

Master of Arts in Political Science (POS)

For students admitted **Fall 2014 to Present:**

Student name: _____ G#: _____

Prerequisite: _____ **Concentration or Specialization (circle one):**

Date Stats Screening Exam Passed: _____ Int'l Sec. Am.Gov&Pol. Comp.Pol. IR

Foundation Courses – 12 credits

Course #/ Title	Semester	Credits	Grade
GOVT 510 – American Government and Politics		3	
GOVT 520 – Political Theory		3	
GOVT 530 – Comparative Politics		3	
GOVT 540 – International Relations		3	

Methods Core– 6 credits

Course #/ Title	Semester	Credits	Grade
GOVT 500 – The Scientific Method and Research Design		3	
GOVT 511 – Problem Solving and Data Analysis I (<i>Prerequisite: Passing grade on statistical screening exam</i>)		3	

Required Concentration or Specialization Field Seminars – 6 credits

Choose a **SET** of two courses:

Course #/ Title	Semester	Credits	Grade
International Security Concentration			
GOVT 744 – Foundations of Security Studies		3	
GOVT 745 – International Security		3	
----OR----			
American Government and Politics Specialization (Select 2 of 4)			
GOVT 603 – Seminar in the Courts and Constitutional Law		3	
GOVT 604 – Seminar on Congress and Legislative Behavior		3	
GOVT 605 – Seminar on the Presidency		3	
GOVT 706 – Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations		3	
----OR----			
Comparative Politics Specialization			
GOVT 631 – Seminar in Comparative Politics and Institutions		3	
GOVT 731 – Advanced Seminar in Comparative Politics		3	
----OR----			
International Relations Specialization (Select 2 of 4)			
GOVT 641 – Global Governance		3	
GOVT 741 – Advanced Seminar in International Politics		3	
GOVT 743 – International Political Economy		3	
GOVT 745 – International Security		3	

Concentration or Specialization Elective – 3 credits

Course #/ Title	Semester	Credits	Grade
(see approved options in advising notes below)		3	

Concentration, Specialization, Thesis, or General Elective courses – 6 credits

Course #/ Title	Semester	Credits	Grade
		3	
		3	

Political Science Research Project – 3 credits

Course #/ Title	Semester	Credits	Grade
GOVT 798 – Political Science Research Project (<i>or GOVT 799 if thesis option chosen</i>)		3	

Political Science Advising Notes

Full-time vs. Part-time:

- Full-time students must be enrolled in a minimum of 9 credits (3 courses) per semester. Full-time Political Science students typically complete the program in two academic years.
- Part-time students typically enroll in two courses per semester and complete the program in three academic years.

Suggested Course Sequence:

- The Political Science curriculum is arranged in a sequential manner. GOVT 500-level courses are foundation courses, 600-level courses are intermediate courses, and the 700-level courses are advanced courses. Students should take 500-level, or foundation courses, during the first two semesters, followed by 600-level classes. The GOVT 700-level courses should be taken during the last semester or two of enrollment in the Political Science program.
- All students should plan to take GOVT 500 and GOVT 511 in their first two semesters in the program.
- Elective courses should not be taken until a student has completed a minimum of 12 credits of required coursework.
- Requests for taking a course out of sequence must be made in writing to the student's advisor and must be approved by the advisor before enrollment.

Research Project or Thesis:

- A project or thesis is required for the MA in political science. Students who choose to do a project take 3 credits of GOVT 798 linked to an advanced specialty course and produce a final research project. The goal of GOVT 798 is to produce a substantial and original contribution to political science knowledge on the model of a paper suitable for presentation at a scholarly conference or an article in a scholarly journal. The length of the final product will normally be 25-40 pages. The research project paper should build on a research paper completed for a course in the student's area of concentration and should be completed over the course of the student's final semester.
- Students who choose to do a thesis (generally worth 6 credits) should be aware of the policies governing theses. They must follow the enrollment policy of the university and, once enrolled in GOVT 799, must maintain continuous enrollment as specified in the Academic Policies section of the catalog. A thesis director and a committee of two additional faculty members appointed by the department read and approve the thesis. Students should make arrangements for doing a project or thesis with their academic advisor. Like GOVT 798, the goal of GOVT 799 is to produce a substantial and original contribution to political science knowledge that is appropriate for conference presentation or publication; however, the thesis will normally be 80-100 pages. In addition, the thesis requires the approval of a three-member thesis committee and must be publicly defended. Guidelines for completing the thesis are determined by George Mason University policy.
- Prior to the start of the project or first thesis semester, students must obtain sponsorship from a faculty project advisor and submit the relevant project forms to their academic advisor. The academic advisor will register the student for the course.

Study Abroad Opportunities:

- A SPGIA-sponsored study abroad course may count as an elective.
- Unless prior written permission is obtained, students may apply only one study abroad course (3 credits) toward graduation.

Professional Internship:

- Students must complete at least 12 credits of core courses prior to participating in an internship.
- International students should not wait until their last term to complete an internship for academic credit. Obtaining an internship is not guaranteed.

Academic Requirements:

- Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average to graduate.
- Students may apply up to six credits of "C" toward graduation.
- A student is terminated from SPGIA if he/she receives a grade of "F" in a single course and/or a grade of "C" in nine or more credits.
- Students must complete all Political Science requirements within *six years* of the date of initial enrollment as a degree-seeking student.

Master's International

- The Master's International (MI), a joint program between Mason and the Peace Corps, enables participants to prepare for Peace Corps volunteer service while earning the MA in Political Science.
- Students apply separately, but at the same time, to the Peace Corps and to Mason.
- Students must complete a minimum of 18 credits prior to their Peace Corps service; this will give the student a foundation to enhance their value as a Peace Corps volunteer.
- Six credits are earned as internship credits for the Peace Corps service. The internship requires a project, agreed upon by the student and his/her advisor, and includes a presentation delivered to faculty and students after the student

returns to the U.S. Upon completion of the two years of service, the student will receive a tuition grant for the six internship credits.

- Students return to Mason after their two years of service to complete the remaining coursework required for the 36-credit MA in Political Science.

Concentration and Specialization Options/Elective Courses:

Students must declare either a concentration or a specialization in one of the areas listed below. A concentration is a structured curriculum with a required set of core courses and a pre-approved set of supplemental courses listed below. A specialization is a more flexible curriculum with a required set of core courses and flexibility regarding supplemental courses. A concentration will appear on a student's diploma and transcript, while a specialization will not. The concentration and specializations for Political Science are:

- Concentration in International Security
- Specialization in American Government and Politics
- Specialization in Comparative Politics
- Specialization in International Relations

Courses listed below will automatically apply to the concentration or specialization under which they fall as concentration/specialization electives. Students may petition their advisor to apply courses from outside this list to their concentration/specialization.

All *non-SPGIA* courses have to be pre-approved by your academic advisor before registering. PhD level courses and/or foreign language courses are *not* permissible elective options.

Concentration in International Security

- GOVT 640 - Strategic Responses to Terrorism: Coordinated Decision Making
- GOVT 641 - Global Governance
- GOVT 741 - Advanced Seminar in International Politics
- GOVT 843 - Diplomacy
- BIOD 621 - Ethics and International Security
- BIOD 622 - Negotiating in the International Arena
- BIOD 705 - Intelligence: Theory and Practice
- BIOD 706 - Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Weapons Policy and Security
- BIOD 709 - Nonproliferation and Arms Control
- BIOD 722 - Examining Terrorist Groups
- BIOD 725 - Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction
- BIOD 760 - National Security Technology and Policy

American Government and Politics Specialization

- GOVT 603 – Seminar in the Courts and Constitutional Law
- GOVT 604 – Seminar on Congress and Legislative Behavior
- GOVT 605 – Seminar on the Presidency
- GOVT 706 – Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations

International Relations Specialization

- GOVT 641 – Global Governance
- GOVT 741 – Advanced Seminar in International Politics
- GOVT 743 – International Political Economy
- GOVT 745 – International Security