

# POLITICAL SCIENCE, PHD

**Banner Code:** PP-PHD-POS

## Academic Advising

560 Founders Hall  
Arlington Campus

359 Research Hall  
Fairfax Campus

Website: [schar.gmu.edu](http://schar.gmu.edu)

The doctoral degree in political science program is designed to prepare students for teaching and conducting research about government, careers in government and politics, and work in domestic and international nongovernmental organizations. The program allows students to combine their academic education with experience in the kinds of complex domestic and international political organizations they are studying. This model for political science education, patterned after the American Political Science Association's Congressional Fellows Program, is designed to foster scholarship and a firsthand understanding of domestic and international institutions such as think tanks, international bodies, nongovernmental organizations, journals of political opinion, and congressional and executive branch offices.

## Admissions & Policies

### Admissions

#### Application Requirements

See Graduate Admission Policies (<http://catalog.gmu.edu/admissions/graduate-policies/>) for general information on graduate admission to George Mason University. See Schar Admissions (<http://schar.gmu.edu/admissions/>) for application requirements and deadlines for the PhD in Public Policy. Students are considered for admission for the Fall term only.

For students who have been admitted with a bachelor's degree, the Faculty Review Committee will review each student's progress after 30 credits of coursework to determine whether the student will be allowed to continue their work toward the PhD. For students entering the program with a master's degree, this review will occur after 12 credits in this program. Students who are not allowed to continue to work toward the PhD will be allowed to complete the MA degree.

### Policies

For policies governing all graduate programs, see AP.6 Graduate Policies (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/>).

#### Academic Advising

A total of 12 credits of supporting courses may be taken in other departments to fulfill a minority of the credits for any of the requirements below, including the methodology requirement, with prior written approval of the program director. All courses should be planned with an advisor and appear on a program of study, which requires the approval of the program director.

A complete description of the program policies, procedures, and requirements is in the PhD student and faculty handbook (<https://>

[schar.gmu.edu/current-students/phd-student-services/phd-handbook-forms/](http://schar.gmu.edu/current-students/phd-student-services/phd-handbook-forms/)), which is published annually.

### Reduction of Credit

For students entering the program with a master's or MPA degree, the number of credits required for the doctorate may be reduced by up to 30 credits subject to approval of the doctoral program director.

## Requirements

### Degree Requirements

Total credits: 72

#### Core Courses

Code	Title	Credits
Select three from the following:		
GOVT 510 or POGO 840	American Government and Politics Policy, Politics, and American Government Institutions	9
GOVT 520	Political Theory	
GOVT 530	Comparative Politics	
GOVT 540	International Relations	
GOVT 550	Seminar in Theories of Public Administration	
Total Credits		9

#### Advanced Courses in Two Major Fields

Students choose two major fields from the four fields below and complete all course requirements for both fields of study for a total of 21 credits.

##### American Government and Politics

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required Field Seminars</b>		
Select two from the following:		
GOVT 603	Seminar in the Courts and Constitutionalism	6
GOVT 604	Seminar on Congress and Legislative Behavior	
GOVT 605	Seminar on the Presidency	
GOVT 706	Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations	

##### Electives

Select one to three electives	3-9
Total Credits	9-15

##### Comparative Politics

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required Field Seminars</b>		
GOVT 631	Seminar in Comparative Politics and Institutions	3
GOVT 731	Advanced Seminar in Comparative Politics	3

<b>Electives</b>	
Select one to three electives	3-9
<b>Total Credits</b>	9-15

**International Relations**

Code	Title	Credits
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**Required Field Seminars**

Select two from the following:	6
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GOVT 741	Advanced Seminar in International Politics	
GOVT 743	International Political Economy	
GOVT 745	International Security	
PUBP 783	Global Governance	

<b>Electives</b>	
Select one to three electives	3-9
<b>Total Credits</b>	9-15

**Public Administration**

Code	Title	Credits
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**Required Field Seminars**

GOVT 753	Collaborative Public Management	3
GOVT 755	Seminar in Politics and Bureaucracy	3

<b>Electives</b>	
Select one to three electives	3-9
<b>Total Credits</b>	9-15

**Advanced Courses in a Minor Field**

Code	Title	Credits
Select three advanced courses in a minor field in consultation with an advisor. <sup>1</sup>	9	
<b>Total Credits</b>	9	

<sup>1</sup> The courses in the minor field should complement the two major fields and need the prior written approval of the advisor.

**Advanced Courses in Methodology**

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Methodology Courses</b>		
GOVT 500	The Scientific Method and Research Design	3
POGO 511	Introductory Data Analysis for Policy and Government	3

<b>Elective Methodology Course</b>	
Select an elective methodology course to meet dissertation research needs. <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>Total Credits</b>	9

<sup>1</sup> Course work in language or to help achieve proficiency in quantitative or qualitative research techniques may be used to meet this requirement with certification of proficiency by a specific outside examination.

<b>Electives</b>		
Code	Title	Credits
Select 0-12 credits of electives		0-12
<b>Total Credits</b>		0-12

**Advancement to Candidacy**

To advance to candidacy, students must complete all coursework required by their approved program of study. Students must also successfully complete and pass two comprehensive qualifying exams in major fields. In addition, students must have an approved dissertation committee and must present and successfully defend a dissertation proposal before advancing to candidacy.

**Dissertation Research**

Once enrolled in GOVT 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal, students in this degree program must maintain continuous registration in GOVT 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal or GOVT 999 Doctoral Dissertation Research each semester (excluding summers) until the dissertation is submitted to and accepted by the University Libraries. Once enrolled in GOVT 999 Doctoral Dissertation Research, students must follow the university's continuous registration policy as specified in AP.6.10.6 Dissertation Research (<http://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/#ap-6-10-6>). Students who defend in the summer must be registered for at least 1 credit of GOVT 999 Doctoral Dissertation Research.

Students may apply to this degree a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6 credits of GOVT 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal and a minimum of 6 credits of GOVT 999 Doctoral Dissertation Research. They apply a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 24 dissertation credits (GOVT 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal and GOVT 999 Doctoral Dissertation Research combined) to the degree. Because of the continuous registration policy, students may be required to register for additional credits of these courses.

Students who do fewer than 24 credits of dissertation will complete their degree with additional electives.

Code	Title	Credits
Select 12-24 credits from the following:		12-24
GOVT 998	Doctoral Dissertation Proposal (minimum of 3, maximum of 6 credits)	
GOVT 999	Doctoral Dissertation Research (minimum of 6 credits)	
<b>Total Credits</b>		12-24