

## Political Science MA Degree Requirements

**ADVISING CHECKLIST**

Graduate students have the following requirements for an MA degree in Political Science. Exceptions or substitutions are sometimes possible by petition. Ask the graduate adviser, [psgrad@sdsu.edu](mailto:psgrad@sdsu.edu).

More information can be found in two places:

- the [2025/2026 University Catalog](#)
- the PS grad website [Degree Requirements and Process](#)

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**A. Core Courses – 13 units**

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- ☐ POL S 615 - Seminar in Research Design and Analysis in Political Science (3 units)
  - ☐ POL S 675 - Seminar in International Relations (3 units)
  - ☐ POL S 605 - Seminar in Political Theory (3 units)
  - ☐ POL S 603 - Seminar in Foundations of Public Policy
- OR**
- POL S 655 - Seminar in General Comparative Political Systems (3 units)

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**B. Two Graduate Seminars – 6 units**

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Two graduate seminars chosen from among the following list, or approved substitutes.

**Elective seminars may not repeat other courses being used toward degree requirements** unless the course permits repeated enrollment with different content (605, 630, 635, and 675 only).

- POL S 603 - Sem in Foundations of Public Policy (3 units)(*If not checked above*)
  - POL S 605 - Sem in Political Theory (3 units)(*If repeated with different content*)
  - POL S 616 - Tools for Quantitative Analysis (3 units)
  - POL S 617 - Sem in Applied Qualitative Methods (3 units)
  - POL S 620 - Sem in American National Government (3 units)
  - POL S 630 - Sem in Politics (3 units)(*Can count twice if repeated with different content*)
  - POL S 635 - Sem in Issues in Public Policy (3 units)
  - POL S 655 - Sem in Gen Comparative Political Systems (3 units)(*if not checked above*)
  - POL S 658 - Sem in Post-Communist Political Systems (3 units)
  - POL S 661 - Sem in the Political Systems of the Developing Nations (3 units)
  - POL S 667 - Sem in Latin American Political Systems (3 units)
  - POL S 675 - Sem in International Relations (3 units)(*If repeated with different content*)
  - POL S 696 - Sem in Selected Topics in Political Science (3 units)
- ☐ Seminar course: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Seminar course: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **C. One 500-Level Elective – 3 units**

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One graduate course chosen from among 500-level courses in Political Science, with the approval of the graduate adviser.

☐ 500-level course: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **D. Two Additional Elective Courses (6 units)**

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Six additional units of Political Science coursework at the 500-700 level, courses from other departments, or transfer courses. Any elective other than 600-level Political Science courses must be pre-approved by the graduate adviser.

Only one 3-unit 795, 797, or 798 may be included in the Program of Study. This limit does not include the 1-unit preparation for culminating experience.

Plan B students may not take additional Special Studies beyond the 798 to prepare for exams.

☐ Elective course: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Elective course: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **E. Culminating Experience (3 units)**

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Select Plan A or Plan B. Before you begin the culminating experience, you need to ensure that the Program of Study in your degree evaluation includes your electives and any approved course substitutions.

You also must be "advanced to candidacy," which requires that you have completed at least 12 units, have maintained at least a 3.0 overall GPA and a 3.0 in all courses on your program of study, and have no course with less than a C grade on your program of study.

See "Path to Graduation" information on the [Degree Requirements and Process](#) page.

☐ Plan A: POL S 799A, Thesis (3 units)

**OR**

☐ Plan B: Comprehensive written and oral examination, with POL S 798 (3 units) dedicated to preparation.

Notes on timing: (1) All courses must be less than six years old at the time of graduation in order to count toward the degree, unless there is a successful petition to validate a few of them for recency. (2) MA students in good standing may take up to 4 approved semesters leave of absence after their first completed semester. Further absence loses matriculation in the program and requires readmission. See [Requirements for Master's Degrees](#) and [University Policies](#) for more information.