



## **GRADUATE STUDIES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

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## MA in Political Science

The Department of Political Science offers individually tailored programs leading to the Master of Arts in Political Science. This degree provides a broad foundation in politics and government for those intending further graduate study or careers in public service, private enterprise, or education. Both thesis and non-thesis programs are available. Together with the Cecil C. Humphreys School of Law, the department offers a dual MA/JD program. The study of Political Science may also be combined with study in related areas.

Courses are structured as interactive seminars, and focus on political science research methods, along with the main political science subfields: American politics, comparative politics, international relations, political theory, and public policy. Graduates of the program go on to Ph.D. programs, politics, non-profit work, and the private sector.

The program aims to help students in a variety of ways: Broadening their understanding of political science, acquisition of research skills, critical thinking and analytical skills, using logic and evidence to construct and defend a position, and communicating arguments in writing and orally.

### Graduate Assistantships

The program offers a number of Graduate Assistantships. Students who receive Graduate Assistantships have their tuition waved, and also receive about \$4,250 per semester in exchange for working 20 hours per week for faculty. These positions are awarded based on merit, however we encourage you to apply by April 15 for priority consideration.

### Admission

To apply:

- Fill out the application form at the University of Memphis Graduate School website: [www.memphis.edu/graduateadmissions/](http://www.memphis.edu/graduateadmissions/). They will need official copies of your academic transcripts and of your GRE score report (we also accept LSAT).
- Email the following materials to Ms. Nicole Reeves ([nreeves1@memphis.edu](mailto:nreeves1@memphis.edu)):
  - A completed copy of the Political Science application form: <http://www.memphis.edu/polisci/forms/graduate-application-form.pdf>
  - A copy of your GRE score report or LSAT score report.
  - A typed personal statement of approximately 1,000 words. This is an essay about why you wish to pursue a graduate degree in political science.
  - Two letters of recommendation (preferably from professors who are familiar with your work). Please have letters of recommendation emailed directly to Ms. Reeves: [nreeves1@memphis.edu](mailto:nreeves1@memphis.edu)
  - Copies of your undergraduate and/or graduate transcripts.

Program Requirements:

1. Students who write a thesis must complete 33 hours of graduate courses, including 3-6 hours of credit for POLS 7996, Thesis. Students electing to write a thesis should familiarize themselves with the Thesis/Dissertation Preparation Guide before beginning to write. Students who do not write a thesis must complete 36 hours of graduate courses.
2. All students must complete POLS 7100 Seminar in Scope and Methods of Political Science Research, POLS 7401 Seminar in Political Theory, and POLS 7101 Political Statistics with grades of B or better in each course.
3. At least 27 semester hours of the courses (30 hours for the non-thesis option) must be taken at the 7000 level, at least 21 (24 for the non-thesis option) of which must be in Political Science.
4. No more than 6 semester hours of internship courses may be counted toward the 33 or 36 semester hour requirement.
5. Non-thesis students must pass a comprehensive examination and thesis students must pass an oral defense of their thesis. The oral defense of the thesis constitutes a comprehensive examination over all course-work.
6. Comprehensive examinations will consist of four questions total. Students will answer two exam questions from any two of the following fields: American Politics, Public Law, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Political Theory, Public Policy or a combination of International Relations and Comparative Politics. A student should take a minimum of nine hours in each of the two examination fields.

## Dual JD/MA Program

### Admission:

Admission to the dual program will require separate admission to each program. (As noted above, the Political Science Department will accept LSAT scores in lieu of the GRE.) Students are admitted into each program separately; completion of one degree is not contingent upon completion of both.

### Program Requirements:

1. **Dual Credit:** Students may earn up to a maximum of sixteen hours of dual credit for law courses taken at the law school. The following courses will qualify for both the JD and MA in Political Science:
  - **Law Courses Required at Law School:**  
Constitutional Law 4 hours, Criminal Law 3 hours, Criminal Procedure I 3 hours
  - **Law School Electives:**  
Administrative Law 3 hours, Criminal Procedure II 2 hours, Federal Courts A 2 hours, Federal Courts B 2 hours, Civil Rights 3 hours, Constitutional Law Seminar 2 hours, Tennessee Constitutional Law 2 hours, Jurisprudence 2 hours, International Law 3 hours, Comparative Law 3 hours, Immigration Law 3 hours, Environmental Law 3 hours
2. **Other Requirements**
  - For students in the dual program, their first year of law school must include only classes that are part of the JD program.
  - With the above exceptions, all the normal requirements for admission and graduation for a JD and for an MA in Political Science apply.

## Accelerated BA/MA Program in Political Science

This program allows outstanding undergraduates to begin the coursework for the MA in Political Science during their senior year. Students are encouraged to begin planning to enter the Accelerated BA/MA program early in their undergraduate career, in consultation with their Political Science advisor. Undergraduates selected into this program begin a carefully tailored course of study which will allow them to complete their BA degree while they also begin the coursework toward their MA.

Up to 9 hours of graduate course work may be applied to both the undergraduate and graduate programs.

### Admission:

To apply, students should have a minimum 3.25 grade point average. (Exceptions to the minimum GPA will be considered on a case-by-case basis.) Students should submit the following by email to Ms. Reeves ([nreeves1@memphis.edu](mailto:nreeves1@memphis.edu)):

1. A completed application form:  
[http://www.memphis.edu/polisci/forms/acceleratedbama\\_form.pdf](http://www.memphis.edu/polisci/forms/acceleratedbama_form.pdf)
2. A very brief (roughly 400 words) personal statement, describing why you are interested in taking graduate courses in political science.
3. Two letters of recommendation (preferably from professors who are familiar with your work). Please have letters of recommendation emailed directly to Ms. Reeves:  
[nreeves1@memphis.edu](mailto:nreeves1@memphis.edu)
4. A copy of your undergraduate transcript.

To continue in the program past the BA, students must apply for admission into the Graduate School and into the Political Science department's MA program.

## FAQ

### How much is tuition?

Tuition changes year to year. You can estimate tuition costs here:

<http://www.memphis.edu/bursar/tuition.php> (click the relevant semester, click graduate courses, change “number of registered hours” to 9, which would be a standard semester). For spring 2019, in-state tuition for 9 hours (3 courses) was \$5,373.00.

### How do I apply for the Graduate Assistantships?

All applicants are automatically considered for a Graduate Assistantship.

### What is the deadline for applying?

We do rolling admission. However, we encourage you to apply by April 15 for priority consideration for a Graduate Assistantship.

### How long does it typically take to complete the MA?

For students not interested in also pursuing a JD, the MA is typically completed in 2 years.

### What type of work do graduates of the MA program typically do?

It varies. Some students go on to work for government at the local, state, or national levels. Others go on to Ph.D. programs. Some take jobs with non-profit organizations, and others with private companies.

### Can I write a thesis as a JD/MA student?

You can, though most JD/MA students take the comprehensive exams route.

### When are classes?

Graduate seminars are typically on weekdays from 5:30pm to 8:30pm. Occasionally we offer weekday afternoon graduate seminars.

### What type of work do Graduate Assistants do?

It varies by professor. Some professors have Graduate Assistants help with research. Others have Graduate Assistants help with teaching responsibilities. Some do a combination of both.

### I have more questions. Who should I contact?

Please feel free to reach out to Dr. Derefe Chevannes, the Director of Graduate Recruitment: [dkchvnns@memphis.edu](mailto:dkchvnns@memphis.edu).