

Department of Political Science

UMKC 2007-08 Graduate and Professional Catalog (1.0)

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Department of Political Science

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Professor:

Robert E. Gamer

Associate Professors:

Robert K. Evanson (principal master's adviser), Harris G. Mirkin (chair)

Assistant Professors:

Elizabeth Miller, Boris E. Ricks

Visiting and Adjunct Professors, Full-time Lecturers:

Robert Collins, Mohammed Hafez, Dan Stoll, Reginald L. Bassa, Jr. (director, program for adult college education)

Department Description

The Department of Political Science offers courses leading to the degrees of bachelor of arts and master of arts, and participates in the Interdisciplinary Ph.D. program.

The undergraduate major in political science is based on the principles of a liberal arts education, with special attention devoted to philosophies, institutions, processes and behavioral aspects of politics.

Master of Arts: Political Science

The master of arts degree in political science offers intensive study across the range of major subfields in politics and government. Because of the breadth of its focus, the M.A. is designed as a terminal degree for most students.

Admission

To be admitted as a regular graduate student in political science, an applicant must have an adequate background in the social sciences. An undergraduate degree in political science is recommended but not required. The department does require applicants to have earned a 3.0 grade-point average in their last 60 credit hours of undergraduate coursework, as well as in their major field of study.

The application process is competitive. Satisfying minimum criteria does not guarantee admission to the graduate program; students are admitted according to their rank in the applicant pool and the adequacy of departmental resources. Applicants must submit:

1. A completed UMKC application for admission.
2. Official transcripts of all previous college work.
3. Scores from the Graduate Record Examination (General).

4. A letter of application to the principal master's adviser expressing personal plans and interests in graduate work in political science.
5. Two letters of recommendation from professors, employers or others qualified to assess academic potential.

All application materials should be sent to the UMKC Office of Admissions for transmittal to the Department of Political Science for an admissions decision.

Applicants whose records do not meet the requirements of undergraduate academic performance, or whose application submissions are incomplete, may be admitted as non-regular graduate students, depending on individual circumstances. Only regular graduate students may apply for the M.A. degree. Admission under any circumstances is no guarantee of retention.

Career Implications

Consult with the principal master's adviser for details on the variety of career opportunities enhanced by the M.A. in political science.

Requirements for Retention

Graduate students are expected to maintain a high degree of academic excellence. After completion of nine credit hours of coursework in political science at UMKC, the academic performance and status of each student will be reviewed by the faculty and a departmental decision will be made as to retention of the student in the graduate program.

Students whose grade-point averages fall below 3.0 (B) for more than two semesters may be dropped from the program. A 3.0 grade-point average is required for graduation.

Temporary grades of "incomplete" will be granted only rarely by political science faculty, only in extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the student, and only if there are reasonable expectations that the work can be completed. Except in thesis courses, all grades of incomplete will be automatically converted to F's after one year.

The faculty of the Department of Political Science views plagiarism and academic dishonesty as inexcusable. Any student found guilty of these will be dropped from the program.

Students also should consult the School of Graduate Studies section in this catalog for general academic regulations that apply to all graduate students at UMKC.

Student Learning Outcomes

Master of Arts in Political Science

The master's program in political science is designed to give students a broad background in the field. In each class research and writing skills are emphasized. Students who intend to go into Ph.D. programs should choose the thesis option.

Requirements for Graduation

The master of arts degree in political science requires the successful completion of either of the following sets of requirements:

- Non-Thesis Option - 33 semester hours of approved coursework.
- Thesis Option - 24 semester hours of approved coursework and 6 hours of thesis (Political Science 5599: Research and Thesis). Students must gain permission to write a thesis. An oral defense of the thesis is required. Those who anticipate further graduate work toward the doctorate are advised to write a thesis.

All M.A. candidates must successfully complete Political Science 5680 (Traditions, Theories and Trends in Political

Science). For a 300- or 400-level course to be accepted for graduate credit, students will be expected to do supplementary work (additional reading, projects, papers and contact hours with instructor) and to demonstrate graduate-level competency and achievement in the subject, and the students must take the course for graduate credit and complete it with a grade of B or better.

No more than nine credit hours of 300- or 400-level coursework taken for graduate credit will count toward the M.A. in political science. No course taken for undergraduate credit at UMKC may be repeated for graduate credit. In either the 30-hour thesis option or the 33-hour non-thesis option, no more than six hours of readings, independent study or directed studies credit (other than thesis hours) may be counted toward the requirements for the M.A.

No more than six hours of approved credit may be transferred from another recognized graduate school, and no more than six hours of pre-approved graduate coursework in other UMKC departments will be accepted toward the degree.

Students should consult the principal masters adviser in selecting approved courses to assure progress toward completion of the degree and to meet their needs and interests in graduate study.

Political Science Courses

5505 Scope And Methods Of Political Science (3). This seminar surveys the various descriptive and quantitative approaches to the study of politics, government and public policy. It covers the methods used in various sub-disciplines and the models employed in political analysis.

5513 Comparative Politics: Asia, Africa, And Latin America (3). A comparison of politics in selected countries from one or more of these regions, with an emphasis on how and why processes differ and change.

5521 Judicial Politics (3). This course addresses broad trends of current research in the area of the judicial process based on empirical studies and the various methodological tools currently used by researchers. Case studies may be used to illustrate in depth the institutional aspects of the judicial process. Biographies may also be used to emphasize the personal and environmental factors which affect judicial decision making.

5522 Seminar In The Presidency (3). Critical examination of the American presidency, with in-depth research into selected themes and presidents. Prerequisites: Political Science 406 or permission.

5524 Urban Politics (3). A seminar on politics and government in urban areas with special attention to community leadership, power structures, interest group and party activity, political behavior, and movements toward local government reform.

5530 International Relations (3). This course examines major schools of thought that attempt to explain contemporary and historical international politics. Topics discussed include international systems, the balance of power, collective security, and international political economy, morality, and law.

5541 American Political Thought (3). This course will focus on intellectual reactions to the major periods in American history (the movement for independence, the writing of the constitution, the Jacksonian period, the civil war debate, the growth of big business, the rise of the positive state and contemporary America). Contemporary theorists will be included along with Jefferson, Madison, Hamilton and Marshall.

5542 Constitutional Interpretation (3). This course will provide an in-depth treatment of selected areas of constitutional development, related to various aspects of public policy developed under the Constitution through judicial interpretation, including federalism, equality, fundamental rights and freedom of expression.

5570 The Politics Of Social Security (3). This course will concentrate upon the principles of social insurance in general, and of the American Social Security system in particular. It will consider the system in relation to the history and traditions of American society. It will analyze popular misconceptions and will pay special attention to the political, economic, and demographic issues relevant to Social Security's current operation and to the program's future.

5575 Political Ideologies (3). Consideration of political ideologies and their effects, with in-depth research into selected topics.

5580 Government And Politics Seminar (3). Offered as a special seminar in the individual faculty member's area of research specialization. The seminar may be repeated for credit when the topic varies. The topic and instructor will be announced in advance.

5590 Directed Studies And Research (1-6). Under the direction of the instructor, students in this course will produce a major research paper: a self-contained thesis chapter, an article for publication or the equivalent. May be repeated for credit.

5599 Thesis (1-6). Directed specialized research.

5680 Traditions, Theories, And Trends In Political Science (3). This intensive survey of political science provides an opportunity for integration of the study of political values, behavior, and institutions with other social sciences.

5688 Doctoral Research Seminar (3). Students will produce a major research paper under the direction of the instructor. The research project will consist of a self-contained chapter of the dissertation or a work of publishable quality. May be repeated for credit.

5697 Doctoral-Level Independent Readings (3). Individual readings under the supervision of members of the Political Science Graduate or Doctoral Faculty in the specified topic or topics. May be repeated. May not be taken during an academic year in which a graduate course or seminar is offered on the topic.

5697A Doctoral-Level Ir: American National Politics And Institutions (3).

5697I Doctoral-Level Ir: International Politics And Processes (3).

5697L Doctoral-Level Ir: Public Law (3).

5697O Doctoral-Level Ir: Public Opinion And Voter Behavior (3).

5697R Doctoral-Level Ir: Research Methods (3).

5697T Doctoral-Level Ir: Political Theory (3).

5697U Doctoral-Level Ir: Urban And State Politics (3).

5699 Research And Dissertation (1-12). Directed specialized research.

5899 Required Graduate Enrollment (1).