

Political Science

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Master of Arts in Political Science

UTEP's location at the intersection of political systems, nationalities, and cultures provides many fascinating and unique opportunities to study American Politics, Border Politics, Comparative Politics, and International relations. Our master's degree is useful for many different career paths. Our UTEP graduates have gone on to jobs in government service, teaching, business, and non-profit organizations. Some of our M.A. graduates have subsequently completed doctoral programs. We offer two degree plans in our M.A. program. Degree Plan I consists of thirty credit hours, including six thesis credit hours, and is designed for those students planning to pursue a doctoral degree or otherwise would like to develop an area of research expertise. Degree Plan II requires 36 credit hours, including a final paper project. Students in our M.A. program may apply for teaching and research assistantships. The deadline to apply for funding is March 31.

Requirements for Admission to the M.A. Program

Admission is based on the entire record of the applicant and not a single criterion.

1. Completed application available online for the Graduate School.
2. Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in the U.S. or proof of equivalent education at a foreign institution in Political Science, or a related area. Please submit transcripts from your bachelor's degree and any other graduate or professional degree programs, including law school.
3. Three letters of recommendation, preferably from former professors in either your bachelor's degree program or previous graduate programs.
4. A statement of purpose outlining your interest in our program and career objectives. If your undergraduate GPA is below 3.0, please also explain any extenuating circumstances.
5. The results of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). For graduates of institutions outside of the United States where English is not the first language, the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is also required. Official test scores from both GRE and TOEFL should be sent directly from the testing agency to the Graduate School.
6. Other evidence of background and experience that may be available.

Degree Plan I

1. Research Methods Preparation (6 hours)
POLS 5300 Research Methods in Political Science
(To be taken in the first semester possible after admission) AND
POLS 5301 Seminar in Qualitative Methods OR
POLS 5302 Seminar in Quantitative Research Methods II
2. At least one graduate course from three of four subfields: American Institutions and Processes, Border Politics, Comparative Politics, and International Relations (9 hours)
3. Electives, which may include one three-credit course taken at the graduate level in a related field with the advice of the Director of Graduate Studies (9 hours)
4. Two Thesis Courses (6 hours)
POLS 5398 Thesis
POLS 5399 Thesis

Total Hours: 30

Degree Plan II

1. Research Methods Preparation (6 hours)

POLS	5300	Research Methods in Political Science (To be taken in the first semester possible after admission) AND
POLS	5301	Seminar in Qualitative Methods OR
POLS	5302	Seminar in Quantitative Research Methods II
2. At least one graduate course from each of the four subfields: American Institutions and Processes, Border Politics, Comparative Politics, and International Relations (12 hours)
3. Electives, which may include one three-credit course taken at the graduate level in a related field with the advice of the Director of Graduate Studies (15 hours)
4. POLS 5393: Final Paper Project and satisfactory defense of paper in last semester of study before a committee comprised of graduate faculty (3 hours)

Total Hours: 36**Additional Policies**

1. Independent studies are limited to three hours of graduate coursework, taken with the permission of the instructor and the Director of Graduate Studies and justified with a proposal from the student outlining the objectives of the project by the end of the drop/add period.
2. No more than six credit hours of upper-division undergraduate classes may count toward our graduate degree. To use an undergraduate course for graduate credit, the following additional work is required: reading of original scholarly books and articles above and beyond textbooks; and additional written work, such as research on specific theories, literature reviews, or identification of issues in specific areas. Undergraduate courses may only count for graduate credit with the permission of the instructor and the Director of Graduate Studies.
3. No student may register for a graduate course in the Department of Political Science without the advice and signed approval of the Director of Graduate studies. This applies not only to the initial registration, but also to all subsequent enrollments.
4. Satisfactory performance in the M.A. program is defined as maintaining a 3.0 GPA. A grade of B or better must be earned in all the mandatory courses required in both degree plans, including POLS 5300, POLS 5301, and POLS 5302.

Political Science (POLS)

For Graduate Students Only

American Institutions and Processes**5310 Seminar in American Political Behavior (3-0)**

The study of the theories and research about how and why people act politically. Areas of study include: political participation, gender, public opinion, political communication, and race and ethnicity. Course content will vary based on which area of study is highlighted.

5315 Seminar in American Institutions and Processes (3-2)

This course is designed to study the various theories and research about the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government in the United States. Course content will vary based on which branch of government is highlighted.

5320 Seminar in Public Law (3-0)

Covers a wide range of substantive and/or procedural topics in public law and/or the sociological analysis of the function of law.

5364 Seminar in Public Policy Analysis (3-0)

The study of the politics of the policy making process. Emphasis is on the actors involved in public policy-making, their interactions, and the outputs of the policy process.

Border Politics**5336 Seminar in Southwestern Border Politics (3-0)**

United States-Mexico relations as they affect the international frontier, with emphasis upon political leadership, ethnicity, and institutions.

5343 Seminar in Border Politics (3-0)

Comparative study of selected international borders in their multifaceted transnational, local, regional, and national complexities.

5344 Seminar in Border Theory (3-0)

Course examines theoretical explanations for the political behavior and events on international borders from a comparative perspective. Special attention is paid to explaining border politics and various issues including bilateral cooperation, geopolitics, territoriality, culture, demographic migrations, and economic flows across borders.

Comparative Politics

5334 Seminar in Comparative Political Development (3-0)

The comparative analysis of socioeconomic development, regime transitions, and political culture. Topics may include democratization political economy, social movements, ethnic conflict, gender politics, civil society, and corruption.

5339 Seminar in Comparative Political Institutions (3-0)

The comparative analysis of political institutions, such as electoral systems, party systems, legislatures, judiciaries, parliamentary vs. presidential systems, cross-border institutions, system of interest representation, and intergovernmental relations.

5342 Seminar in Comparative Electoral Systems (3-0)

The comparative analysis of elections and electoral systems in the world. Topics may include analyses of electoral rules and their consequences, elections, voting behavior, electoral strategies, electoral administration, and elections in non-democratic countries.

5346 Seminar in Political Economy of Development (3-0)

A survey of theories and research on the political economy of development. Topics may include global and national inequalities, development strategies, and the role of politics and political institutions in shaping policy choices and outcomes. *Prerequisite:* Departmental approval.

5348 Seminar in Politics of Latin America (3-0)

Examines contending theories and research on Latin American politics. Focuses on such topics as democratic, semi-democratic, and non-democratic regimes; popularism; electoral and party systems; political institutions; the role of the military; economic development; and public policy. Topics and countries may vary by instructor. *Prerequisite:* Departmental approval.

5350 Field Analysis Seminar (3-3)

A special listing for courses in the field of comparative politics offered by the departmental faculty that are outside the purview of the above courses. It covers specialized thematic or geographic topics. It can also be used for study abroad programs. Topics vary by instructor. The course may be repeated under a different topic and/or instruction.

International Politics

5330 Seminar in International Politics (3-0)

Examines the structures and the interactions that characterize the politics of the international system. Attention is paid to various theoretical perspectives of international relations scholarship and other topics of world politics.

- 5331 Seminar in International Organization and International Law (3-0)**
Focuses on the creation and operation of international organizations, both state and non-state based, and on the continuing evolution of international law. May be repeated for credit when the topic varies.
- 5332 Seminar in Foreign Policy Decision Making (3-0)**
Examines in detail the process of decision making within individual international actors and the cumulative effects of such decisions.
- 5338 Seminar in International Political Economy (3-0)**
Examines the political and economic effects of the interaction of national policies in the global economy, with special attention paid to theory, evidence, and national policies. Topics include: trade policies, monetary policies, financial crises, multinational corporations, intergovernmental economic organizations and treaties, free trade areas, and other issues of economic development.
- 5347 Seminar in International Security (3-0)**
Examines how the security of nations is affected by the behavior of other nations and non-state actors. Topics include international war, civil war, terrorism, genocide, disease and ecological disaster, and the proliferation of conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction.
Prerequisite: Departmental approval.

General

- 5300 Seminar in Quantitative Research Methods (3-0)**
Basic introduction to principles of scientific inquiry, research design, and quantitative methodological techniques used in political analysis. Required of all graduate Political Science majors. The seminar must be taken during the first semester of graduate study.
- 5301 Seminar in Qualitative Research Methods (3-0)**
The study of qualitative research methods, including case studies and the comparable cases strategy. Issues and themes used to illustrate these methods will vary according to the instructor's interests. *Prerequisite:* POLS 5300 or equivalent course, with a minimum of "B" or better.
- 5302 Seminar Quantitative Research Methods II (3-0)**
This course further explores methods of quantitative analysis and hypothesis testing, including data management, various regression estimation methods, diagnostic techniques, and other topics. *Prerequisite:* POLS 5300 or equivalent course, with a minimum of "B" or better.
- 5349 Seminar in Political Thought (3-0)**
This course investigates topics of political thought ranging from ancient to modern/contemporary time periods. The subject matter will vary according to the instructor's choice but will familiarize students with relevant literature and contemporary scholarly discussions of political thought.
- 5380 Selected Problems in Government (3-0)**
Independent study, research, and writing on a topic agreed upon by student and professor.
- 5393 Final Paper Project (3-0)**
This course is to be taken the last semester by students in degree plan II. Students will extend and refine a paper from a seminar taken during their first 27 credit hours. *Prerequisite:* POLS 5300 and POLS 5301 or 5302 or equivalent course, with minimum grades of "B" or better.
- 5398 Thesis (0-0-3)**
As part of this course, the student will successfully prepare and defend a prospectus for the MA thesis. The prospectus must be approved by the student's thesis committee, and failure to meet this requirement within two long semesters will preclude continuation of the student in the MA program. *Prerequisite:* Instructor approval.

5399 Thesis (0-0-3)

Continuous enrollment required while work on the thesis continues. *Prerequisites:* POLS 5398 and instructor approval.