



**Graduate Handbook
Department of
Political Science
The University of Texas
at Tyler**

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The Graduate Program in Political Science

The Department of Political Science at the University of Texas at Tyler offers a 36-hour graduate program leading to a Master of Arts degree.

Master of Arts in Political Science

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The Master of Arts degree in political science focuses instruction on four areas: American politics, political theory, comparative politics, and international relations. This course of study is designed to 1) prepare students for matriculation to doctoral programs in political science; 2) train degree recipients for teaching responsibilities at the junior college level; and/or 3) provide professional competencies for private and public sector employment.

Admission Requirements

1. Apply for admission to the graduate program . There is no paper application. **You must apply online.** A link to the online application may be found at:

<http://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/admissions.htm>

2. Submit an official transcript from the college or university that awarded the baccalaureate or higher degree to the Office of Graduate Studies.

IMPORTANT Things to Remember:

You **must** be accepted for graduate study by the university BEFORE you can be considered for admission to the graduate program. Submission of the online application is necessary before you will be considered for admission to the program.

There is a deadline each semester for submission of applications. Missing this deadline will result in your enrollment being delayed by a semester.

In considering admission to our program, consideration may also be given to one or more of the following: the applicant's demonstrated commitment to his or her chosen field of study; socioeconomic background; first

generation college graduate; multilingual proficiency; geographic region of residence; and level of responsibility in other matters including extracurricular activities, employment, community service, and family responsibilities.

Since a limited number of students are accepted, meeting or exceeding all the admission requirements is not a guarantee of admission to the program.

ADMISSION STATUS:

Your admission status is determined by the program AFTER you have applied to the university for admission for graduate studies. The university recognizes five categories of graduate admission for Master's students: (1) Full Graduate Admission; (2) Conditional Admission; (3) Provisional Admission; (4) Special Admission; (5) Non-degree Seeking. The requirements for each category are determined as follows:

FULL GRADUATE ADMISSION

1. Obtain a baccalaureate degree from an accredited University or College.
2. Achieve a score of at least 1000 on the Graduate Record Examination (verbal and quantitative sections combined). (Under some extenuating circumstances, provisional admittance for those who make less than 1000 may be allowed at the discretion of the Graduate Coordinator.)
3. Obtain at least a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale on your last 60 hours of junior and senior level undergraduate or graduate coursework.

CONDITIONAL ADMISSION

This status is granted to applicants who have not satisfied, at the time of enrollment, the minimum GPA or test score requirements, or who have other deficiencies in their preparation. The status of conditional admission is established at the program level. An applicant who has been admitted conditionally will complete a degree plan with the graduate advisor that specifies the conditions to be met. The conditions may not include more than nine (9) hours of graduate work. Upon completion of the requirement(s), the student's academic record will be reviewed for consideration to be granted full graduate status.

PROVISIONAL ADMISSION

This status is granted to those whose application files lack required items such as transcripts, official report of test scores, or verification of licensure. An applicant who has been admitted provisionally must contact the program graduate advisor to review specific entrance requirements of the selected degree program before being allowed to enroll. Provisional admission allows the applicant to enroll for only one semester with a maximum of nine (9) graduate hours. Provisional admission will not be continued beyond one semester.

SPECIAL ADMISSION

A student seeking teaching certification, a graduate certificate, or other non-degree program (such as licensure) may be admitted as a special student. The student must submit a Graduate Application and meet all admission requirements set by the particular program. Individual programs determine the number of hours to be taken and other requirements. Students may enroll only in graduate courses for the specific non-degree program. Registration is approved by the program advisor and College Graduate Coordinator. Graduate hours completed prior to admission as a special student may not be accepted by a particular program. If a student subsequently decides to pursue a degree, the selected degree program will determine which courses taken while classified as a special student will apply to the degree.

NON-DEGREE SEEKING

A student who desires to take graduate courses for personal enrichment, for job advancement, or for transfer to another institution, may do so by completing a graduate application. Non-degree seeking students are limited to enrolling in a total of nine graduate hours unless approval is given by the advisor.

A maximum of nine (9) graduate hours of UT Tyler credit earned as a non-degree seeking student may subsequently be applied toward a master's

degree if approved by the degree granting program. Individual programs may limit the number of hours applicable to the program.

Transfer Of Credits

A student may transfer from approved institutions a maximum of 9 semester hours of graduate work in which a grade of "B" or better has been earned. All transfer work is subject to approval by the Graduate Coordinator.

SCHOLASTIC LOAD

The minimum credit hour load to be considered a full-time graduate student is nine (9) semester hours of graduate level courses during a fall or spring semester or six hours during a regular summer session. The maximum credit hour load permitted is twelve (12) hours during a fall or spring semester, six (6) hours during a regular summer session and three (3) hours during intersession.

GRADING SYSTEM

At the end of each regular semester and summer session, grades are available to the student through the student information system by telephone or web access.

Grades, levels of performance, and grade points are awarded for graduate per attempted semester credit hour at UT TYLER are as follows:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>level of performance</u>	<u>grade points</u>
A	excellent	
B	average	
C	poor	
D or F	failing	

CALCULATION OF GRADE POINT AVERAGE

Grades A, B, C, D, and F and the associated semester credit hours will be used to calculate grade point average. The designations I, W, CR, and NC and the associated semester credit hours will not be used.

GRADE REPLACEMENT

A student repeating this course for grade replacement must file an “Intent to Receive Grade Forgiveness” with the Registrar by the 12th class day of the semester. Failure to file an intent to use grade forgiveness will result in both the original and the repeated grade being used to calculate one’s overall grade point average. As a graduate student, a student will receive grade forgiveness (grade replacement) for only two course repeats during his or her career at UT Tyler.

Course Requirements

Political Science

Two degree options exist: (1) the *Non-Thesis option* is intended for students seeking broad knowledge of the field of political science, and who may wish to complement that knowledge with additional course work, and intensive reading within the discipline. (2) the *Thesis option* is designed especially, but not exclusively, for students contemplating doctoral study, and those desiring advanced competence in research skills. Students choosing either option are advised to complete a graduate level research methods course; those choosing the Thesis option, will, with rare exception, be expected to complete such a course before beginning thesis research. Non-thesis option requires the student to take comprehensive final exams.

A. Required Courses—18 hours

POLS 5300 *Seminar in Scope and Methods*
POLS 5311 *Seminar in American Government*
POLS 5321 *Seminar in Political Theory*
POLS 5331 *Seminar in Comparative Politics*
POLS 5341 *Seminar in International Relations*

PADM 5397 *Advanced Statistical Analysis* (an equivalent course OR the passing of a language proficiency exam may be substituted subject to the approval of the Graduate Coordinator.)

B. Approved Electives

Thesis option—12 hours

Non-thesis option—18 hours

Where appropriate, graduate courses from other disciplines may apply toward your electives, with the approval of your advisor.

C. Thesis (POLS 5395, 5396)—6 hours

These courses are pass/fail and taken in conjunction with research of the thesis and the writing and defense of the thesis respectively. The thesis will be in an area of faculty expertise. A three-person committee, which shall include at least two political science faculty (one of whom will chair the committee) shall direct the thesis.

Graduation Requirements

1. Complete all the required coursework with at least a cumulative grade point average of 3.0.
2. Thesis students must submit a standard master's quality thesis acceptable to a three-person committee, which shall include at least two faculty in that discipline including the chair of the thesis. Guidelines for thesis are available on the UT Tyler web site:

<http://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/thesisguide.pdf>
3. Thesis students will also give an oral defense of their thesis to faculty and students. .
4. Political Science students must demonstrate competence in a methodological skill, normally including (a) reading ability in a foreign language, or (b) advanced research and analytical techniques.
5. Non thesis students must obtain a satisfactory performance on a final comprehensive examination. Students should notify the graduate

advisor of intent to take comprehensive examinations at or before the beginning of the semester in which they intend to take them.

Time Limitation

Degree requirements for graduate programs at UT Tyler must be completed within a six-year period. This time period begins with the enrollment of the first course that applies to the degree including graduate credit transferred from another institution.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What are comps?

“Comps” is short for comprehensive exams. Comps are intended to broadly test your knowledge and skills of the discipline.

2. When should I start preparing for my comps?

As soon as you enter the program. It is never too early to start preparing for comps. Anything you learn in the program may serve as subject matter for a comp.

3. When should I take my comps?

When you have completed or nearly completed your core coursework and obtained approval from your advisor. Comps are taken on a date set by the department once each Fall and Spring in mid to late November and mid to late April.

4. What is the format of the comps?

We require a four hour written examination in each of three of the four subdisciplines of political science (American politics; International Relations; Comparative Politics; Political Theory). The exams are taken over two consecutive days: two four hour exams (one morning; one afternoon) are administered the first day and the third is administered on the morning of the second day.

5. What if I fail my comps?

Any student who fails the comprehensive examination may, upon recommendation of the Graduate Coordinator, be granted permission to take a second examination. Upon failing the second examination, the student will be dropped from the program.

6. When should I start my thesis?

A research proposal must be approved by your committee the semester before you begin your thesis credit hours. While the bulk of your thesis will be completed as you take your thesis credits, any coursework you take while in the program can serve as foundational work for your thesis.

7. Are there any form or style requirements for the thesis?

Yes. You can pick up a copy of the “Guidelines for Preparation of the Master’s Thesis” from the Office of Graduate Studies.

8. Who is my graduate advisor?

Your graduate advisor is the program director for your degree program and is responsible for overseeing your progress in the program.

9. How do I select my committee?

You will select your committee with the advice of your graduate advisor based upon which willing and able faculty will be able to offer a contribution to your research topic. One of these faculty may come from outside the program, if deemed appropriate by your advisor.

10. What does my graduate advisor do?

They can assist you with picking courses, selecting a research topic, preparing for comps, and any other information that can help you complete the program. If you are writing a thesis, your advisor will assist you in choosing a topic.

11. If I don't like my advisor, can I get a new one?

Be sure that you discuss any problems or different points of view openly with your advisor and with other faculty in the discipline. Cooperation is essential for your successful completion of the program.

12. Do you offer any financial support?

The Financial Aid Office is the best source of information for scholarships and other forms of financial aid. Be sure to check on deadlines for these applications.

13. Do you offer any career placement services for graduates?

The University of Texas at Tyler offers career counseling through the Career Services Office. Your graduate faculty are also excellent sources of career information and counseling.

For additional information, please refer to the website of the UT-Tyler Office of Graduate Studies:

<http://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/index.html>