

# POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, M.A.

Saint Louis University's Master of Arts in Political Science and Public Affairs program allows academically talented students to advance their knowledge and analytical skills by focusing on an interdisciplinary problem-oriented area of interest within political science.

SLU's M.A. in political science and public affairs is open to individuals who have previously earned a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree in political science or a related social science discipline from an accredited university and demonstrate outstanding potential. Students admitted for M.A. study must have an outstanding undergraduate record and demonstrate the potential for senior leadership in political science.

## Curriculum Overview

The M.A. in political science and public affairs requires 30 credits.

M.A. students on the St. Louis campus may choose one of three formal concentration areas—American politics, international affairs or public policy and administration. Alternatively, they may design an individual plan of study in consultation with a faculty mentor and the coordinator of graduate studies. All M.A. students on SLU's Madrid Campus (<http://www.slu.edu/madrid/>) complete a concentration in international relations and crisis.

Students enrolled on either the St. Louis or the Madrid campus may take some elective courses on the other campus.

### American Politics Concentration

This concentration provides a substantive grounding in the academic study of American politics, strong methodological skills and options to focus on particular areas of interest, such as public law. This concentration is appropriate for students with a variety of interests and goals, including additional graduate study in political science and related fields or law school.

### International Affairs Concentration

This concentration provides an overall theoretical and substantive grounding in international relations and comparative politics. Some of the topics covered are the process of democratization, international security, warfare and economic development.

### International Relations and Crisis Concentration (Madrid Campus)

This concentration familiarizes students with the key theoretical, political and social dimensions of the global governance of insecurity and the emergence, management and consequences of crises today.

### Public Policy and Administration Concentration

This concentration is designed for students interested in gaining a practical understanding of how political and social policies are developed and administered. Like a Master of Public Administration, it prepares students to work in local and national government, non-profits and the private sector.

## Careers

An M.A. in political science and public affairs prepares students for careers in government, foreign service, national or international business,

nonprofit organizations and NGOs, as well as future graduate study. Possible careers include campaign aide, diplomat, non-profit manager, and labor relations specialist.

## Admission Requirements

A B.A. or B.S. in political science or a related social science discipline is required. This should include at least 18 credits of undergraduate political science courses and an undergraduate social science methods course.

Successful applicants possess a GPA of 3.4 (overall and in political science courses) and sufficient TOEFL score (for international applicants).

## Application Requirements

- Online application and fee
- Three letters of recommendation
- Transcript(s)
- A statement of purpose
- A writing sample
- Curriculum vitae or résumé

## Requirements for International Students

All admission policies and requirements for domestic students apply to international students along with the following:

- Demonstrate English Language Proficiency
- Proof of financial support must include:
  - A letter of financial support from the person(s) or sponsoring agency funding the time at Saint Louis University
  - A letter from the sponsor's bank verifying that the funds are available and will be so for the duration of study at the University
- Academic records, in English translation, of students who have undertaken postsecondary studies outside the United States must include the courses taken and/or lectures attended, practical laboratory work, the maximum and minimum grades attainable, the grades earned or the results of all end-of-term examinations, and any honors or degrees received. WES and ECE transcripts are accepted.

## Assistantship Application Deadline

For full consideration for a University-wide fellowship or assistantship, applicants should submit their application by Jan. 10. For consideration for a Department of Political Science graduate assistantship, applicants should submit their application by March 1.

## Review Process

Applications are reviewed by a committee of political science department faculty members. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis, for either fall or spring admission.

## Scholarships, Assistantships and Financial Aid

For priority consideration for a graduate assistantship, apply by the program admission deadlines listed. Fellowships and assistantships provide a stipend and may include health insurance and a tuition scholarship for the duration of the award.

For more information, visit <http://www.slu.edu/financial-aid> (<http://www.slu.edu/financial-aid/>).

## Learning Outcomes

1. Graduates will be able to explain how political systems operate within the context of their chosen M.A. concentrations.
2. Graduates will be able to critique competing theoretical explanations and produce a comprehensive review of the scholarly literature in their chosen field of study.
3. Graduates will be able to design original research and seminar projects that investigate political processes with appropriate methodologies and contribute to ongoing scholarly debates.
4. Graduates will be able to explain the results of their research in public forums and justify their methodological choices.
5. Graduates will be able to analyze the values that inform political institutions, behavior, and policies.
6. Graduates will be able to demonstrate honest and ethical research practices.

## Requirements

Students on SLU's St. Louis campus will choose one of the three formal concentrations, or they may choose a general M.A. designed around an individualized plan of study. All students on SLU's Madrid campus (<http://www.slu.edu/madrid/>) complete the concentration in international relations and crisis.

All students will complete a total of 30 credits for the M.A. degree. All students are required to pass a field exam on their formal concentration or individual topic of interest administered at the beginning of the student's final semester of coursework.

No more than 12 credits of the M.A. may be taken outside political science, and no more than 6 credits may be independent study classes or internships. Some classes have prerequisites. Depending on their undergraduate preparation, students may be required to take specific undergraduate classes prior to enrolling in post-baccalaureate classes. Exceptions will be allowed only with the approval of the coordinator of graduate studies for the department.

### Cognate Fields

St. Louis M.A. students may choose to complete some of their course work in a cognate field. A cognate field is made up of three courses (9 credits) in departments other than political science that are relevant to the student's areas of interest.

Some possibilities for cognate fields include:

- Coursework toward a graduate minor or certificate program, for example, in women's and gender studies ([https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/womens-gender-studies/womens-gender-studies-graduate-minor/?\\_ga=2.246293508.1408572268.1585575311-1836301299.1581545667](https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/womens-gender-studies/womens-gender-studies-graduate-minor/?_ga=2.246293508.1408572268.1585575311-1836301299.1581545667)) or geographic information systems (GIS) (<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/earth-atmospheric-sciences/geographic-information-systems-certificate/>)
- Graduate classes in another discipline, like economics (<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/business/economics/applied-financial-economics-ms/>)
- Three courses in different disciplines all touching on the same subject area, like Asian studies (<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/arts-sciences/interdisciplinary/asian-studies-minor/>)

### General M.A. in Political Science and Public Affairs

Students who choose the general M.A. instead of a formal concentration work with a faculty mentor and the graduate coordinator to design a

coherent plan of study on their topic of interest. An individual curriculum plan for the general M.A. (30 credits) includes the same general requirements as a formal concentration:

1. a foundational course or courses on the content of the student's topic of interest
2. a foundational course on methods of inquiry related to that topic
3. a political theory course
4. a range of elective courses constituted as a coherent domain of study

### American Politics Concentration

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Core Courses</b>		
POLS 5100	Seminar in American Politics	3
POLS 5750	American Political Thought: Meanings of Citizenship	3
<b>Research Methods</b>		
POLS 5020	Advanced Topics in Research Methods	3
<b>Other Required Courses</b>		
<i>Three more American politics or Public Policy courses</i>		9
<b>Political Science Elective Courses</b>		
<i>Select 12 credits</i>		12
<i>Six credits may be an internship or MA thesis</i>		
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>30</b>

### International Affairs Concentration

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Comparative Politics Classes</b>		
Select two courses numbered between POLS 5500 and 5599 or POLS 5840 <sup>†</sup>		6
For example:		
POLS 5530	Authoritarian Politics: Rigging Elections and Clinging to Power	
POLS 5840	Global Health Politics & Policy	
<b>International Relations Classes</b>		
Select two courses between POLS 5600 and 5699 or POLS 5840		6
For example:		
POLS 5650	War, Peace, and Politics	
POLS 5690	Theories of World Politics	
<b>Choose an additional course in either Comparative Politics or International Relations</b>		<b>3</b>
<b>Research Methods</b>		
POLS 5020	Advanced Topics in Research Methods	3
<b>Political Theory</b>		
<i>Choose one course from the following:</i>		3
POLS 5730	Contemporary Political Ideologies	
POLS 5740	Marx's Capital	
POLS 5750	American Political Thought: Meanings of Citizenship	
POLS 5760	Feminist Theories	
POLS 5770	Feminist Epistemologies	
<b>Political Science Electives</b>		
<i>Select 9 credits of Political Science courses</i>		9

Six credits may be an internship or M.A. thesis

**Total Credits** **30**

† POLS 5840 can count as a Comparative Politics course or an International Relations course, but it cannot count as both.

**International Relations and Crisis Concentration (Madrid Campus)**

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Core Courses</b>		
POLS 5590	Crisis of Leadership †	3
POLS 5662	International Contemporary Challenges †	3
POLS 5663	Key Contemporary Crises †	3
<b>Research Methods</b>		
POLS 5020	Advanced Topics in Research Methods	3
<b>Other Required Courses</b>		
POLS 5610	International Relations: Theory & Practice †	3
POLS 5630	The European Union: Politics and Political Economy †	3
POLS 5910	Graduate Internship	3
<b>Political Science Electives</b>		
<i>Select 9 credits</i>		9
POLS 5510	Democratization ‡	
POLS 5520	Political Change ‡	
POLS 5530	Authoritarian Politics: Rigging Elections and Clinging to Power ‡	
POLS 5550	Politics of Economic Development ‡	
POLS 5650	War, Peace, and Politics ‡	
POLS 5690	Theories of World Politics ‡	
POLS 5730	Contemporary Political Ideologies ‡	
POLS 5840	Global Health Politics & Policy ‡	
POLS 5990	Thesis Research †	
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>30</b>

† Madrid campus only  
‡ St. Louis campus only

**Public Policy and Administration Concentration**

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Core Courses</b>		
POLS 5100	Seminar in American Politics	3
<i>Select one of the following:</i>		3
POLS 5310	Issues in U.S. Public Administration	
POLS 5350	Issues in Public Policy	
POLS 6310	Policy Process	
<b>Research Methods</b>		
POLS 5020	Advanced Topics in Research Methods	3
<b>Political Theory</b>		
<i>Choose one from:</i>		3
POLS 5730	Contemporary Political Ideologies	
POLS 5740	Marx's Capital	
POLS 5750	American Political Thought: Meanings of Citizenship	
POLS 5760	Feminist Theories	

POLS 5770 Feminist Epistemologies

**Other Required Courses**

*Select six credits of the following:* 6

ECON 5010	Economics for Managers	
POLS 5310	Issues in U.S. Public Administration	
POLS 5350	Issues in Public Policy	
POLS 5325	Public Sector Budgeting	
POLS 5350	Issues in Public Policy	
POLS 5360	Urban Economic Development	
POLS 5850	Policy Evaluation and Assessment	
POLS 6310	Policy Process	
POLS 6330	Public Finance Theory	

**Political Science Electives**

*Select 12 credits* 12  
Six credits may be an internship or M.A. thesis

**Total Credits** **30**

**Non-Course Requirements**

- Students may complete an internship for up to six credits as part of the M.A. in political science and public affairs. Students will work under the direction of a preceptor at the internship location and a faculty member in the department. The internship should involve 200 hours of work central to the organization students are working with, and students will also need to write an extensive paper related to the work.
- Students who choose to write master's theses will work closely with a faculty director and a committee of two other faculty members chosen with the director's guidance. The M.A. thesis is a two-semester project. Students will complete a thesis proposal in the first semester and the thesis itself during the second semester. Students who are not able to defend their proposal successfully during the first semester will not be allowed to continue to the second semester of thesis work. The length of the thesis varies according to the nature of the project, but most theses fall between 40 and 75 pages.
- All students in the political science M.A. program must sit for a field exam during their last semester of coursework. All students must pass the written portion of the exam. An additional oral exam will be required at the discretion of the exam committee.

**Continuation Standards**

Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 in all graduate/professional courses.

**Roadmap International Affairs Concentration**

Course	Title	Credits
<b>Year One</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
POLS 5690	Theories of World Politics <sup>1</sup>	3
POLS 5020	Advanced Topics in Research Methods <sup>2</sup>	3
POLS 5550	Politics of Economic Development <sup>3</sup>	3
<b>Credits</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>Spring</b>		
POLS 5510	Democratization <sup>1</sup>	3
POLS 5730	Contemporary Political Ideologies <sup>4</sup>	3

POLS 5840	Global Health Politics & Policy <sup>3</sup>	3
<b>Credits</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>Summer</b>		
POLS 5910	Graduate Internship <sup>5</sup>	3
<b>Credits</b>		<b>3</b>
<b>Year Two</b>		
<b>Fall</b>		
IA Concentration Field Exam <sup>6</sup>		0
POLS 5650	War, Peace, and Politics <sup>3</sup>	3
POLS 5350	Issues in Public Policy <sup>3</sup>	3
POLS 5530	Authoritarian Politics: Rigging Elections and Clinging to Power <sup>3</sup>	3
<b>Credits</b>		<b>9</b>
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>30</b>

<sup>1</sup> International affairs concentration core requirement; students choose two core courses from a list of comparative politics courses and two courses from a list of international relations courses.

<sup>2</sup> IA concentration required research methods course.

<sup>3</sup> Elective.

<sup>4</sup> IA concentration political theory requirement; students choose one course from a list.

<sup>5</sup> Elective. (As an alternative, these three elective credits may be taken in a fourth semester.)

<sup>6</sup> Students take the field exam for their concentration at the beginning of their final semester in the program.

## Program Notes

The Master of Arts in Political Science and Public Affairs offers a number of concentrations, including international affairs, public policy and administration and American politics. Each concentration combines core requirements and electives.

The roadmap above is for the international affairs concentration. Core courses (in boldface in the shaded areas above) can be taken in a different order, but students should plan to complete core requirements during the first two semesters in the 30-hour M.A.

## Contact Us

For additional information please contact

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## Madrid

SLU-Madrid offers an M.A. in political science and public affairs, with a concentration in international relations and crisis.

Learn More (<http://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics/degrees-and-programs/political-science.php>)