UNLV

Master of Arts in Political Science Program Handbook

Welcome

Mission Statement

The Department of Political Science offers a general Master of Arts degree with concentrations in American Politics (including public policy and public law), Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Theory. Students can normally expect to complete the program in one-and-a-half to two years. The graduate program in political science is designed to prepare graduate students for doctoral studies, teaching positions at secondary schools and community colleges, or employment by government agencies, research centers, or private industry.

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program specific information that is not found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the UNLV Graduate Catalog, as well as the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College: valarie.burke@unlv.edu or GradAssociateDean@unlv.edu.

Department Graduate Faculty

A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Faculty must hold either associate or full graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For up to date information regarding graduate faculty status in your department, visit the Graduate Faculty status web page.

Program Information

Master of Arts - Political Science

Contact Information

http://www.unlv.edu/politicalscience

Department Chair

David Damore, Ph.D, WRI B213, david.damore@unlv.edu

Graduate Coordinator

Christian Jensen, Ph.D, WRI B215, christian.jensen@unlv.edu

Department Main Office

WRI B227, Phone: (702)895-3307, Fax: (702)895-1065

Program Requirements

Program requirements regarding [admission, coursework and culminating experience are found in the graduate catalog](#).

Degree Requirements
Students may take courses in American Politics (including public law and public policy), Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Theory. Completion of the program requires a minimum of 30 credits beyond the BA.

a. Core curriculum (18 credits)
(i) Methods in political science (six credits)
(ii). Proseminars (12 credits): American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Theory
b. Major Field (six credits not including the pro-seminar): students select one of the four fields as their major field of study
c. Direct readings (six credits): to be taken as students are completing their professional papers
d. Professional paper: development of an original research paper

GPA Requirement
Students must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 for all course work. No course in which a student makes a grade below B will count toward the degree.

Advisor and Advisory Committee Guidelines

Advisory Committee consisting of three faculty members from the department and one faculty representative of the Graduate College (until students have formed their Advisory Committee, the Graduate Coordinator acts as students' temporary advisor). One of the three departmental members serves as chair and, from that point, as the primary advisor. The chair of the Advisory Committee should be a faculty member from the student's major field.

With the Advisory Committee's approval and that of the Graduate Coordinator, students establish a program of study for their remaining credits.

Degree Program Benchmarks

Professional Paper
As students are completing their coursework, they should consult with their faculty advisor and a supervising committee consistency of two additional faculty members from the department and one member from outside the department who serves as the Graduate College Representative, and begin working on their professional paper. The professional paper serves as the culmination of students' training and requires that students develop and execute an original research project addressing a topic of their choosing. The result of the project should be a scholarly investigation of a specific research question of theoretical significance akin to a journal article.

In students' final semesters as they are completing their professional papers, they enroll in six credits of PSC 795. If students plan to defend their professional papers in the summer, they must take three credits of PSC 795 that summer.

Each member of the advisory committee reads the professional paper and may require revisions. In writing the professional paper, the student should follow the Guide to Preparing and Submitting a Thesis or Dissertation (available on the Graduate College's Web site: [http://www.unlv.edu/graduatecollege)](http://www.unlv.edu/graduatecollege); the department has no formatting or stylistic requirements of its own, but your committee may have such requirements.

Twice a year the Graduate College holds a seminar to explain its requirements for writing a thesis (or professional paper). The department strongly urges you to attend one of those seminars; doing so will likely save you much time in the long run.

The professional paper must be unanimously approved by the committee. After the paper has been approved,

an oral defense is held. You are responsible for arranging a date and time at which all members of your committee may attend; you are also responsible for arranging a room with one of our administrative assistants.

The committee may require you to make substantive or stylistic revisions, or both, to your paper even after you have defended it.

When you have successfully defended your paper, made any necessary further revisions, had those revisions approved by your committee, and submitted final copies to the Graduate College, you are required to give the department one copy of your paper, bound in black cover.

Professional Code of Ethics/Discipline Guidelines
UNLV Graduate College policy regarding academic integrity can be found in the graduate catalog.

The Department of Political Science has high expectations of its students, among which are that you adhere to standards of integrity. You are expected to do all of your work, oral and written, honestly. You should be familiar with the statement on the subject in the Graduate Catalog.

One aspect of integrity is providing adequate citations in your written work. The department does not have one required format for citations, although professors may impose such a requirement in their courses. If the professor does not do so, you should use a method specified in a style book (e.g., Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*).

Annual Review Procedures
Each winter break and early spring term, graduate students are **required** to complete the Graduate Student Individual Development Plan (IDP) form. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress, and it establishes reasonable goals for the year ahead. Reported student data is shared with students' graduate coordinators and advisors to foster opportunities for discussion about students' strengths and weaknesses, accomplishments and next requirements, and mentoring plans so that students know what they need to do in order to progress successfully through their programs in a timely manner. Students who are graduating are also required to complete the form in order to record their achievements since the data is also used to track metrics related to the annual productivity of all students. This survey will be sent by the Graduate College to the student's Rebelmail account. The review covers the prior calendar year and assesses student progress while setting goals for the year ahead.

Probation
If a student fails to successfully progress in their degree program, their department/school will recommend that the student be placed on probation by the Graduate College. Students on probation may be dismissed/separated from their program for failing to successfully meet the conditions of their probation by the deadline provided. Please see the Probation and Separation section of the Graduate Catalog for more information.

Additional Program Information
Graduate Assistantships

The information here supplements that in the Graduate Assistant Handbook (available on the Graduate College's Web site).

The number of assistantships offered by the department may vary from year to year. The number of vacancies varies from semester to semester. Selection of recipients is made by a committee of departmental faculty.

Contracts for graduate assistants (GAs) begin at the beginning of the week before instruction begins in a semester; contracts end at the deadline for submission of final grades by instructors.

Assignments held by graduate assistants vary from semester to semester. Assignments are normally made in the week before the contract for the semester begins. Depending upon the faculty member to whom graduate assistants are assigned, they will be either assisting faculty with teaching or research or both. Graduate Assistantships are awarded on a competitive basis and to maintain an assistantship student must remain in good standing (e.g., maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average and make continuous progress toward their degree).

The MA Graduate Assistantship contracts may be awarded up to a maximum of two years.

Forms and Deadlines
All of the forms listed below are available on the Graduate College's Web site–except part 2 of the Proposed Master's & Specialist Degree Program form, which is available on the department's Web site.

For an up-to-date list of deadlines, see the Graduate College's Web site.

The following forms must be submitted to the Graduate College before completion of sixteen credits (or by the sixth week of your first semester as an admitted student if you are counting twelve or more credits toward your degree that were completed before you were admitted to the program):
1. Appointment of Advisory Committee
2. Proposed Master's & Specialist Degree Program, part 1
3. Proposed Master's & Specialist Degree Program, part 2
4. Prospectus Approval

The Application for Graduation form must be submitted in the semester of graduation according to the deadline specified on the Graduate College's Web site.

Any change in your proposed degree program must be submitted on a Change in Proposed Degree Program form.

The following deadlines apply for the professional paper:
1. Eighth week of the semester of your graduation: submit a completed draft to your advisory committee, and to the Graduate College for an initial format check.
2. At least one week before the defense of your paper: submit the completed paper to your advisory committee.
3. At least three weeks before the end of instruction: defend your paper.
4. At least two weeks before the end of instruction: submit final copies of the revised paper, as well as the Culminating Experience Results form, to the Graduate College.

University Resources
Leadership and Professional Development Academy
The goal of the Professional Development Academy is to serve as a virtual resource providing support and many professional opportunities to UNLV graduate students. The Academy offers information about events and services such as graduate certificate programs, workshops, training sessions and career services. You can follow Academy activities via social media or look for regular updates on the website.

Academic Success Center
The goal of the Academic Success Center is to help students do well academically and complete they studies on time. They offer or will refer you to such programs and resources as tutoring, advising, skills testing, career exploration and more. They guide students every step of the way to the many established resources created to ensure they complete their educational goals. Learn more about the programs and services the center currently offers.

Alumni Association
With an alumni base 120,000 strong, the UNLV Alumni Association offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

Commencement Office

Located in the UNLV Office of the Registrar, the commencement office is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma; for all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College. It is the students' responsibility to ensure they apply for graduation on time and submit all required forms to the Graduate College. Questions regarding thesis/dissertation should be directed to the Graduate College Student Services Team and questions regarding required forms should be directed to the Graduate College RPC Team

Office of Diversity Initiatives

The vision of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and support for UNLV's diversity mission: *to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment*. This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The DRC is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

Office of International Student and Scholars

International Students and Scholars (ISS) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

Jean Nidetch Women's Center

The Jean Nidetch Women's Center is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

The Intersection

The Intersection is a one-stop resource for UNLV's highly diverse student body — a comprehensive multicultural center grounded in the academic life of our students. As an intersecting campus resource, the Intersection helps ensure students, particularly first-generation and students of color, successfully navigate their academic careers. Here, all members of campus can discuss their differences, discover their similarities, and build a shared sense of belonging.

UNLV Libraries

UNLV Libraries has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)

The Graduate & Professional Student Association serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141 and Gateway Building PDAC Room. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one

graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

Office of Student Conduct

The Office of Student Conduct is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Conduct collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the *UNLV Student Code of Conduct* by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
- Establishing accountability for student choices;
- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
- Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

Military and Veteran Services Center

The Military and Veteran Service Center is staffed with veterans and GI Bill-experienced staff to assist more than 1,000 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

Writing Center

This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the Online Writing Lab (OWL) page.

University Policies and Procedures

Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures. To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the Graduate Student Handbook, and following websites:

- Academic Integrity
- Activation for Military Service
- Change of Address
- FERPA/Privacy Rights
- Health Insurance - Mandatory
- Jean Clery Campus Safety and Security Report
- Proof of Immunization
- Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects
- Rebelmail Policy
- Student Conduct Code
- Student Computer Use Policy
- Title IX

UNLV does not discriminate in its employment practices or in its educational programs or activities, including admissions, on the basis of sex/gender pursuant to Title IX, or on the basis of any other legally protected category as is set forth in NSHE Handbook Title 4, Chapter 8, Section 13. Reports of discriminatory misconduct, questions regarding Title IX, and/or concerns about noncompliance with Title IX or any other anti-discrimination laws or policies should be directed to UNLV's Title IX Coordinator Michelle Sposito. The Title IX Coordinator can be reached through the online reporting form at Title IX Reporting Form, by email at titleixcoordinator@unlv.edu, by phone at (702) 895-4055, by mail at 4505 S. Maryland Parkway, Box 451062, Las Vegas, NV, 89154-1062, or in person at Frank and Estella Beam Hall (BEH), Room 555.

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the Graduate Student Handbook:

- Academic Calendar
- Academic Policies
- Admission and Registration Information
- Progression and Completion Policies (listed alphabetically)

In addition, the Graduate College website contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.

Handbook Information

Last revised	Revised by	Changes summary
May 2016	David Damore	Update sections for consistency with current program requirements