

POLITICAL SCIENCE MA

The Master of Arts in Political Science provides high-quality instruction and training representing the breadth and depth of knowledge in the field to prepare our graduates for a wide variety of options after completing the program. We offer a traditional approach to serve the diverse needs of our students and prepare them for scholarly and professional pursuits. Some of our graduates go on to pursue a PhD or law degree, others teach at community colleges or high schools, and others seek careers in government, politics (e.g., as lobbyists, policy analysts, and campaign consultants), and in business and the nonprofit sector. We also encourage political science MA students to integrate applied experiences, such as teaching and internships, into their program of study.

Advising Requirement

Advising is mandatory for this program. Consult your department advisor or program coordinator for information.

Requirements for the MA in Political Science

Completion of all requirements as established by the department graduate committee, the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice, the graduate advisory committee, and Graduate Studies, to include:

1. Completion of an approved program consisting of 30 units of 400/500/600-level courses as follows:
 - a. At least 24 units in the discipline of political science.
 - b. At least 18 units required for the degree in 600-level courses in political science or in a social science approved by the student's graduate advisory committee and the Graduate Coordinator.
 - c. At the discretion of the academic program, a maximum of six semester units of special session credit earned in non-matriculated status combined with all transfer coursework may be counted toward the degree requirements. This applies to special session credit earned through Open University, or in courses offered for academic credit through Professional & Continuing Education. Correspondence courses and UC Extension coursework are not acceptable for transfer.
 - d. Not more than three units of internship coursework and only if the student has a GPA of 3.2 or higher and the student's graduate advisory committee or the Graduate Coordinator agrees that the internship is a meaningful educational experience.
 - e. Not more than nine units of POLS 697 and POLS 699T; not more than six units of POLS 699T.
 - f. Students take five course seminars and one American Political Institution course. The remaining courses consist of electives, internship, independent study, and thesis units.
 - g. For students who select the Thesis Plan, the final three elective units are fulfilled by taking three units of POLS 699T. For students who select the Comprehensive Exam Plan, the final three units are fulfilled by taking an elective course chosen from the approved courses.
2. Completion and final approval of one of the following, as specified by the student's graduate advisory committee.

a. Thesis Plan

The candidate shall submit an acceptable thesis based upon research developed by the student and agreed to by the student's graduate advisory committee.

- i. Thesis Proposal: a proposal (prospectus or detailed outline) of the thesis must be submitted to and approved by the graduate advisory committee before the student begins the thesis. The proposal includes at least a statement of the problem or hypothesis, a relevant review of the literature, the basic research methods to be employed, justification of the study's value, and estimated time of completion. The proposal is a formal document that must have appropriate attention given matters of format, documentation, and quality of writing.
- ii. Registration in POLS 699T: the student should register for POLS 699T no earlier than the second semester in the program and in accordance with their thesis plan. However, it is advisable that the student complete most of the program coursework before registering for POLS 699T.
- iii. Approval of Thesis: the thesis shall be approved by all members of the graduate advisory committee.
- iv. Oral Defense: a required oral defense of the thesis shall be conducted by the candidate's graduate advisory committee. Interested faculty members may attend. The oral defense is generally limited to matters within the scope of the thesis. The candidate may repeat the defense one time if failed by the committee on the first attempt. The time and date of the defense must be noted in print and circulated to the Office of Graduate Studies at least one week prior to the date.

b. Comprehensive Examination Plan

- i. Written Comprehensive Examination: the candidate shall complete and pass a written examination.
- ii. Preparing for Comprehensive Exam: students are given lists of suggested readings for various fields of study in political science. Candidates are expected to have a broad understanding of their fields of study and to cite the relevant and important scholarly literature in responding to comprehensive exam questions.
- iii. Grading: the examination shall be graded as pass or fail.
- iv. Repeating Written Examination: the candidate may repeat the examination once.

3. Approval by the departmental graduate committee and the Graduate Council on behalf of the faculty of the University.

Course	Title	Units
Foundation		
POLS 521	Research Experience: An Introduction to Exploring Data in Politics and Criminal Justice	3
POLS 611	Seminar in Comparative Government	3
POLS 621	Seminar in American Politics	3
POLS 632	Seminar in Political Theory	3
POLS 641	Seminar in International Relations	3
American Political Institution		
Select one of the following:		3
POLS 601	State and Local Government	
POLS 651	Seminar in Judicial Politics	
POLS 672	The U.S. Presidency	
POLS 673	The U.S. Congress	

Elective Courses

Select 12 units from the following: ^{1, 2}		12
INTR 414	Politics of Terrorism	
INTR 449	Issues in Comparative Politics and International Relations	
POLS 498	Special Topics	
POLS 601	State and Local Government ³	
POLS 602	Public Administration and Democracy	
POLS 624	Public Opinion and Survey Design	
POLS 626	Interest Groups, Protest Movements, and Political Change	
POLS 627	U.S. Campaigns and Elections	
POLS 651	Seminar in Judicial Politics ³	
POLS 653	Environmental Policy and the Law	
POLS 660A	Public Management	
POLS 660B	Public Personnel Administration	
POLS 660C	Public Budgeting and Finance	
POLS 662	Organizational Theory in the Public Sector	
POLS 664	Public Policy in Health and Human Services	
POLS 668	Public Policy Formation	
POLS 669	Public and Non-Profit Program Evaluation	
POLS 671	Topics in American Politics	
POLS 672	The U.S. Presidency ³	
POLS 673	The U.S. Congress ³	
POLS 689	Intern/Fieldwork Public Admin	
POLS 697	Independent Study	
POLS 699T	Master's Thesis	
Total Units		30

¹ Thesis students take three units of POLS 699T.

² At least one course (three units) must be 600-level.

³ Course may be used to satisfy this requirement if not used above.

Graduate Grading Requirements

All courses in the major (with the exceptions of Comprehensive Examination - 696, Independent Study - 697, Master's Project - 699P, and Master's Thesis - 699T) must be taken for a letter grade, except those courses specified by the department as ABC/No Credit (400/500-level courses), AB/No Credit (600-level courses), or Credit/No Credit grading only. A maximum of 10 units combined of ABC/No Credit, AB/No Credit, and Credit/No Credit grades may be used on the approved program (including 696, 697, 699P, 699T and courses outside the major). While grading standards are determined by individual programs and instructors, it is also the policy of the University that unsatisfactory grades may be given when work fails to reflect achievement of the high standards, including high writing standards, expected of students pursuing graduate study.

Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average in each of the following three categories: all coursework taken at any accredited institution subsequent to admission to the master's program; all coursework taken at Chico State subsequent to admission to the program; and all courses in the approved master's degree program. Failure to maintain a 3.0 average in any category will result in academic notice in the master's program. Failure to remedy the deficiency within one semester with appropriate courses approved by the program

coordinator may result in disqualification from the master's program. See Graduate Education Policies (<https://catalog.csuchico.edu/graduate-requirements/graduate-education-policies/#academicstanding>) for more information.

In addition, no course in which a grade lower than B- is earned will be counted toward the fulfillment of any graduate degree requirements.

Continuous enrollment is required. At the discretion of the academic program, a maximum of six semester units of special session credit earned in non-matriculated status combined with all transfer coursework may be counted toward the degree requirements. This applies to special session credit earned through Open University, or in courses offered for academic credit through Professional & Continuing Education.

Graduate Time Limit

All requirements for the degree are to be completed within five years of the end of the semester of enrollment in the oldest course applied toward the degree. See Master's Degree Requirements (<https://catalog.csuchico.edu/graduate-requirements/masters-degree-requirements/>) for complete details on general degree requirements.

Graduate Requirement in Writing Proficiency

All students must demonstrate competency in writing skills as a requirement for graduation. Political Science graduate students will demonstrate their writing competence through the first seminar in which they enroll. The instructor of that seminar will certify for the Graduate Coordinator that the student has met the requirement. Consult with the Graduate Coordinator for specifics.

Prerequisites for Admission to Conditionally Classified Status

1. Satisfactory grade point average as specified in Graduate and Postbaccalaureate Admission Requirements (<https://catalog.csuchico.edu/graduate-requirements/graduate-postbaccalaureate-admission-requirements/>).
2. Approval by the department and Graduate Studies.
3. An acceptable baccalaureate in political or social science from an accredited institution, or an equivalent approved by Graduate Studies.
4. All new students enter as conditionally classified students. Conditionally classified students are required to make no grade lower than a B-, maintain an overall grade point average of 3.0, and finish all coursework (no "Incomplete" or "Satisfactory Progress").

Prerequisites for Admission to Classified Status

In addition to any requirements listed above:

1. Completion of a minimum of nine units of graduate study as a conditionally classified student, including a graduate seminar.
2. Formation of a graduate advisory committee. This should be done as early as possible and in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator. For students who select the Thesis Plan, at least two of the faculty members on the committee, including the chair, must be chosen from the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice. The Thesis Committee and the Graduate Coordinator are responsible for all guidance of the student through completion of the degree. For

students who select the Comprehensive Exam Plan, the Graduate Coordinator organizes the graduate advisory committee and is responsible for guidance of the student through completion of the degree.

3. Development of an approved master's degree program plan. The Graduate Coordinator works with the student in the development of the student's master's degree program plan. The plan must be approved by the graduate advisory committee, the Graduate Coordinator, and Graduate Studies.

Advancement to Candidacy

In addition to any requirements listed above:

1. Completion of at least 18 units of the student's master's degree program plan.
2. Graduate advisory committee approval of the student's thesis proposal or the intention to attempt the comprehensive exam.
3. A minimum grade point average of 3.0.

Definition of Blended Programs

A blended bachelor's and master's degree program combines an existing Chico State bachelor's degree with an existing Chico State master's degree; the blended program allows up to 12 units of the graduate program units to be double-counted at the undergraduate level, for a minimum of 138 units to receive both degrees. Students who complete a blended program will receive both a bachelor's and master's degree. Upon completion of 120 semester units and with the completion of all requirements for the bachelor's degree, students in blended programs will be awarded the bachelor's degree. Upon completion of the requirements for the master's degree, students will be awarded the master's degree.

Students interested in applying to a blended program must be enrolled in a bachelor's degree program at Chico State and must meet and maintain the minimum GPA of the existing master's degree entrance requirements for all bachelor's coursework completed at the time of the application to the blended program, or show promise to reach this level as determined by the program. Once admitted to the blended program, students shall not be required to apply for admission to the master's program.

Blended Political Science BA + Political Science MA

Eligibility

In order to apply to the blended program students must have completed 60 undergraduate units. A total of 12 units in the major, including POLS 331W, must be completed before applying.

Application Procedure

Application deadlines: April 1 for fall start, November 1 for spring start.

Students who meet the eligibility criteria may submit an application for admission to the blended program (<https://csuchico.my.site.com/BlendedProgram/s/>). Formal application through Cal State Apply is not necessary and the student is not required to pay an application fee. GRE scores are not required. Students must meet the requirements outlined below to change to blended graduate status and continue toward the master's degree.

Grading Requirement

Once in the blended program, students must maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA during their remaining undergraduate and graduate semesters.

Transition to Graduate Status

Students can transition to the graduate program after completing all undergraduate degree requirements with a minimum 2.5 GPA in all coursework. The Office of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Coordinator will verify graduate program eligibility at the end of the semester in which the bachelor's degree is completed. Qualified students change to graduate status effective the following semester.

Requirements for the Blended BA + MA

Legal Studies Option

The blended program allows the courses below to count toward both degrees.

Course	Title	Units
POLS 651	Seminar in Judicial Politics	3
POLS 689	Intern/Fieldwork Public Admin	3
Select one of the following:		3
POLS 624	Public Opinion and Survey Design	
POLS 653	Environmental Policy and the Law	
POLS 668	Public Policy Formation	
Select one of the following:		3
POLS 601	State and Local Government	
POLS 621	Seminar in American Politics	
POLS 672	The U.S. Presidency	
POLS 673	The U.S. Congress	
Total Units		12

U.S. Politics Option

The blended program allows up to 12 units from the courses below to count toward both degrees.

Course	Title	Units
POLS 521	Research Experience: An Introduction to Exploring Data in Politics and Criminal Justice	3
POLS 632	Seminar in Political Theory	3
Select one of the following:		3
POLS 624	Public Opinion and Survey Design	
POLS 653	Environmental Policy and the Law	
POLS 656	International Public Administration	
POLS 657	The Criminal Justice System: Institutions and Public Policy	
POLS 661	Seminar in Public Administration	
POLS 668	Public Policy Formation	
Select one of the following:		3
POLS 601	State and Local Government	
POLS 672	The U.S. Presidency	
POLS 673	The U.S. Congress	
Select any political science elective including elective courses listed in the MA.		6