MASTER OF ARTS: POLITICAL SCIENCE

Student Learning Outcomes

Students graduating from this program will:

• Students will explain the fundamental theories and key concepts in American politics, comparative politics, and international relations.
• Students will describe the genesis and evolution of major debates in the field, and how leading schools have defined and pursued key questions in the field, whether this be American politics, comparative politics or international relations.
• Students will demonstrate the ability to conduct basic research in the field, including defining concepts and developing scientific inference, and collecting, measuring, and analyzing data to answer questions in political science.
• Students will demonstrate their ability to critically analyze the literature, and define and carry out their own research project.
• Students will demonstrate their ability to effectively communicate in both oral and written form. This should include summarizing the arguments of others as well as presenting their own arguments and research.

Program Requirements

The Master of Arts degree in political science requires the successful completion of either of the following sets of requirements:

• Non-Thesis Option - 33 semester hours of approved coursework.
• Thesis Option - 24 semester hours of approved coursework and 6 hours of thesis (POL-SCI 5599). Students must gain permission to write a thesis. Permission to do so depends on the quality of the thesis proposal, the student’s writing skills, and the ability of the Department to supervise the student in the subject area of the proposed thesis. An oral defense of the thesis is required.

Required Coursework

All M.A. candidates must successfully complete the following courses:

POL-SCI 5501 Seminar in American Government
POL-SCI 5513 Seminar in Comparative Politics
POL-SCI 5530 Seminar in International Relations

With permission of the principal M.A. advisor, students may transfer six credit hours of graduate work from other institutions, and may count no more than six credit hours of pre-approved graduate coursework in other UMKC departments.

Candidates also may take up to six credit hours of 300- or 400-level coursework in political science at UMKC and count them toward the M.A. degree. For a 300- or 400-level course to be accepted for graduate credit, a student must arrange with the instructor in advance to do supplementary work (such as additional reading, writing, and contact hours) and earn at least a B in the course. In addition, the student must not have previously taken an equivalent course at UMKC or elsewhere.

In either the 30-hour thesis option or the 33-hour non-thesis option, no more than six hours of readings, independent study or directed studies credit (other than thesis hours) may be counted toward the requirements for the M.A.

In all cases, students in the M.A. program must take at least 15 hours of graduate-level (5500-level) courses in political science at UMKC in fulfillment of their degree requirements. In addition, University of Missouri rules mandate that students in graduate programs must take at least 60% of their course work at the graduate level. Applied to the M.A. program in political science, this means that students taking the thesis option must complete at least 18 graduate hours, and students in the non-thesis option must complete at least 21 graduate hours. Graduate courses taken at UMKC in political science and other programs, graduate transfer hours, and thesis hours all count toward fulfillment of this requirement.

Students should consult the MA program faculty advisor upon enrolling to develop a program of study, and meet regularly with an advisor to ensure timely progress toward completion of the degree while meeting their needs and interests in graduate study.

Other information about the Master of Arts in Political Science may be found on the department’s web page: http://cas.umkc.edu/politicalscience/Masters.asp.

JD/MA in Political Science Dual Degree Program

The Department of Political Science and the UMKC School of Law offer a dual degree program for the J.D. and M.A. Students must satisfy the admission and degree requirements for each school and program. Students fully admitted to the School of Law are exempt from the GRE requirement for admission to the M.A. program. For further information, contact the School of Law or consult the Department of Political Science site at http://cas2.umkc.edu/politicalscience/JDMA.asp.