

Graduate Student Handbook  
for the  
Master of Arts in Political Science

The Department of Political Science and Public Administration  
College of Liberal Arts  
The University of Texas at El Paso

Updated Spring 2025

## **Disclaimer**

This handbook is designed to familiarize you with our departmental and programmatic information, guidelines, rules, resources, and policies. This handbook is not intended to be 100% comprehensive or address every application of, or exception to, general policies and procedures described.

Please note that federal, state, and university policies frequently change. To ensure this handbook is kept as up to date as possible, we may make changes to our policies and procedures without prior notice. Although we will try to communicate changes with you when they occur, a policy may be changed, added, or eliminated without notice.

Furthermore, any policy or procedure described within that conflicts with university policy should be resolved in favor of university policy, as established by The University of Texas at El Paso and UT System.

Any questions about the handbook or content within should be directed to the Director of Graduate Studies and/or Department Chair.

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## **Land Acknowledgement**

As members of the University of Texas at El Paso community, we acknowledge that we are meeting on unceded Indigenous land. We would like to recognize and pay our respects to the Indigenous people with long ties to the immediate region: Lipan Apache, Mescalero Apache, Piro, Manso, Suma, Jumano, Ysleta del Sur Pueblo, Piro/Manso/Tiwa Indian Tribe of the Pueblo of San Juan de Guadalupe, and Tortugas Pueblo. We also acknowledge the nations whose territories include present day Texas: the Carrizo & Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Caddo, Tonkawa, Comanche, Alabama-Coushatta, Kickapoo, and the peoples of Chihuahua and northern Mexico from whom most/many of our students descend, such as the Rarámuri, Tepehuan, Wixarrika and Nahuatlaca peoples. Finally, we recognize all of the American Indian and Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories here in Paso del Norte, on Turtle Island. The University of Texas at El Paso honors your history and cultures and we seek greater awareness of the myriad ways in which your legacy can guide us in fruitful partnerships and mutually fulfilling relationships.

## **Purpose of this Handbook**

Welcome to the Master of Arts in Political Science (MA POLS) in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration at The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). This Handbook will acquaint you with the policies and procedures of the Department and MA program to facilitate your progress toward applying for the program and earning your MA degree.

Read this handbook carefully and consult with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), who is your graduate advisor, whenever you have questions. Be aware that the policies and procedures described herein are subject to change and can be affected by changes in the policies of the University. Check the campus catalog, the College of Liberal Arts website, and the Graduate School for the most up-to-date information.

### **UTEP Graduate School**

The MA in Political Science program is overseen by the Graduate School of The University of Texas at El Paso. For more information about the Graduate School, please visit the following website:

<https://www.utep.edu/graduate/>

### **UTEP College of Liberal Arts**

The MA in Political Science program is housed within the UTEP College of Liberal Arts. For more information, please visit the following website:

<https://www.utep.edu/liberalarts/>

### **UTEP MA in Political Science Program**

Inquiry: <https://www.utep.edu/programs/graduate/political-science-ma.html>

How to Apply: [http://catalog.utep.edu/grad/college-of-liberal-arts/political-science/political-science-ma/?utm\\_source=mcprogram-grad-page&utm\\_medium=website&utm\\_content=political-science-ma](http://catalog.utep.edu/grad/college-of-liberal-arts/political-science/political-science-ma/?utm_source=mcprogram-grad-page&utm_medium=website&utm_content=political-science-ma)

Overview: <https://www.utep.edu/liberalarts/political-science/academic-programs/masters/curriculum-and-course-description.html>

### **UTEP Department of Political Science and Public Administration**

<https://www.utep.edu/liberalarts/political-science/about/about-us.html>

## Overview of the Master of Political Science

The MA program is designed to prepare students for academic and non-academic careers. Our program offers an intellectually stimulating academic and professional environment where students are encouraged to develop their skills and interests to their full potential, as well as contribute to knowledge and praxis in political science through research, teaching, and service. Students develop deep and comprehensive substantive knowledge within the field, strong critical and analytical thinking skills, excellent communication and problem-solving skills, and high ethical and professional standards. Students develop broad knowledge, substantive expertise, and research skills that are highly transferable and valuable to variety of industries, fields, and organizations—making the MA in political science one of the most valuable and flexible degrees available.

Indeed, a MA degree can enable students to enter fast-paced, high impact careers in government service, teaching, business, non-profits, think tanks, foreign service, federal/state/local government agencies, consulates, international organizations, public policy, CIA, FBI, criminal justice, business, immigration advocacy, economic development, environmental organizations, human rights organizations, military, trade and integration, foreign policy, and more. Graduate can obtain careers as legal consultants, data analysts, grassroots organizers, journalists, reporters, campaign managers, representatives, judges, lawyers, grant writers, diplomats, professors, executive directors, editors, city planners, corporate advisors, political commentators, program managers, high school and college teachers, intelligence officers, and so on. Indeed, as politics influences all industries and fields, the substantive knowledge of our students is invaluable to a broad array of employers. Furthermore, the research and analytical skills—especially data analysis skills—of our students make them competitive in diverse, high-paying careers.

Virtually all our students are employed upon graduation or continue to a PhD program or law school. We have an excellent record of graduate employment in private, public, nonprofit, education, and local and federal government offices. For example, our graduates have held career positions at nonprofits, universities, city/local/federal and elected offices, law firms, Federal Bureau of Investigation, State Department, El Paso Times, Texas community colleges, high schools, and private industries. Our graduates have become data analysts, corporate strategists, educators, research coordinators, consultants, executive directors, academic coordinators, police officers, election officers, outreach coordinators, lawyers, development officer, military leadership, lecturers, congressional staffer, campaign coordinators, law clerks, paralegals, and more.

While undergraduate education focuses primarily on learning established facts, graduate level work introduces students to how such knowledge is created, the limits and uncertainty of such knowledge, the breadth and depth of academic literature and scholarship on specific topics, how to generate new knowledge, and the methodologies used to appropriately evaluate and build knowledge. As such, students are challenged to become familiar with and analyze existing literature and scholarship in political science as well as synthesize established knowledge in new, innovative ways. Students are also challenged to learn appropriate methodologies to test political science theories, identify causal mechanisms, evaluate political institutions and policies, and apply

political science theory, methods, and knowledge to real-world contexts to develop solutions to complex and dynamic problems.

Below are the two primary learning objectives for MA political science students:

### **MA Program Learning Objectives**

1. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of, and be able to critically analyze, the literature in their specialized field in Political Science.
2. Students will be able to employ appropriate methodology used in political science.

### **MA Degree Plan**

There are two tracks for the MA in Political Science: the thesis degree plan (thesis option) or the final paper project (non-thesis option).

1. **Thesis:** consists of 30 credit hours, including six (6) thesis credit hours, and is designed for students who would like to develop in-depth research expertise in a specialized area.
2. **Final Paper (Non-Thesis Option):** requires 36 credit hours, including a final paper project, and is designed for students who would like to develop broad knowledge in Political Science.

More information about these degree plans is located in their respective chapters in the Handbook.

### **New Student Orientation**

Upon acceptance into the program, all new political science graduate students are required to attend the orientation session(s) for the political science graduate program. Students are to complete all required modules, orientations, and events associated with the University, Graduate School, department, and program. Additional orientations, modules, events, and requirements are also required for teaching assistant positions.

### **Academic Advising**

Upon entering the graduate program, new graduate students will meet with the Director of Graduate Studies, who will review the student's interests and background, discuss the student's objectives and career goals, and assist in developing a tailored program of study. Each semester, students are required to be advised by the Director of Graduate Studies before registering for classes to discuss progress, timelines, graduation, and any concerns or questions.

## MA Political Science Admissions

MA Political Science applicants apply for the program through the UTEP Graduate School online portal. The application is online (<https://www.utep.edu/graduate/apply-now/apply-now.html>), and only complete applications are considered for admission.

Students in our MA program can apply for teaching and research assistantships at the time of application or upon admission. Information on teaching and research assistantships can be found in the Funding Opportunities section of this Handbook.

### Application Requirements

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. Transcripts are required from the bachelor's degree and any other graduate or professional degree programs, including law school.
3. Two letters of recommendation, preferably from current or former professors in either the bachelor's degree program or previous graduate programs.
4. A statement of purpose outlining one's interest in the program and career objectives. If the applicant's undergraduate GPA is below 3.0, any extenuating circumstances must be explained.
5. Applicants from countries where English is not the first language are required to demonstrate English proficiency. Please consult the [graduate school](#) website for required scores.

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

### Admission Deadlines

**Spring Semester Admission:** The deadline to apply for Spring admission into the MA Political Science program is November 15<sup>th</sup>. We encourage early applications for international student applicants and applicants seeking teaching assistantship positions, where the early admission deadline is September 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Fall Semester Admission:** The deadline to apply for Fall admission into the MA Political Science program is July 15<sup>th</sup>. We encourage early applications for international student applicants and applicants seeking teaching assistantship positions, where the early admission deadline is March 31<sup>st</sup>.

## **Fast Track Program**

The Fast Track Program enables outstanding undergraduate UTEP students to receive both undergraduate and graduate credit for up to 15 hours of UTEP course work as determined by participating Master's (and Doctoral programs). The MA in Political Science offers a Fast Track program for outstanding UTEP undergraduate students who wish to transition from their undergraduate degree to graduate degree.

Eligible undergraduate UTEP students who are interested in this program must apply for the UTEP MA program (as described on page 9). Upon admission, they will be enrolled in the Fast Track program, where up to 15 credit hours of graduate coursework will count towards their undergraduate and graduate degrees. Upon graduation as an undergraduate, the student will continue as a graduate student to complete the MA degree, without any additional application.

All Fast Track students are required to complete both undergraduate advising and advising with the Director of Graduate Studies each semester. Fast-Track students are simultaneously undergraduate and graduate students; thus, students are responsible for complying with undergraduate policies and procedures as well as the graduate policies of the Graduate School and MA program described in this Handbook.

Undergraduate students must earn a B or better in the graduate course for it to count as graduate credit. If the grade is a C, it will not count toward the graduate degree but the credit hours will still count toward the undergraduate degree.

### **Applicant Requirements**

1. This program is intended for UTEP students who are interested in transitioning from a bachelor's degree to a graduate degree. A student who has previously earned a bachelor's degree may not apply to this program.
2. To be considered for the Fast Track Program, students need to complete a Graduate School application. Once the Graduate School clears the application based on the recommendations of the intended graduate program, students will be assigned a fast track code until the bachelor's degree is conferred. The student will be subsequently admitted as a new student in the graduate program.
3. Students must have successfully completed at least 90 hours of undergraduate coursework toward their major with a minimum of 24 of those hours at UTEP.
4. Students must have and maintain the same GPA requirement in the major as for the university honor's certificate, which is an undergraduate GPA of GPA equal or greater than 3.30.
5. In addition to maintaining a GPA of at least 3.30 in the political science major, applicants must have completed POLS 3300 (Research Methods) with at least a B course grade and must have completed at least two upper-division political science courses with As.

## Graduate Certificate in Political Science

The Graduate Certificate is intended for prospective or current Government/Political Science teachers who plan to teach dual-credit, college level Political Science courses (i.e., courses that count for both high school and college credit). To obtain the certificate, students will take 18 semester credit hours of graduate Political Science content courses. Credit earned for the certificate can be counted towards the MA in Political Science. The Certificate does not confer a MA in Political Science but offers a reduced course load to comply with dual-credit teacher credentialing.

### Admission Requirements

1. A bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. institution or proof of equivalent education at a foreign institution.
2. The bachelor's degree must be in Political Science, or the applicant must have 12 hours of advanced-level Political Science courses.
3. GPA of 3.0 or above.
4. An analytical writing sample.
5. A statement of purpose.
6. Two professional reference letters

Conditional admittance will be given if the application materials show potential for success but are lacking in one area (such as the GPA). In this case, students will need to take one graduate class in Political Science and receive a B or A in the class before they can be fully admitted into the program.

### Course Requirements

Code	Title	Hours
<b>Required:</b>		
<a href="#">POLS 5300</a>	Sem In Quant Rsrch Methods I	3
<b>Select five courses from the following:</b>		
<a href="#">POLS 5301</a>	Sem in Qual Resrch Methods	3
<a href="#">POLS 5302</a>	Sem Quant Research Methods II	3
<a href="#">POLS 5310</a>	Seminar in Am. Pol. Behavior	3
<a href="#">POLS 5313</a>	Seminar-Political Communication	3
<a href="#">POLS 5315</a>	Seminar in Am. Inst and Process	3
<a href="#">POLS 5320</a>	Seminar In Public Law	3
<a href="#">POLS 5330</a>	Seminar-International Politics	3
<a href="#">POLS 5331</a>	Semina-Intn'l Organ/Intn'l Law	3
<a href="#">POLS 5332</a>	Sem-Foreign Policy Dec Making	3
<a href="#">POLS 5334</a>	Seminar-Comparative Pol. Dev.	3
<a href="#">POLS 5338</a>	Sem. In Int. Pol. Econ.	3
<a href="#">POLS 5339</a>	Sem. Comp. Pol. Institutions	3

Code	Title	Hours
<a href="#">POLS 5343</a>	Seminar in Border Politics	3
<a href="#">POLS 5345</a>	Sem in Comp Electoral Systems	3
<a href="#">POLS 5346</a>	Sem in Pol Econ of Developmt	3
<a href="#">POLS 5347</a>	Sem in International Security	3
<a href="#">POLS 5348</a>	Sem in Politics of Latin Amer	3
<a href="#">POLS 5349</a>	Seminar in Political Thought	3
<a href="#">POLS 5364</a>	Seminar-Public Policy Analysis	3
<a href="#">POLS 5368</a>	Seminar in Conflict Analysis	3
<a href="#">POLS 5370</a>	Field Analysis Seminar	3
<a href="#">POLS 5380</a>	Selected Problems-Government	3

While not degree-conferring, certificates are awarded approximately 30 days after graduation (even if not in a degree-seeking program). Once awarded, the certificate with award date is noted on the transcript. A hard copy of the certificate is mailed to the student approximately 45 days after awarding of the certificate.

The link to the [Application for Graduate Certificate](#) is located on the Graduate School website under Forms - <https://www.utep.edu/graduate/forms.html>. Students must completely fill out the form, including the portions identifying the courses specific to the certificate.

Students generate the application for graduate certificate form. The electronic form routes to the Director of Graduate Studies as Certificate Program Director for final review and approval. After their approval, the form will route to [gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu](mailto:gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu) for processing.

## MA Political Science Degree Plans

We offer two degree plans in the MA program:

1. **Degree Plan Thesis Option** consists of 30 credit hours, including six (6) thesis credit hours, and is designed for students who would like to develop in-depth research expertise in a specialized area.
2. **Final Paper (Non-Thesis Option):** requires 36 credit hours, including a final paper project, and is designed for student who would like to develop broad knowledge in Political Science.

### Additional Policies

1. Independent studies are limited to three (3) 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 student can register for a graduate course in the Department of Political Science without the advice and approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. This applies to the initial registration and all subsequent enrollments.
3. Satisfactory performance in the MA 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: Seminar in Quantitative Research Methods I

POLS 5301: Seminar in Qualitative Research Methods

POLS 5302: Seminar in Quantitative Research Methods II

Methods courses cannot be substituted with courses outside the department without explicit approval of Director of Graduate Students and is reserved for extreme, extenuating circumstances.

## Thesis Degree Plan

Required Credits: 30

The thesis track will prepare students who would like to develop in-depth research expertise in a specialized area. In addition to 9 hours of core courses and 9 hours of elective courses, the thesis track requires 6 credits in graduate-level Research Methods and 6 credits for the completion of the Thesis.

Students must enroll in POLS 5300, offered (only) in fall semesters. Students may select to take either POLS 5301 or POLS 5302 to fulfill their methods requirements. Students may take more than two methods courses; however, a minimum of two courses are required. Methods courses (POLS 5300, POLS 5301, POLS 5302) require a grade of B or better to contribute to degree plan.

Graduate students are required to maintain at least a 3.0 GPA. All non-methods POLS courses require a grade of C or better to contribute to degree completion.

Thesis courses (POLS 5398 and POLS 5399) should be taken during the last two semesters of the student's degree plan, after all core graduate courses are completed. Thesis courses (POLS 5398 and POLS 5399) cannot be taken simultaneously. All students must be enrolled during the semester of graduation. Students completing the thesis will produce a major paper that demonstrates their mastery of the program's learning objectives. While theses vary in length, topic, and methodology, thesis projects are often analogous to two graduate-level course papers. More details on the thesis are listed in the Thesis section of this Handbook.

<b>Required Courses:</b>		Credit Hours
<a href="#">POLS 5300</a>	Sem In Quant Rsrch Methods I	3
<a href="#">POLS 5301</a> or <a href="#">POLS 5302</a>	Sem in Qual Resrch Methods Sem Quant Research Methods II	3
<b>Political Science Subfields:</b>		
Select one course from three of the four subfields below:		9
American Institutions and Processes:		
<a href="#">POLS 5310</a>	Seminar in Am. Pol. Behavior	
<a href="#">POLS 5313</a>	Political Communication	
<a href="#">POLS 5315</a>	Sem. In Am. Inst. & Proc.	
<a href="#">POLS 5320</a>	Seminar In Public Law	
<a href="#">POLS 5364</a>	Seminar-Public Policy Analysis	
Comparative Politics:		
<a href="#">POLS 5334</a>	Seminar-Comparative Pol. Dev.	
<a href="#">POLS 5339</a>	Sem. Comp. Pol. Institutions	
<a href="#">POLS 5345</a>	Comparative Electoral Systems	
<a href="#">POLS 5346</a>	Sem in Pol Econ of Developmt	
<a href="#">POLS 5348</a>	Sem in Politics of Latin Amer	
<a href="#">POLS 5370</a>	Field Analysis Seminar	
International Politics:		
<a href="#">POLS 5330</a>	Seminar-International Politics	

<a href="#">POLS 5331</a>	Semina-Intn'l Organ/Intn'l Law	
<a href="#">POLS 5332</a>	Sem-Foreign Policy Dec Making	
<a href="#">POLS 5338</a>	Sem. In Int. Pol. Econ.	
<a href="#">POLS 5347</a>	Sem in International Security	
<a href="#">POLS 5368</a>	Seminar in Conflict Analysis	
<b>Political Science Electives:</b>		
Select 9 hours from the following:		9
<a href="#">POLS 5301</a>	Sem in Qual Resrch Methods	
<a href="#">POLS 5302</a>	Sem Quant Research Methods II	
<a href="#">POLS 5310</a>	Seminar in Am. Pol. Behavior	
<a href="#">POLS 5313</a>	Political Communication	
<a href="#">POLS 5315</a>	Sem. In Am. Inst. & Proc.	
<a href="#">POLS 5320</a>	Seminar In Public Law	
<a href="#">POLS 5330</a>	Seminar-International Politics	
<a href="#">POLS 5331</a>	Semina-Intn'l Organ/Intn'l Law	
<a href="#">POLS 5332</a>	Sem-Foreign Policy Dec Making	
<a href="#">POLS 5334</a>	Seminar-Comparative Pol. Dev.	
<a href="#">POLS 5338</a>	Sem. In Int. Pol. Econ.	
<a href="#">POLS 5339</a>	Sem. Comp. Pol. Institutions	
<a href="#">POLS 5343</a>	Seminar in Border Politics	
<a href="#">POLS 5345</a>	Comparative Electoral Systems	
<a href="#">POLS 5346</a>	Sem in Pol Econ of Developmt	
<a href="#">POLS 5347</a>	Sem in International Security	
<a href="#">POLS 5348</a>	Sem in Politics of Latin Amer	
<a href="#">POLS 5349</a>	Seminar in Political Thought	
<a href="#">POLS 5364</a>	Seminar-Public Policy Analysis	
<a href="#">POLS 5368</a>	Seminar in Conflict Analysis	
<a href="#">POLS 5370</a>	Field Analysis Seminar	
<a href="#">POLS 5380</a>	Selected Problems-Government	
<b>Thesis:</b>		
<a href="#">POLS 5398</a> & <a href="#">POLS 5399</a>	Thesis I Thesis II	6
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>36</b>

## Final Paper Degree Plan

Required Credits: 36

The final paper degree plan offers a professional track to students who would like to develop broad knowledge in Political Science. This degree plan requires 12 hours of core courses, 15 hours of elective courses, 6 credit hours of Research Methods, and the completion 3 hours of the final paper course (POLS 5393).

Students must enroll in POLS 5300, offered (only) in fall semesters. Students may select to take either POLS 5301 or POLS 5302 to fulfill their methods requirements. Students may take more than two methods courses; however, a minimum of two courses are required. Methods courses (POLS 5300, POLS 5301, POLS 5302) require a grade of B or better to contribute to degree plan.

Graduate students are required to maintain at least a 3.0 GPA. All non-methods POLS courses require a grade of C or better to contribute to degree completion.

The final paper (POLS 5393) should be taken during the last semester of the student's degree plan, after all core graduate courses are completed. All students must be enrolled during the semester of graduation. Students completing the final paper (POLS 5393) will produce a major paper that demonstrates their mastery of the program's learning objectives. While final papers vary in length, topic, and methodology, final paper projects typically represent a refined, revised version of a single graduate-level course research paper. More details on the final paper can be found in the Final Paper section of this Handbook.

<b>Required Courses:</b>		Credit Hours
<a href="#">POLS 5300</a>	Sem In Quant Rsrch Methods I	3
<a href="#">POLS 5301</a> or <a href="#">POLS 5302</a>	Sem in Qual Resrch Methods Sem Quant Research Methods II	3
<b>Political Science Subfields:</b>		
Select 12 hours, with at least one course each in the categories of American Institutions and Processes, Comparative Politics, or International Politics, from the following:		12
American Institutions and Processes:		
<a href="#">POLS 5310</a>	Seminar in Am. Pol. Behavior	
<a href="#">POLS 5313</a>	Political Communication	
<a href="#">POLS 5315</a>	Sem. In Am. Inst. & Proc.	
<a href="#">POLS 5320</a>	Seminar In Public Law	
<a href="#">POLS 5364</a>	Seminar-Public Policy Analysis	
Comparative Politics:		
<a href="#">POLS 5334</a>	Seminar-Comparative Pol. Dev.	
<a href="#">POLS 5339</a>	Sem. Comp. Pol. Institutions	
<a href="#">POLS 5345</a>	Comparative Electoral Systems	
<a href="#">POLS 5346</a>	Sem in Pol Econ of Developmt	
<a href="#">POLS 5348</a>	Sem in Politics of Latin Amer	

<a href="#">POLS 5370</a>	Field Analysis Seminar	
<b>International Politics:</b>		
<a href="#">POLS 5330</a>	Seminar-International Politics	
<a href="#">POLS 5331</a>	Semina-Intn'l Organ/Intn'l Law	
<a href="#">POLS 5332</a>	Sem-Foreign Policy Dec Making	
<a href="#">POLS 5338</a>	Sem. In Int. Pol. Econ.	
<a href="#">POLS 5347</a>	Sem in International Security	
<a href="#">POLS 5368</a>	Seminar in Conflict Analysis	
<b>Political Science Electives:</b>		
Select 15 hours from the following:		15
<a href="#">POLS 5301</a>	Sem in Qual Resrch Methods	
<a href="#">POLS 5302</a>	Sem Quant Research Methods II	
<a href="#">POLS 5310</a>	Seminar in Am. Pol. Behavior	
<a href="#">POLS 5313</a>	Political Communication	
<a href="#">POLS 5315</a>	Sem. In Am. Inst. & Proc.	
<a href="#">POLS 5320</a>	Seminar In Public Law	
<a href="#">POLS 5330</a>	Seminar-International Politics	
<a href="#">POLS 5331</a>	Semina-Intn'l Organ/Intn'l Law	
<a href="#">POLS 5332</a>	Sem-Foreign Policy Dec Making	
<a href="#">POLS 5334</a>	Seminar-Comparative Pol. Dev.	
<a href="#">POLS 5338</a>	Sem. In Int. Pol. Econ.	
<a href="#">POLS 5339</a>	Sem. Comp. Pol. Institutions	
<a href="#">POLS 5343</a>	Seminar in Border Politics	
<a href="#">POLS 5345</a>	Comparative Electoral Systems	
<a href="#">POLS 5346</a>	Sem in Pol Econ of Developmt	
<a href="#">POLS 5347</a>	Sem in International Security	
<a href="#">POLS 5348</a>	Sem in Politics of Latin Amer	
<a href="#">POLS 5349</a>	Seminar in Political Thought	
<a href="#">POLS 5364</a>	Seminar-Public Policy Analysis	
<a href="#">POLS 5368</a>	Seminar in Conflict Analysis	
<a href="#">POLS 5370</a>	Field Analysis Seminar	
<a href="#">POLS 5380</a>	Selected Problems-Government	
<b>Final Paper:</b>		
<a href="#">POLS 5393</a>	Final Paper Project	3
<b>Total Hours</b>		<b>36</b>

## **Funding Opportunities**

### **Teaching Assistantships (TAs)**

Teaching assistantship positions are available to active, full-time graduate students in good academic standing. The position pays a monthly stipend for nine months (during the fall and spring semesters). These teaching assistantships are offered based on merit and eligibility, which includes maintaining full-time status, English fluency, and good academic standing. The teaching assistant position comes with the monthly stipend, health insurance, and a tuition reduction in the form of in-state tuition rate for those who are not residents of Texas. These positions are subject to budget approval and funding availability each year. Employment will be at The University of Texas at El Paso, for the Department of Political Science and Public Administration.

#### *Eligibility*

Full-time, active student

Good academic standing

English fluency

Available to work the required 20 hours per week during normal workday hours

(8 am -5 pm)

Teaching assistantships are determined on a semester-by-semester basis. All applicants, whether newly applying or seeking to renew their TA position, must apply each semester. Calls for applications and deadlines are disseminated by the DGS via UTEP email. Adequate (positive) teaching assistant evaluations from supervising instructors are required for renewing teaching assistants. Negative teaching assistant evaluations can lead to non-renewal or termination.

Teaching assistantships typically do not extend into the summer. Teaching assistantships may not extend beyond 4 semesters in total (two academic years), including Fast Track students.

### **Research Assistantship (RAs)**

Research Assistants may be funded as a teaching assistant, depending upon faculty needs and departmental approval, or funded by faculty research grants. Research assistants work 20 hours per week, directly under faculty supervision on a specific research project. Work duties are specified by the faculty supervisor, which may include data collection, coding, experiments, literature analysis, data analysis, and research writing. It is expected that research assistants will perform work duties required by the faculty supervisor at a satisfactory level. Unsatisfactory performance of work duties or failure to make normal degree of progress may result in the loss of the assistantship.

### **Departmental Travel Grants**

The department offers students funding for academic endeavors, such as funding assistance for conference travel. Applications for funding must be submitted at least two weeks in advance of funding need, and applications require a letter of support from a faculty reference. All successfully

funded students will need to submit a final expenditure report, proof of conference attendance, and/or paper produced. Priority is given to applicants who sought and/or were awarded funding from other sources.

### **Komarnicki Scholarships**

Our graduate students are eligible for the Komarnicki Scholarship, administered by our department. These scholarships are awarded through an approximately \$600,000 endowment donated to UTEP. Preference for these scholarships is given to students who have completed their core requirements and who have a GPA of at least 3.67 after their first graduate semester. We seek to nominate and encourage applications from all qualified individuals. We are also committed to diversity in our scholarship pool of recipients.

### **Additional Resources**

Graduate students are also eligible to apply for scholarships and grants through the Office of Student Fellowships and Awards, Office of Scholarships, Dean's Office, the Graduate School, and the Student Government Association.

### **Office of Student Fellowships and Awards**

<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/student-fellowships-awards/>

### **Office of Scholarships**

<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/scholarships/>

### **The Graduate School**

<https://www.utep.edu/graduate/funding/paying.html>

### **Dodson Research Funds and Travel Grants**

<https://www.utep.edu/graduate/funding/internal-funding.html>

### **Office of Student Financial Aid**

<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/financialaid/>

### **Student Success Resource Hub**

[https://www.utep.edu/advising/student\\_resources/student-success-resource-hub.html](https://www.utep.edu/advising/student_resources/student-success-resource-hub.html)

## **Advising and Registration**

Each semester, students are required to schedule a meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies for advising and registration for courses. Students must bring their UTEP IDs. The Director of Graduate Studies will advise and assist students in course selections for the upcoming semester in order to satisfactorily complete the degree plan. After these meetings, students will register for their selected courses (approved by the Director of Graduate Studies) via Goldmine.

Full-time students are required to take three courses each semester. Full-time student enrollment is required for teaching assistantship positions and often required for financial aid assistance. If a student is or becomes part-time, we encourage them to correspond with the UTEP Office of Student Financial Aid. Students taking the final paper course POLS 5393 without two additional courses need to complete the graduation application to be considered full-time.

E-mail: [studentfinancialaid@utep.edu](mailto:studentfinancialaid@utep.edu)

Phone: (915) 747-5204

We do not recommend taking more than three courses in a given semester. Permission from the DGS and course instructor(s) are required to take more than three courses at once.

Please note that students must register for their courses. The Director of Graduate Studies does not register students for courses.

Any registration issues should be corresponded with the Director of Graduate Studies as well as the UTEP Registrar's Office (<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/registrar/people/contact-us.html>).

### **Thesis and Final Paper**

Students must select their thesis chair or final paper chair—and obtain their consent and approval for that role—prior to their advising meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies and prior to registering for POLS 5398 (Thesis I) or POLS 5393 (Final Paper). Final paper students must apply for graduation at the start of their final paper semester in order to be considered full-time for financial aid purposes.

## Thesis

### **What is a thesis?**

A thesis is an original research project that produces new knowledge about a topic or issue. The project showcases the skills acquired by student over the course of their graduate education. Specifically, thesis students are evaluated based upon the two below learning objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of, and be able to critically analyze, the literature in their specialized field in Political Science.
2. Students will be able to employ appropriate methodology used in political science.

Thesis projects vary in length and approach, though are generally 50-100 pages long or the equivalent of two graduate-level seminar class papers. Thesis length and approach depend upon the topic, methodological approach, and approval of the thesis chair and committee. Students select their topic, research question, theoretical approach and framework, and methodological approaches. Thesis committees, especially the thesis chair, will assist students throughout the thesis process, including feedback on viable research questions, inclusion of relevant scholarship, developing appropriate theoretical frameworks, and conducting appropriate methods for evaluation and hypothesis testing.

Thesis projects are conducted during POLS 5398 (Thesis I) and POLS 5399 (Thesis II), under the mentorship of the thesis chair and thesis committee. These courses are not pre-formulated courses with predetermined meeting times, locations, frequency, assignments, etc.; rather, they depend upon the individual arrangement(s) between the student, thesis chair, and Director of Graduate Studies. Students are expected to work within the agreed upon timeline and proactively communicate about progress with their thesis chair and thesis committee.

### **Thesis Committee**

Students select their thesis committees, consisting of a thesis chair (primary mentor and graduate faculty member in political science), (at least) one additional committee member who is a graduate faculty member in political science, and (at least) one committee member from outside the department. All thesis committee members must be UTEP Graduate Faculty. Students must select their thesis chair prior to registering for POLS 5398 (Thesis I) and obtain their consent and approval. Students will then select the other members of their committee, often with the guidance of their thesis chair and Director of Graduate Studies. The thesis chair is the primary point of contact for all drafts and discussions regarding the thesis topic, discussion, progress, deadlines, expectations, and so on. Students also consult with their thesis committee members as well for feedback, but thesis chairs are directly advising and mentoring the student, meeting on a regular basis, setting deadlines, evaluating progress, and offering feedback on all drafts. Thesis chairs determine when/whether a thesis project is sufficiently complete and of high quality to be sent to committee members for review, defended as a prospectus, and/or defended as a final manuscript.

Students are encouraged to select thesis committee members based upon their areas of expertise in the area(s) of the desired thesis topic and/or methods as well as based upon faculty with whom students have developed positive working relationships. Students are encouraged to consult faculty CVs (online and on the departmental website), read their relevant publications, and reach out to faculty whose research interests are appealing. Please recognize that any given faculty member may be unavailable to participate in thesis committee work for a variety of reasons.

### **Thesis Prospectus**

A thesis prospectus is essentially a proposal or research design. The thesis prospectus identifies a research question, theoretical argument, hypotheses, data collection, and methodological strategies for evaluation. In essence, the proposal is the ‘front end’ or front half of the thesis project. It should include:

1. *Statement of research question or research problem*, identifying a) the subject of the thesis, b) a cogent argument as to why this subject is worthy of study and scholarly attention, c) how this thesis will fit into the body of existing research on the topic and what its contributions to scholarship, knowledge, and practice will be;
2. *Literature review*, summarizing prior research that is relevant to this subject, highlighting what existing knowledge suggests about the research question, gaps in knowledge, and limitations to existing scholarship, theories, data, measurements, and/or analytical techniques;
3. *Theory*, a well-developed narrative identifying the proposed mechanics/solution to the research question that identifies the causal mechanism(s) and explanatory factors for the outcome of interest, as informed by prior scholarship and student-derived creative innovation;
4. *Hypotheses*, identifying the observable implications of the theory proposed that will be used to evaluate and test (falsify) the theoretical argument empirically;
5. *Data and methods/Research design/ Analytical Plan*, identify the empirical strategies used to test the hypotheses, the data that will be used or collected/created, operationalizations of concepts, variables included, measurement strategies, sampling strategies, and proposed method of evaluation (such as specific statistical analyses, case studies, etc.)

While the thesis project is not expected to be completed at this stage, the thesis prospectus must be sufficiently developed to offer the thesis committee a clear view of the thesis topic, contribution, framing, approach, and next steps. The thesis committee can thereby evaluate that the thesis is appropriate (satisfies departmental requirements for completion) and viable (able to be completed within the timeframe), as well as offer feedback for revisions, any additional requirements, and suggestions for further reading.

### **Thesis Prospectus Defense**

The thesis prospectus is formally presented and evaluated during the thesis prospectus defense. Specific instructions and format may vary by committee, but generally the thesis prospectus is scheduled by the thesis chair, in consultation with the student and thesis committee members, once

the thesis chair has agreed that sufficient progress has been made. The thesis prospectus document must be sent to all thesis committee members at least two weeks in advance of the defense date.

On the date of the thesis prospectus defense, the student often gives a short presentation of their thesis prospectus, followed by a question/answer session and discussion. Thesis committee members will ask questions and, as on an open event, the audience may ask questions afterward. Upon the completion of the discussion, the student (and audience) will be asked to leave the room to allow the thesis committee to deliberate. Once completed, the thesis chair will ask the student to return to the room, where the student receives their evaluation and feedback for moving forward with the thesis project. Typically, students are enrolled in Thesis I at the time of the thesis prospectus defense (POLS 5398).

Students must complete the appropriate Graduate School forms for the thesis prospectus defense, as coordinated with the thesis chair. All Graduate School forms are electronic.

Graduate School forms can be located here: <https://www.utep.edu/graduate/forms.html>

Graduate School thesis resources: <https://www.utep.edu/graduate/forms.html>

### **Thesis Defense**

Once the student has completed and revised the full thesis manuscript, the student will submit the full thesis manuscript to their thesis committee chair. The thesis committee will determine whether the thesis is satisfactory for defense and completion of the MA degree. The thesis committee will schedule the thesis defense in consultation with the student. The thesis must be sent to all thesis committee members at least two weeks in advance of the defense date. Students are encouraged to format the thesis pursuant to the Graduate School requirements at this stage (or earlier):

[https://www.utep.edu/graduate/\\_files/docs/admission-and-enrollment/thesisdissertationformat.pdf](https://www.utep.edu/graduate/_files/docs/admission-and-enrollment/thesisdissertationformat.pdf)

Thesis defense events are open to the public and must be announced/advertised by the thesis chair, department, or Director of Graduate Studies. On the date of the thesis defense, the student often gives a short presentation of their thesis, followed by a question/answer session and discussion. Thesis committee members will ask questions, followed by audience questions. Upon the completion of the discussion, the student (and audience) will be asked to leave the room to allow the thesis committee to deliberate. Once completed, the thesis chair will ask the student to return to the room, where the student receives their evaluation. Students must be enrolled in Thesis II at the time of the thesis defense (POLS 5399).

If thesis requirements are not met, the student will re-enroll in Thesis II (POLS 5399) each semester until a successful defense. If students must re-enroll in Thesis II (POLS 5399), the student and thesis committee must complete the Thesis Agreement Form, available on the departmental website, and submit a copy to the Director of Graduate Studies.

Students must complete the appropriate Graduate School forms for the thesis defense, as coordinated with the thesis chair. This includes the required SafeAssign form and format checks.

All Graduate School forms are electronic. Students must also have their thesis committee sign the cover page of their thesis, which is the only manual signature(s) required. Thesis chair and/or committee will also complete the Thesis/Final Paper Learning Outcomes Evaluation form and submit this form to the DGS.

Graduate School forms can be located here: <https://www.utep.edu/graduate/forms.html>

Graduate School thesis resources: <https://www.utep.edu/graduate/forms.html>

## Thesis Submission and Graduation

All Graduate School forms must be completed and submitted prior to the thesis deadlines. The Graduate School and Director of Graduate Studies emails deadlines regularly, as these deadlines vary each semester. Students are responsible for checking their UTEP emails as well as completing all forms and submitting them by these deadlines. These forms are electronic and are available here: <https://www.utep.edu/graduate/forms.html>.

### Finalizing your thesis or dissertation?

#### Follow these steps:

Skip directly to Step 2 if you have already applied for graduation.

Remember to submit your thesis/dissertation for preliminary format check before you defend to [gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu](mailto:gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu).

All students are required to run a plagiarism check on the thesis/dissertation. Log into Blackboard to access "UTEP Graduate School SafeAssign Submission" to conduct the plagiarism check. Share the results of the check with your committee at the time of your defense and then advance the approved form to the Graduate School using the [SafeAssign Submission form](#) along with the [defense form](#) and [signature page](#).

Forward all graduation correspondence including graduation forms to [gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu](mailto:gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu).

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#### 1 Apply for Graduation.

- Meet with your program director to review your [Goldmine Online Degree Evaluation](#).
- Complete and submit the [Application for Graduate Degree](#).
- Graduation fees can be paid in Goldmine under Pete's Payment Options.

#### 2 Preliminary format check.

- The preliminary format check takes place before the scheduled defense.
- After applying for graduation, submit the thesis/dissertation for preliminary format check *before you defend* to [gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu](mailto:gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu).
- Submit the thesis/dissertation for [SafeAssign Plagiarism](#) check

#### 3 Defend the thesis/dissertation.

- Present SafeAssign check results & [SafeAssign Check results form](#) to your committee at the time of defense.

#### 4 Post Defense

- Submit the [defense form](#) and [SafeAssign Plagiarism Check Results Form](#) to [gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu](mailto:gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu) no later than <date provided each semester>
- Apply all committee recommended revisions to the thesis/dissertation

**5 Final format check.**

- The final format check takes place after you defend.
- Resubmit the final revised post-defense [thesis](#) or [dissertation](#) for final format approval to [gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu](mailto:gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu).

**6 Final submission.**

- After obtaining final format approval from the Graduate School, submit the [signature page](#) and upload the thesis or dissertation PDF file at the [ProQuest/UMI](#) website by <date provided each semester>

The Graduate School does not require hard signatures. Electronic signatures as well as one email thread from your program/committee in lieu of signatures verifying successful defense in place of the defense form and verifying successful acceptance of the dissertation in place of the signature page, are all acceptable.

[How to Graduate \(graduation deadlines, forms & other information about graduation\).](#)

Graduate School Graduation

915-747-5491

Forward all correspondence regarding graduation to [gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu](mailto:gradschoolgraduation@utep.edu).

## **Final Paper**

### **What is a final paper?**

A final paper is an original research project or extensive analytic literature review. The project showcases the skills acquired by student over the course of their graduate education. Specifically, thesis students are evaluated based upon the two below learning objectives:

1. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of, and be able to critically analyze, the literature in their specialized field in Political Science.
2. Students will be able to employ appropriate methodology used in political science.

Final paper projects vary in length and approach, though are generally 30-70 pages long or the equivalent of one graduate-level seminar class paper. Indeed, most final paper projects originate from a graduate-level seminar course research paper, which is then refined and revised to become the final paper. Final paper length and approach depend upon the topic, methodological approach, and approval of the final paper chair and committee. Students select their topic, research question, theoretical approach and framework, and methodological approaches. Final paper committees, especially the final paper chair, will assist students throughout the final paper process, including feedback on viable research questions, inclusion of relevant scholarship, developing appropriate theoretical frameworks, and conducting appropriate methods for evaluation and hypothesis testing.

Final paper projects are conducted during POLS 5393 (Final Paper Project) course, under the mentorship of the final paper chair and final paper committee. This course is not a pre-formulated course with predetermined meeting times, locations, frequency, assignments, etc. Rather, it depends upon the individual arrangement(s) between the student and final paper chair.

### **Final Paper Committee**

Students select their final paper committees, consisting of a final paper chair (primary mentor and graduate faculty member in political science) and (at least) one additional committee members within the department. All final paper committee members must be UTEP Graduate Faculty. Students must select their final paper chair prior to registering for POLS 5393 (Final Paper Project) and obtain their consent and approval. Students will then select the other members of their committee, often with the guidance of their final paper chair and Director of Graduate Studies. The final paper chair is the primary point of contact for all drafts and discussions regarding the thesis topic, discussion, progress, deadlines, expectations, and so on. Students also consult with their final paper committee members as well for feedback, but final paper chairs are directly advising and mentoring the student, meeting on a regular basis, setting deadlines, evaluating progress, and offering feedback on all drafts. Final paper chairs determine when/whether a final paper project is sufficiently complete and of high quality to be sent to committee members for review and defended.

Students are encouraged to select final paper committee members based upon their areas of expertise in the area(s) of the desired final paper topic and/or methods as well as based upon faculty

with whom students have developed positive working relationships. Students are encouraged to consult faculty CVs (online and on the departmental website), read their relevant publications, and reach out to faculty whose research interests are appealing. Please recognize that any given faculty member may be unavailable to participate in final paper committee work for a variety of reasons.

### **Final Paper Defense**

Once the student has completed and revised the full final paper manuscript, the student will submit the final paper manuscript to their final paper committee chair. The final paper committee will determine whether the final paper is satisfactory for defense and completion of the MA degree. The final paper committee will schedule the final paper defense in consultation with the student. The final paper must be sent to all final paper committee members at least two weeks in advance of the defense date.

Final paper defenses are not required to be public nor announced/advertised. On the date of the final paper defense, the student often gives a short presentation of their final paper, followed by a question/answer session and discussion. Final paper committee members will ask questions, followed by audience questions. Upon the completion of the discussion, the student (and audience) will be asked to leave the room to allow the final paper committee to deliberate. Once completed, the final paper chair will ask the student to return to the room, where the student receives their evaluation. Students must be enrolled in Final Paper Project (POL5 5393) at the time of the final paper defense.

If final paper requirements are not met, the student will re-enroll in Final Paper Project (POL5 5393) each semester until a successful defense. If students must re-enroll in Final Paper Project (POL5 5393), the student and final paper committee must complete the POL5 5393 Final Paper Prospectus Agreement Form, available on the departmental website, and submit a copy to the Director of Graduate Studies.

Students should complete the appropriate Graduate School forms for the thesis/final paper defense, as coordinated with the final paper chair. Final paper chair and/or committee will also complete the Thesis/Final Paper Learning Outcomes Evaluation form and submit this form to the DGS.

Graduate School forms can be located here: <https://www.utep.edu/graduate/forms.html>

Note that the Graduate School thesis deadlines and thesis completion form also apply to final paper projects.

### **Final Paper Submission and Graduation**

All Graduate School forms must be completed and submitted prior to the thesis deadlines. The Graduate School and Director of Graduate Studies emails deadlines regularly, as these deadlines vary each semester. Students are responsible for checking their UTEP emails as well as completing all forms and submitting them by these deadlines. These forms are electronic and are available here: <https://www.utep.edu/graduate/forms.html>. Unlike theses, final papers are not uploaded to

the Graduate School and do not require SafeAssign submission. The only form required is the electronic Thesis Completion Defense Form (linked above).

## **MA in Political Science Graduate Student Awards**

### **Outstanding Political Science Graduate Student Award** (eligible Fall and Spring)

This award is given to the outstanding Master candidate at each commencement, using the following criteria:

- Student's major must be political science
- Minimal GPA of 3.6
- Evidence of outstanding research, service, and/or leadership, including conference papers, coauthoring, excellent service as TA or RA, maturity and compliance with department policies, good role model for other students, and participation in department functions.

Procedure: The Director of Graduate Studies will request faculty nomination letters. Any faculty member may nominate a student. The nomination should be in a letter (along with any supporting material) to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). The DGS shall then present the letters and supporting material to the Graduate Committee, and in doing so provide other available information, such as GPA, etc. The Graduate Committee will then make a recommendation to departmental faculty, which will then vote to select the winner. The departmental faculty shall have access to the information assembled by the DGS and reviewed by the Graduate Committee.

### **Department's Nominee for Outstanding Graduate Thesis Award** (eligible Fall and Spring)

Students who graduated during the previous calendar year are eligible for this award. Calls for nominations from the University and Graduate School go out during the Fall and Spring semester(s), which will be shared by the Director of Graduate Studies.

The chair of an eligible student's committee may make a nomination by submitting to the DGS a copy of the thesis and an accompanying letter that describes its content and importance. Given that outside readers serve as referees, faculty should only consider submitting theses that reflect well on the department. The Graduate Committee will review the nomination letters and in the case of multiple nominations, read the theses. The DGS will then submit the nomination to the College of Liberal Arts.

Liberal Arts selections are presented at the Outstanding Achievement Ceremony. UTEP selections will be presented at the Honor's Convocation.

### **Department Graduate Thesis Honoree**

The Department's Nominee for the Outstanding Thesis Award (see above) will also receive this award at the next Homecoming.

### **Thomas Cook Award** (annually presented at UTEP Honor's Convocation in Spring)

This award is given to the outstanding Master candidate(s) among those who graduated in the preceding Summer or Fall, or who will graduate in the Spring. It is awarded to one of the winners of the Outstanding Political Science Graduate Student Awards (see above). The departmental faculty will select candidates, informed by the earlier nominations and any other accompanying

information submitted by the DGS. If there is only one winner of Outstanding Political Science Graduate Student Award, that student will also receive the Thomas Cook Award. The winner of the Cook Award may also be honored at Homecoming the following Fall. Awardees will be notified by the Director of Graduate Studies.

**Outstanding Graduate Student Service Award** (eligible Fall and Spring)

This award is for outstanding graduate students displaying leadership and making a significant contribution to the department. All political science majors are eligible for this award via a faculty nomination letter, which details the extraordinary contributions and impact this nominee has made to the department. Awards are considered for qualified students, though the department is under no obligation to provide this award each commencement. The Director of Graduate Studies will request faculty nomination letters.

The Graduate Committee will use the following criteria to select the awardee:

- Review of faculty nominations requested by the DGS and distributed to Graduate Committee. Nominations should clearly state why the student is deserving of the award based on the above description.
- Review of student résumés or CVs requested by the DGS and distributed to the Graduate Committee.
- In the event of a tie, or as needed, interviews with each candidate will be conducted by the Graduate Committee. The Graduate Committee should draft a standard set of questions ahead of interviews to ensure fairness.
- The Graduate Committee evaluates nominations and submits a recommendation(s) to the Committee of the Whole, which will then vote to select the winner. The Committee of the Whole shall have access to the information assembled and reviewed by the Graduate Committee. Awardee(s) will be notified by the Director of Graduate Studies.

**Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant Award** (eligible Fall and Spring)

This award is for outstanding teaching assistant(s) who demonstrates excellence in leadership, professionalism, and service. The awardee(s) will represent a student leader who consistently goes above-and-beyond their duties to improve student learning, class management, and student outreach in a given academic year. A faculty nomination letter is required that details the student's outstanding service within their teaching assistant role. The Director of Graduate Studies will request faculty nomination letters. Awards are considered for qualified students, though the department is under no obligation to provide this award at each commencement. The Graduate Committee evaluates nominations and submits a recommendation(s) to the Committee of the Whole, which will then vote to select the winner. The Committee of the Whole shall have access to the information assembled and reviewed by the Graduate Committee. Awardee(s) will be notified by the Director of Graduate Studies.

**Outstanding Graduate Student Research Assistant Award** (eligible Fall and Spring)

This award is for outstanding research assistant(s) who demonstrate excellence in research and scholarship. Awardees represent student leaders who consistently go above-and-beyond their research assistant duties to make a meaningful contribution and impact in political science scholarship. The Director of Graduate Studies will request faculty nomination letters that detail students' outstanding contribution to research. While some research projects and requirements are more demanding than others, faculty nominations will be evaluated by the Graduate Committee in a holistic manner so as to ascertain exemplary students who show leadership and initiative themselves. Awards are considered for qualified students, though the department is under no obligation to provide this award at each commencement. The Graduate Committee evaluates nominations and submits a recommendation(s) to the Committee of the Whole, which will then vote to select the winner. The Committee of the Whole shall have access to the information assembled and reviewed by the Graduate Committee. Awardee(s) will be notified by the Director of Graduate Studies.

**Outstanding Graduate Student Research Award** (eligible Fall and Spring)

Students pursuing their own research, outside of research pertaining to their theses or final papers, are eligible for this award. Such research may be an extension of a class project that is presented at professional or university conferences or submitted for publication. Papers fulfilling class requirements are not inherently sufficient for faculty nomination, unless they demonstrate exemplary mastery of the substantive and methodological skills required in political science research. The Director of Graduate Studies will request faculty nomination letters. In addition to faculty nomination, the research paper must also be provided for committee evaluation. Awards are considered for qualified students, though the department is under no obligation to provide this award at each commencement. The Graduate Committee evaluates nominations and submits a recommendation(s) to the Committee of the Whole, which will then vote to select the winner. The Committee of the Whole shall have access to the information assembled and reviewed by the Graduate Committee. Awardee(s) will be notified by the Director of Graduate Studies.

## **Grade Appeal**

Any student may request a faculty member to review and re-evaluate a grade previously given to the student by that faculty member. Students who wish to appeal a grade should talk first with the faculty member who assigned the grade. Students may also seek assistance or intervention from the Department Chair ([pols@utep.edu](mailto:pols@utep.edu)) or other appropriate academic administrator in obtaining a grade review by a faculty member.

The formal grade appeal process is to be available in cases where a student wishes to appeal the final grade assigned by a faculty member when the student contends that the final grade assigned was the product of malicious, biased, arbitrary, or negligent determination or impermissible discrimination. No challenge to grading standards shall be pursued on any grounds other than these. This process may not be used to adjudicate cases of suspected student misconduct, plagiarism, or collusion. Formal grade appeals must be officially filed with the Student Grievance Committee of the Faculty Senate (<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/dean-of-students-office/resources/grade-grievance.html>) no later than one (1) year after the official grade has been released to the student, or in the case of a student who has graduated, no later than three (3) months after the degree has been conferred. The decision of the Student Grievance Committee is final.

## **Student Complaints**

Academic student concerns that do not involve discrimination, including problems with instructor behavior or student dismissal from a program, should first be addressed with the faculty or staff member with whom they arise. If no satisfactory resolution can be achieved at that level, a written complaint should be submitted to that individual's supervisor, usually the Chair of the Department ([pols@utep.edu](mailto:pols@utep.edu)). If successful resolution is not achieved, the complaint may be appealed in writing to the Academic Dean ([collegeofliberalarts@utep.edu](mailto:collegeofliberalarts@utep.edu)). If the complaint is not satisfactorily resolved at the level of the Dean, a written appeal may be submitted to the Office of the Provost ([provostoffice@utep.edu](mailto:provostoffice@utep.edu)). The decision of the Provost is final. Each appeal should be submitted no later than ten (10) working days after the last questioned decision or interpretation.

## UTEP Policies

### Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another as one's own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All suspected violations of academic integrity at The University of Texas at El Paso must be reported to the [Office of Community Standards](#) for possible disciplinary action. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP) and available in the Office of the Dean of Students and the homepage of The Dean of Students at [www.utep.edu/dos](http://www.utep.edu/dos), may result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to failing a grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others. To learn more, please visit [HOP: Student Conduct and Discipline](#).

### Artificial Intelligence

Use of AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as [ChatGPT](#) or [DALL-E](#), is generally **not allowed** for assignments in graduate courses. Each student is expected to use critical and creative thinking skills to complete tasks and not rely on computer-generated ideas or writing. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work, without **prior permission from instructor and appropriate acknowledgement**, will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Community Standards.

If explicit instructor approval allows for the use of AI technologies, any use of AI technologies or automated tools is **only allowed with approval from the instructor BEFORE being used**. Instructor will designate permission on a case-by-case basis. If given permission to use any of these tools, students must **properly cite** and give full credit to the program used upon submission of every relevant assignment. For example, text generated using ChatGPT must be cited:

Chat-GPT(version). Date of query (year/month/day). "Text of your query."  
Generated using OpenAI. <https://chat.openai.com/>

A short paragraph describing how the tool(s) was/were used for the assignment must be included.

Brainstorming using some AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as [ChatGPT](#) or [DALL-E](#), also requires instructor prior approval and appropriate citation and attribution. (Keep in mind that AI-generated ideas are not your own and may hinder your ability to think critically and creatively about a problem. It is also important to remember that these technologies often "hallucinate" or produce materials and information that are inaccurate or incomplete—even providing false citations for use.)

You are not allowed to submit any AI-generated work as your own; you must receive permission and are required to cite it like you would any other source. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office Community Standards.

### **Special Accommodations (CASS)**

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. Students who become pregnant may also request reasonable accommodations, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations and University policy. Accommodations that constitute undue hardship are not reasonable. To make a request, please register with the UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS). Contact CASS at 915-747-5148, email them at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.

The University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and auxiliary services to students, staff, faculty, job applicants, applicants for admissions, and other beneficiaries of University programs, services and activities with documented disabilities in order to provide them with equal opportunities to participate in programs, services, and activities in compliance with sections 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. Students who become pregnant or have parenting responsibilities may also request reasonable accommodations. Reasonable accommodations will be made unless it is determined that doing so would cause undue hardship on the University.

The UTEP Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) will process requests for accommodations based on a disability, pregnancy, or parenting. Contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services at 915-747-5148, email them at [cass@utep.edu](mailto:cass@utep.edu), or apply for accommodations online via the CASS portal.”

For more information, please visit: <https://www.utep.edu/titleix/pregnancy-and-parenting.html>

### **TITLE IX and SB 212**

During the 2019 Texas legislative session, [Senate Bill 212](#) was passed into state law. This new law requires **all employees** of Texas universities **to report** incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking allegedly committed by or against a student or employee, to a Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. Under this law, an employee who fails to report or falsely reports such an incident will also be subject to criminal liability (misdemeanor) and termination of employment.

Incidents of sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, or stalking may be reported, or a Formal Complaint filed, online through the **Title IX Incident Reporting Form**. A report may be made anonymously, though it may affect the ability of UTEP's Title IX program to offer assistance or investigate an incident. Reports or complaints may also be sent

to [TitleIX@utep.edu](mailto:TitleIX@utep.edu), which is received by UTEP's Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Title IX Coordinators. Complaints or allegations of sex discrimination, sexual harassment (including sexual violence) or sexual misconduct will be handled by the Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator and will use the preponderance of the evidence (more likely than not) standard to determine violations of the Policy. Finally, reports or Formal Complaints may also be made directly to the Title IX Coordinator and Deputy Title IX Coordinators.

For more information and additional resources, please visit: <https://www.utep.edu/titleix/on-and-off-campus-resources.html>

## Student Support and Resources

A variety of university-provided resources and support centers can be located here: <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/>. Some of these services are highlighted below.

### UTEP Library

The library provides innovative and high-quality services, programs, and resources that support UTEP's stated mission of education, research, scholarship, and community service. The library provides access to a range of print and electronic information resources that meet the individual needs of its users in its multicultural university community and the U.S. – Mexican Border Regions.

The UTEP library includes subject specialists, resources, and workshops that can assist students in research at all stages. For more information, go to:

<https://www.utep.edu/library/>

### University Writing Center

The University Writing Center is a useful tool each student should take advantage of in all written/paper assignments. While not required, your paper will be improved following a consultation with the staff. The staff sees students through appointments or walk-ins, though appointments are preferred. For more information, go to:

<http://uwc.utep.edu/index.php/hours-location>.

### University Career Center

The Career Center has several great services, resources, and events that can help you explore career options that align with your interests and values. They offer free services, including one-on-one appointments, recruiting and networking events, interview preparation, resume building workshops, career advising, job search resources, career planning tools and templates, career fairs, job and internship hunting support, and more. For more information, go to:

<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/careers/students-alumni/student-services.html>

<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/careers/>

### Military Student Success Center

The Military Student Success Center (MSSC) serves the military-affiliated community of El Paso, Fort Bliss, and beyond as the epicenter for success at The University of Texas at El Paso. Through a collaborative effort the MSSC ensures student success by achieving academic, social and professional development from admission to graduation. The MSSC accomplishes this effort by

extending student support services, assisting in using educational benefits and facilitating the transition from military to college life. The MSSC's vision is to make UTEP one of the most Military Friendly Institutes of Higher Learning in the country. They strive to meet the unique and ever-changing needs of our military students by continually reviewing, analyzing and updating their policies and procedures. Their goal is to make the MSSC at UTEP a model program of successful transition into civilian life for military students. For more information, go to:

<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/mssc/>

### **Childcare**

A YWCA Early Learning Academy (ELA) is a warm, friendly place that fosters exploration, problem solving, creativity, and growth. Each site is staffed with highly-trained, nurturing caregivers who appreciate each and every child, as they are now, and for the amazing person they will grow up to be. For more information, go to:

<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/early-learning-academy/>

### **Counseling and Psychological Services**

The University Counseling Center is dedicated to providing high quality mental health services that support students' ability to benefit from their experience at The University of Texas at El Paso. To this end the center provides career counseling, educational workshops, individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, and professional training experiences that are responsive to the individual, cultural, and demographic diversity of our students. The center, located at 202 Union West, offers confidential counseling services in English or in Spanish. They also provide group and individual counseling for currently enrolled UTEP students, via in-person and Zoom.

**Student tuition includes free individual and/or group counseling and mental health services.**

<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/resources/services-students.html>

<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/resources/services-students-faq.html>

### **TimelyCare**

TimelyCare is a new virtual resource for students that offers free mental health and wellness services. Services available include: 24/7 on-demand emotional support, scheduled counseling with a licensed counselor, scheduled health coaching with certified health coaches, and self-directed health and wellbeing content. For more information, go to:

<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/counseling-services/timelycare.html>

### **Togetherall**

Togetherall is a free online community, a safe place to support your mental health 24/7. Togetherall platform is monitored by trained clinicians and student members remain anonymous. For more information, go to:

<https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/counsel/services/togetherall.html>

### **Graduate Student Assembly (GSA)**

The GSA is the representative body for all graduate students on UTEP's campus. GSA contributes to a collegial, collaborative, and interdisciplinary community of graduate students. More broadly, GSA shares the Graduate School's commitment to fostering an inclusive, safe, and diverse culture of graduate education. GSA wants to ensure the success of UTEP graduate students.

All UTEP graduate students are automatically members of the Graduate Student Assembly, and each College/School and the graduate program can name a representative to the Graduate Student Advisory Board.

If you would like to become more active in the group, attend the next meeting or event, email: [gradsa@utep.edu](mailto:gradsa@utep.edu) or visit <https://www.utep.edu/graduate/pd/graduate-student-assembly.html>.

### **Additional Student Resources**

From emergency financial aid to tech equipment, housing assistance, class registration help, career resources, and beyond, UTEP has you covered. If you need further guidance or cannot find the support you are looking for, reach out to the team at the Student Success HelpDesk. Email them at [studentsuccess@utep.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@utep.edu) or call at (915) 747-8887.

Check out additional resources at: [https://www.utep.edu/advising/student\\_resources/student-success-resource-hub.html](https://www.utep.edu/advising/student_resources/student-success-resource-hub.html)

## APSA Style Guide

The APSA style guide is the professional style manual for political science professional.

For full style manual see:

<https://connect.apsanet.org/stylemanual/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2018/11/Style-Manual-for-Political-Science-2018.pdf>

### In-text Citations

These are parenthetical portions, usually at the end of sentences, that provide the immediate source of the information used in the sentence. Citations are required for direct quotations, paraphrasing, and facts or opinions not generally known or easily checked. The citations refer the reader to the full source information in the reference list at the end of the manuscript, and are therefore an essential aspect of a manuscript.

APSA employ the *author-date* style preferred by many in the physical, natural, and social sciences. For example: (Smith 2002) or (Smith 2002, 148). See more examples below.

Each parenthetical citation **must** have a matching source that appears in the reference list at the end of the manuscript, including the citations found in endnotes and in the source notes of tables and figures.

Template: (author last name(s) <space> publication year)  
(author last name(s) <space> publication year, page number)

*Examples:* (Arena 2014) (Durant n.d.) \*where n.d. means “no date”

Page numbers must be included for quotes, and should be included to point to specific data sets, ideas, or to avoid ambiguity. The numbers should point to a specifically contextual page or range of pages. The page numbers can be cited as either inclusive or nonconsecutive page numbers.

(Jentleson 2015, 12–14) (Fraser 2017, 227)

With two or three authors, cite all names each time. Use *and*, not an ampersand (&).

(Dodd and Oppenheimer 1977) (Roberts, Smith, and Haptonstahl 2016)

When four or more authors are cited, *et al.* should follow the first author’s last name, even in the first reference, unless the author is in multiple references where the *et al.* would not be the same, in which case use the first and second author’s last names before *et al.* (and so on) or a shortened title in quotes preceded by a comma.

(Angel et al. 1986)

When multiple sources are cited together, they are included in the same parentheses, but separated by semicolons. They should be alphabetized.

(Hochschild 2015; Jentleson 2015)

(Hauck 2000; Hauck and Vogelsong 2005; Hauck, Smith, and Vogelsong 2010; Jordan et al. 1999, 56–58; Walthall 2012)

Citations of multiple sources by the same author, but published in different years, can omit the name with the second source and beyond.

(Barbarosa 1973; 1978) (Barbarosa 1973, 18; 1978, 32)

If two or more sources are published by the same author in the same year, add lowercase letters to the publication year. To determine how to label the sources with the letters, alphabetize them by title.

(Frankly 1957a, 1957b)

A parenthetical citation to a statute or court case should include the name of the case (in italics except for v.) or statute and the year.

(*Baker v. Carr* 1962)

## References

The References section is the same as a Works Cited or Bibliography section at the end of the manuscript.

All references should be alphabetized by author last name. Single-authored sources precede multi-authored sources beginning with the same last name. Multi-authored sources with the same name (first and last) of the first author should continue to be alphabetized by the second author's first name. When a source cannot be alphabetized by the author's name, alphabetize it by (in descending order): year (oldest to newest), editor's name, title, or descriptive phrase. When alphabetizing by article title, an initial article is ignored. Undated or forthcoming books follow all dated works.

All sources included in in-text citations should also appear in the References.

Each part of a reference is separated by a period, except when otherwise indicated. Each part begins with a capital letter unless it is a lowercase part of an author's, editor's, or translator's name. The general format is:

author last name, author first name. year of publication. "Title of article or chapter." *Book or Journal Title* Volume (issue number): page number range.

If the source was published by an organization, association, or corporation and does not carry an author's name, the organization is listed as the author, even if it is also the publisher.

When no author is associated with a source, but an editor(s) or translator(s) is, those names take the place of the author's name. The abbreviations *ed.* or *eds.*, or *trans.* follows the name(s), preceded by a comma.

If the source does not have an author, editor, translator, organization, association, or corporation that sponsored it, the title should be used in place of the name.

When the year of publication cannot be located, *n.d.* must take its place. When the publication is forthcoming (that is, not yet published), the term *forthcoming* takes the place of the year.

## ***Examples***

### *Journal examples*

Aldrich, John H. 1980. "A Dynamic Model of Presidential Nomination Campaigns." *American Political Science Review* 74 (3): 651–69.

Chambers, Simone. 2018. "Against Democracy. By Jason Brennan." Review of *Against Democracy*, Jason Brennan. *Perspectives on Politics* 16 (2): 503–5. doi: 10.1017/S153759271800066X.

Prufer, Olaf. 1964. "The Hopewell Cult." *Scientific American*, December 13–15.

### *Book Chapter examples*

Halchin, L. Elaine. 2001. "And This Parent Went to Market: Education as Public Versus Private Good." In *School Choice in the Real World*, eds. Robert Maranto, Scott Milliman, Frederick Hess and April Gresham, 39–57. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Halchin, L. Elaine. 2001. "And This Parent Went to Market: Education as Public Versus Private Good." Chap. 1 in *School Choice in the Real World*, eds. Robert Maranto, Scott Milliman, Frederick Hess and April Gresham. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Hall, Peter Dobkin. 2006. "A Historical Overview of Philanthropy, Voluntary Associations, and Nonprofit Organizations in the United States, 1600–2000." In *The Nonprofit Sector: A Research Handbook*, 2nd edition, eds. W. W. Powell and R. Steinberg, 32–65. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Hermann, Margaret G. 1984. "Personality and Foreign Policy Decision Making: A Study of Fifty-Three Heads of Government." In *Foreign Policy Decision Making*, eds. Donald A. Sylvan and Steve Chan, 133–52. New York: Praeger.

Book examples

Davidson, Roger H., Walter J. Oleszek, Frances E. Lee, and Eric Schickler. 2016. *Congress and Its Members*, 14th edition. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Website/Blog/Social Media example

Sides, John. 2008. "Who Will Win the Nominations?" *The Monkey Cage* [blog], January 3. [http://themonkeycage.org/2008/01/who\\_will\\_win\\_the\\_nominations/](http://themonkeycage.org/2008/01/who_will_win_the_nominations/).

Dissertation or thesis example

Munger, Frank J. 1955. "Two-Party Politics in the State of Indiana." PhD diss. [or Master's thesis.] Harvard University.

Conference paper (unpublished) example

Mefford, Dwain, and Brian Ripley. 1987. "The Cognitive Foundation of Regime Theory." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago.