

# POLITICAL SCIENCE, PHD

The Johns Hopkins University Department of Political Science is known for its strength in theory and in innovative and trans-disciplinary approaches to uncovering new knowledge, and the program of doctoral study draws on these strengths to provide rigorous training. Our program is designed for highly qualified, intellectually curious, and creative graduate students who can benefit by learning from and contributing to this community of scholars.

Doctoral students develop in-depth knowledge of a major field and a minor field (or two major fields), chosen from American politics, comparative politics, international relations, law and politics, and political theory. In addition, doctoral students may complete a certificate in comparative racial politics.

Students have opportunities to work closely with faculty and to pursue independent research, and faculty and doctoral students benefit from strong connections with colleagues in other social science and humanities disciplines and opportunities to collaborate with them.

The preparation of the next generation of scholars in the field of political science is a key part of the Johns Hopkins political science department faculty's commitment to research and advancing the understanding of politics. The doctoral program reflects the distinctive strengths of the department's cross-cutting intellectual orientations (encompassing the themes of power and inequality, identities and allegiances, agency and structure, and borders and flows), realized in faculty and PhD student research and teaching.

The department and Krieger School of Arts and Sciences provide opportunities for developing teaching and other career-related skills.

## Financial Support

The department ordinarily provides financial aid to all students admitted to the graduate program unless they hold fellowships from sources outside the university. Departmental fellowships cover full tuition and an annual stipend. Assuming satisfactory progress toward the PhD, students can normally expect to receive funding for five years. Teaching experience is regarded as an important part of the graduate program, and graduate students are required to teach during their program. More details are available in the handbook.

## Admission Requirements

The Department of Political Science admits approximately 7-9 new graduate students each year, selected from approximately 200 applications.

The deadline for application for admission to graduate study and the award of financial assistance is December 15 (most years). Decisions are made exclusively in late February or early March and announced by March 15.

A bachelor's degree (or equivalent) is required for application. Inclusion of a Graduate Record Examination (GRE) score is required. Each applicant must have three letters of recommendation. Students whose native language is not English must take the TOEFL examinations or provide other evidence of fluency in English (such as a degree from an institution in which the language of instruction is English). A broad background in the liberal arts and sciences is preferred.

More information on applying can be found at <http://grad.jhu.edu/apply/application-process/>.

All applications should be submitted online.

We recognize that it can be financially burdensome to relocate to a new city to attend a Ph.D. program. Students who are accepted to Ph.D. programs at JHU can apply to receive a \$1,500 need-based grant to offset the costs of relocating to JHU. These grants provide funding to a portion of incoming students who, without this money, may otherwise not be able to relocate to JHU for their Ph.D. program. This is not a merit-based grant. Applications will be evaluated solely based on financial need.

## Program Requirements

The requirements for the PhD in political science are divided between those that must be satisfied by all candidates for that degree and those particular to the student's major and minor fields.

## Department-wide Requirements

All candidates for the PhD must satisfy the following requirements:

### Course Requirements

- To fulfill the requirements for the PhD in Political Science students must complete 12 courses at the 600-level with a grade of B or better.
- Of these 12 courses, eight must be graduate-level (600-level) courses taken in the Political Science Department.
- No more than two of these eight courses (600-level) may be Independent Studies.
- If a graduate student is interested in taking an undergraduate-level course, the student must make arrangements to take a graduate-level Independent Study with the professor teaching that course. (NB: As noted above, a student may take no more than two Independent Studies for credit toward fulfilling the requirements of the PhD).
- A graduate student may take no more than one graduate-level course at another division of Johns Hopkins University (i.e. SAIS, Public Health, etc.) for credit toward fulfilling the requirements of the PhD in Political Science.
- Students may make a formal request to the DGS to have up to two graduate-level courses taken at another institution count for credit toward fulfilling the requirements of the PhD in Political Science at JHU.

### Foreign Language Requirement

All students must demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language. This requirement can be fulfilled as follows:

1. Demonstrate fluency in a foreign language (granted automatically for students whose first language is not English).
2. Complete four semesters of college-level foreign language instruction.
3. Pass a translation exam.
4. Earn a degree from a University where instruction is not in English.
5. With a degree from an institution in which the language of instruction is a language other than English.
6. Place into a third-year foreign language course through online placement tests (see GRLL website).

## Comprehensive Examination Requirement

Students are required, at a minimum, to take comprehensive exams in one major field and one minor field. Students may also elect to take two major exams or a major exam and two minor exams (one of which may be outside the Department of Political Science).

Faculty members in the field write and evaluate the exams and determine the format. Major field comprehensive exams take place over two days (8 hours per day); minor field exams take place over one day. The fields within the department are: American Politics, Law and Politics, Political Theory, Comparative Politics and International Relations.

Students choosing a second minor outside the Political Science Department must devise a coherent program of study in that discipline, in consultation with their Political Science faculty advisor and with faculty from the other department. Students choosing an external minor must complete a minimum of three courses at the 600 level in the external minor's discipline, earning a grade of B or better. They must also pass a comprehensive examination prepared and evaluated in consultation with faculty of the Department of Political Science by the instructors in those courses.

## Dissertation

The dissertation is the capstone of doctoral education, and it must be a substantial work of independent scholarship that contributes to knowledge in the student's field of study. Students must identify a tenure-track or tenured member of the Political Science faculty who is willing to supervise the preparation of their dissertation. A dissertation prospectus must be submitted to two professors (one of whom must be the dissertation advisor) and that prospectus must be accepted by them both.

## Defense

Students must pass a final examination that takes the form of a defense of the doctoral dissertation that is conducted under the rules of the Graduate Board of Johns Hopkins University.

Note: Exceptions may be made to some of these requirements but only with the approval of the graduate student's advisor and the Political Science Department's Director of Graduate Studies.

## Field-specific Requirements

Field-specific basic expectations, procedures, and requirements are stated below. These are implemented, interpreted, and adjusted in the light of the intellectual orientations and objectives of individual students. It is important that students work closely with their advisors and with the faculty in their major and minor fields in constructing and pursuing their programs of study.

## American Politics

Students majoring and minoring in American Politics will work with at least two faculty members to develop a plan of study that includes recommended course work and other preparation needed to pass a comprehensive exam. Students completing a major are expected to demonstrate a breadth of knowledge sufficient for framing a dissertation in the relevant disciplinary literature and teaching undergraduate courses in the field; students who pursue a minor may focus more narrowly on an area of study in which they demonstrate fluency. These may include, but are not limited to, the following areas of faculty interest:

- American Political Institutions (Congress, Courts, and the Executive)
- Urban Politics
- American Political Development
- Race and Politics
- Political Behavior and Public Opinion
- Public Policy
- American Political Thought
- Political Parties and Elections

In addition, students majoring in the field are strongly encouraged to take AS.190.602 Introduction to Quantitative Political Science as part of their course of study.

## Comparative Politics

All students majoring and minoring in this Comparative Politics will become conversant with major substantive and methodological debates in the field, and be able to comment on the key theoretical literature in several of those debates. They will normally also develop knowledge of at least one world region. Students majoring or minoring in Comparative Politics are required to take AS.190.625 Theories of Comparative Politics and at least one seminar in quantitative or qualitative methods. Students are expected to master the material covered in these courses, as well as others with more specialized topics.

Students will take a comprehensive exam that will test their ability to engage with several areas of theoretical debate in Comparative Politics, and their ability to use comparative examples to support their arguments. Students may focus on (but are not limited to):

- Civil Society
- Institutional Theories
- Transnational Relations, Social Movements, and Contentious Politics
- Political Parties, Interest Groups, Representation, and Political Behavior
- Comparative Political Economy
- Comparative Racial Politics, Nationalism, and Migration and Citizenship
- The Political Economy of Development
- Economic and Political Transitions
- Ideas and Politics

Within the spirit of this division of the overall field, students may propose alternative delineations of thematic subfields.

Students working in specific thematic and substantive subfields within Comparative Politics will be required to demonstrate competence in methodologies and bodies of theory judged by the faculty to be necessary for quality research and teaching in those subfields.

## Requirements for the Major Exam

Student taking the major exam are expected to compile a reading list that includes at least six fields, including a general "Theories of Comparative Politics" field. The reading list must be approved by the student's advisor at least six weeks before the exam. We strongly advise students to submit their reading lists to all of the CP faculty for feedback at least a few months before the exam. A minimum of three CP faculty members will read each major exam.

## Requirements for the Minor Exam

Students taking the minor exam should seek two readers among the CP faculty for their exams. Students are expected to compile a reading list that includes at least four fields, including a general “Theories of Comparative Politics” field. The reading list must be approved by the two readers at least six weeks before the exam. We strongly advise students to submit their reading lists to all of the CP faculty for feedback at least a few months before the exam.

## International Relations

All students majoring or minoring in International Relations will be required to have deep knowledge of the scholarship relevant to their area of research and to be conversant with the major theoretical, substantive, and methodological themes and debates of the field. It is strongly recommended that students take AS.190.676 Field Survey of International Relations (or a similar course) and a methods/epistemology course chosen in consultation with their faculty advisers.

Students majoring in International Relations will take an examination covering two subfields. The first subfield must be International Politics. The other subfield is to be determined in consultation with faculty teaching International Relations. Choices include but are not restricted to:

- International Law and Diplomacy
- International Relations Theory
- International Security Studies
- Science, Technology, and Art and International Relations
- Global Political Economy

Students minoring in International Relations will take a comprehensive examination in International Politics.

## Political Theory

Students majoring in Political Theory will take a comprehensive examination covering the following two subfields:

- Contemporary Political Theory
- History of Political Thought

Each student preparing for a major comprehensive exam will propose six or seven thinkers in the history of thought, six or seven recent or contemporary thinkers, and three or four issue areas. Examination questions are composed in light of the theorists and issues articulated in the exam prospectus.

The minor comprehensive exam in political theory asks the student to select half the number of thinkers required for the major exam and three issue areas.

Preparation for these examinations will be arranged in consultation with relevant faculty.

Students majoring in political theory will also take at least one minor field from American Politics, Law and Politics, Comparative Politics, or International Relations.

## Law and Politics

Law and politics focuses on American constitutional thought, judicial politics, law and society, and philosophy of law. Students learn not only about the history and context of American constitutional developments, but also about the operation of the judicial branch of government in the

past and the present. Studying how courts and judges do their work, students also consider how that work has changed over time. Students explore how legislation, as well as court decisions, reflect and influence a society’s policies, politics, and moral commitments. In addition, they examine how social movements, interest groups, and professional networks help to shape law’s content and implementation.

Students may major or minor in law and politics. In either case, students work closely with at least two members of the faculty to develop a plan of study regarding coursework and additional reading to prepare them for comprehensive exams. Majors are expected to demonstrate a breadth of knowledge in the field sufficient for framing a dissertation and for teaching undergraduate courses; minors may focus more narrowly on a particular area of study.

## Progress Toward the PhD

The time necessary to obtain a PhD in the department varies according to the preparation individual students bring to the program, the scope and complexity of their dissertation topics, and other factors. Students are required to make satisfactory progress, meaning that they must work toward fulfilling the requirements in a timely manner. Students are encouraged to satisfy the department’s foreign language requirement by the time of their first comprehensive exam. Most students take their comprehensive examinations in the third year in the program. Students who have completed all requirements except the dissertation must work to complete their dissertations as quickly as is reasonable given the unique circumstances of their course of study, and they must periodically demonstrate progress on the dissertation.

The Master of Arts degree is offered only to students who have been admitted into the PhD program. For the M.A., the student must complete at least seven (7) 600-level courses in the department, all with a grade of B or better.