

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.

Related Programs

Master's

- International Affairs (MA) (<https://catalog.luc.edu/graduate-professional/graduate-school/arts-sciences/political-science/international-affairs-ma/>)

Doctoral

- Political Science (PhD) (<https://catalog.luc.edu/graduate-professional/graduate-school/arts-sciences/political-science/political-science-phd/>)

Combined

- Political Science/Law (MA/JD) (<https://catalog.luc.edu/graduate-professional/dual-degree-programs/political-science-jd-ma/>)

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

Code	Title	Hours
<i>Political Science Methods</i>		
PLSC 401	Intro to Research Design & Method	3
PLSC 475	Political Analysis I	3
PLSC 476	Political Analysis II	3
<i>Seven Electives from Two Subfields</i> ¹		21

The sub-fields that may be chosen from are International Relations, Comparative Politics, American Politics, and Political Theory.

International Relations Courses

PLSC 430	Theories of International Politics
PLSC 431	Formulation US Foreign Policy
PLSC 432	Comparative Foreign Policy Analysis
PLSC 433	International Organization
PLSC 435	International Political Economics
PLSC 436	International Conflict
PLSC 437	Selected Problems International Law
PLSC 439	Selected Problems in International Politics
PLSC 531	Seminar: International Politics

Comparative Politics Courses

PLSC 420	Comparative Political Systems
PLSC 421	Democratic Political Systems
PLSC 422	Authoritarian Political Systems
PLSC 423	Soviet & Post-Soviet Politics
PLSC 424	Politics of Developing Areas

PLSC 425	Sub-Saharan Africa
PLSC 426	Latin American Politics
PLSC 427	Politics of the Middle East
PLSC 428	Political Violence
PLSC 429	Comparative Politics Selected Problems
PLSC 520	Seminar: Comparative Politics
PLSC 521	Seminar Western European Politics
PLSC 532	Soviet/Post-Soviet Foreign Policy

American Politics Courses

PLSC 404	Selected Problems in American Politics
PLSC 405	American Executive Branch
PLSC 406	American Legislative Branch
PLSC 407	Public Policy-Making & Implementation
PLSC 410	Urban Politics
PLSC 411	American Political Parties/Electoral Process
PLSC 412	Constitutional Politics
PLSC 417	The American Legal System
PLSC 418	Political Psychology & Socialization
PLSC 419	Managing Urban Government

Political Theory Courses

PLSC 440	Ancient Political Thought
PLSC 442	Modern Political Thought
PLSC 444	Great Authors
PLSC 446	Political Ethics
PLSC 447	American Political Thought to Civil War
PLSC 449	19th Century Political Thought
PLSC 543	Liberalism
PLSC 546	Political Philosophy Selected Problems

Total Hours **30**

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.

Capstone Requirement: 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.

Code	Title	Hours
<i>Take for two semesters (may satisfy 6 elective hours)</i>		
PLSC 596	Thesis Research	
<i>Take until done with thesis</i>		
PLSC 595	Thesis Supervision	

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 Political Science-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.

Suggested Sequence of Courses

The below sequence of courses is meant to be used as a suggested path for completing coursework. An individual student's completion of requirements depends on course offerings in a given term as well as the start term for a major or graduate study. Students should consult their advisor for assistance with course selection.

Course	Title	Hours
Year 1		
Fall		
PLSC 401	Intro to Research Design & Method	3
PLSC 475	Political Analysis I	3
Elective		3
Hours		9
Spring		
PLSC 476	Political Analysis II	3
Elective		3
Elective		3
Hours		9

Year 2

Fall

Elective ¹	3
Elective	3
Hours	
	6

Spring

Elective ¹	3
Elective	3
Hours	
	6
Total Hours	
	30

¹ If pursuing thesis capstone option, student must substitute this elective for PLSC 596 Thesis Research.

Responsible Conduct of Research

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.

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/academic-standards-regulations/graduate-professional/>) under their school. Any additional University Policies supersede school policies.

Learning Outcomes

The MA in Political Science offers students:

- 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:

1. Advanced methodological training
2. Advanced language training/proficiency in a language other than English
3. Advanced research skills
4. International, cross-cultural experience
5. Professional development and experience
6. Networking opportunities