

GUIDELINES FOR NEW MA STUDENTS

Department of Political Science, Graduate Program

ADVISING

In your first semester of study, you are assigned a faculty advisor normally drawn from the field in which you plan to specialize. The faculty advisor can discuss course options with you and serve as a source of information about the substantive part of your program.

REQUIRED COURSES

Master's students must take P SC 5923, Introduction to Analysis of Political Data and P SC 5933, Intermediate Analysis of Political Data. Both courses are normally offered in the fall semester in an accelerated course format. The other required course P SC 6003, Political Science: Survey of a Discipline is typically offered during the spring semester. You are responsible for meeting with your faculty advisor to consider your proposed course of study. All students are encouraged to use the graduate degree checklist and two-year schedule to plan their coursework.

FIELDS OF STUDY

You should choose your major and secondary emphasis concentration as soon as possible. Knowing your fields of study will aid you with course selection and identification of potential members for your advisory committee.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Students are responsible for forming and meeting with their advisory committee in their second semester to ensure timely degree completion. At the time of your committee conference your committee will approve your Graduate College Program of Study (POS) forms, which must be submitted to the graduate programs office and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies in Political Science. You should consider selecting the person who will serve as the chair of your committee first. Students should choose a chair from the field they consider to be their primary area of interest. This person can advise you on other possible committee members who are appropriate given your particular interests. However, it is your responsibility to contact each prospective member and ask him or her to be a member of your committee. The chair of your committee is responsible for the general oversight of your program of study and will coordinate the oral defense and comprehensive examination. More information on thesis and non-thesis program options are provided in the *Political Science Student Guide*. You may alter your program of study or change the membership of your committee at any time with the consent of your Committee Chair and the Director of Graduate Studies.

PROGRESS TOWARD DEGREE COMPLETION

The department normally expects full-time graduate students to enroll in at least nine hours of course work for the fall and spring semesters. If a student carries a lesser load, it becomes difficult to complete the degree within a reasonable period of time.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The department encourages graduate students to participate in a variety of professional development opportunities. Each month, there is a graduate student Lunch-N-Learn in which faculty and students meet to discuss special topics. Recent examples include: research expectations, job opportunities, conference presentations, and networking. In addition, the department hosts research presentations for faculty and graduate students who are presenting conference papers to "test-drive" their talks. There are many special events with guest speakers such as the biennial Rothbaum Lectures, the annual Bellmon Lecture, and job talks from prospective faculty members. Graduate students are encouraged to attend these as well.

ANNUAL EVALUATION

The Department of Political Science annually assesses each student's progress to degree completion. The period covered includes the fall and spring semesters. Guidelines for the annual evaluation of graduate students are included in the annual *Political Science Student Guide*. In preparation for the annual evaluation, all graduate students are required to submit a mini-curriculum vitae (CV) as part of your annual evaluation. This form is included in the *Forms* section of this site and is transmitted to students electronically during the spring semester with instructions for completion and submission.

RESEARCH

Any student conducting human subjects research for a thesis must first receive approval of the project from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). If a Master's student is doing a research paper instead of a thesis, the project must be approved by the IRB only if publication of the results is expected. For more information, consult the [IRB website](#).