

POLITICAL SCIENCE

Degree Requirements

Master of Arts (M.A.)

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies. (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>)

Depending on the student's previous methodological training, 30 credits of course work, including an essay, are required for a master's degree. At least 18 credits must be at the 500 level. The course work includes:

Code	Title	Credits
Required Courses		
PLSC 501	Methods of Political Analysis	3
PLSC 502	Statistical Methods for Political Research	3
PLSC 503	Multivariate Analysis for Political Research	3
18 additional credits in Political Science		18
3 credits for the M.A. essay		3
Total Credits		30

Students also take a seminar on teaching and professional development in political science. There are no language requirements for the degree. Every master's student is required to pass an examination of their master's essay.

Credits earned at other institutions but not used to earn a degree may be applied toward the requirements for a graduate degree, subject to restrictions outlined in GCAC-309 Transfer Credit (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/transfer-credit>).

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Policies. (<https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/>)

The Department of Political Science requires a minimum total of 60 post-baccalaureate credits for the Ph.D. At least 45 credits, exclusive of the dissertation, must be in political science. Course work accepted for the M.A. in Political Science at Penn State will count toward the department's 60-credit requirement. In the case of students who have earned credits in an advanced degree program at another university or in another department at Penn State, a maximum of 30 credits may count toward the 60-credit departmental requirement.

In the case of transfer students, a maximum of 30 credits earned in an advanced degree program at another university or in another department at Penn State will count toward the 60-credit requirement.

The department requires that a student complete the designated "core" courses in methodology (PLSC 501, PLSC 502, and PLSC 503) and two 1.5-credit seminars on teaching, writing, and professional development in Political Science. Students must complete an additional 24 credit hours in political science, chosen in consultation with their advisor. Students must also complete an additional 9 hours of coursework, chosen in consultation with their advisor, which may be taken in political science or another discipline.

The communication and foreign language requirement for the Ph.D. may be satisfied by advanced course work and competence developed in foreign languages, statistics, or other research methods.

To earn the Ph.D. degree, doctoral students must successfully pass a qualifying examination, comprehensive examination, and final oral examination (the dissertation defense). Ph.D. candidates must also write a dissertation that is accepted by the Ph.D. committee, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School.