

# Process for a Two-Year Political Science MA Degree with a Thesis (Plan A)

## 1<sup>ST</sup> SEMESTER

- ❖ Enroll in three courses that apply towards the MA degree requirements and toward a certificate emphasis, if any (Public Policy or Comparative and Global Politics)
- ❖ Take care of any conditions placed on your admission if you do not yet have “classified graduate” standing.
- ❖ Begin thinking about a thesis topic and question. Write assigned papers for your classes that permit you to learn more about a potential topic.

Completed: 9 units

### *Note on electives:*

- 24 units of your degree should be within the Political Science department, unless we specifically develop a Program of Study with an exception for you.
- At least 21 units must be at the 600- or 700-level.

These guidelines leave some room for taking relevant courses outside the department or 500-level courses on special topics of interest.

## 2<sup>ND</sup> SEMESTER

- ❖ Enroll in three courses that apply towards the MA degree requirements and toward a certificate emphasis, if any (Public Policy or Comparative and Global Politics)
- ❖ As part of one of these classes, write a paper that could serve as the literature review for your thesis or that involves some preliminary analysis of some of the data/material you might use for your thesis
- ❖ Start thinking about who might serve on your thesis committee (2 faculty members in the department, one outside the department). Begin conversations with them about your ideas and the proposal you have started developing
- ❖ Work with the Grad Adviser to submit a **Program of Study** after the Fall Schedule comes out.

Completed: 18 units

## SUMMER

Do preliminary work toward your thesis, such as literature reviews. If you have a plan in place, you could also or instead do data collection or fieldwork.

## 3<sup>RD</sup> SEMESTER

- ❖ Enroll in two courses that apply towards the MA degree requirements and toward a certificate emphasis, if any (Public Policy or Comparative and Global Politics)
- ❖ Enroll in a third elective or independent study closely connected to one of your exam fields, or take an independent study (795/798) with a faculty member who might become your thesis adviser. Use this course to write portions of your thesis.
- ❖ Enroll in 1-unit 798 for community and support as you develop your thesis
- ❖ Apply to **Advance to Candidacy**. *You need to advance before you can finalize your committee or enroll in 799A.*
- ❖ Complete a thesis proposal and give it to potential committee members prior to asking for their commitment to serve on your thesis committee.
- ❖ Once you have three committee members who have agreed to support your work, hold a meeting to discuss your thesis plan, methods, and timetable.

Completed: 28 units

## 4<sup>TH</sup> SEMESTER

- ❖ Before the semester begins, pick up an Appointment of Thesis Committee form from Grad Affairs and collect signatures from your three committee members and the grad adviser.
- ❖ When this form is submitted and approved, Grad Affairs will enroll you in 799A
- ❖ Submit an **Application to Graduate** with a fee to the Cashier's Office by the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the semester.
- ❖ Write the remaining sections of your thesis by the end of February. Give chapters in draft to your thesis chair for comments for revision.
- ❖ Once the chair has seen and approved your revisions, submit the thesis to the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> readers for comments and revision.
- ❖ When the committee members are satisfied with your work, collect their signatures.
- ❖ Format the thesis, or have it formatted professionally.
- ❖ Submit the formatted thesis by the no-risk deadline (early April) for a Spring graduation.

Completed: 31 units