POLITICAL SCIENCE, MA: POLITICAL DATA ANALYSIS

The Department of Political Science offers graduate programs of study in political science with concentrations in five fields: American politics; comparative politics; international relations; political theory; and public administration and public policy.

The master's program is designed to provide students with a basic grounding in the scope and methodology of the discipline, while at the same time allowing maximum flexibility in developing a program of study that will meet students' career objectives. It is recommended that students preparing themselves for PhD work emphasize empirical theory, quantitative skills and strategies and techniques of conducting research. Students may select coursework to help them prepare for such career fields as governmental service, public and private education, community service, and private industry. In developing an appropriate and coherent program of study, each graduate student works closely with the major professor and committee of advisors.

The Department accommodates the master's student who attends part time by scheduling sufficient graduate-level courses in the late afternoons and evenings to enable the student to earn a master's degree through part-time attendance.

In the PhD program the departmental emphasis is on conceptual and quantitative work. The Department requires that the student be broadly trained and accordingly encourages each student to take advantage of offerings in related disciplines to strengthen expertise in political change. The graduate of the program is qualified for a career in university teaching, in government service or in the private sector where the analytical skills and knowledge of the social scientist are required. Graduate degrees are conferred on the basis of a level of achievement which is acquired by independent reading and research as well as by taking courses. They are never conferred solely on the basis of prescribed courses and residency requirements.

Political Science, MA: Political Data Analysis

Students who specialize in the data analysis track focus on developing skills related to research design and the quantitative analysis of political data.

In addition to providing a strong foundation for progressing to a PhD program, the data analysis specialization prepares students for both public and private sector jobs, including employment in state, local, and national governments, non-profit organizations, research firms, think tanks, political parties and organizations, and corporations. In consultation with their advisor, students in this track develop a course of study that includes the program's required methodological courses, as well as more advanced data science courses.

Admission Requirements

Application Deadlines

Application deadlines vary by program, please review the application deadline chart (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/program-deadlines/) for specific programs. Other important dates and deadlines can be found by using the One Stop calendars (https://uwm.edu/onestop/dates-and-deadlines/).

Admission

An applicant must meet Graduate School requirements (http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/admission/) plus these departmental requirements to be considered for admission to the program:

1. Undergraduate major or substantial work in the field of political science.
2. Undergraduate grade point average of at least 3.0 (4.0 scale).
3. Three letters of recommendation from persons familiar with applicant's scholastic ability and achievements.
4. Personal statement of research interests and how UWM's Political Science Department will help you meet your career and educational goals.

Submission of GRE scores (official or unofficial) is encouraged, but not required.

Credits and Courses

Minimum degree requirement is 30 graduate credits, all of which must be taken at the 700 level or above.

Code	Title	Credits
Core Courses on scope and method of political inquiry		
POL SCI 700	Scope and Methods of Political Science	3
POL SCI 701	Techniques of Political Science Research	3
POL SCI 702	Advanced Techniques of Political Science Research	3
Other POL SCI courses		15
Up to 6 credits in related field		6
Total Credits		**30**

A student must enroll for at least 3 credit hours of POL SCI 990 for final preparation of the Master's Paper.

Political Data Analysis Concentration

The Political Data Analysis concentration requires a minimum of 15 credit hours (5 courses) in social science data analysis. These courses count toward the 30 total graduate credits required for the MA degree.

Six required credits are drawn from the two required data analysis courses:

Code	Title	Credits
Required Data Analysis Courses		
POL SCI 701	Techniques of Political Science Research	3
POL SCI 702	Advanced Techniques of Political Science Research	3
Total Credits		**6**

Students must also take nine credits using a combination of the following:

Code	Title	Credits
Select 9 credits		**9**
POL SCI 720	Theoretical and Methodological Issues of Comparative Politics	
POL SCI 935	Seminar in Advanced Political Science Methodology	
Up to six credits of approved methodology courses outside the department		
Total Credits		**9**

Students in this concentration hone and apply their methodological skills in substantive seminars that expose students to the latest quantitative research on politics. Students are expected to complete a Master's Thesis that relies on quantitative analysis of political data.

Additional Requirements

Major Professor as Advisor

The student must have a major professor to advise and supervise the student's studies as specified in Graduate School regulations. The incoming student is advised by the Director of Graduate Studies; as the student develops specialized interests within the discipline, the student selects a major professor from within that area of specialization.

Master's Paper

A formal thesis is not required. However, each student shall prepare and defend orally a paper that demonstrates conceptual ability and research competence in some recognized area (sub-field) of political science. It is expected that the master's paper will be prepared in a scholarly fashion, normally conforming to the format characteristic of journal articles published in the chosen area of study. A statement setting forth additional guidelines and criteria of evaluation will be made available.

For full-time students it is expected that the master's paper will be defended prior to the completion of four semesters (two years) of graduate work. Consequently, the Department encourages students to choose paper topics for graduate seminars that may serve as the basis for the master's paper. Postponement of the oral defense of the master's paper beyond four semesters requires the approval of the Graduate Committee.

Comprehensive Examination

An oral defense of the master's paper is required. Master's papers will be defended before a three-person committee composed of one of the student's advisors and two other faculty members selected by the chair of the Department in consultation with the student and the advisor.

The committee will be selected at least one full semester prior to anticipated submission of the master's paper. The student must obtain committee approval of the research topic and methodology immediately following the selection of the committee.

Time Limit

The student must complete all degree requirements within five years of initial enrollment.

Political Science MA Learning Outcomes

Students graduating from the Political Science MA program will be able to:

- Critically evaluate leading theories in the scientific study of politics (including in the areas of political behavior, government institutions, and international relations).
- Develop original, logically coherent arguments to explain political phenomena.
- Craft cutting-edge research designs that are capable of answering key questions in the social sciences.
- Master and apply the latest quantitative (statistical) methodologies to evaluate a research question.
- Make effective oral arguments in defense of one's research.
- Compose clear and coherent written texts that describe a research problem, postulate an argument, and examine that argument with evidence.