirements (12 semester hours)

Code	Title	Semester Hours
Select 4 courses from the following:		12
IRLS500	International Relations Theory	
IRLS503	International Organizations	
IRLS600	Strategic Geography and Geopolitics	
IRLS631	Government and Security in Korea	
IRLS655	Latin American Security Issues	
IRLS660	Seminar in Middle East Politics and Security	
LSTD507	International Law	
MATH530	Applied Statistics	
Total Semester Hours		12

Concentration in Public Policy (12 semester hours)

Discusses a variety of security, economic, foreign, and domestic policy issues at the national, state, and local levels. Topics include budgeting and expenditures, data analysis through statistics, management of large bureaucracies, and the Department of Homeland Security.

Objectives

Upon successful completion of this concentration, the student will be able to:

- Assess the prioritization of American domestic, economic, and foreign policy issues.
- Evaluate the policy-making environment and the role of economic, political, cultural, and organizational factors that affect decision making in the United States.
- Analyze the role of the Executive Branch, Congress, the Department of Defense, appropriate Cabinet Departments and the separated armed services in the formulation of security and domestic policy.

Concentration Requirements (12 semester hours)

Code	Title	Semester Hours
Select 4 courses from the following:		12
HLSS502	Homeland Security and Defense	
MATH530	Applied Statistics	
PADM510	Administrative Theory	
PADM520	Public Administration in Society	
PADM610	Public Management	
PADM612	Public Finance	

PADM615	Program Appraisal	
PADM620	Local Political Administration	
Total Semester Hours		12

Final Program Requirements (0-3 semester hours)

Code	Title	Semester Hours
Select 1 course from the following:		0-3
POLS697	Portfolio and Critical Reflection Paper Capstone in Political Science ¹	
POLS698	Comprehensive Examination in Political Science (0 semester hours) ¹	
Total Semester Hours		0-3

¹ Taken once all other requirements have been met.

Elective Requirements (3-6 semester hours)

Code	Title	Semester Hours
Select any graduate courses not already taken to fulfill the requirements listed above.		3-6
Total Semester Hours		3-6