

POLITICAL SCIENCE, PUBLIC LAW AND ADMINISTRATION

Undergraduate Program Information

The study of political science, public law and administration blends the strengths of a liberal arts education while preparing students for a career in their field. Career opportunities can include positions in: federal, state, and local government; public administration and public service; non-profit organizations; and in public policy analysis.

The political science major program calls for a thorough preparation in the study of government and politics as described below with the opportunity for those interested in specific careers to concentrate in one of the subfields:

- American government and politics,
- public law,
- public administration and policy,
- comparative politics,
- political theory and
- international relations.

The department also offers an interdisciplinary supplementary major in Law and Society, which is supportive of law-related careers.

A political science minor program involving 18 credits of course work is also offered. A subfield minor or a general minor may be selected. In addition, the department participates in an interdisciplinary minor in Contemporary Social Studies.

Graduate Program Information

The Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration offers two Masters degrees and a graduate minor:

- the Master of Arts (MA) in Political Science,
- the Master of Public Administration (MPA) and
- a graduate minor in Security Studies.

The programs are designed to prepare students both for diverse careers in the public sector and for further training at the doctoral level. The MPA program is accredited by the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs and Administration (NASPAA), a distinction held by fewer than one-quarter of MPA programs nationwide. The MPA program offers a joint degree with the Department of Criminal Justice (MPA/MCJ). Students in this joint degree program can earn two master's degrees with fewer credits than would be required to earn those degrees independently.

The department is also one of the lead departments for the interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in Transborder and Global Human Dynamics.

Admission

Prospective graduate students in either the MA or MPA should demonstrate a 3.0 grade point average for the second half of their undergraduate course work. For students with a GPA of less than 3.0, GRE scores are required, though this requirement may be waived if the undergraduate degree was awarded more than five years before applying. Applicants to either program are required to submit an application online. See instructions at: <https://apply.nmsu.edu/apply/>. Applications

include three letters of recommendation, a writing sample, and a personal statement concerning their interest in pursuing a graduate degree. Additional information concerning program requirements and the admission process can be obtained from either the department's MA chair or MPA director. Under exceptional circumstances the department may exempt students from the minimal requirements. Application for admission to the Graduate School should clearly indicate the program in which the student wishes to enroll. Applications for admission to the MPA program are reviewed twice a year, once in the Fall semester and once in the Spring semester. Applications to the Ph.D. in Transborder and Global Human Dynamics are reviewed once a year in the Spring semester for starting the program in the Fall semester.

Students interested in the MPA/MCJ joint degree option must apply and be accepted in to the two departments separately, and indicate their interest on their applications in one of the joint degree programs.

General Requirements

Students in both the MA and MPA programs select either a thesis or non-thesis option. Students planning on continuing their studies in a doctoral program or wishing to establish expertise related to a specific career objective are strongly encouraged to select the thesis option. The non-thesis option is suggested for students desiring immediate employment or seeking to enhance their current employment situations. Course work outside the department must have prior advisor approval to ensure a well-integrated program of study. Complete information on the requirements for either program should be obtained directly from the department. Most MA and MPA courses are offered in the evening or online.

Minors

The Department of Political Science, Public Law and Administration offers a general undergraduate Political Science minor and specialized sub field minors. In addition, the department participates in an interdisciplinary minor in Contemporary Social Studies with History and other departments.

A student cannot earn both a B.A. in Political Science and a general minor in Political Science. Political Science majors may pursue a subfield minor in the department, however, they cannot double count any upper division courses in Political Science toward the minor.