POLITICAL SCIENCE, PHD

Banner Code: PP-PHD-POS

Academic Advising

560 Founders Hall
Arlington Campus

359 Research Hall
Fairfax Campus

Website: schar.gmu.edu

The doctoral 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

Please see Graduate Admissions for general information on graduate admission to George Mason University. Please see the Schar School of Policy and Government Admissions website (http://schar.gmu.edu/admissions/doctorate-admissions) for application requirements and deadlines. 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 course work 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

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), 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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOVT 510</td>
<td>American Government and Politics</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVT 520</td>
<td>Political Theory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVT 530</td>
<td>Comparative Politics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVT 540</td>
<td>International Relations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVT 550</td>
<td>Seminar in Theories of Public Administration</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOVT 603</td>
<td>Seminar in the Courts and Constitutional Law</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVT 604</td>
<td>Seminar on Congress and Legislative Behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVT 605</td>
<td>Seminar on the Presidency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVT 706</td>
<td>Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Electives

Select one to three electives 3-9

Total Credits 9-15

Comparative Politics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GOVT 631</td>
<td>Seminar in Comparative Politics and Institutions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GOVT 731</td>
<td>Advanced Seminar in Comparative Politics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Electives

Select one to three electives 3-9

Total Credits 9-15
**International Relations**

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
---|---|---
**Required Field Seminars**
GOVT 641 | Global Governance | 6
GOVT 741 | Advanced Seminar in International Politics | 6
GOVT 743 | International Political Economy | 6
GOVT 745 | International Security | 6

**Electives**
Select one to three electives | 3-9
Total Credits | 9-15

**Public Administration**

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
---|---|---
**Required Field Seminars**
GOVT 753 | Third-Party Governance | 3
GOVT 755 | Seminar in Politics and Bureaucracy | 3

**Electives**
Select one to three electives | 3-9
Total Credits | 9-15

**Advanced Courses in a Minor Field**

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
---|---|---
Select three advanced courses in a minor field in consultation with an advisor. 1 | 9
Total Credits | 9

1 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**
---|---|---
**Methodology Courses**
GOVT 500 | The Scientific Method and Research Design | 3
POGO 511 | Introductory Data Analysis for Policy and Government | 3

**Elective Methodology Course**
Select an elective methodology course to meet dissertation research needs. 1 | 3
Total Credits | 9

1 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.

**Electives**

**Code** | **Title** | **Credits**
---|---|---
Select 0-12 credits of electives | 0-12
Total Credits | 0-12

**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. 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) | 
Total Credits | 12-24

**Advancement to Candidacy**

To advance to candidacy, students must complete all course work 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.