

MASTER OF ARTS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

The Master of Arts in Political Science is an online degree program designed for both recent college graduates and individuals seeking to advance their professional or academic careers. The program serves students preparing for doctoral studies or law school, high school teachers seeking to improve their professional credentials, individuals wanting to teach in the community colleges, and individuals preparing for careers or advancement in nonprofit organizations (international and domestic) and the public sector.

Students are admitted to the graduate program for the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters, with the following application deadlines:

Fall semester enrollment: August 1

Spring semester enrollment: December 1

Summer enrollment: May 15

Admission into the program is based on the listed requirements and faculty/student ratios. The following are required for admissions consideration:

1. Graduate Studies Application (<http://www.shsu.edu/admissions/apply-texas.html>): The Graduate Studies Application is an institutional application required by SHSU. Students must provide biographical and educational information and information relevant to determining State of Texas residency.
2. Application fee: An application fee is required for all applications to graduate programs at SHSU.
3. Transcripts documenting all prior degrees.*
4. Minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0: Applicants who do not possess a graduate degree from an accredited institution are expected to have earned a minimum GPA of 3.0 in an undergraduate degree from an accredited institution. However, applicants who possess neither a graduate degree nor a minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 may submit additional information as evidence of their academic and professional potential. Such additional information may include, but is not limited to: GRE scores, an academic writing sample, a narrative that provides an explanation for the applicant's low GPA and for why the GPA is not indicative of the applicant's academic and professional potential, etc.
5. Statement of Intent: Applicants should submit a written statement that specifically addresses at least the following three elements: a) why they are applying to the program; b) how their experience (academic, work, etc.) has prepared them to enter the program; and c) what they plan to do – professionally – with the degree.
6. Names and contact information for at least two individuals who can speak to applicant's academic and professional potential.

*Applicants may submit unofficial transcripts for review by the admissions committee. However, under university policy, admission decisions are contingent upon receipt of official transcripts.

Applicants must submit all application materials directly to the Office of Graduate Studies (<http://www.shsu.edu/dept/graduate-admissions/prospective-students.html>) by the relevant deadline. A holistic review of each applicant's file will then be completed, with admission to the MPA Program offered to applicants on a competitive basis.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

The program offers two degree plans:

- a thesis option (30 hours of coursework, including a 6-hour written thesis)
- a non-thesis option (36 hours of coursework and written comprehensive exams)

The thesis degree plan is designed for students who plan to pursue a doctoral degree. The non-thesis degree plan is designed for students who plan to pursue a career in the public and nonprofit sectors, other employment fields relevant to the study and practice of government, or teach political science/government classes at the post-secondary level. All students are admitted as non-thesis students, but may petition to change to the thesis option after completing preliminary coursework.

Requirements for the non-thesis degree plan include:

- three subfield seminars: POLS 5330, POLS 5371, POLS 5373
- nine elective courses from among the subfields
- passing comprehensive exams

For their nine elective courses, students should choose POLS courses appropriate to their professional needs and interests. With graduate advisor approval, students may pursue a concentration in an appropriate area from one or more other departments.

Prior to graduation, all non-thesis students must complete and pass the comprehensive exams, which encompass key learning objectives from the core coursework (the three subfield seminars). Students are expected to complete all core coursework prior to taking their comprehensive exams. However, students with one core course remaining may take their comprehensive exams early with the approval of the MA Director. Comprehensive

exams are administered during the fall, spring, and summer semesters. Students must be enrolled in the university during the semester or summer session in which their comprehensive exams are administered.

Requirements for the thesis degree include:

- three subfield seminars: POLS 5330, POLS 5371, POLS 5373
- five elective courses from among the subfields
- two thesis courses: POLS 6098, POLS 6099
- successfully defending a written thesis

For their nine elective courses, students should choose POLS courses appropriate to their professional needs and interests. With graduate advisor approval, students may pursue a concentration in an appropriate area from one or more other departments.

Students defend their written thesis during the last semester of coursework. They are required to be enrolled in the University during the semester or summer session in which the thesis is defended.

Plan 1 - Thesis: MA in Political Science

Code	Title	Hours
Master of Arts in Political Science (Thesis)		
Specified Courses		
POLS 5330	American Politics	3
POLS 5371	Comparative Politics	3
POLS 5373	International Relations	3
POLS Electives		
Select five additional non-thesis POLS graduate courses		15
POLS 6098	Thesis	3
POLS 6099	Thesis	3
Total Hours		30

Plan 2 - Non-Thesis: MA in Political Science

Code	Title	Hours
Master of Arts in Political Science (Non-Thesis)		
Specified Courses		
POLS 5330	American Politics	3
POLS 5371	Comparative Politics	3
POLS 5373	International Relations	3
POLS Electives		
Select nine additional non-thesis POLS graduate courses		27
Total Hours		36

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) marketable skills initiative is part of the state's **60x30TX plan** and was designed to help students articulate their skills to employers. Marketable skills are those skills valued by employers and/or graduate programs that can be applied in a variety of work or education settings and may include interpersonal, cognitive, and applied skill areas.

The MA in Political Science is designed to provide graduates with the following marketable skills:

- Develop students' analytical and writing skills.
- Develop students' ability to utilize technology to solve problems and accomplish goals.
- Prepare students for professional careers in the 21st century.
- Prepare students to make meaningful contributions to local, state, national, and global communities.