Political Science, MA, MS

Department: Political Science Department
College: College of Humanities and Social Sciences

Overview

About This Degree

Students in the graduate program in political science at USU become experts in the topics they study related to government, public policies, political processes, and more as they work with award-winning faculty that foster classroom environments where engaging discussion and research are required.

The program welcomes students with a wide range of career goals. Some students wish to continue on to positions in government, lobbying, or with think tanks, while others are preparing to enter the Foreign Service or international political careers. Many students also are accepted to top PhD programs at other universities.

The **MA** degree requires students to gain proficiency in one or more foreign languages. The **MS** degree requires students to incorporate a quantitative competency into their research in lieu of a foreign language. A course plan will be developed for each student with their committee in their first year.

The program offers two tracks. Students must choose one.

- **Public policy track:** This examines the process and strategies of public policy development with an emphasis on which policies can succeed both substantively and politically in different policy arenas.
- **Conflict and cooperation track:** In this track, students explore human propensities for war, peace, and progress through examination and comparison of militant groups, nations, states, empires, and international relations. Students study the causes of warfare and terrorism, national and international policies for security, as well as conditions and policies for peace, stability, nation-building, and democratic practice.

Career Options

This degree is designed to prepare students for careers as policy analysts in government or in the private sector, and as professional political scientists (much of the curriculum is tailored for entry into doctoral programs), who teach and conduct research at the college or university level.

What it takes

Admissions Requirements

The department will consider applications from students with undergraduate degrees in subjects other than political science. Acceptance in these cases may require fulfilling certain course prerequisites.

Application Requirements:

- Complete the online application
- Pay the $55 application fee
- Score at or above the 50th percentile on the GRE
- Have a 3.0 or higher GPA on your last 60 semester or 90 quarter credits
- Provide transcripts of all college/university credits
- Provide three contacts for letters of recommendation

International students have additional admissions requirements.

Admissions Deadlines

The department accepts new students each fall and has the following application deadline:

- Fall semester - February 1
- Applicants who submit applications after the February 1 deadline may still be admitted to the program; however, they will not be considered for financial assistance.

Master's Degree Plan Options

Students can receive the **MS** or **MA** by pursuing the following option:

- The **Plan B** option, which requires the production of a paper or creative work of art and is expected to reflect equivalent scholarship standards as a thesis.

Financial Assistance

The department normally appoints a number of teaching assistants, each with about $7,000 annual stipend. Most appointments are for one year, but renewable for a second if performance is satisfactory. Research assistantships and government assistantships are sometimes available as well.

A variety of additional funding opportunities are available, including fellowships, scholarships, tuition awards, and travel support. Additionally, students may be eligible for subsidized health insurance through qualifying assistantships.

Program Requirements

Click here to see course requirements for the **Master of Arts**.

Click here to see course requirements for the **Master of Science**.

Students may complete up to three credits of internship work. The department can help students find internship opportunities, or they are free to arrange their own. The internship is not required for graduation, however.

Contact

Advisor(s)

Peter McNamara
Associate Professor
Office: MAIN 324 C
Phone: (435) 797-1318
Email: peter.mcnamara@usu.edu

Faculty

Damon Cann, PhD, State University of New York – Stonybrook
Associate Professor
Area: Parties, elections, interest groups, research methods, statistics
Office: MAIN 324D
Phone: (435) 797-8705
Email: damon.cann@usu.edu

Huiyun Feng, PhD, Arizona State University
Associate Professor
Area: Chinese politics, East Asian politics, comparative politics, international relations
Office: MAIN 330 B
Phone: (435) 797-8277
Email: huiyun.feng@usu.edu

Colin Flint, PhD, University of Colorado-Boulder
Professor
Area: Geopolitics, Peace and Conflict, World-Systems Theory

Office: Main 320B
Phone: (435) 797-5962
Email: colin.flint@usu.edu

William Furlong, PhD, University of Florida
Professor
Area: Latin America, Central America, democratization, development
Office: MAIN 328 B
Phone: (435) 797-1311
Email: bill.furlong@usu.edu

Greg Goelzhauser, PhD, Florida State University
Assistant Professor
Area: Judicial Politics, Presidency, Regulation
Office: MAIN 324 B
Phone: (435) 797-9489
Email: greg.goelzhauser@usu.edu

David Goetze, PhD, Indiana University
Associate Professor
Area: Human Cooperation & Conflict, Ethnic Conflict, Evolutionary Theory
Office: MAIN 328 D
Phone: (435) 797-1316
Email: david.goetze@usu.edu

Kai He, PhD, Arizona State University
Assistant Professor
Area: International Security, International Political Economy, Chinese Politics, Methods
Office: MAIN 330 E
Phone: (435) 797-1305
Email: kai.he@usu.edu

Roberta Herzberg, PhD, Washington University – St. Louis
Associate Professor
Area: Public choice, health policy, public policy
Office: MAIN 320 B
Phone: (435) 797-1307
Email: bobbi.herzberg@usu.edu

Jeannie Johnson, PhD, University of UK-Reading
Assistant professor
Area: Comparative Cultures, Civilization, Terrorism
Office: MAIN 330 C
Phone: (435) 797-7570
Email: jeannie.johnson@usu.edu

Michael Lyons, PhD, University of California – Santa Barbara
Associate Professor
Area: U.S. government, Congress, public policy, elections
Office: MAIN 320 B
Phone: (435) 797-1312
Email: michael.lyons@usu.edu

Peter McNamara, PhD, Boston College
Associate Professor
Area: Political theory
Office: MAIN 324 C

Phone: (435) 797-1318
Email: peter.mcnamara@usu.edu

Robert Nalbandov, PhD, Central European University-Hungary
Assistant Professor
Area: IR Theories, Neo-Institutionalism, Regional Politics & Securities (Eurasia, Former Soviet Union, Africa)
Office: MAIN 330 A
Phone: (435) 797-4932
Email: robert.nalbandov@usu.edu

Anthony Peacock, PhD, Claremont Graduate University
Department Head, Professor
Area: Public law
Office: MAIN 320 C
Phone: (435) 797-1314
Email: anthony.peacock@usu.edu

Veronica Ward, PhD, University of Maryland
Associate Professor
Area: International relations, social choice, global environmental issues, conflict and cooperation
Office: MAIN 324 E
Phone: (435) 797-1319
Email: veronica.ward@usu.edu

Get Involved

Professional Organizations, Honor Societies, and Clubs

American Political Science Association: This is the leading professional organization for the study of political science and serves more than 15,000 members in over 80 countries. With a range of programs and services for individuals, departments and institutions, APSA brings together political scientists from all fields of inquiry, regions, and occupational endeavors within and outside academe in order to expand awareness and understanding of politics.

Labs, Centers, Research

Institute of Government and Politics: IOGP aims to enhance understanding of government institutions and the political process by providing opportunities that bridge practical skills and academic training. The nonpartisan IOGP engages students, faculty, political and community leaders, and citizens in the discussion of policy development through its internship program, visiting speakers, seminars, and policy forums.