



the **u**niversity of south dakota.

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Master of Arts Program
(2006-2007)

Contact: Rich Braunstein, Director of Graduate Studies
414 E. Clark Street, Office 233-D
Vermillion, SD 57069
605-677-5244; rich.braunstein@usd.edu

I. Program at a Glance

The Master of Arts in Political Science is designed for students who wish to gain in-depth knowledge of a specific field within Political Science. Through coursework within Political Science, research opportunities, and supporting coursework from a field outside the Department, recipients of the MA will be prepared for diverse careers or further study.

The MA program offers three fields of study:

- International Relations
- American Politics
- Public Policy
- Public Law

Program Requirements:

- 33 credit hours.
- Comprehensive Exam.
- Required Courses for all MA students include only POLS 765: Research Methods.
- There are two tracks to complete the MA in political science.
 1. Thesis Option: Master's candidate in this track must complete a scholarly thesis. The project is overseen by a Thesis Advisor and Committee. Thesis students must take six credit hours of thesis and can take up to six credit hours of classes outside of POLS related to their field.
 2. Non-Thesis Option: Master's candidate in this track must complete a comprehensive examination in their selected field of study. The exam is administered in their last semester of study. Non-thesis students may take up to nine credit hours of classes outside of POLS.

II. Admission

Applicants who hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited university or college are eligible to seek admission to a graduate program at USD. Application materials are available through the Department of Political Science, University of South Dakota, 414 East Clark Street, Vermillion, South Dakota, 57069-2390 (605) 677-5242 and through the department's website, <http://usd.edu/polsci/grad/grad.cfm>.

The Graduate School requirements for admission include the following:

- Three letters of recommendation are required.
- Two official transcripts from each college or university attended previously are required. If you have received an undergraduate degree from USD, you may submit un-

official or Webadvisor transcripts.

- In addition, applicants whose native language is not English are required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). The minimum score required is 550. No other English language proficiencies are allowed as a substitute.
- A \$35 non-refundable application fee.

The Department of Political Science's requirements for admission include the following:

- An undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or better, based on a 4.0 scale is required for full admission for traditional students.
- The scores from the any of the following are acceptable: the general portion of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT), the Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT), the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), or the EIT scores. There is no minimum score required; the score is considered along with the other application materials. Scores more than five years old will not be considered.
- A 500 word applicant-authored essay stating reasons for pursuing graduate study in public administration and a public service career.
- Three letters of recommendation focused on the applicants potential for success in graduate education.

A. Types of Admission

1. Full Admission. Generally, students will be admitted unconditionally if they have a strong undergraduate record, demonstrate strong communication skills in their admissions essay, receive favorable recommendations, and have met all other minimal conditions for acceptance into the Graduate School. Students with existing advanced degrees are most often admitted unconditionally in most instances. Subject to Admissions Committee approval, those who do not meet all of the criteria above may be admitted on a provisional basis. You must be fully admitted to the MA program before you can sit for the comprehensive exam.

2. Provisional Admission. Students who do not meet all of the qualifications for Full (unconditional) admission may be granted provisional admission to the program of study. The student may be admitted with specific provisions necessary for full admission. These are conditions that must be met prior to being fully admitted to the MA program. Further, the student must complete specified requirements in the time frame stipulated by the Admissions Committee. Failure to complete specified requirements can result in being denied the ability to register for additional coursework until specified conditions are met.

In short, students can demonstrate their capacity for graduate study through prior professional work experience, entrance examination scores, high quality admissions essay and letters of reference. Where there are questions about student capacity unanswered by these sources, the Admissions Committee can offer provisional admission to students to facilitate their studies while their capacity can be demonstrated.

3. Special Student. Special student status allows students to complete six credit hours without applying for admission to a degree program. These liberal admission policies allow students to try out a program without seeking full admission.

Students who take classes under this designation can take up to six credits before formally applying to pursue an MA degree. That is, without receiving admission to the program, students may not count more than six credit hours of study toward their degree.

Special students may also seek specific permission to enroll in a certificate program.

4. Admission Deferment. Students may petition to defer their admission for one calendar year before the next annual review. Students attending the On-Campus program in Vermillion must begin in the fall semester and can not defer admission until spring of any academic year.

5. Immunization. The University requires that you provide evidence that you have received immunization against various communicable diseases prior to registration.

Due to regulations mandated by the South Dakota Board of Regents and the State Health Department, medically signed proof of **TWO** properly administered immunizations **OR** immune titers for Measles (Rubeola), Mumps, and Rubella are now required for all new, readmitted and transferred students at all State Institutions. Official documentation from a physician's office, department of health, high school or other university is acceptable. Individual shot records may be used if the injections were signed or initialed by the doctor or nurse.

If you have only one immunization, the required second immunization may be administered not less than one month after the first immunization. Students who fail to provide the required proof of immunization will be **REFUSED REGISTRATION** and **WILL NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND CLASSES** until in compliance.

Upon completion of the immunization requirements, send or fax this form to Sioux Valley Vermillion Clinic & USD Student Health using the address or fax number listed above.

If you are unable to locate documentation of your immunizations but know you have received both MMR injections, you may choose to receive the necessary titers to confirm your immunity. The titers are available at Student Health at a reduced fee to students. The MMR injection is also available at Student Health as a reduced fee. Please call 605-624-9111 to set up an appointment. If you have records and wish to fax them, the fax number is 605-624-6636, but please do not fax records until after speaking with a representative of Student Health and then only after they are expecting your records.

Forms can be downloaded from Student Health at:

http://www.usd.edu/shs/required_immunization_form.pdf

6. Transfer Credit.

A student may transfer up to nine hours of graduate credit from outside USD and use these credits toward the MA degree requirements. This transfer of credits requires the approval of the Graduate Director. Approval will be based on the following factors: the credits transferred from a regionally accredited institution of higher education at the master's level taken fewer than seven (7) years prior to conferring the USD masters degree. Further, the approval will be contingent on the similarity of transfer courses to USD courses in terms of skills, attitudes, values and behavioral requirements. Students intending to transfer credits should discuss the issue with a faculty advisor (either the Graduate Director or the chair of the student's advisory committee), and requests should be made as soon as possible.

Requests must be accompanied by an official transcript (if one is not on file with the University), and should be accompanied by a catalog description and a course syllabus for the course the student is petitioning to transfer. The student must be in good standing in the institution from which the credit is being transferred, the grades must be the equivalent of "B" or better. Grades of B, P, or S or similar designations are acceptable for one course of up to three credit hours with approval as described above.

The Graduate Director must recommend by letter to the Dean of the Graduate School and by signature on the student's program of study that such credit is to be used on the student's Program of Study. The student initiates this request for transfer by completing a form which can be found at the following URL:

<http://www.usd.edu/registrar/OnlineForms/TransferEquivRequestForm.pdf>

III. General Program Requirements

- No more than six credit hours in Independent Study
- No more than six credit hours of internship; the internship must be related to a student's field of study to make it an academic as well as practical experience.
- More than one grade below a B may result in probationary status or dismissal from the program.
- No student may repeat a graduate course taken at the undergraduate level.

IV. Electives

At least five courses in a selected field are necessary for the thesis option and six are required for the non-thesis option.

A. International Relations*

POLS 541 Genocide in the Modern Era
POLS 542 German Politics
POLS 544 European Politics: Study Abroad
POLS 549 Middle Eastern Politics
POLS 551 Advanced Problems in International Relations
POLS 553 American Foreign Policy
POLS 554 International Law
POLS 555 International Human Rights
POLS 559 Political Geography
POLS 751 Seminar in International Relations
POLS 795 Independent Study and Research

**One might also find related coursework in other departments such as Economics, History and the Law School. MA candidates in this area are encouraged to seek out these opportunities and to work with the Graduate Director to seek enrollment in these courses.*

B. American Politics

POLS 592 Current Problems in Politics: Selected Topics
POLS 505 Urban Politics
POLS 506 Government and the Economy
POLS 517 American Indian Government and Politics
POLS 526 Public Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation
POLS 529 Courts, Politics, and Administration
POLS 532 The American Presidency
POLS 535 Political Parties and Campaigns
POLS 538 Lawmakers and Lawmaking
POLS 564 Politics and Leadership in Literature
POLS 565 Contemporary Political Thought
POLS 566 American Political Thought
POLS 711 Seminar in American Political Institutions
POLS 795 Independent Study and Research

C. Public Policy

POLS 506 Government and the Economy
POLS 517 American Indian Government and Politics
POLS 526 Public Policy Analysis and Program Evaluation
POLS 529 Courts, Politics, and Administration
POLS 538 Lawmakers and Lawmaking
POLS 795 Independent Study and Research

D. Public Law

POLS 507 Environmental Law and the Economy
POLS 529 Courts, Politics, and Administration
POLS 530 Constitutional Law
POLS 531 Criminal Law
POLS 538 Lawmakers and Lawmaking
POLS 554 International Law
POLS 555 International Human Rights
POLS 633 Administrative Law and Government
POLS 731 Seminar in Public Law
POLS 795 Independent Study and Research

V. Comprehensive Exams

- The comprehensive exam has two sections, as listed below.
 - Part A: General Theoretical Questions . Part A requires students to answer two of three questions focused on overall knowledge in student's field of study.
 - Part B: Specific Field Questions. Part B requires students to answer two of three specific questions drawn from student's field of study.
- A student may take POLS 787: Exam Preparation. The course can be taken in the semester before the exam is taken or in the same semester the exam is taken. Students will register for the exam with the Graduate Director and coordinate a readings list with the Graduate Director and two faculty advisors.
- If a student fails a comprehensive exam, they may retake it again at the next exam offering. There are three such times in a year the exam is offered – once in spring, summer and fall semesters. Students who need to retake the exam must retake the entire exam.
- A student may take the exam only twice. Failure to pass the exam a second time will result in dismissal from the program.
- The student must answer four questions in four hours. Passing the exam requires an average of 2.0 on all four questions and may not receive a score of 0.0 on any individual question. The breakdown of grades and justifications are as follows:

Table One: Comprehensive Exam Scoring Criteria

4	Response incorporates all relevant information and/or concepts, and provides substantial rationale or support for information and/or concepts included in the response.
3	Response incorporates most relevant information and/or concepts, and provides satisfactory rationale or support for information and/or concepts included in the review.
2	Response incorporates some relevant information and/or concepts, and provides some rationale or support for information and/or concepts included in the response.
1	Response incorporates little relevant information and/or concepts, and provides little rationale or support for information and/or concepts included in the response.
0	Response incorporates no relevant information and/or concepts, and provides no rationale or support for information and/or concepts included in the response.

VI. The Thesis

The Master’s Thesis is a significant research project that grows out of the coursework and serves as a capstone experience to their graduate education. During the summer or second to last semester of study, MA students negotiate to find a faculty member who would serve as their Professional Report Committee Chair and the student will register for POLS 788 (Professional Report). In consultation with the student’s advisory committee Chair, the student writes a two-page prospectus of the Professional Report and completes a ten-page professional literature review of the topic. Upon completion of the professional report and submission of the final version to the MPA Director, the student will be issued a final grade.

During the last two semesters of study, the student will complete POLS 766 (Public Sector Analytical Techniques) – a course that will guide them in designing the data collection and analysis phase of their Professional Report. When students have completed their report under the guidance of their Committee Chair and Sponsor, students schedule a time with all committee members for a defense of the Report, distribute paper and electronic copies of the Report to all committee members at least one week in advance of the defense date, and defend their research and findings in front of the committee so noted.

A final oral presentation summarizing the findings is presented in a briefing attended by agency personnel and representatives from the school, including the student’s policy paper supervisor and the remainder of the student’s graduate committee. The MPA Com-

mittee may require these papers to be presented again at a day-long public service colloquium, in April.

The University of South Dakota requires that human subjects protections be identified and utilized. Students may need to complete training in human subjects protection prior to data collection for their professional report. The forms required for human subjects protection are a good way to think about your project – what questions you are asking, what data will answer those questions, and how will your method and the answers will affect the stakeholders.

Professional Reports are not master's theses. The statement of purpose for the professional report is not a binding document for the advisory committee. For personal or professional reasons, a student may wish to write a master's thesis in lieu of the professional report. With the approval of the chair of the student's MPA advisory committee, a thesis can be an acceptable alternative to the professional report. However, selecting this alternative does not relieve the student of the obligation to take the written examination required of all MPA candidates.

VII. The Graduate Committee

An advisory committee will be created for each student. The graduate committee is a three-member committee comprised of two members of the USD Graduate Faculty from the department of Political Science and one member from outside the department. Two members are appointed by the student and a third member is to be appointed by the Graduate Director in consultation with the student.

The advisory committee will advise the student on a variety of matters. The committee approves the student's program of study, approves the student's thesis or professional report, and certifies to the Graduate School that the candidate has satisfactorily met all requirements for the Master's degree in Public Administration.

At the conclusion of the first full session in residence or the first two semesters, or after the completion of fifteen hours of graduate credit, the student should file a program of study with the graduate school. At the latest, this must be filed the first week of the academic term in which the student expects to graduate. Failure to meet this deadline may result in not graduating that semester. Graduate School rules require the program of study to be signed by the student's advisory committee and department chair. At least 50% of the courses listed in the student's program of study must be "graduate student only" classes (USD graduate student only courses are numbered 600 or higher). It is important for the student to update his/her program plan of study annually.

<http://www.usd.edu/gradsch/forms/posMasters.pdf> (8/23/06)

VIII. Graduate Student Rules and Responsibilities

- It is the responsibility of graduate students to be aware of the necessary paperwork and deadlines for completion of their program.
- Students need to choose a faculty member to serve as their advisor/director, based on their chosen area of emphasis: International Relations, American Politics and Public Policy, or Public Law.
- If students are writing a thesis, they should become familiar with standard research design approaches, as discussed in POLS 765: Graduate Research Methods. Regardless of approach, thesis writers are expected to have thoughtfully developed and delivered Master's Thesis.
- Students will create a committee in consultation with their advisor to oversee the thesis and comprehensive examination.
- Thesis defenses need to be arranged following the final approval of the thesis by the director. This may take place following consultation with the director and committee members in order to find a time convenient for them.
- No alterations of the Graduate School's and University's deadlines are possible, and graduate students should be aware that it may not be possible to complete a program within the timeframe originally expected. Availability of courses, absence of faculty members or other delays cannot always be anticipated.
- A student given an incomplete must complete the course within one semester.

IX. Grading Standards/Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students' progress through the MA program is reviewed on a semester basis. If a student is not making satisfactory academic progress toward their degree, they may be dismissed from the MA program for cause. Students achieving a 3.0 grade point average, completing examinations on time, and completing courses on time will not be dismissed for unsatisfactory academic progress, all else being equal.

Passing grades for graduate students are all grades within the general A, B, and C categories. Since Graduate School rules require at least a 3.0 average for work comprising the student's entire program, **a grade of C or lower** in any course should be regarded as a very strong warning that work in the course was below faculty expectations.

The symbol of I (Incomplete) may be granted to a student *only* if it can be demonstrated that it would be unfair to hold the student to the normal time limits of the course. Illness or other exceptional circumstances are the usual bases for consideration. Students should not assume that an incomplete will be granted automatically upon request. Rather, a student who believes that her/his circumstances warrant an incomplete is advised to consult with the course instructor. The instructor will specify the work required to be completed by a date certain to remove the incomplete grade.

The Department calculates an incomplete grade as an F (zero grade points) in the grade point average until a grade is recorded for the course. Failure to remove the incomplete

by the date specified will trigger the University Registrar to change the grade from I (incomplete) to NCI.

A. Academic Honesty

USD Code of Student Conduct contains the University's policy on academic honesty.

Acts of dishonesty, include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Cheating, which is defined as, but not limited to the following:
 - a. use or giving of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examination;
 - b. use of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; or
 - c. acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the institutional faculty or staff.
2. Plagiarism, which is defined as, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment consistent with accepted practices of the discipline;
 - b. the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.
3. Other forms of dishonesty relating to academic achievement, research results or academically related public service;
4. Furnishing information known or believed to be false to any institutional official, faculty member or officer;
5. Forgery, fabrication, alteration, misrepresentation or misuse of any document, record or instrument of identification, including misrepresentations of degrees awarded or honors received;
6. Tampering with the election of any institutionally recognized student organization;
7. Claiming to represent or act in behalf of the institution when not authorized to represent or to act.

Source: <http://www.usd.edu/cgi-bin/byteserver.pl/infodesk/studenthandbook.pdf> (page 35 of printed document, 8/11/2003)

The Department of Political Science believes plagiarism has no place in academic work. Plagiarism involves using without attribution, the words and ideas of someone else. Such failure to attribute may or may not be intentional.

While there is a strong presumption that a student will do original and distinctly different papers for each class, it is possible that under special circumstances, and with the full knowledge and concurrence of both instructors, the same or closely related data or theoretical concerns in the literature may constitute a substantial part of the basis of academic papers in two different courses.

Be certain that you understand plagiarism and the Department's policy. Students who violate the academic honesty policy may face disciplinary penalties up to and including expulsion from the MA program or from South Dakota Board of Regents institutions.

X. Graduation/Commencement

The student is responsible for fulfilling the graduate school's responsibilities and meeting their deadlines. These can be found at any time through the following URL:

<http://www.usd.edu/gradsch/acadSchedule.cfm> (8/23/06). Students should complete a program of study and file a copy with the program director and the Graduate School the last month of the semester prior to the one in which they plan to graduate (e.g., December for a May commencement). The program of study contains the classes taken by semester, and the grade received. The program of study is the Graduate School's mechanism for verifying you have completed degree requirements so the university can award you a degree. You are to file the form with the signatures of your advisor (for your professional report) and two committee members, and the Chair of the Department. After getting the signatures of your committee members, take the completed form to the graduate secretary who will get the Department Chair's signature and make a copy for our files and file the form with the Graduate School.

The second form is the Degree Application due near the end of the first week of the semester in which you intend to graduate. The form is available from the same URL (above) which you can fill it in with Adobe Acrobat Reader. Please fill in the form, print it, bring it to the department for the Graduate Director's signature and leave the form with the graduate secretary. We will photocopy it and ensure that it is filed with the graduate school.

Here are the most important things about this form.

1. Your name on this form will be the name on your diploma.
2. The hometown you list will be the hometown that receives the press release announcing that USD has awarded you a Master of Public Administration degree.
3. The address listed is where they will mail your diploma.
4. The previous degrees earned is the Bachelor of Science or Bachelor of Arts or whatever degree you have earned previously (presently held), and the name of the institution from which you obtained this degree. This will show on the graduation program.