

# DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THE FIELD OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

As part of the social and behavioral sciences discipline in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, the PhD in political science examines politics on a national and international scale, with emphasis on American politics, comparative politics, and international relations. The nationally recognized program offers graduate students an opportunity to work with prominent scholars in a wide range of fields and to take advantage of the resources and opportunities of the nation’s capital.

The program trains students broadly, with emphasis on mastering a variety of research methods. Students have won prestigious dissertation and post-doctoral awards and are active in all aspects of the profession. Students are able to construct a program consisting of a major and minor field of study. The three major fields are American politics, international relations, and comparative politics. The PhD program allows students to construct a program consisting of a major and a minor field of study. The three major fields are American politics, international relations and comparative politics. Any of the major fields—plus public policy, political theory, or research methodology—is an option for a minor. In addition, the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration and the Department of Political Science offer a dual master of public policy (MPP) (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/public-policy-administration/mpp/>) and doctor of philosophy in political science (PhD) (p. 1) degree program.

Program graduates have secured tenure-track positions at such schools as William & Mary, DePaul University, University of Indiana, University of Toronto, Colorado State University, Occidental College, SOAS/University of London, and University of Oregon. Graduates seeking positions outside of a university setting have found positions at the Congressional Research Service, the World Bank, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation, among others.

Visit the program website (<https://politicalscience.columbian.gwu.edu/phd-political-science/>) for additional information.

## ADMISSIONS

Article	Requirement
Admission deadlines:	Fall - December 15
Standardized GRE general test (institutional code 5246) test scores:	

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the academic International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or the PTE Academic is required of all applicants except those who hold a bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral degree from a college or university in the United States or from an institution located in a country in which English is the official language, provided English was the language of instruction.

Minimum scores for the program are:

- Academic IELTS: an overall band score of 7.0 with no individual score below 6.0; or
- TOEFL: 600 on paper-based or 100 on Internet-based; or
- PTE Academic: 68.

Recommendations required:	Three (3) academic letters of recommendations required
Prior academic records:	Transcripts are required from all colleges and universities attended, whether or not credit was earned, the program was completed, or the credit appears as transfer credit on another transcript. Unofficial transcripts from all colleges and universities attended must be uploaded to your online application. Official transcripts are required only of applicants who are offered admission.

If transcripts are in a language other than English, English language translations must be provided. The English translation alone should be uploaded into your application.

Statement of purpose:	In an essay of 250 – 500 words, state your purpose in undertaking graduate study in your chosen field and describe what political problems or questions motivate you. Include your academic objectives, research interests, and career plans. Also discuss your related qualifications, including collegiate, professional, and community activities, and any other substantial accomplishments not already mentioned on the application. If you are applying for an assistantship or fellowship, you should also describe any teaching experience you have had.
-----------------------	--

Writing Sample:	Academic writing sample of not more than 30 pages required.
-----------------	---

International applicants only:	Please review International Applicant Information ( <a href="https://columbian.gwu.edu/international-graduate-applicants/">https://columbian.gwu.edu/international-graduate-applicants/</a> ) carefully for details on required documents, earlier deadlines for applicants requiring an I-20 or DS-2019 from GW, and English language requirements.
--------------------------------	--

Supporting documents not submitted online should be mailed to:

Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, Office of Graduate Studies  
The George Washington University  
801 22nd Street NW, Phillips Hall 107

Washington DC 20052

For additional information about the admissions process visit the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences Frequently Asked Questions (<https://columbian.gwu.edu/graduate-admissions-faq/>) page.

Contact:

askccas@gwu.edu  
202-994-6210 (phone)

Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday

## REQUIREMENTS

Students of outstanding ability are admitted to the doctoral program upon recommendation of a departmental graduate committee and the concurrence of Columbian College.

The following requirements must be fulfilled:

The general requirements stated under Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, Graduate Programs (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/#degreeregulationtext>).

The requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy Program (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/#doctoraltext>).

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required</b>		
PSC 8101	Introduction to Empirical Political Analysis	
PSC 8108	Craft of Political Inquiry	
PSC 8109	Dissertation Development Workshop	

Five major field courses, including a field seminar, if applicable.

Four minor field courses, including a field seminar, if applicable.

### Additional requirements

In addition to required coursework, program requirements consists of two comprehensive examinations covering a primary and supporting field, an original research paper, and a dissertation demonstrating the capacity to undertake original and significant research. The research paper, to be completed by the second year in the program, must reflect the student's ability to conduct original research. Students prepare for the comprehensive exams by taking at least five courses in their primary field and at least four courses in their supporting field, selected according to departmental guidelines. Three primary fields are available: American politics, international relations, and comparative politics. In addition, political theory, public policy, and research methodology are available as supporting fields. Petitions for a self-designed minor field (e.g., political communications) composed primarily of courses not offered by the established fields can be jointly proposed by students and faculty. All students must complete a sequence of

courses in research methodology comprising PSC 8101, PSC 8108, and PSC 8109.

A recommendation to the Dean for Admissions to candidacy, or the dissertation research stage, will be considered upon satisfactory completion of all coursework, research paper, field examinations, and successful defense of the dissertation prospectus. Students must pass their primary field examination with a satisfactory pass or above and must pass their supporting field examination with a bare pass or above in order to be considered eligible for promotion to candidacy. Admission to candidacy is permitted only if the student's performance on the examinations and in the coursework gives a good indication of success in the second unit. Passing the field examinations does not in itself ensure admission to candidacy.

The dissertation prospectus must outline the central research question(s), relate the proposed research to the existing literature, detail a research methodology, and explain the nature of the original contribution that the completed project will provide. The prospectus must be presented and defended in an open forum, which all faculty and doctoral students are invited to attend. The full dissertation must be similarly defended. A dual degree program enables students to earn the master of public policy along with the PhD in the field of political science.

## COMBINED PROGRAM

### Combined program

- Dual Master of Public Policy and Doctor of Philosophy in the field of political science (<https://bulletin.gwu.edu/arts-sciences/public-policy-administration/dual-mpp-and-phd-political-science/>)