Department of Political Science and Geography

The Department of Political Science and Geography offers a Master of Arts Degree in Political Science and a Master of Arts Degree in Geography.

• M.A. in Geography (p. 1)
• M.A. in Political Science (p. 2)

Master of Arts Degree in Geography

The M.A. in Geography degree is designed to give graduate students the opportunity to analyze social processes and the physical environment across a range of cultures and historical periods, using appropriate methodologies and data management techniques. The degree gives students the chance to explore the many challenges of achieving more just sustainability through a critical overview of environmentally and socially sustainable countries, regions, cities, and communities. The program is especially designed to give students insights into a variety of regional social, environmental, and economic problems, and to exploit the strong international connections that the geography faculty have established. The program aims to provide rigorous training that prepares Master’s students for entry into doctoral programs at UTSA and elsewhere, and to offer career advancement for terminal Master’s students from the city and region. Faculty will encourage students to become involved in professional geography through pertinent internships, conference presentations, publication, and membership in the Association of American Geographers.

Program Admission Requirements

Students wishing to apply to the Master of Arts program in Geography must submit the following materials to the Graduate Admissions office:

1. an application form (available online at http://graduateschool.utsa.edu)
2. an application fee
3. official transcripts from all collegiate institutions attended including community colleges
4. a statement of purpose (750-1000 words) indicating your interests and goals in studying geography
5. two letters of recommendation from references who can speak to your qualifications for the graduate program (at least one of these must be from a college or university professor who can discuss and evaluate specifically your academic qualifications and potential for graduate-level study).

Returning Students

Master’s students who have not been in attendance for two full years will have their status changed to inactive. An inactive student may reapply to the program but must file a new application for graduate admission, along with a nonrefundable application fee, by the application deadline and meet the catalog requirements and admission conditions in effect at the time of reapplication. All returning students will be subject to a full course review in the program. Courses over six years old may need to be repeated (see section “Repeating Courses” in Chapter 2, General Academic Regulations, in this catalog).

Students who wish to take courses in the program without earning credit toward a Master’s degree may apply as non-degree-seeking students. Upon admission to the Graduate Program, all students must meet with the Graduate Advisor of Record for the department as well as their Faculty Subfield Advisor (assigned at time of admission) before enrolling in coursework.

Additionally, all graduate students should attend the Department’s Graduate Program Orientation held at the beginning of each semester.

Degree Requirements

The minimum number of semester credit hours required for the degree is 36 for the nonthesis option, and 33 for the thesis option. To be able to graduate in the minimum time period (two years) students should plan ahead and take all the GRG courses as they are offered each semester.

All degree candidates must complete the following requirements:

Nonthesis Option

A. 9 semester credit hours of required courses:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5003</td>
<td>Research Design and Spatial Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5013</td>
<td>Geographic Thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5913</td>
<td>Design and Management of Geographic Information Systems</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

B. 18 semester credit hours of prescribed elective courses in geography from the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5323</td>
<td>Seminar in Urban Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5403</td>
<td>Seminar in Biogeography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5413</td>
<td>Climatology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5423</td>
<td>Physiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5433</td>
<td>Environmental Landscape Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5513</td>
<td>Geography and Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5543</td>
<td>Gender and Cities: An introduction to Feminist Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5553</td>
<td>Global Urban Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5563</td>
<td>Applied Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5753</td>
<td>The Geography of Development and Underdevelopment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRG 5903</td>
<td>Seminar in Political Geography</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. 9 hours of free electives (inside or outside geography) that may include the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANT 5483</td>
<td>Landscape and Settlement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANT 6653</td>
<td>Spatial Techniques in Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANT 6723</td>
<td>Seminar in Culture, Environment, and Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE 6113</td>
<td>Global Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEO 6513</td>
<td>Advanced GIS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Department of Political Science and Geography

A. 9 semester credit hours of required courses:
   - GRG 5003 Research Design and Spatial Analysis
   - GRG 5013 Geographic Thought
   - GRG 5913 Design and Management of Geographic Information Systems

B. 12 semester credit hours of prescribed elective courses in geography from the following:
   - GRG 5323 Seminar in Urban Geography
   - GRG 5403 Seminar in Biogeography
   - GRG 5413 Climatology
   - GRG 5423 Physiography
   - GRG 5433 Environmental Landscape Management
   - GRG 5513 Geography and Culture
   - GRG 5543 Gender and Cities: An introduction to Feminist Geography
   - GRG 5553 Global Urban Sustainability
   - GRG 5563 Applied Sustainability
   - GRG 5753 The Geography of Development and Underdevelopment
   - GRG 5903 Seminar in Political Geography

C. 6 hours of free electives (inside or outside geography) that may include the following:
   - ANT 5483 Landscape and Settlement
   - ANT 6653 Spatial Techniques in Anthropology
   - ANT 6723 Seminar in Culture, Environment, and Conservation
   - CE 6113 Global Change
   - DEM 7093 GIS for Population Science
   - GEO 6513 Advanced GIS
   - PAD 5503 Urban Planning and Society
   - POL 5793 International Political Economy
   - SOC 6043 Immigration and Society
   - URP 5363 Urban Planning Methods I

Other free electives may be allowed with the approval of the Geography Graduate Program Committee.

D. Comprehensive Examination
   - GRG 6961 Comprehensive Examination

Enrollment in GRG 6961 Comprehensive Examination will be required in the semester the comprehensive examination is taken, if registered for no other courses that semester.

Total Credit Hours

36

Thesis Option

A. 9 semester credit hours of required courses: 9
   - GRG 5003 Research Design and Spatial Analysis
   - GRG 5013 Geographic Thought
   - GRG 5913 Design and Management of Geographic Information Systems

B. 12 semester credit hours of prescribed elective courses in geography from the following: 12
   - GRG 5323 Seminar in Urban Geography
   - GRG 5403 Seminar in Biogeography
   - GRG 5413 Climatology
   - GRG 5423 Physiography
   - GRG 5433 Environmental Landscape Management
   - GRG 5513 Geography and Culture
   - GRG 5543 Gender and Cities: An introduction to Feminist Geography
   - GRG 5553 Global Urban Sustainability
   - GRG 5563 Applied Sustainability
   - GRG 5753 The Geography of Development and Underdevelopment
   - GRG 5903 Seminar in Political Geography

C. 6 hours of free electives (inside or outside geography) that may include the following: 6
   - ANT 5483 Landscape and Settlement
   - ANT 6653 Spatial Techniques in Anthropology
   - ANT 6723 Seminar in Culture, Environment, and Conservation
   - CE 6113 Global Change
   - DEM 7093 GIS for Population Science
   - GEO 6513 Advanced GIS
   - PAD 5503 Urban Planning and Society
   - POL 5793 International Political Economy
   - SOC 6043 Immigration and Society
   - URP 5363 Urban Planning Methods I

Other free electives may be allowed with the approval of the Geography Graduate Program Committee.

D. Thesis 6
   - GRG 6893 Master's Thesis Proposal
   - GRG 6983 Master's Thesis

E. Comprehensive Examination

Comprehensive Examination

Students will prepare for the Comprehensive Examination under faculty supervision and in consultation with their Faculty Subfield Advisor and Graduate Advisor of Record. In consultation with the Faculty Subfield Advisor and Graduate Advisor of Record, students will choose an exam committee, including an exam chairperson, in the semester before taking the Comprehensive Examination. The Comprehensive Examination will be evaluated as either “CR” (satisfactory performance) or “NC” (unsatisfactory performance). Students are expected to take the Comprehensive Examination during the semester in which they plan to complete the degree. The Comprehensive Examination can be attempted a total of two times and only once a semester. Credit earned for the Comprehensive Examination will not count toward the 36 semester credit hours (nonthesis option) or 33 hours (thesis option) required for the Master's degree.

Master of Arts Degree in Political Science

The Master of Arts degree in Political Science offers students the opportunity to develop and expand their understanding of political theories, methodologies, and substantive political affairs. The program prepares students for possible careers in city, state and federal government, international governmental and non-governmental organizations, public opinion polling, campaign management, community college teaching and other related occupations. The program also provides excellent preparation for law school and doctoral studies. Students may specialize in American Government, International Politics, or Political Theory and Public Law.

Program Admission Requirements

Students wishing to apply to the Master of Arts program in Political Science must submit the following materials to the Graduate Admissions office:

1. completed application (available online at http://graduateschool.utsa.edu)
2. application fee
3. grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or higher in the last 60 hours of coursework
4. official transcripts from all collegiate institutions attended including community colleges
5. a statement of purpose (roughly 500 words or two typed pages) indicating your interests and goals in studying political science
6. three letters of recommendation from references who can speak to your qualifications for the graduate program (at least two of these must be from a college or university professor who can discuss and evaluate specifically your academic qualifications and potential for graduate-level study).

Applicants must satisfy all University requirements and must have completed 18 semester credit hours in upper-division undergraduate or graduate-level courses in Political Science or directly related fields in the social and/or behavioral sciences. An overall grade point average of 3.0 in Political Science courses is also required. All applications are
Degree candidates must complete the following requirements:

**A. 6 semester credit hours of methodological core courses:**
- POL 5003 Political Inquiry
- POL 5013 Research Methods

**Plus 6 semester credit hours of breadth core courses from the following:**
- POL 5043 International Politics
- POL 5063 Political Philosophy
- POL 5153 American Government and Politics

**B. 18 semester credit hours of designated elective courses in consultation with the faculty advisor**

Students may receive up to 6 semester credit hours for courses taken outside of political science after consultation with their advisor.

Students specializing in American Government must complete:
- POL 5153 American Government and Politics
- Select at least 9 semester credit hours from the following:
  - POL 5023 Political Economy
  - POL 5033 Political Communications and Behavior
  - POL 5103 Topics in American Politics
  - POL 5113 Latino/a Politics
  - POL 5133 Gender and Elections
  - POL 5163 American Political Development
  - POL 5183 Congress
  - POL 5193 Presidency
  - POL 5233 Political Creativity

**C. Students must complete core course requirements within the first 18 hours of coursework and immediately thereafter participate in a required assessment of progress in the program.**

Included in the assessment, the student must submit a plan of action for completing the remaining hours of coursework and an estimated date of program completion. Enrollment in POL 6893, Research Proposal will only be approved upon successful completion of the assessment.

**D. Research Proposal**

- POL 6893 Research Proposal

All students must successfully complete this course before enrolling in POL 6993, Master's Research Project, or POL 6983, Master's Thesis. Upon completion of POL 6893, students must pass an oral comprehensive examination that will include a defense of the research proposal conducted by a three-person faculty committee.

**E. In consultation with their committee, students must select 3 semester credit hours from the following:**
- POL 6983 Master's Thesis
- or
- POL 6993 Master's Research Project

**Total Credit Hours**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POL 5413</td>
<td>Seminar in Political Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5433</td>
<td>Electoral Behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5463</td>
<td>Lobbying and Government Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5503</td>
<td>Law and Courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5563</td>
<td>Seminar in Jurisprudence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5623</td>
<td>Federalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5043</td>
<td>International Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5303</td>
<td>Topics in Comparative and International Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5333</td>
<td>European Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5363</td>
<td>Mexican Politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5703</td>
<td>American Foreign Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5713</td>
<td>Comparative Political Systems</td>
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<td>POL 5723</td>
<td>International Organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>POL 5733</td>
<td>Political Actors and Systems in Latin America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5773</td>
<td>Foreign Policy Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5783</td>
<td>International Security</td>
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<tr>
<td>POL 5793</td>
<td>International Political Economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5823</td>
<td>Political Economy of the Americas</td>
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<tr>
<td>POL 5853</td>
<td>Economic Geography</td>
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<tr>
<td>POL 5873</td>
<td>Global Governance</td>
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<td>POL 5903</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Political Philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>POL 5203</td>
<td>Topics in Political Theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5213</td>
<td>Seminar in American Political Thought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POL 5273</td>
<td>Contemporary Political Theory and Social Policy</td>
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**Total Credit Hours**

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<tr>
<td>36</td>
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Geography (GRG) Courses

GRG 5003. Research Design and Spatial Analysis. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
An investigation of the conceptualization and design of research and the analysis of spatial data. The course reviews pitfalls in research, the development of theory and formulation of hypotheses, sampling, and the testing of hypotheses with techniques appropriate to the level of measurement. The calculation and interpretation of central tendency and dispersion and the use of bivariate techniques such as Chi-square, Spearman and Personian correlation and regression will be covered. Students will use standard statistical packages such as SPSS to gain first-hand experience in research design and problem-solving with exemplary data sets offering them the opportunity to investigate their interests.

GRG 5013. Geographic Thought. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
A topical course emphasizing theories and concepts at the frontier of human or physical geography. The content of this course will vary. Consult with the Instructor or the Graduate Advisor of Record for information on content in a given semester. Course may be repeated for credit when topics vary.

GRG 5133. Gender and Election. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course examines gender dynamics in electoral politics, asking what barriers women as candidates and minorities may face when running for office. It is designed to provide students with a critical examination of gender in the political system. Still too often political scientists have equated gender with biological sex, downplaying the variety of ways in which gender issues shape American politics. The central premise of this course is that politics cannot be fully understood without including gender as an analytic construct. This course sets out to discover how gender “matters” in U.S. politics.

GRG 5323. Seminar in Urban Geography. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
An investigation of urbanity and urbanization to provide an understanding of the physical, historical, social, political, cultural, and economic forces that shape cities and public spaces in the context of globalization. The course begins with the origin and evolution of urban geography as a discipline. It proceeds to address three principal themes: social and environmental (in) justice, comparative urbanism, and ‘sense of place’ from international perspectives. Other topics may include social area analysis, residential segregation, migration, urban transportation, the urban economic base, and consumer shopping behavior in cities.

GRG 5353. Seminar in Historical Geography. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Graduate level study of historical landscapes, the role of the environment, boundaries, settlement origins and patterns, origins of agriculture and industry, and the history of geography. Regional focus includes Latin America, Anglo-America, and Texas. Regional emphasis and sub-regional coverage may vary.

GRG 5403. Seminar in Biogeography. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Biogeography is the study of the distributions of biological diversity and the reasons for these spatial patterns. This course will evaluate species diversity and abundance at present and in the past, and why these variables change over time. Foundations in ecology will be provided as needed for the understanding of spatial patterning of species. The role of biogeography under increasing human impacts and in consideration of global climate change will also be explored.

GRG 5413. Climatology. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
In-depth treatment of the elements and causes and consequences of climate and weather on a global scale. The course includes the components of climate, climatic classifications, and the interpretation of patterns and formative processes of temperature, air pressure, winds, air masses, precipitation, and storms, including attention to regional weather patterns, tornadoes and hurricanes. Emphasis is on human impacts stemming from and influencing climatic phenomena.

GRG 5423. Physiography. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
An advanced study of landforms, including the analysis of relief features at the surface of the earth, and the processes and materials that form them and change them over time. Students will be given the opportunity to examine the impacts of human intervention in landscape-shaping processes. Emphasis is placed on sustaining and conserving the physical landscape by understanding how different forces and landscape systems overlap, interact and evolve.

GRG 5433. Environmental Landscape Management. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
An assessment of management practices and policies in a variety of landscapes. In-depth evaluations of ecosystem services and land use needs, and management practices that are used to address various land use goals. Emphasis will be placed on the role of spatial scale in management and in sustainable management practices.

GRG 5513. Geography and Culture. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
An exploration of the nature and distribution of cultural landscapes and human behavior within these landscapes. Taking a global focus, the course examines the spatial diffusion of culture, regional differences in religion, language and ethnicity, environmental perception and behavior, intercultural communication, and environmental determinism and possibilism, among other topics.

GRG 5543. Gender and Cities: An introduction to Feminist Geography. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course provides an introduction to the sub-discipline of feminist geography. It explores the distinctive contribution that geographers have made to the analysis of feminist theories, and how space is socially produced and consequently, is gendered. A wide range of interdisciplinary literatures enable an understanding of how women and men experience cities differently in relation to transportation choices, housing preferences, employment opportunities, and feelings toward urban public spaces. The class goes beyond the Anglo-American discourses to consider case studies in non-Western contexts.

GRG 5553. Global Urban Sustainability. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Cities, as engines of financial and human capital accumulation, have often been seen as environmental sacrifice zones. Current processes of rapid urbanization throughout the globe emphasize quantitative material increase rather than qualitative growth and improvement. This course is an intensive seminar for graduate students in geography, urban planning, architecture, urban public policy, environmental sciences, and other fields interested in exploring the potential for sustainable urbanism. A wide range of sustainable programs and practices from around the world will be presented and discussed.
GRG 5563. Applied Sustainability. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course focuses on current trends in the developing field of sustainability practice. Students will examine case studies of environmentally and socially sustainable, and economically resilient, societies. Topics for case study may include land use planning/development, energy systems, infrastructure, waste management, food systems, building construction, biodiversity, and economics as related to sustainability. This class is appropriate for individuals seeking to become professionals who can help guide their organizations toward a sustainable future in strategic, realistic, and competitive ways.

GRG 5603. Geopolitics. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Investigates the links between political power and geographic space, and the effects of geography (both human and physical) on international politics and international relations. Covers the ideas of Ratzel, Mahan, Mackinder, Spykman, Huntington, and others, in the German, French and Russian schools. Examines the role of geopolitics in current global political standoffs and conflicts.

GRG 5753. The Geography of Development and Underdevelopment. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Advanced analysis of economic growth and social change in developing nations and regions. Investigates issues such as defining of development, major theories of development and underdevelopment, global inequalities, population growth and migration, and the role of agriculture, industry, transportation, and government and trans-governmental planning in development. (Same as POL 5753. Credit cannot be earned for both GRG 5753 and POL 5753).

GRG 5903. Seminar in Political Geography. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Investigates the role of the political state in society and the evolution of state organization from classical times to the present. Topics may include centrifugal and centripetal forces, geopolitics, territorial morphology, boundaries, core areas, and emerging supranationalism. (Same as POL 5903. Credit cannot be earned for both GRG 5903 and POL 5903).

GRG 5913. Design and Management of Geographic Information Systems. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisite: GRG 3314 or permission of instructor. A course for graduate students wishing to gain expertise in advanced topics and applications in GIS and related environmental informatics, as applied in the Geosciences and Social Sciences. The course covers advanced ArcGIS functions; advanced GIS applications; and student GIS projects. Students are encouraged and guided in developing research projects related to their MA thesis and/or professional goals. They will learn how to download both spatial and non-spatial data from available sources and how to use such data in their research. (Same as POL 5913. Credit cannot be earned for both GRG 5913 and POL 5913).

GRG 6893. Master’s Thesis Proposal. (0-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisites: Permission of the Thesis Advisor or Faculty Subfield Advisor, course instructor, and Graduate Advisor of Record. An examination of the research questions and the theoretical and methodological assumptions that characterize different subfields in Geography. As part of this course, the student will develop, prepare and defend a proposal for the Master’s thesis. Credit will be awarded upon approval of the proposal by the student’s course instructor and thesis advisor. A thesis committee must be formed by the end of the course. This course will be taken in the student’s third long semester in the program. Failure to meet this requirement within four long semesters from the time when the student enters the graduate program will preclude continuation of the student in the Master’s program.

GRG 6951. Independent Study. (0-0) 1 Credit Hour.
Prerequisites: Graduate standing and permission in writing (form available) of the instructor and the student’s Graduate Advisor of Record. Independent reading, research, discussion, and/or writing under the direction of a faculty member. For students needing specialized work not usually available as part of the regular course offerings. May be repeated for credit, but not more than 6 hours, regardless of discipline, will apply to the Master’s degree.

GRG 6952. Independent Study. (0-0) 2 Credit Hours.
Prerequisites: Graduate standing and permission in writing (form available) of the instructor and the student’s Graduate Advisor of Record. Independent reading, research, discussion, and/or writing under the direction of a faculty member. For students needing specialized work not usually available as part of the regular course offerings. May be repeated for credit, but not more than 6 hours, regardless of discipline, will apply to the Master’s degree.

GRG 6953. Independent Study. (0-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisites: Graduate standing and permission in writing (form available) of the instructor and the student’s Graduate Advisor of Record. Independent reading, research, discussion, and/or writing under the direction of a faculty member. For students needing specialized work not usually available as part of the regular course offerings. May be repeated for credit, but not more than 6 hours, regardless of discipline, will apply to the Master’s degree.

GRG 6961. Comprehensive Examination. (0-0) 1 Credit Hour.
Prerequisites: Approval of the Faculty Subfield Advisor, Graduate Advisor of Record, and the student’s Comprehensive Examination Committee. Students will select fields of study and prepare for examination under faculty supervision. Students will designate an exam committee and exam chair in the semester prior to enrollment. Enrollment is required each term in which the Comprehensive Examination is taken if no other courses are being taken that term. May be repeated once during a different semester. Credit earned in GRG 6961 may not be counted toward the Master’s degree. The grade report for the course is either “CR” (satisfactory performance on the Comprehensive Examination) or “NC” (unsatisfactory performance on the Comprehensive Examination).

GRG 6963. Internship. (0-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Practical experience in a workplace setting in which classroom knowledge of geographic skills and concepts can be deepened and applied. May be repeated for credit to a maximum of 6 hours.

GRG 6966. Internship. (0-0) 6 Credit Hours.
Practical experience in a workplace setting in which classroom knowledge of geographic skills and concepts can be deepened and applied. May be repeated for credit to a maximum of 6 hours.

GRG 6973. Special Problems. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. An organized course offering the opportunity for specialized study not usually available as part of the regular course offerings. Special Problems courses may be repeated for credit when topics vary, but not more than 6 hours, regardless of discipline, will apply to the Master’s degree.

GRG 6983. Master’s Thesis. (0-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisites: POL 6893 and permission of Graduate Advisor of Record and Thesis Committee. Thesis research and preparation. May be repeated for credit, but not more than 3 hours will apply to the Master’s degree. Credit will be awarded upon completion of the thesis. Enrollment is required each term in which the thesis is in progress.
Department of Political Science and Geography

Political Science (POL) Courses

POL 5003. Political Inquiry. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
An introduction to investigation and analysis in Political Science. A major objective is for students to learn how to frame a question, formulate a hypothesis, and review and apply the relevant literature. The course provides an introduction to research design and qualitative research methods, and may include questions in the philosophy of science and other methodological and theoretical questions central to political science.

POL 5013. Research Methods. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
This course provides students with the opportunity to develop a basic working knowledge of the empirical, quantitative approaches/techniques social scientists use in understanding social/political phenomena. The conceptual focus will be on classic hypothesis testing. The class will culminate with multiple regression analysis and its extensions. Students will be given an opportunity to learn how to read the empirical, quantitative primary political science literature, and conduct a statistical analysis of a question in political science.

POL 5023. Political Economy. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
Analysis of the interplay of politics and economics in the domestic and international arenas. Divergent theoretical perspectives and their basis in the work of classical and contemporary political economists and social theorists. Topics may include the politics and economics of international trade, technology policy, educational reform, industrial restructuring, privatization, environmental policy, and labor-market policy.

POL 5033. Political Communications and Behavior. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
An examination of major theories and research dealing with human behavior and interaction in politics, drawing on the literature of political sociology, political communications, political anthropology, and political psychology. Professional applications such as public opinion polling, political journalism, public relations, campaign management, political advertising, and political consulting are considered.

POL 5043. International Politics. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
This course analyzes theories of international relations and/or comparative politics, with an emphasis on major theoretical paradigms and methodological approaches. Topics may include security, economics, the environment, and human rights.

POL 5063. Political Philosophy. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
A broad survey of central political issues and thinkers. Students will be introduced to the philosophies of thinkers such as Plato, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Marx.

POL 5093. Politics of U.S. National Security Policy Making. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
An examination of the political dynamics of national security decision making, placing particular emphasis on executive branch leadership and coordination with other institutions of government. Discussion of the history and politics, evolution, and institutional roles of the U.S. national security system. Includes discussion of policy initiatives, institutional decision making settings, constitutional and statutory controls on institutional powers, and policy outcomes. Course may explore a sample of major national security decisions in terms of political characteristics and principles.

POL 5103. Topics in American Politics. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
An examination of an individual topic or set of issues in American politics. May be repeated for credit when topics vary.

POL 5113. Latino/a Politics. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
This course examines the role of the Latino electorate in shaping state and national politics. Topics may include the political histories of various Latino national origin groups, public policy issues that concern Latinos, the successes and failures of Latino empowerment strategies, and the electoral impact of Latino votes.

POL 5133. Gender and Elections. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
How ethnic and gender differences influence political behavior, policymaking, and policy outcomes in the United States. Theories of ethnic relations and feminist and other theories of gender relations. Strategies for dealing with ethnic conflict and gender discrimination and harassment. (Formerly POL 5123. Credit cannot be earned for both POL 5133 and POL 5123.) (Formerly titled "Ethnic and Gender Politics").

POL 5153. American Government and Politics. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
An examination of the major issues, problems, and processes of American government and administration.

POL 5163. American Political Development. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
This course presents a macropolitical perspective on American politics. It introduces students to debates in political science about change and development in political authority relations since the founding of the Republic. Topics may include the nature of regimes and regime change; the relationship between ideology and political culture; developments in institutional authority and in the balance of power among institutions such as the three branches of government, federal and state authority, and the military; continental development; the emergence of the regulatory state; the United States as a world power; and the representative process and forms of popular organization.

POL 5183. Congress. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
The study of the U.S. Congress. Topics may include Congressional procedure and policymaking, representation, and elections. The course also considers the various approaches used in the scholarly study of Congress, including behavioral, rational choice, and historical methods.

POL 5193. Presidency. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
This course examines the origins and development of the presidency, the relationship of the institution of the presidency with major actors in the governmental process, and the modern practice of presidential leadership in the United States.

POL 5203. Topics in Political Theory. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
An examination of an individual topic, theorist, or set of issues in political theory. May be repeated for credit when topics vary.

POL 5213. Seminar in American Political Thought. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.  
Consideration of American political thinking and its impact from the colonial era to the present with an emphasis on primary sources. Readings may include diverse works of a political, judicial, philosophical, theological, and literary nature. May be organized chronologically or topically.
POL 5233. Political Creativity. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course examines significant cases of institutional change and development. The course begins with a focus on theoretical debates about political innovation and institutional explanations of politics. We will review the debate about how institutions create political order and constrain individual action as well as leading critiques of order and constraint. We will consider how individual creative action is inseparable from the practice of politics and government. Individual action is partly about leaders and entrepreneurs, but innovation is also about other dimensions of political order which are subject to order-changing actions of a non-individualistic kind, involving embedded cognitive schemas, deliberative procedures and social learning, and historical conjunctures in which individual and collective agents create opportunities in concrete circumstances. Various cases will be taught in different semesters from the U.S. and other countries, such as race relations, political revolutions, policy innovations of various kinds, negotiation of equity commitments, post-crisis reconciliation exercises, and leadership.

POL 5273. Contemporary Political Theory and Social Policy. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course explores contemporary social policy from a normative perspective. Topics may include the nature of a just educational system; justice of universal health care; normative issues relating to reproduction and genetic technologies; social security reform; the proper role of the state in regulating and supporting families; and other policy topics.

POL 5303. Topics in Comparative and International Politics. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
An examination of an individual topic or set of issues in comparative and/or international politics. May be repeated for credit when topics vary.

POL 5333. European Politics. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
An examination of the political systems and links between civil society and political institutions in several European nations in the post-WWII era. This course will focus on domestic politics, and will also introduce the European Union. Topics may include political institutions, policy processes, political representation, and public opinion in the European countries.

POL 5363. Mexican Politics. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course focuses on Mexico's political and economic development, including the interaction between the state and civil society and the current challenges of the state. The course includes a historical overview of the development of Mexican national politics, institutions and the economy, and the emergence of civil society. Specific topics may include guerrilla movements, drug dealing, and U.S.-Mexico relations.

POL 5413. Seminar in Political Psychology. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
The study of psychological theories of political phenomena at individual, small group, organizational, and nation-state levels. Topics may include political socialization, personality and political leadership, the social psychology of mass participation, rational choice and symbolic politics paradigms of political behavior, psychological models of international conflict, and models of political cognition.

POL 5433. Electoral Behavior. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
An examination of political science theory and research on elections and voting behavior in the United States and other countries. Topics may include electoral cycles and realignment patterns; the impact of media coverage and campaign tactics on opinions, turnout, and electoral outcomes; and the sociodemographic and psychological variables influencing voting and nonvoting.

POL 5463. Lobbying and Government Relations. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course is explores both theoretical and practical themes related to the efforts of interest groups to shape the policy making process. Special focus is placed on the inner workings of legislatures at local, state, and national levels with the objective of increasing the governmental relations effectiveness of public interest groups, businesses, trade organizations, bureaucratic agencies, and unions.

POL 5503. Law and Courts. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Examination of the role of courts in American politics and administration. May focus on American constitutional development, constitutional and legal interpretation, or judicial politics and behavior. May also incorporate a comparative perspective on the role of courts in constitutional systems. (Formerly titled "Constitutional Law and Judicial Decision-Making").

POL 5563. Seminar in Jurisprudence. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Examination of the philosophical and historical foundations of law. Topics may include theoretical accounts of the nature of law; competing theories of justice; problems of legal obligation and civil disobedience; and judicial modes of interpreting and applying law. Authors may include Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Augustine, Aquinas, Hobbes, Austin, Holmes, Frank, Hart, Oakeshott, Rawls, Finnis, Dworkin, and Posner.

POL 5623. Federalism. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
The administrative and political effects of the division of authority among coordinate units of government. Federal-state, state-local, local-federal, state-state, local-local, and governmental-nongovernmental relations are examined. (Formerly titled "Intergovernmental Relations in the United States").

POL 5703. American Foreign Policy. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course analyzes the domestic and international factors that affect American foreign policy, including explanations that focus on psychology, bureaucratic politics, lobbying organizations, public opinion, and national culture.

POL 5713. Comparative Political Systems. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Comparative analysis of theories and issues pertaining to political institutions and processes in post-industrial, developing, and transitional systems. Topics may include state theory, nationalism, new institutionalism, political economy, party systems, politics of contention, regional integration, and the internationalization of public policy.

POL 5723. International Organizations. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
An examination of international political and economic organizations, as well as major issues involving them. Topics may include alliance systems, regional development, common markets, peacekeeping, international conferences, United Nations, IMF, World Bank, and regional organizations.

POL 5733. Political Actors and Systems in Latin America. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
An examination of politics in Latin America. The course centers the analysis around two axes: the interplay between civil society and the state and patterns of inter-American relations.

POL 5773. Foreign Policy Analysis. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course will compare worldviews, institutional processes, policies, and outcomes in foreign policymaking. Cross-national and thematic comparisons will be used to examine the foreign policies of major actors in international security, international organization, economic competition, and humanitarian issues. Regional comparisons may focus on political and economic issues in Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa and/or Latin America.
POL 5783. International Security. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course examines circumstances and issues leading to war and the conditions necessary to return nations and regions to stability and security in the world community. Topics may include causes of civil and international war, deterrence, nuclear and conventional weapons, terrorism, and conflict prevention and resolution.

POL 5793. International Political Economy. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course analyzes the interaction of politics and economics in the international arena, with a focus on international trade, investment, monetary, and financial relations. Topics may include the role of international economic institutions (such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization), regional integration, foreign debt, dependency and development, structural change in international economics, and critiques of economic globalization.

POL 5823. Political Economy of the Americas. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
An examination of the changing relationship among the state, society, and the private sector in Latin America and its influence on hemispheric relations. Topics may include state ownership and privatization, industrial policy, trade union influence, foreign investment and foreign trade policy, and the impact of NAFTA, GATT, and other international agreements.

POL 5853. Economic Geography. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
An advanced examination of the location of economic activities, their causes, and consequences. Includes the principles and practices of manufacturing and agricultural location and their impact on political subdivisions and economies; trade areas for retail and service activities; the role of transportation; the economic impact of globalization on local areas; and community economic base and shift-share analysis applied to local economies, with implications for planning and public administration. (Same as GRG 5303. Credit cannot be earned for both POL 5853 and GRG 5303).

POL 5873. Global Governance. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
This course analyzes the ways in which various actors bring order to the international system. While traditional theories focus on the role of the state, this course gives greater attention to non-state actors, public and private institutions, and the many ways in which they interact in managing common affairs. Theoretical and empirical issues include, but are not limited to, contending perspectives and systems of rule-making in the areas of security, poverty, trade and finance, human rights and the environment.

POL 5903. Seminar in Political Geography. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Investigates the role of the political state in society and the evolution of state organization from classical times to the present. Topics may include centrifugal and centripetal forces, geopolitics, territorial morphology, boundaries, core areas, and emerging supranationalism. (Same as GRG 5903. Credit cannot be earned for both POL 5903 and GRG 5903).

POL 6893. Research Proposal. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisites: Permission of the Subfield Advisor, course instructor, and Graduate Advisor of Record. A course to assist students in developing a research proposal for a study in Political Science to be accomplished as either the Master's Research Project or the Master's Thesis. As part of this course, students will explore research questions and theoretical and methodological assumptions that characterize subfields in Political Science. Specific attention will be given to framing research questions, identifying an appropriate research methodology, organizing work tasks and timelines for completion, developing the relevant literature, and drafting a research proposal. Successful completion of this course requires passing an oral comprehensive examination that will include a defense of the research proposal conducted by a Research Project or Thesis committee. Students must complete this course before enrolling in POL 6993 or POL 6983. (Formerly titled "Master's Thesis Proposal").

POL 6951. Independent Study. (0-0) 1 Credit Hour.
Prerequisites: Graduate standing and permission in writing (form available) of the instructor and the student’s Graduate Advisor of Record. Independent reading, research, discussion, and/or writing under the direction of a faculty member. For students needing specialized work not usually available as part of the regular course offerings. May be repeated for credit, but not more than 6 hours, regardless of discipline, will apply to the Master’s degree.

POL 6952. Independent Study. (0-0) 2 Credit Hours.
Prerequisites: Graduate standing and permission in writing (form available) of the instructor and the student’s Graduate Advisor of Record. Independent reading, research, discussion, and/or writing under the direction of a faculty member. For students needing specialized work not usually available as part of the regular course offerings. May be repeated for credit, but not more than 6 hours, regardless of discipline, will apply to the Master’s degree.

POL 6953. Independent Study. (0-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisites: Graduate standing and permission in writing (form available) of the instructor and the student’s Graduate Advisor of Record. Independent reading, research, discussion, and/or writing under the direction of a faculty member. For students needing specialized work not usually available as part of the regular course offerings. May be repeated for credit, but not more than 6 hours, regardless of discipline, will apply to the Master’s degree.

POL 6961. Comprehensive Examination. (0-0) 1 Credit Hour.
Prerequisites: Approval of the Faculty Subfield Advisor, Graduate Advisor of Record, and the student’s Comprehensive Examination Committee. Students will select fields of study and prepare for examination under faculty supervision. Students will designate an exam committee and exam chair in the semester prior to enrollment. Enrollment is required each term in which the Comprehensive Examination is taken if no other courses are being taken that term. May be repeated once during a different semester. Credit earned in POL 6961 may not be counted toward the Master’s degree. The grade report for the course is either “CR” (satisfactory performance on the Comprehensive Examination) or “NC” (unsatisfactory performance on the Comprehensive Examination).

POL 6963. Internship. (0-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Practical experience in a workplace setting in which classroom knowledge of political institutions, processes, and public policy can be deepened and applied. May be repeated for credit to a maximum of 6 hours.
POL 6966. Internship. (0-0) 6 Credit Hours.
Practical experience in a workplace setting in which classroom knowledge of political institutions, processes, and public policy can be deepened and applied. May be repeated for credit to a maximum of 6 hours.

POL 6973. Special Problems. (3-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisite: Consent of instructor. An organized course offering the opportunity for specialized study not usually available as part of the regular course offerings. Special Problems courses may be repeated for credit when topics vary, but not more than 6 hours, regardless of discipline, will apply to the Master’s degree.

POL 6983. Master’s Thesis. (0-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisites: POL 6893 and permission of Graduate Advisor of Record and Thesis Committee. Thesis research and preparation. May be repeated for credit, but not more than 3 hours will apply to the Master’s degree. Credit will be awarded upon completion of the thesis. Enrollment is required each term in which the thesis is in progress.

POL 6993. Master’s Research Project. (0-0) 3 Credit Hours.
Prerequisites: POL 6893 and permission of the Graduate Advisor of Record and Research Project Committee. Research project and preparation. May be repeated for credit, but not more than 3 hours will apply to the Master’s degree. Credit will be awarded upon completion of the research project.