

University of Nevada Reno

*Curriculum and Program
Requirements*

Department of Political Science

Ph.D. Program



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THE UNIVERSITY

As Nevada's flagship land-grant institution, the University has been instrumental in the history of the nation's fastest-growing state. When the University opened in 1874 as the University Preparatory School in Elko, it was located 300 miles east of the state's Virginia City-Carson City-Reno population base. State officials relocated the university to Reno in 1885, and its first year of formal college-level study was in 1887. Until 1957, the University of Nevada served as the only state-supported higher-education institution in the Silver State.

One of the top 150 research universities in the country, Nevada enrolled 16,336 students in fall 2005. The University's two Reno campuses are in northwestern Nevada, just 15 minutes from the California border. Nestled in the Sierra Nevada foothills, the University is 45 minutes from Lake Tahoe and four hours from the San Francisco Bay Area.

The faculty of the University is exceptionally well-qualified, with 94 percent of tenured faculty and 79 percent of the full-time faculty holding the highest degrees attainable in their respective fields. More than 50 percent of the faculty has been hired during the past 10 years, reflecting the retirement of the "baby boomer" generation of faculty and general growth of the University. Faculty-initiated research grants and contracts have increased 600 percent during the past 15 years, a result of attracting world-class faculty members.

At present, 37 percent of the University's 999 full-time academic faculty members are female, with 15 percent made up of men and women of color. The University's 663 administrative faculty, or professional staff, includes 53 percent women and 16 percent people of color.

The University of Nevada, Reno is fully accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, the official accrediting agency of most western states.

THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

The Ph.D. degree is offered as part of the curricular program of the Department of Political Science. The Department is an academic unit within the College of Arts and Science. The activities of the Department focus upon both undergraduate and graduate education, research, and public

service. In addition to the Ph.D., the Department offers the Bachelor's (BA) and Master's (MA) in Political Science, a Master's of Public Administration (MPA), and a BA in International Affairs.

THE Ph.D. FOCUS

The Ph.D. degree is conferred only for work of distinction in which the student displays decided contributions of original scholarship, and only in recognition of marked ability and achievement. The specific goals of the Ph.D. program include:

- the development of the research analysis capabilities of students through the advanced study of political processes and problems, and through an increased understanding of policy issues and research skills;
- the preparation of individuals for careers in teaching and research at institutions of higher education--or careers in public administration or public policy; and
- the support of university-based research involving issues of politics and public policy.

The strength of this Ph.D. program lies in the diversity of its faculty. Students accepted into the Ph.D. program are expected to have one field of Political Science as a major focus, and a second field of Political Science as a minor focus. The fields are: American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Political Theory, Public Administration, and Public Policy. Comprehensive exams (major and minor) are required in both of the fields selected by a student. Students should consult with the Graduate Director in selecting major and minor fields. All field combinations must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Admission to the Ph.D. program is competitive; a limited number of applicants are accepted each year. The application **deadline is March 31** for admission in the following fall semester. Admission decisions are made by a departmental selection committee, usually by the end of April. To be considered, all applications must be complete. Please note that the Graduate School, which has to approve all applicants, has its own deadlines and regulations. The Graduate School can be reached online at unr.edu/grad.

It is expected that students seeking admission into the Ph.D. program will have completed a master's level degree (MA, MS, MPA, JD).

The following application materials are required from every applicant (please note whether these materials are sent directly to the Graduate School or to the Department of Political Science):

1. The application for admission to graduate school at UNR, sent directly to the Graduate School, which is posted on the Graduate School's website.
2. Official transcripts for all undergraduate and graduate work, sent directly to the Graduate School.
3. Scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) sent directly to the Graduate School. (LSAT scores are an acceptable substitute.) No special area tests are required.
4. Three letters of recommendation, sent directly to the Department of Political Science. (At least two of the letters of recommendation should be written by persons who can evaluate the applicant's academic performance. Letters should be addressed to the Director of Graduate Studies.)
5. A written statement of educational and career goals, sent directly to the Department of Political Science. (This is also used as a sample of an applicant's writing abilities.)

Completed applicant files are reviewed by the Department and forwarded to the Graduate School for final approval. Applicant files cannot be processed without GRE or equivalent scores. Incomplete applicant files are retained for one year. If the file is not completed by the end of the period, the file is deactivated.

REGULAR ADMISSION

To be eligible for admission, applicants must have an overall GPA of 3.25 or higher (on a four-point scale) for all prior coursework (graduate and undergraduate). While no university requirement for the GRE is established, the Department utilizes a combined score on the **VERBAL** and **QUANTITATIVE** sections of the GRE (or equivalent exam) that falls in the 60th percentile or above as a guideline for admission. Students must achieve a score of at least 500 on the verbal portion of the GRE (or equivalent exam). In addition, the Department requires a minimum of 18

credit hours (six semester courses) of coursework in political science or acceptable social science cognates. Acceptable coursework in statistics, economics and American government is required of all applicants. The Department reserves the right to specify additional requirements. A student must make up any deficiencies in coursework requirements. Such make-up coursework can generally be completed while the student is pursuing an approved program of graduate study.

Please note that these are minimum requirements; meeting minimum requirements does not guarantee admission to the program. Students are admitted on an increasingly competitive basis. We take into consideration a student's overall record, as well as fit with departmental/faculty areas of expertise and teaching/research interests. We also consider each student's long-term professional goals, with an eye toward determining the extent to which this department can effectively contribute to student achievement of those goals.

International Students (studying under a student visa) must have a minimum TOEFL score of 500 on the paper-based exam; 61 on the internet-based exam; OR 173 for the computer-based exam. They must also meet all other requirements for International Students, as established by the Graduate School and the Office of International Students and Scholars [Student Services Building 0(074), University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada 89557-0074 (unr.edu/oiss)]. The Department of Political Science reserves the right to request that the English skills of incoming International Students be evaluated by the Intensive English Language Center here on campus. The results of that evaluation will be used to determine if the student needs to take additional English or other classes to facilitate their success in the program.

PRESCRIBED PROGRAM ADMISSION

The Department of Political Science does not have a prescribed admission program for Ph.D. students.

FINANCIAL AID AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

The Department of Political Science offers a limited number of graduate research assistantships. Departmental assistantships are generally awarded towards the end of the Spring semester for the following academic year. Assistantships are competitive and available only for

full-time students. Application forms and information can be obtained from the Political Science website (unr.edu/cla/polisci).

The university provides a range of financial assistance options for graduate students. Interested applicants should contact Student Financial Services located in the New Student Services Building.

GENERAL OVERVIEW OF COURSEWORK FOR THE Ph.D. DEGREE

The Ph.D. program **requires** all students to fulfill the following minimum course requirements:

Scope and Methods: 9 credits

Psc 780, Psc 781, and Psc 782

Major Field: 15 credits

To be selected in consultation with the Graduate Director.

Minor Field: 9 credits

To be selected in consultation with the Graduate Director.

Field Seminars and/or Electives: 9 credits

To be selected in conjunction with the Graduate Director.

Comprehensive Exam: 6 credits (three for each exam)

In addition to completing the specified minimum number of course credits, students must pass a comprehensive exam in each of his/her fields of concentration (major and minor). Students must register for three comprehensive exam credits during each the semesters s/he takes the comprehensive exam. Exams are constructed and graded by an Examination Committee made up of faculty from the major or minor specialization of the student, working with the Graduate Director.

The form of the exam is an open-book, take-home exam which the student has one week to complete. Exams are given in twice a year, at the beginning of the fall semester and the end of the spring semester. Students should take the exams as soon as possible after completion of the

required coursework for each exam. Four possible grades may be awarded: Pass with Distinction; Pass; Provisional Pass (requiring additional work on the part of the student, as determined by the Exam Committee and the Graduate Director); or Fail. Students receiving a failing grade on one or both comprehensive exams MAY be granted the opportunity to retake the exam(s) once. **PERMISSION TO RETAKE A FAILED EXAM IS GRANTED AT THE SOLE DISCRETION OF THE DEPARTMENT.**

Dissertation: 24 credits

Each student must complete 24 hours of dissertation credits. Students may not register for dissertation credits until s/he has passed both comprehensive exams and been Advanced to Candidacy, unless approval to do so is obtained from the Graduate Director.

Credits at the 700-level: 30 credits

All students must take 30 credits of 700-level courses.

COURSE SCHEDULING

As a significant portion of students in the Ph.D. program are working professionals, a large number of seminars, particularly in the areas of public administration, policy and methodology, are offered in the evenings or on weekends. Students may pursue the degree part-time within the prescribed time limit and registration requirements set by the University. The above course requirements are the minimum standards established by the Department. Students will likely take courses beyond the minimum in preparation for comprehensive exams and their dissertation research.

TRANSFER/SUBSTITUTION OF CREDITS

A maximum of 24 semester hours of graduate credit **MAY** be transferred for credit towards the Ph.D. degree. These credits may be from another university or from a previous degree program at UNR. Up to nine of the 24 transfer credits may be taken as "graduate special" courses at UNR. Transfer credits must be approved by the Graduate Director and the student's Program of Study Chair, as well as the Graduate School (where those courses are transferred in from another institution). Only those courses that relate to a student's particular program focus will be approved for transfer and/or substitution.

Courses older than eight years, whether transferred in or taken in-residence, cannot count toward the 72 credit requirement for the Ph.D., UNLESS those courses were part of a student's previously completed Master's (or JD) program. All courses transferred into the Ph.D. program must be approved by the Graduate Director and the Graduate School.

THE PROGRAM OF STUDY

The student, in consultation with his or her Dissertation Committee, as approved by the Graduate Director, determines the Program of Study to be pursued for completion of the Ph.D. degree. The Program of Study form, which lists by name and number all the courses to be completed in fulfilling requirements for the graduate degree and a short description of the student's dissertation, must be filed with the Graduate School. This same form is used to put together a student's Dissertation Committee, and all committee members must sign it prior to submission to the Graduate School. The Program of Study must be consistent with general University, Graduate School, and Departmental standards. Thus, each student's Program of Study must also be approved by the Department Chair, Graduate Director, and Dean of the Graduate School.

ADVISORS

At the time of admission to the program, all students receive advisement from the Graduate Director. Students should form a Program of Study Committee (also known as the Dissertation Committee) as soon as possible after completing 12 credits of coursework in residence.

Once the student forms a Dissertation Committee, the advisement function is assumed by the committee chair. Students should meet with their advisor to discuss academic plans, gain further information about the program, and design a Program of Study. It is likely that some students will change advisors as they refine their dissertation research interests and become more familiar with the faculty. Students may change advisors in consultation with the individual faculty members involved and upon the approval of Director of Graduate Studies. Such changes are made official by filling out and submitting the appropriate form.

THE DISSERTATION

All Ph.D. students are required to complete a dissertation. The topic of the dissertation is selected by the student in consultation with his or her dissertation committee. The dissertation must represent original and independent investigation which is a contribution to knowledge. The dissertation must demonstrate the student's ability to select and delimit a topic for analysis, to assemble pertinent data, to ground the analysis in a relevant body of theory and literature, to execute a research design, and to express the findings effectively both in written form and in an oral defense.

There are three distinct phases of the dissertation process. First, the student must submit a **written dissertation prospectus** for review by their committee. **A prospectus may be submitted only after passage of both comprehensive exams. An oral defense of the prospectus is required.** The proposal defense also serves as an oral exam, whereby faculty may ask questions germane to the student's areas of concentration and dissertation topic. Passage of the oral prospectus defense formally advances the student to doctoral candidacy. **At this time, the student should complete a graduate school form that advances her/him to candidacy. This must occur at least eight months before graduation occurs.**

The second phase of the process is the actual writing of the dissertation. Students should take care to meet all Department and University requirements as to the form and substance of the dissertation throughout its writing. The third phase is a final oral defense of the dissertation. The dissertation must be complete (subject to minor revision) prior to the oral defense and made available for review by any interested faculty in the Department. The final oral defense is open to all interested faculty. Passage of the oral requires the signature of each member the student's Dissertation Committee.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

The primary guidance students receive in the Ph.D. program comes from their Dissertation Committee. (This Committee is assembled at the same time a student determines his/her Program of Study. The same form is used to document the existence of a formal Program of Study and identify members of the Dissertation Committee.) Attaining a graduate degree, and especially the Ph.D., involves more than the completion of a prescribed set of courses and credits. The student's committee assists in structuring the Program of Study so that the student will be adequately

prepared to pass comprehensive exams and complete the dissertation. In addition, committee members will review and assist the student's dissertation research and otherwise guide professional development.

The Program of Study/Dissertation Committee must consist of at least five (5) members. The Chair and two members must be drawn from faculty within the Department of Political Science. The final two members of the committee must be drawn from departments outside Political Science. **All members of the committee must have Graduate Faculty status.**

Great care should be taken in assembling the committee, as so much of the student's professional development will follow from it. Members of the committee should be individuals with whom the student can work, who have some interest in the student's research, and who can materially aid the student's development. However, because of the role the committee plays in professional development, students are encouraged to form a committee as soon as feasible. This is done by completing the Program of Study/Dissertation Committee form, available from the Graduate School or the Director of Graduate Studies in the Department.

ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY FOR GRADUATION

Advancement to candidacy implies that students have successfully completed all departmental coursework, the comprehensive exams, and University residency requirements. Application for admission to candidacy must be filed not later than **eight months** before awarding of the degree. **Before a student can be admitted to candidacy, moreover, that student must have completed two consecutive semesters (excluding summer sessions) of full-time study (9 credits) in residence at UNR.** Forms and deadlines for application are available from the Graduate School. Admission to candidacy requires approval of the student's Committee Chair, Department Chairman, and the Dean of the Graduate School.

In order to be admitted to candidacy, the student must have a "B" average in all coursework taken prior to admission to candidacy.

The Department may--at its discretion--terminate a student's program if he or she received six or more credits of B- or lower grades. The Department may--at its discretion--

terminate a student's program if s/he received three or more credits of below C grades.

TIMEFRAME

For students entering the program with a Master's degree in hand, who transfer 24 (or less) credits into their Ph.D. program, the age of the transferred-in Master's credits is irrelevant. **(All such transfers must be approved by the Graduate Director and the chair of the student's dissertation committee, however.)** Students have eight years to complete all Ph.D. requirements, a timeframe that begins the date of your acceptance into the program. No courses taken in residence (including credits taken as a Graduate Special) in pursuit of the Ph.D. may be older than 8 years, at the time of graduation from the program.

KEY TERMS AND REGULATIONS OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

All students should be familiar with the general requirements of the Graduate School. Students should obtain a copy of the University's catalog detailing these regulations and important calendar dates governing the academic year. The following are several important items often considered by prospective graduate students.

- Graduate Courses: Courses numbered 600 and above are for graduate credit. No course is acceptable for graduate credit for which the student received undergraduate credit.
- 700 Level Courses: A minimum of 30 credits in courses numbered 700 and above, not including dissertation credits, are required for Ph.D. degrees.
- Residence: A minimum of six semesters of graduate study beyond the bachelor's degree is required. At least two successive semesters, excluding Summer sessions, must be spent in full-time study (9 credits) in residence at UNR. Residence credit is defined as earned by students physically present on the Reno campus for the duration of the scheduled instruction or training period. Exceptions include such field courses or off-campus sites as approved by the university and department.
- **All students must register for at least three credits each semester in order to remain in active status in the program.** (No coursework is required in the summer sessions.)

- Foreign Language Requirement: There is no general foreign language requirement for the Ph.D. degree. However, a student's committee may require a reading knowledge of a foreign language linked to a particular program of study.
- Time Limit: All requirements for the Ph.D. degree must be satisfied within the period of eight calendar years immediately preceding the granting of the degree.
- Grades and Credits: Each graduate course must be completed with a grade of "C" or above for the credit to be acceptable toward an advanced degree. Each candidate must have a "B" average or above on all graduate course work taken, including transfer credit*. *In addition, a "B" average or above must be obtained throughout a student's Program of Study.*
- S/U Grading: A maximum of 9 graduate credits for a Ph.D. of S/U grading, including transfer credits, may be acceptable (pending approval of the Dissertation Committee and the Graduate Director). (Comprehensive Exam credits are exempt from this policy.)
- Correspondence Study: Graduate credit is not allowed for correspondence study courses.
- Extension Courses: Graduate credit earned through extension courses is not accepted for transfer credit.
- Full-time Study: Registration in 9 graduate credits or more in a semester is considered full-time. For half-time graduate assistants, or other assigned equivalent duties, a minimum of 6 graduate credits constitutes full-time study. All Teaching Assistants must complete 9 credits each semester.
- Limitations on Student Credit Loads: A full-time graduate student may not register for more than 16 graduate credits in any semester, nor for more than 6 graduate credits in any five-week summer session. Registration for graduate assistants is limited to 12 graduate credits per semester. Undergraduate credits, taken as part of a student's required course of study, are calculated on a 3-2 conversion scale.

***Note: these are graduate school rules--the political science department may terminate a student's program if s/he receives six or more credits of b- or lower grades, -- or three credits of c or below**

grades. In short, c or below grades are not acceptable grades in the Ph.D. Program in political science.

POLITICAL SCIENCE FACULTY

William L. Eubank. Ph.D., University of Oregon, Associate Professor. Areas of interest: Research Methods, Judicial Process and Constitutional Law, Voting Behavior and Parties, Public Choice.

Stacy Gordon. Ph.D., University of California, Davis, Associate Professor and Undergraduate Advisor. Areas of interest: Research Methods, Legislative Politics, American Government, Comparative Politics.

Carlos Guevara Mann. Ph.D., University of Notre Dame, Assistant Professor. Areas of Interest: Comparative and International Politics, Politics of Democracy, Politics of Latin America.

Eric B. Herzik. Ph.D., University of North Carolina, Professor and Chair of the Department. Areas of interest: State and Local Government, Policy Analysis and Evaluation, Executive Politics.

Derek Kauneckis. Ph.D., Indiana University, Bloomington, Assistant Professor. Areas of Interest: Public Policy, Environmental Policy, Property Rights Theory, Institutional Analysis, Research Methods, and Comparative Politics.

John Marini. Ph.D., Claremont Graduate School, Associate Professor. Areas of interest: Political Philosophy, Organizational Theory, Bureaucratic Politics.

Robert Ostergard. Ph.D. University of New York, Binghamton, Assistant Professor. Areas of Interest: International Relations and Security policy, Comparative Politics (regional focus on Africa), International Political Economy, Civil-Military Relations, and Civil Conflict.

Jennifer Ring. Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley, Professor, and Director of Women's Studies. Areas of interest: Political Philosophy, Feminist Theory, Multicultural Politics.

Christopher Simon. Ph.D., Washington State University, Associate Professor. Areas of interest: Public Administration, Public Policy, Research Methods, Education Policy, American Politics, Policy Analysis and Evaluation, State and Local Politics.

Leonard Weinberg, Ph.D., Syracuse University, Professor. Areas of interest: Comparative Politics, Terrorism, Western Europe, Extremist Movements.

Allen R. Wilcox. Ph.D, Northwestern University, Professor. Areas of interest: Research Methods, Public Policy, Environmental Policy, Voting Behavior.

Leah Wilds. Ph.D., Colorado State University, Associate Professor and Graduate Director. Areas of interest: Public Policy, Environmental Politics (global and domestic), Western Land and Water Resources

ADJUNCT FACULTY

Carina Black. Ph.D., University of Nevada, Reno, Adjunct Professor. Areas of Interest: Comparative Politics, Public Policy and International Affairs.

Robert Dickens. Ph.D., University of Arizona, Director, Governmental Relations, University of Nevada, Reno. Areas of interest: Public Policy, Bureaucratic Politics, Intergovernmental Relations, Public Choice.

Richard Harris. J.D. Stanford University, Adjunct Professor. Areas of Interest: Natural Resource and Environmental Law.

John Scire. Ph.D., University of Nevada, Reno, Adjunct Professor. Areas of Interest: Energy Policy, Foreign Policy, International Conflict Studies, and Terrorism.

Sue Wagner. M.A. University of Arizona, Adjunct Professor. Areas of Interest: Legislative Process, Economic Development and Nevada Gaming.

Sally Zanjani. Ph.D., New York University, Adjunct Professor. Areas of Interest: American West and Nevada History.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Where to Email:

Departmental Web Site: <http://www.unr.edu/cla/polisci>

Where to Write:

Dr. Leah Wilds, Graduate Director

Political Science Department

University of Nevada, Reno

Reno, Nevada 89557-0302

Email: wilds@unr.edu

UNIVERSITY TERMINOLOGY

- ASUN-Associated Students of the University of Nevada
- Academic Status--Determined by regulations governing honor roll, good standing, probation, suspension and disqualification.
- Admission-Formal application and acceptance as a regular student in a degree program.
- Adviser, advisee-The adviser is the faculty member assigned by the University to assist each student in planning the proper academic program. The student is called the adviser's "advisee."
- Audit-To take a course without credit and grade.
- Course-A particular subject being studied (thus, a course in English).
- Credit-The numerical reward received for completing a course. It is described in semester credit hours, and is defined as 3 hours of work per week for one semester. Usually this work is made up of one period in class plus 2 hours of preparation for lecture-seminar classes, or 3 hours of laboratory classes.

- Curriculum-The total group of courses required for a degree.
- Department-A part of a college which offers instruction in a specific area of knowledge.
- Disqualification-The involuntary separation of a student from the university for unsatisfactory academic performance following second academic suspension.
- Extracurricular-Those activities which are part of student life but are not part of the regular course of study, such as debate, dramatics and athletics.
- Fee-A charge which the university requires for services provided, such as a music fee paid for private lessons.
- GPA-Grade point average.
- GSA-Graduate Student Association.
- Good Standing-A student who is not on probation, suspension or disqualification.
- Grade Points-Grades are evaluated in terms of quality points. For each credit of "A" work completed, four grade points are earned; for each credit of "B," three grade points; "C," two grade points; "D," one grade point; and "F," zero grade points. (Some professors utilize the "plus-and-minus" grading system; this policy is explained in the course syllabus for courses using such an option.)
- Graduate Special-A regular, post-baccalaureate non-degree student not admitted to advanced degree study, but who may be taking graduate classes.
- Graduate Standing-A regular advanced degree seeking student officially admitted to a graduate program.
- Graduate Study-Work beyond the bachelor's degree, usually toward a Master's or Doctor's degree.
- I.D. Card-Identification Card.

- Incomplete-The I is not a grade. It is a mark which is given when a student has been performing satisfactory work, but for a reason beyond the student's control has been unable to complete the required work for a course.
- International Student-An individual who is attending school on a student visa.
- Non-degree Student-An individual who is not officially admitted to the university. Registration is limited.
- Prerequisite-The preliminary requirement which must be met before a certain course may be taken.
- Probation-A warning status resulting from unsatisfactory academic achievement or conduct.
- Registration-The act of enrolling in classes, usually at the beginning of a semester. This involves choosing classes with the help of the adviser, completing all registration forms, paying all fees, and registering with the registrar's office.
- Regular Student-A degree-seeking student who is officially admitted to the university.
- Required Subjects-Those subjects which are prescribed for the completion of a particular program or major.
- Resident Alien-A student attending as a permanent immigrant who has not attained U.S. citizenship.
- Schedule, Class-A listing of the courses which the student takes each semester.
- Semester-Fifteen weeks of instruction, including final examinations.
- Suspension-The involuntary separation of a student from the university for unsatisfactory academic achievement or conduct.
- Transcript-A certified copy of the student's permanent academic record on file in the Office of Admissions and Records, listing each course and the final grade received.

- Tuition-An additional charge for regular instruction and is required only of nonresident students.
- Withdrawal-The act of officially leaving the university or a particular class.