

# **GRADUATE PROGRAM IN POLITICAL SCIENCE**

Student Handbook

**Department of Political  
Science**

College of Arts and Sciences

University of Louisville

August 10, 2021

## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

### A. DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Campus Location and Telephone: Ford Hall, Room 205; 502-852-6831  
 Office Hours: 8:30 am – 5:00 pm; 8:30 am – 4:30 pm (summer)  
 Department Chair: Dr. Tricia Gray  
 (tricia.gray@louisville.edu)  
 Graduate Advisor: Dr. Melissa Merry  
 (melissa.merry@louisville.edu)  
 Program Assistant: Brooke Ryder  
 (brooke.ryder@louisville.edu)

### B. PROGRAM GOVERNANCE

The graduate program in the Department of Political Science is governed by a committee selected from among the Department's graduate faculty and appointed by the Department Chair. The Graduate Advisor, also appointed by the Chair, serves as the chair of the committee.

The policies outlined below reflect standards set by the Graduate School and the College of Arts and Sciences (the unit to which the Political Science Department belongs).

### C. POLITICAL SCIENCE FACULTY

The Department of Political Science has earned a reputation for outstanding teaching, scholarship, and service. Faculty in the Department have won many teaching awards, including the Arts and Sciences Teacher of the Year (seven times), the Alumni Outstanding Teacher Award (three times), the Trustees' Award (three times), the University Distinguished Teaching award, and the Kentucky Professor of the Year Award. Several faculty are named "Faculty Favorites" each year by students at the University of Louisville. Faculty have published over 50 books and hundreds of scholarly articles and book chapters, winning the University's Distinguished Research Award in Social Science and the College's Distinguished Research Award in Social Science. Faculty have also won prestigious national and international awards such as Fulbright Awards, National Endowment for the Humanities Awards, Social Science Research Council Grants, American Council of Learned Societies Grants, an Eisenhower Leadership Grant, a Smith Richardson Foundation Grant, a Ford Foundation Fellowship, a Woodrow Wilson International Center Fellowship, and a Humboldt Fellowship. Department faculty contribute thousands of hours to university, community, and professional service, winning the University Distinguished Service Award, as well as numerous awards from state and local agencies.

**David Buckley**

**Endowed Chair in Asian Democracy Paul Weber Endowed Chair in Politics, Science, and Religion**

Ph.D., Georgetown University

Associate Professor

Religion & Democracy, Political Islam, Ethnic Conflict, Survey and Experimental Research

**Julie M. Bunck**

**Honors Advisor**

Ph.D., University of Virginia

Professor

Comparative Politics (Latin America), International Relations.

**Anne I. Caldwell, Internship Advisor**

Ph.D., University of Notre Dame

Associate Professor

Feminist Theory, Modern Political Thought, Women and Politics

**Dewey M. Clayton**

Ph.D., University of Missouri

Professor

American Government, Race, Law and Politics

**Adam Enders**

Ph.D., Michigan State University

Assistant Professor

American Politics, Public Opinion, Political Psychology

**Jasmine L. Farrier**

Ph.D., University of Texas-Austin

Professor

American Government, Public Administration

**Michael R. Fowler**

J.D., Harvard University

Professor

International Law and Organization, Conflict Management

**Kristopher Grady**

**Undergraduate Advisor**

Ph.D., Michigan State University

Assistant Professor

International Relations

**Tricia J. Gray**

**Department Chair**

Ph.D., Miami University

Associate Professor

Latin American Politics, International Relations

**Shiping Hua**

Ph.D., University of Hawaii

Professor

Comparative Politics, East Asia, Political Culture

**David L. Imbroscio**

Ph.D., University of Maryland

Professor

Political Economy, Urban Politics, Public Policy on Poverty

**Cathryn Johnson**

Ph.D., Indiana University

Assistant Professor

Comparative Politics, African Politics, Gender and Politics

**Melissa K. Merry**

**Graduate Advisor**

Ph.D., University of Washington

Associate Professor

Public Policy, Digital Politics, Environmental Politics, American Government

**Laura P. Moyer**

Ph.D., University of Georgia

Associate Professor

Constitutional Law, Civil Rights and Liberties, Judicial Politics, Gender Politics

**Rodger A. Payne**

Ph.D., University of Maryland

Professor

International Relations, Security, Global Environment

**Sherri L. Wallace**

Ph.D., Cornell University

Professor

African American Politics, Urban Politics, Public Policy

**Charles E. Ziegler**

**Grawemeyer Award Director**

Ph.D., University of Illinois

Professor

Comparative Politics (Russia and Eurasia), Foreign Policy

## **II. ACADEMIC PROGRAM FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE**

### **A. OVERVIEW**

The Department of Political Science offers the Master of Arts (M.A.) degree in Political Science. Students may select from one of two main options for their graduate studies: 1) the general M.A. in Political Science, and 2) the M.A. in Political Science with a concentration in Digital Politics. Both options offer students training in the full range of fields of study and methodological approaches to Political Science. Each of these options is described below.

### **B. THE M.A. IN POLITICAL SCIENCE**

The M.A. provides students with broad training in the major fields of study in Political Science. Beyond the requirements outlined below, the curriculum is flexible to allow students to design their own program of study. The Department of Political Science (and the larger University community) enjoys especially strong faculty in two fields of study: International Politics and American Politics. Students are encouraged to concentrate their coursework in one of these fields

The field of International Politics includes the comparative study of various regimes and nations around the world and the study of relations among nations and other global actors. Members of the Department faculty possess expertise in the study of Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Europe, and the former Soviet Union. Specific issues of faculty interest include civil-military relations, women in developing nations, revolution, political economy, foreign policy, defense and security, the global environment, international organizations, and international law.

The field of American Politics involves the study of the politics, processes, and outputs of American government. Members of the Department faculty possess expertise in the study of American governmental institutions that formulate and administer public policy and the study of American political behavior. Specific areas of faculty interest include Congress, the judiciary, public opinion, voting behavior, urban policy, environmental policy, economic development policy, antipoverty policy, and housing policy.

## 1. CORE COURSES

The M.A. program includes 18 hours of required core courses. All students must successfully complete the following required courses (six hours). It is recommended that these courses be completed during the first year:

- POLS 670 (Research Design)
- POLS 671 (Introduction to Data Analysis)

Students must also successfully complete the following four core seminars (twelve hours):

- POLS 619 (Seminar in Public Policy)
- POLS 629 (Seminar in American Politics)
- POLS 639 (Seminar in International Relations)
- POLS 649 (Seminar in Comparative Politics)

## 2. 500-LEVEL CREDIT

Students in the M.A. program normally will take coursework numbered 600 or above. However, students doing the non-thesis option may take up to nine hours of coursework at the 500 level. Students doing the thesis option may take up to six hours of coursework at the 500 level. Students enrolling in 500-level courses must meet all the requirements for graduate-level credit set by the instructor of the course.

## 3. INDEPENDENT STUDY CREDIT

Students may take up to three hours of independent study credit (POLS 691) under the supervision of a faculty member.

## 4. INTERNSHIP CREDIT

Students may take up to six hours of internship (practicum) credit (POLS 510-511) under the supervision of a faculty member. These hours count toward the limit on 500-level credit (see section II.B.2.). Note that the total number of credits received from internship credit and independent study credit may not exceed six hours. In particular, students may take six hours of internship credit, *or* three hours of internship credit and three hours of independent study credit.

## 5. ELECTIVE CREDIT

Students are encouraged to enroll in courses offered by other departments, if such courses meet their particular educational or career objectives. With the approval of the Graduate Advisor, up to six hours of coursework may be taken outside the Political Science Department. Generally, approved courses are offered by the disciplines closely related to Political Science (e.g. history, law, public administration, sociology, economics, communication, geography, justice administration). Coursework from other disciplines also may be approved if a student can demonstrate its relevance to the study of Political Science.

## **6. TRANSFER CREDIT**

Earned graduate credit may be transferred from accredited institutions that offer advanced degrees. The maximum number of semester hours normally transferable is six. Students requesting transfer credit must produce the required documentation to show that the course meets the standards set by the Department of Political Science for graduate credit. This documentation will include the official transcript, course syllabus, and copies of all assignments completed for the course. Credits that have been applied to any other degree may not be transferred. Credit earned more than three years prior to the student's application to the Graduate School of the University of Louisville will not usually be considered for transfer. Only courses in which the student earned grades of "B" or better will be considered for transfer. Hours and quality points earned at other institutions are not included in the calculation of a student's GPA. Students may initiate the transfer of credits after they have enrolled in their first semester of coursework.

## **7. COURSE LOADS**

Full-time study is defined as nine hours of credit during the fall or spring semester or during the summer session (both terms). The maximum number of hours that may be taken in a semester or summer session is 12. Any student seeking to enroll in more than the maximum number of hours must petition the Unit dean for permission.

## **8. THESIS OPTION**

### **a. Introduction**

Students who choose the thesis option must complete 24 hours of coursework and six hours of Thesis Guidance (POLS 699). The six hours of Thesis Guidance can be taken in one semester, usually the final semester of the student's degree program, or divided across two semesters.

The thesis should be an original contribution to the discipline, show an awareness of scholarly work relevant to the thesis topic, and employ methods appropriate to the development of an extended academic project. A thesis is typically between 60 and 85 pages in length and consists of multiple chapters.

The thesis is prepared under the supervision of a faculty advisor who serves as chair of the thesis committee. The student selects a topic in consultation with the advisor and develops the content, approach, and presentation with the advisor's approval and support.

Students considering the thesis option should examine recent theses completed in the Political Science Department to get a clear sense of the expectations and standards associated with thesis-writing. These theses are available in Ekstrom Library.

The student provides an oral defense of the completed thesis before a committee of three faculty members prior to submitting the thesis to the Graduate School.

## **b. Thesis committee**

The committee includes the chair, who must be a member of the Political Science Department's senior graduate faculty; a second faculty member from Political Science, who must have graduate faculty member status; and a member of the graduate faculty from outside the Political Science Department.

## **c. Procedures for theses**

Students who choose the thesis option must follow specific steps:

**First**, the student must meet with the Graduate Advisor to discuss, in general terms, the thesis project, faculty members who might be suitable for the thesis committee, and requirements for completion of the project.

**Second**, the student must gain the sponsorship of a senior member of the graduate faculty from the Political Science Department, who agrees to act as chair of the thesis committee. At this time, the chair of the thesis committee should assist the student in selecting the other two members of the committee. It is the responsibility of the committee chair and the student to see to it that all required procedures are followed.

**Third**, the student fills out the **Thesis / Dissertation Advisory Committee Appointment form** and submits the form to Brooke Ryder, who will forward it to the Graduate School. This form requires the signatures of all members of the committee.

**Fourth**, the student fills out an **Independent Study form** with a detailed plan of work description and submits it to their thesis supervisor who signs. They will then send the form to the Graduate Advisor who signs and sends it to the Department Chair to sign. The Chair then sends the form to the A&S Deans office where they will approve the form and forward to the registrar's office who will enroll you in the course.

**Fifth**, the student composes a prospectus. The chair of the thesis committee should supervise the preparation of the prospectus and give final approval for review by the second reader on the committee. The prospectus is then submitted to the Graduate Advisor, along with a proposed thesis committee. The prospectus must be approved by both the chair of the thesis committee and the second reader on the committee at least four months prior to the final oral defense (December 15 for a May degree, April 1 for an August degree, August 1 for a December degree). See "Thesis prospectus" below for further details.

**Sixth**, the student writes the thesis, working in close consultation with the committee chair and, if appropriate, other members of the thesis committee.

At a minimum, the student should be in contact with the faculty sponsor every two/three weeks throughout the term.

The student is expected to submit at least one rough draft of the paper to the faculty sponsor and incorporate faculty feedback into the final draft.

**Seventh**, after the thesis has met the approval of the committee chair and, if appropriate, other members of the thesis committee, the committee chair schedules the

oral defense of the work. Each member of the committee must receive a clean, typed copy of the thesis at least two weeks before the scheduled oral defense. Also, the student must arrange to submit a **Thesis / Dissertation Final Oral Examination Schedule form** to the Graduate School, listing the thesis title, the student's identification number, and the time and place of the oral defense at least two weeks prior to the defense. Final approval of the thesis is made by the three members of the thesis committee.

**Eighth**, the thesis must include a 150-word abstract. Other submission and formatting information is available from the Graduate School. Students should email Courtney Kerr (clkerr01@louisville.edu) several weeks prior to the submission deadline to schedule an appointment to review and secure approval of the format of the thesis.

**Finally**, in keeping with the deadlines established by the Graduate School, the student must submit the following:

- One unbound copy (on 25% cotton paper) with original signatures to the Graduate School.
- One copy to the advisor;
- One copy to the Political Science Department.

#### **d. Thesis prospectus**

The prospectus lays the foundation for the thesis. Given the importance of the document, the student should seriously consider registering for three of the six Thesis Guidance credits during the semester in which the prospectus is being written. The student would register for the remaining three credits in the following semester, during which the thesis is being completed.

The prospectus for a master's thesis should be ten to twelve pages in length, including the bibliography. The M.A. prospectus introduces and describes the topic of investigation and the primary and secondary sources to be used, outlines the major assumptions behind the study and gives a tentative line of argument and/or mode of analysis, and finally discusses the potential worth of the project when completed. The bibliography should list the relevant primary and secondary material.

The prospectus, once approved by the chair of the thesis committee, should be submitted to the Graduate Advisor, who will review the prospectus, then forward it to the Political Science faculty member who will serve as the second reader on the thesis committee. The second reader must indicate, in writing, whether he or she approves the prospectus and what points he or she thinks the student should address before proceeding on the thesis project. The second reader's comments should be provided to the student, the thesis committee chair, and the Graduate Advisor. A face-to-face meeting of the student, the thesis committee chair, and the second reader is highly advisable. If the faculty members of the thesis committee have significant reservations about the thesis project, the student will be asked to revise and resubmit the prospectus. In the event that the student cannot address the concerns of the committee members, the student should seriously consider abandoning the thesis project and developing a directed research project instead. The student should bear in mind that switching from thesis track to non-thesis track may entail additional course work to achieve the 33 credit hours required for a non-thesis degree.

## 9. NON-THESIS OPTION

### a. Introduction

Students who choose the non-thesis option must complete 33 hours of coursework and three hours of Directed Research (POLS 695). The directed research paper should be based on work the student has engaged in, in one or more graduate seminars. It is recommended that the project develop one of the student's strongest seminar papers. Directed research papers are typically between 25 and 35 pages in length and consist of distinct sections and sub-sections. The paper involves substantially revising and probably reframing previously written work. It will entail fresh primary and secondary research and careful integration of the new material into the initial work the student has done on the topic.

The directed research paper is completed under the guidance of a single faculty advisor, who has sole authority over approving the finished paper.

### b. Procedures for directed research papers

Students who choose the non-thesis option must follow specific steps:

**First**, the student must gain the sponsorship of a senior member of the graduate faculty of the department. A student who is unsure about which faculty member might be a suitable sponsor should meet with the Graduate Advisor to discuss potential sponsors. It is the responsibility of the faculty sponsor and the student to see to it that all required procedures are followed.

**Second**, the student fills out an **Independent Study form** with a detailed plan of work description and submits it to their thesis supervisor who signs. They will then send the form to the Graduate Advisor who signs and sends it to the Department Chair to sign. The Chair then sends the form to the A&S Deans office where they will approve the form and forward to the registrar's office who will enroll you in the course.

**Third**, the student composes a prospectus. The faculty sponsor should supervise the preparation of the prospectus and give final approval. The approved prospectus is then submitted to the Graduate Advisor. The prospectus must be approved at least three months before the end of the semester in which the student intends to complete the directed research paper (February 1 for the spring semester, May 15 for the summer semester, September 1 for the fall semester). The student should not expect a response from the Graduate Advisor; approval by the faculty sponsor is sufficient to launch the project. See "Directed Research Prospectus" below for further details.

**Fourth**, the student writes the directed research paper, working in close consultation with the faculty sponsor. At a minimum, the student should be in contact with the faculty sponsor every two-three weeks throughout the semester. The student is expected to submit at least one rough draft of the paper to the faculty sponsor and incorporate faculty feedback from the draft into the final paper. The sponsor has discretion to determine the deadline for receipt of the finished paper, but in any case, the paper must be given to the sponsor in time for her or him to evaluate it and submit a grade at the end of the semester. There is no oral defense of the paper.

**Finally**, upon completion of the project, the student should provide a copy of the paper to the Graduate Advisor. Failure to do so may delay the conferral of the student's degree.

### **c. Directed Research Prospectus**

The prospectus for a directed research paper should be about three pages in length, not including a bibliography of the relevant primary and secondary sources. It should indicate what research the student has completed on the topic and discuss how the student will extend that research. If the directed research paper is to be an expansion of a seminar paper, the student should include a copy of the seminar paper with the submission of the directed research prospectus. One to two pages should suffice for the bibliography.

Upon submission to the Graduate Advisor, the prospectus should include a cover page with the student's name, the title of the proposed paper, and the director's name and signature (indicating approval).

## **10. THESIS PROJECTS AND DIRECTED RESEARCH PAPERS COMPARED**

Thesis projects and directed research papers differ mainly in length and the amount of research required to complete them. A thesis project entails a sustained effort over more than a single semester, while a directed research paper can be finished in one semester. A student should choose the thesis track only if he or she has completed enough course work to provide the necessary background for undertaking a thesis project and is able to work consistently and independently on what is likely to be the biggest project the student has ever undertaken. Writing a thesis should not be seen as an easy way to avoid the additional course work required for a non-thesis degree. Indeed, some students may find that 24 hours of course work has not prepared them to write a thesis.

Thesis projects and directed research papers are similar in that both require the student to develop an original approach to a topic relevant to study of politics, situate the proposed research in the relevant literature on the topic, identify a suitable methodology for carrying out the research, and deal with the limitations of research that are inherent in the study of politics. If well-executed, either option provides a student with a high quality writing sample suitable for submission when applying to a Ph.D. program.

## **11. HUMAN SUBJECTS IN RESEARCH**

If the thesis project or directed research paper involves working with human subjects (e.g. interviews, observations), the student will need to apply for Human Subjects Review through the University of Louisville IRB. Guidelines for human subjects protocols are available through the Senior Vice President for Research website. Note that both the student and the faculty member who is supervising the student must obtain certification for doing research that involves human subjects. This requirement does not apply to research based on secondary analysis of existing data collected by another entity.

## C. THE CONCENTRATION IN DIGITAL POLITICS

The MA in Political Science with a concentration in Digital Politics combines broad training in Political Science with an applied focus that allows students to develop skills and earn the credentials that will be useful in their career pursuits.

Information technology is increasingly being recognized as essential to the functioning of government and to political advocacy. This concentration will increase students' marketability, giving them skills that will position them to take jobs designing e-government initiatives, crafting social media advocacy or narrative strategies for non-profit organizations, and conducting online political campaigns, among other careers.

This track draws on the strengths of existing research and teaching interests of faculty members in the department. Anne Caldwell, Adam Enders, Tricia Gray, Melissa Merry, and Rodger Payne have all published work on aspects of digital political communication and have expertise pertinent to different facets of information technology and politics.

### 1. CORE COURSES

The M.A. program with a concentration in Digital Politics includes 30 hours of required courses and six hours of electives, for a total of 36 credit hours. All students must successfully complete the following required courses (six hours). It is recommended that these courses be completed during the first year:

- POLS 670 (Research Design)
- POLS 671 (Introduction to Data Analysis)

Students must successfully complete the following four core seminars (twelve hours).

- POLS 619 (Seminar in Public Policy)
- POLS 629 (Seminar in American Politics)
- POLS 639 (Seminar in International Relations)
- POLS 649 (Seminar in Comparative Politics)

Students must successfully complete three digital politics seminars (nine hours) in the Political Science Department.

- POLS 507 (Digital Politics: American)
- POLS 507 (Digital Politics: Public Policy)
- POLS 507 (Digital Politics: Global)

Other digital politics seminars may be offered; students should seek approval from the Graduate Advisor for these courses to count toward the digital politics requirements.

Finally, students must successfully complete an internship (three hours) related to digital politics.

- POLS 692: Internship in Political Communication in the Digital Age

The internship must be approved by the Graduate Advisor and conducted under the supervision of a faculty member.

## **2. 500-LEVEL CREDIT**

Students pursuing the digital politics concentration may take up to nine hours of coursework at the 500 level. Students enrolling in 500-level courses must meet all the requirements for graduate-level credit set by the instructor of the course.

## **3. INDEPENDENT STUDY CREDIT**

Students may take up to three hours of independent study credit (POLS 691) under the supervision of a faculty member. In order to enroll in this course the student must fill out an **Independent Study form** with a detailed plan of work description and submits it to their thesis supervisor who signs. They will then send the form to the Graduate Advisor who signs and sends it to the Department Chair to sign. The Chair then sends the form to the A&S Deans office where they will approve the form and forward to the registrar's office who will enroll you in the course.

## **4. ELECTIVE CREDIT**

Students must complete six hours of elective coursework, in Political Science or other departments. Students are encouraged to enroll in courses offered by other departments, if such courses meet their particular educational or career objectives. With the approval of the Graduate Advisor, up to six hours of coursework may be taken outside the Political Science Department. Generally, approved courses are offered by the disciplines closely related to Political Science (e.g. history, law, public administration, sociology, economics, communication, geography, justice administration). Coursework from other disciplines also may be approved if a student can demonstrate its relevance to the study of Political Science.

## **5. TRANSFER CREDIT**

Earned graduate credit may be transferred from accredited institutions that offer advanced degrees. The maximum number of semester hours normally transferable is six. Students requesting transfer credit must produce the required documentation to show that the course meets the standards set by the Department of Political Science for graduate credit. This documentation will include the official transcript, course syllabus, and copies of all assignments completed for the course. Credits that have been applied to any other degree may not be transferred. Credit earned more than three years prior to the student's application to the Graduate School of the University of Louisville will not usually be considered for transfer. Only courses in which the student earned grades of "B" or better will be considered for transfer. Hours and quality points earned at other institutions are not included in the calculation of a student's GPA. Students may initiate the transfer of credits after they have enrolled in their first semester of coursework.

## **6. COURSE LOADS**

Full-time study is defined as nine hours of credit during the fall or spring semester or during the summer session (both terms). The maximum number of hours that may be taken in a semester or summer session is twelve. Any student seeking to enroll in more than the maximum number of hours must petition the Unit dean for permission.

### **III. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

#### **A. ADMISSION**

Applicants selected for the program have generally earned at least a 3.0 undergraduate GPA overall or a 3.2 undergraduate GPA in the last 60 credit hours or the equivalent. On the Graduate Records Examination (GRE), successful applicants generally present a Verbal score of at least 153, a Quantitative score of at least 144, and an Analytical score of at least 4.0. A student falling moderately below these levels may still be admitted on a conditional basis if there is some evidence demonstrating that she or he can perform at the graduate level. The deadlines for admission are: July 15 (Fall semester), November 15 (Spring semester)

#### **B. NON-DEGREE STATUS**

In exceptional circumstances, a student seeking eventual admission into the graduate program and holding a baccalaureate degree will be advised to register for courses in non-degree status. If the student wishes to apply the hours earned under non-degree status, he or she must gain prior approval from the Graduate Advisor for the specific courses to be taken. The student's performance in these approved courses will be used as a part of the evaluation of her or his application. Normally, the maximum number of hours taken in non-degree status that can be applied toward the M.A. degree is six. If the courses offered are at the 500-level, the student must let the instructor know he or she plans eventually to obtain graduate credit for these courses. This ensures the instructor holds the student to the graduate-level requirements and standards set for the course. A student wishing to apply these 500-level hours to the graduate program must demonstrate that she or he has met the graduate-level requirements and standards set by the instructor. Also note that students registering in non-degree status must obtain the permission of the instructor to enroll in any course numbered 600 or above.

#### **C. ACADEMIC ADVISING AND ORIENTATIONS**

All new students are required to meet with the Graduate Advisor to receive academic advising. It is highly recommended that continuing students meet with the Graduate Advisor at least once while taking courses. Students are required to meet with the Graduate Advisor prior to embarking on a thesis or directed research project. Students are also encouraged to seek academic advising from other members of the Department faculty, especially those with whom they share academic interests. All students (new and continuing) should attend the orientation session(s) and reception(s) offered by the Graduate School and the College of Arts and Sciences. The Department of Political Science may also offer a brief orientation, which all new students must attend. Students will be notified of the dates, times, and locations of these events.

#### **D. EARLY REGISTRATION**

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of early registration. This helps ensure a seat in desired courses and helps the instructor plan the logistics of the class. Graduate courses need a minimum of five students in order to be offered. Early registration for the Spring semester is generally held in October; for the Fall semester it is held in March or April. Continuing students will find that they are not able to register if an advising flag has been placed on their record. Contact the departmental Program Assistant to remove the flag.

## **E. GRADING SYSTEM**

The grading system for the graduate program, along with the quality points accruing for each letter grade, is as follows: A+ (4.0), A (4.0), A- (3.7), B+ (3.3), B (3.0), B- (2.7), C+ (2.3), C (2.0), C- (1.7), D+ (1.3), D (1.0), D (0.7), F (0.0).

“W” means withdrew and carries no quality points. No student may withdraw from any course after mid-semester. In exceptional cases, the Graduate Dean may grant a student’s request to withdraw from courses because of illness or conditions beyond the student’s control. “I” means work in course is incomplete. If the work is not completed by the end of the next term, regardless of whether the student is enrolled, the “I” automatically becomes an “F.” “X” means coursework has not been finished because of the nature of the research or study involved, e.g. continuing thesis work.

The maximum number of “C” hours (C+, C, or C-) that can count toward the degree is six. Although grades below C- will be calculated in the student’s grade point average, courses in which these grades have been earned will not be counted toward the fulfillment of degree requirements. A student who has received the grade of C, D, or F may repeat the course upon the approval of the Graduate Advisor and the Graduate Dean. When a student repeats a course, the grade point average will be calculated on the basis of the last grade earned, although all previous grades will remain on the transcript. No courses being applied to the M.A. degree can be taken pass/fail.

## **F. ACADEMIC STANDING**

To remain in good standing a student must maintain an overall graduate grade point average of 3.0 or higher. A student must be in good standing in order to be graduated from the M.A. program. A student whose graduate GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on probation until the student regains a 3.0 average or is dismissed. Students are ordinarily not permitted to continue on probation for more than one semester.

## **G. PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING**

It is expected that students will refrain from plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism and cheating are serious breaches of academic conduct and may result in permanent dismissal. Each student is advised to become familiar with the various forms of academic dishonesty as explained in the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities. A plea of ignorance is not acceptable as a defense against the charge of academic dishonesty.

## **H. PROGRAM DURATION, DEGREE PROGRESS, AND TIME LIMITS**

Full-time students normally complete the M.A. degree in two years. Students enrolled in the accelerated B.A. (or B.S.)/M.A. program typically complete the degree in three semesters. All graduate students are expected to make steady and satisfactory progress toward the completion of the degree. Students who fail to enroll for a period of more than 12 months will be considered to have withdrawn from the program. Students who seek to return after such a period are required to reapply to the Department for readmission. Credit earned more than three years prior to the completion of the degree may not be counted toward meeting the degree requirements.

## **I. MASTER'S CANDIDACY**

If a student has completed all of the required coursework for the degree and has registered for but failed to complete a thesis or directed research project, he or she must maintain candidacy status in all subsequent semesters until the degree is completed. Registration in candidacy status is a means of maintaining continuous registration. This status must be maintained year-round (Fall, Spring, and Summer) until the degree is awarded. Students will be billed at the current rate per semester. Once a student registers for candidacy he or she may not thereafter register for additional courses. Exceptions may, in unusual circumstances, be granted by the Unit dean upon written request from the Department.

## **J. APPLICATION FOR DEGREES**

Degrees are awarded in August, December, and May. Candidates who expect to receive degrees on a particular award date must fill out a degree application online. The degree application process is available through ULink ([ulink.louisville.edu](http://ulink.louisville.edu)). Students must submit their completed application for degrees to the Graduate School on or before the dates specified in the University calendar (posted on the U. of L. website). For students seeking degrees in the spring semester, the deadline for degree applications is usually February 15.

## **K. EMAIL ACCOUNTS**

All graduate students are assigned a University e-mail account. You are expected to check your account on a regular basis. You will receive announcements from various University, College, and Department offices, and instructors use Blackboard to communicate important information about classes. The Political Science Department maintains a graduate student e-mail distribution list to send announcements to you. It is your responsibility to provide the department with the e-mail address you expect to check most often.

## **IV. OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

### **A. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

The Department of Political Science has a limited number of graduate assistantships to offer exceptionally qualified full-time students. The availability of these funds varies from year to year. If available for a given year, the application deadline will be April 15, subject to change. Students awarded these positions are required to work 20 hours per week assisting faculty members with research, teaching, or administrative projects. Compensation normally includes a monthly stipend, health benefits, and the remission of in-state tuition. Graduate Assistants are discouraged from seeking employment outside the University while they are fulfilling their duties. Graduate Assistants are prohibited from accepting other employment within the University unless the Dean of the Graduate School gives permission to do so. Students seeking other forms of financial assistance should contact the University's financial aid office directly.

## **B. ACCELERATED PROGRAM**

The Department of Political Science also offers its undergraduate majors an opportunity to earn both a BA (or BS) degree and an MA degree at an accelerated pace. Students must apply during the second semester of their junior year. This program allows students to complete one semester (9 credit hours) of graduate coursework while enrolled as undergraduate students. Typically, students finish their MA degrees within three semesters of completing their undergraduate degrees.

## **C. J.D./M.A. DUAL DEGREE PROGRAM**

### **1. Introduction**

The Louis D. Brandeis School of Law and the Department of Political Science of the College of Arts and Sciences and the Graduate School have developed a program for interdisciplinary studies that will result in dual degrees in Law and Political Science. The program recognizes the many connections among politics, government, and law. Students interested in these connections will have a unique opportunity to explore them in the course of completing the dual degree program. Students enrolled in the program will also acquire interdisciplinary skills in research and writing. The program will prepare students to pursue a wider variety of career options than either the J.D. or the M.A. alone would provide.

A student participating in the dual degree program will be able to combine Law courses and Political Science courses to create a well-defined concentration of study. Examples of such concentrations include environmental law and politics, negotiations and dispute resolution, administrative law and politics, federalism, international law and politics, comparative law and politics, civil rights and liberties, constitutional law and politics, and race, law, and politics.

### **2. Admission requirements**

The J.D. / M.A. program is open to all students who have successfully completed a baccalaureate degree at an accredited college or university. To be admitted into the program, the student must (1) apply to, (2) meet the admission requirements of, and (3) be accepted by both the School of Law and the Department of Political Science. In addition, students currently enrolled only in the Political Science M.A. program must apply to the School of Law prior to completing 18 credit hours of M.A. course work. Students currently enrolled only in the School of Law must apply to the M.A. program prior to completing the first semester of the second year of law school.

Upon admission to both schools, students must submit a letter of intent and a proposed course of study to the School of Law or to the Department of Political Science, depending on where they first intend to take courses, or in which they are currently taking courses. A copy of the letter must also be sent to the appropriate office of the other program. Students will need to plan their four-year course of study carefully, taking into account the sequence and the availability of course offerings in each program. Successful applicants will be notified of the procedures to follow in pursuing the J.D./M.A. course of study.

### 3. Curriculum requirements

Candidates in the J.D. / M.A. program must complete 81 hours in the J.D. curriculum (instead of the normal 90 hours) and either 21 hours in the M.A. curriculum (instead of the normal 30 hours) for the Thesis Option or 27 hours in the M.A. curriculum (instead of the normal 36 hours) for the Non-thesis Option. Nine hours from each program can be counted as electives in the other program to give the student the requisite hours for both the J.D. and M.A. degrees. M.A. credit will be applied to the J.D. degree on a pass/fail basis only. J.D. credit will be applied to the M.A. degree on a graded basis; only law courses in which the student has earned a “B” or better may be transferred. Only M.A. courses approved by the Law Dean’s Office may be applied to the J.D. degree. Likewise, only J.D. courses approved by the Graduate Advisor in Political Science will be applied to the M.A. degree.

Students should consult the handbooks for each program for complete listings of degree requirements. Students must complete the requirements for both degrees before either degree is awarded.

### D. STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Graduate students have the opportunity and are encouraged to become involved in numerous student groups. These groups include the campus-wide Graduate Student Council (GSC), the Graduate Network in Arts and Sciences (GNAS), Pi Sigma Alpha (the Political Science honor society), College Democrats, and College Republicans.

The Department of Political Science must have a student representative on the GSC or the GNAS in order to give Political Science graduate students eligibility to apply for research or travel funds. These organizations maintain listservs that any graduate student may join.

### E. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The M.A. degree is designed to meet the needs of students seeking careers in teaching, research, and public service and/or who anticipate continuing their studies on the doctoral level. To enhance the ability of students to meet their career goals, the curriculum strives to help students develop specific skills, including written and verbal communication skills, analytical skills, methodological skills, and statistical literacy. It is also strongly recommended that students interested in international studies enroll in foreign language courses to build their skills in this area.

The learning environment provided by the program furnishes students with additional avenues for professional development:

- Participation in the Kentucky Political Science Association (KPSA)  
Over the past few years, several graduate students have been given the opportunity to present scholarly papers at the annual meeting of the KPSA.
- Departmental funding for academic activities  
Using the forms posted on the Departmental website, students may apply for grants to support their research or to finance participation at a scholarly conference.

- Membership in the American Political Science Association (APSA)

The APSA is the principal professional organization of Political Scientists in the United States, but it also enrolls international members. Membership includes subscriptions to the *American Political Science Review*, *Perspectives*, and *P.S.*, as well as discounts on other journals, books, and conference registration. Students intending to pursue a Ph.D. after completing their M.A. degree may be eligible for a department-funded membership in the APSA. Contact the Graduate Advisor for more details.

- Scholarly collaboration with faculty

Outstanding advanced students have been invited to co-author research papers, articles, and book chapters with members of the Department faculty.

- Internships

The Department has strong links to the Kentucky General Assembly and Kentucky state government. These links afford graduate students numerous experiential learning opportunities through internship placements. In addition, students may identify other internship programs that complement their coursework and promote their professional development. Graduate students interested in internships should confer with the Graduate Advisor about the suitability of the program.

## **F. GRADUATE STUDENT HONORS**

Students demonstrating superior academic accomplishment during their graduate studies may be recommended by the Department of Political Science for a Graduate Dean's Citation. Typically the Department recommends one or two students each year for the Citation. Nominees are reviewed by a committee in the Graduate School. Criteria for selection include an outstanding academic record and a significant record of accomplishment beyond the required coursework. Students may not nominate themselves.