POLITICAL SCIENCE, MS

Department of Political Science, College of Arts & Sciences

Vision Statement

The Department of Political Science's vision is to provide quality research, teaching, and service for our students, community, and academic field in order to produce qualified individuals and advanced knowledge to benefit communities regionally, nationally, and internationally. UNO is recognized by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching as a doctoral and research institution. We value diversity among faculty, staff, and students and recognize its essential contribution to campus culture and development of knowledge. The Master of Science in Political Science offers a broad foundation in the discipline with a high degree of interdisciplinary collaboration, if desired. Some students enter the program with the intention of continuing on with their PhD, while others use the program to prepare themselves as practitioners in the fields of education, government, intelligence, law, journalism, non-profit, or lobbying. Students can earn the degree completely on-line, on-campus, or blended (on-line/on-campus).

Program Contact Information

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Program Website (http://www.unomaha.edu/college-of-arts-and-sciences/political-science)

Other Program-Related Information

Alternative Delivery

- The University of Nebraska at Omaha Department of Political Science offers a program to earn a Master’s Degree for which all courses can be taken online. Many of our students are mid-career professionals seeking a better understanding of the subject matter from fields such as; education, military, and public service. Others are more traditional students who intend to continue onto a PhD. Our program has been in place since 1969 and we currently have over 80 active students. There are several advantages to UNO’s Online Master’s of Science in Political Science (PSCI):
  - High-quality curriculum from a distinguished university. UNO is one of 88 institutions of higher education nationally classified as a doctoral/research university, according to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching—out of the 4000 academic institutions it categorizes. In addition, UNO received a first-tier regional best ranking in the U.S. News & World Report’s 2010 edition of America’s Best Colleges.
  - Low tuition from a convenient, accessible location—you computer. Students can select courses that are taught entirely online. It is very rare for our courses to have specific times in which you are required to be online.
  - The UNO PSCI Master’s program affords its students an environment that serves as an incubator for acquiring the skills necessary for students’ desired careers, and for developing a self-understanding that will enable students to succeed both professionally and personally. Students are assured of a high-quality degree program that not only meets but exceeds national standards of education in political science.
  - Our Flexibility: our program offers the maximum possible flexibility to tailor an area of specialization. This flexibility encourages students to create an approved program of study that incorporates interests in other disciplines, such as communications, criminal justice, economics, geography, history, psychology, public administration, social work, sociology, teacher education, and urban studies. We accept up to 10 hours of graduate-level transfer credit, graded at a B or above, from another accredited institution that has not been applied towards another degree or completed program. In addition, students can apply up to 12 approved elective credit hours of courses outside the field of political science.

3+2 Program

The Political Science Department has developed a program through which high caliber UNO undergraduate students can obtain a joint Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science in Political Science within a five-year period. During this program, students complete 4 of their 5 upper-level PSCI required courses as a graduate student. These 4 courses (12 credit hours) will count towards their undergraduate major requirement as well as their graduate electives. These 4 courses will be spread out between their junior and senior years. Students must graduate with their BA/BS before starting their graduate-only seminars.

1. Student must be an undergraduate student at UNO majoring in Political Science.
2. Student must have a GPA of 3.5 or above.
3. Must have at least sophomore status when applying.
4. Student must apply to the program (specifying that they are applying as a 3+2 student) and provide all supplemental materials.

It is highly recommended that students take 2-3 (3000/4000) level Political Science courses before beginning their graduate-level courses.

At this time this program is only applicable to on-campus students. Please inquire with the Political Science Department for more information about this program.

Outstanding Teaching

Our faculty regularly wins campus and system-wide teaching awards, making us one of the most recognized departments on campus. The awards earned are among the highest honors that UNO bestows on its faculty.

- Our faculty utilize active and service-learning teaching strategies; multiple assessment tools; participate in extended education on improving teaching and learning; and publish research on pedagogy.
- For many years we have conducted exit interviews with our graduates. They show very high levels of satisfaction with the quality of instruction, the advising process, the amount of attention paid to students, and the ease with which the students interact with university personnel and procedures.

We have a proven track record of excellence in undergraduate and graduate instruction, and are nationally known for our innovative research on some of the discipline’s most important questions.

Admissions

Application Deadlines

- Fall: June 15 (February 15 if interested in scholarship or graduate assistantship)
- Spring: October 15 (September 15 if interested in scholarship or graduate assistantship)
- Summer: March 15

Program Specific Requirements

- Baccalaureate degree with a minimum of 3.0 GPA
- 15 credit hours in political science-related courses is preferred.
- Courses can be in: American government, political theory, international relations, comparative politics, and social science (quantitative)
methodology. Students without the above undergraduate background may be admitted on a provisional basis to address these educational gaps. Students must earn a grade of B or above in each of these courses.

- Two (2) Letters of Recommendation from a former professor, supervisor, or individual that can speak to one’s academic potential in a graduate program.
- Submission of an academic, research-based writing sample, written in English, of at least five pages in length. If no such paper exists, the applicant should contact the Academic Program Coordinator for an alternative assignment.
- Applicants whom English is not the language of nurture should have a minimum score of 80, internet-based TOEFL, with no sub-score under 15. The IELTS and PTE English proficiency tests are also accepted. Those scores must translate to the minimum internet-based TOEFL equivalent to be considered for admission. Passing with a minimum score does not guarantee admission into the program.

### Degree Requirements

#### Required Course

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSCI 8000</td>
<td>SEMINAR IN THE RESEARCH METHODS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

Each student is required to complete PSCI 8000: Seminar in Research Methods. If a student does not have an undergraduate course in statistical analysis or quantitative research methods (where he/she earned a B or above), he/she will be required to take a provisional undergraduate course before taking this required seminar.

#### Seminar Course Requirement (9-12 hours)

Thesis students must complete nine (9) credit hours and non-thesis students must complete twelve (12) credit hours from the following core seminar courses. Not all seminars will be offered every term. Seminars may also only be available online or on-campus during specific terms. At times there may be a special topics seminar course offered that may count towards a student’s core seminars.

A student who does not have sufficient background in one or more of these subfields may be required to take a provisional undergraduate course before taking its equivalent graduate seminar.

#### Non-Thesis Exit Requirement (3 hours)

Non-thesis students must take 3 credit hours of a capstone project. They may choose from PSCI 8980 or PSCI 8910.

1. PSCI 8980: students will work with one faculty member on a political science-related topic of their choice and will produce a research-based product at the end of the term.
2. PSCI 8910: students will be hired for a paid or volunteer, approved internship during a specific term. Students must submit the internship approval form before the term, complete 150 hours of documented work, and turn in an end-of-internship assignment documenting their experience as directed by the internship coordinator. Students may not already work for this organization or company. See academic program coordinator for the forms noted above.

#### Thesis Exit Requirement (6 hours)

Students whose thesis applications have been approved by the graduate chair must complete 6 credit hours of thesis work PSCI 8990.

Students must complete the thesis over the course of two terms (three credit hours each term).

The first term of thesis includes the forming of the thesis committee and approval of one’s thesis proposal.

The second three credit hours will focus on writing and defending the thesis.

Students must have a minimum of 3 voting committee members. All committee members must be faculty members with a PhD and employed by UNO. One of the committee members must have a PhD and have graduate faculty status in a field/department other than political science. Distance students may work with a faculty member outside of UNO, however, this member cannot be a voting member on the committee.

Students must follow UNO’s Graduate College's thesis submission guidelines and ensure that all paperwork has been submitted to the graduate office on time.

### International Affairs Concentration

Students who are completing the International Affairs concentration as part of their Master’s degree must ensure that 12 out of their required 30 credit hours include the 2 required seminars below and a choice of 2 electives listed below.
**Required Seminars (6 credit hours)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSCI 8250</td>
<td>SEMINAR IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSCI 8500</td>
<td>SEMINAR IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Select two of the following:</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>PSCI 8206</td>
<td>INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF EAST ASIA</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PSCI 8216</td>
<td>INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF THE MIDDLE EAST</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSCI 8225</td>
<td>INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSCI 8235</td>
<td>GENDER AND GLOBAL POLITICS</td>
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<td>PSCI 8246</td>
<td>INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT RESOLUTION</td>
<td></td>
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<td>PSCI 8255</td>
<td>GLOBAL SECURITY ISSUES</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSCI 8265</td>
<td>UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY</td>
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<td>PSCI 8256</td>
<td>INTELLIGENCE AND NATIONAL SECURITY</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSCI 8266</td>
<td>INTERNATIONAL LAW</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSCI 8276</td>
<td>GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS</td>
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<td>PSCI 8286</td>
<td>INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF LATIN AMERICA</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSCI 8296</td>
<td>INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT &amp; SUSTAINABILITY</td>
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Other seminars and electives may be permitted with prior approval of the graduate chair.

**Total Credits**: 12

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**Incomplete Policy**

The Department will comply with the UNO’s Incomplete Policy (https://www.unomaha.edu/registrar/faculty-and-staff/grading/incomplete.php).

In line with the UNO graduate policy on **incomplete grades** stating that the grade “I” is only to be issued due to a student’s illness, military service, hardship, and death in the immediate family after the student has completed a substantial amount of the course. The professor reserves the right to use his/her discretion in determining additional situations where a grade of “I” may apply and what “substantial” means for that course. It is expected that the student discuss this matter with the professor and create a plan of action towards the completion of this course. The professor also reserves the right to decide the consequences for a student who does not finish the course in the time agreed. Consequences may include, but are not limited to, an extended deadline, a permanent incomplete, or a failing grade for the course.

**In-progress grades (IP)** are only to be issued during the second part of a thesis project when a student is actively working towards its completion.

**Standing I/IP Grades**

Students with an I/IP can have a maximum number of 9 active credit hours.

If a student has 9 credit hours of I/IP grades (total from past terms), he/she may not enroll in new courses. A student may start enrolling in new courses as he/she reduces his/her credit hours of I/IP grades. Any student with an I/IP cannot have more than 9 ‘active’ credit hours at one time (includes current courses as well as I/IP grades).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I/IP Credit Hours</th>
<th>New Credit Hour Allowance</th>
<th>Total ‘Active’ Credit Hour Load</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>9 (full time)</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
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The graduate program chair reserves the right to waive this policy for any given student, based on compelling circumstances.

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**Academic Dishonesty Policy**

Academic dishonesty is a violation of the student code of conduct and is cause for a student to be dismissed from the program. Graduate students are expected to know what counts as academic dishonesty (https://www.unomaha.edu/student-life/student-conduct-and-community-standards/policies/academic-integrity.php).

Instructors reserve the right to decide how to address issues of academic dishonesty in their courses. Students may be subject to (including, but not limited to): the failure on the specific assignment or failure of the entire course.

Faculty will report all instances of graduate student academic dishonesty to the Graduate Chair.

The student has the right to appeal this decision through the appropriate channels. Please see the student code of conduct for further information.