Admission Requirements

Admission to this program is contingent upon admission to the Graduate School. All students are required to take the Graduate Record Examination. All applications for admission to the doctoral program in political science must have the approval of the Department’s Graduate Committee. Applicants may apply for admission at any time, but all application materials must be received at least six weeks prior to the start of the semester for which admission is sought. Applicants seeking financial aid should apply for Fall semester admission and submit all application materials by January 15.

The doctoral degree in political science indicates not merely superior knowledge of this discipline but also intellectual initiative and the ability to design and carry out independent research and evaluation. Students in their pre-candidacy stage will be judged on the basis of these attributes as well as on their grade-point performance. Possession of a master’s degree does not automatically warrant admission to doctoral study. A Ph.D. student is required to complete a minimum of ninety graduate credits, thirty of which are earned through the dissertation.

Doctoral students structure their course work in terms of a single major field and two minor fields of political science. Major field concentrations may be elected in American government, comparative politics, political theory, public administration, public policy, urban politics, or world politics. Minor concentrations may be in the above seven fields. Other concentrations may be allowed upon approval of the Department’s Graduate Studies Committee. Students should consult the Director of Graduate Studies regarding the specific requirements of these concentrations. Satisfactory completion of written and oral final qualifying examinations are a condition for candidacy.

All Ph.D. students are required to teach at least one semester course during their course of study for the degree, unless this requirement is specifically waived by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Admission to candidacy for the doctor’s degree will usually require at least two years of full-time graduate study beyond the bachelor’s degree. It is granted upon fulfillment of the following requirements:

1. Completion of Department and Graduate School residence and course requirements, including PS 7660 and PS 8600.
2. Filing an approved Plan of Work with the Graduate School.
3. Completion of the general statistics requirement (PS 5630 and PS 6640, or their equivalents);
4. Completion of a preliminary oral examination after the second year of course work for the degree;
5. Completion of the final written qualifying examination.

Approval of Dissertation Prospectus: The candidate is required to prepare and defend a Dissertation prospectus to present following the qualifying examination. The prospectus must be approved by the Dissertation advisory Committee before beginning work on the Dissertation.

Dissertation: The thirty credit dissertation registration requirement is fulfilled by registering for the courses PS 9991, PS 9992, PS 9993, and PS 9994 (Doctoral Dissertation Research and Direction I, II, III, and IV, respectively), in consecutive academic year semesters.

Submission of Dissertation: The candidate is required to submit a doctoral Dissertation on a topic satisfactory to his/her Dissertation Committee, designed to demonstrate proficiency in political science analysis, a capacity for independent and creative research, and the ability to perfect and follow through on an appropriate research or evaluation design.

Academic Scholarship: All course work must be completed in accordance with the regulations of the Graduate School and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. All course work must be completed in accordance with the regulations of the Graduate School and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.