POLITICAL SCIENCE

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M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.

Chair
Steven Wilkinson

Director of Graduate Studies
Milan Svolik

Professors
Bruce Ackerman, Akhil Amar (Law), Seyla Benhabib, Paul Bracken (Management), David Cameron, Bryan Garsten, Alan Gerber, Jacob Hacker, Gregory Huber, Statthis Kalvvas, David Mayhew, Barry Nalebuff (Management), Douglas Rae, John Roemer, Susan Rose-Ackerman, Frances Rosenbluth, James Scott, Ian Shapiro, Stephen Skowronek, Steven Smith, Susan Stokes, Peter Swenson, Ivan Szelenyi (Sociology), John Wargo (Forestry & Environmental Studies), Steven Wilkinson, Elisabeth Wood

Associate Professors
Ana De La O Torres, Alexandre Debs, Hélène Landemore, Jason Lyall, Karuna Mantena, Nuno Monteiro, Milan Svolik

Assistant Professors
Peter Aronow, Katharine Baldwin, Deborah Beim, Daniela Cammack, Alexander Coppock, Allan Dafoe, John Henderson, Eitan Hersh, Daniel Mattingly, Didac Queralt, Kelly Rader, Thania Sanchez, Fredrik Sävje

FIELDS OF STUDY
Fields include political theory, international relations, comparative politics, American politics, political economy, quantitative empirical methods, qualitative and archival methods, and formal theory.

SPECIAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENT
The department requires that scores from the GRE General Test and a writing sample accompany an application. Additional details about the application process are available on the department website. The department only accepts applications for the Ph.D. program.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE

Overall program requirements
Students are required to pass sixteen term courses by the end of their fourth term in the program, to receive a grade of Honors in at least two Political Science courses, and to maintain an overall High Pass or above average (for purposes of calculating this average, Honors=3, High Pass=2, Pass=1, and Fail=0). The High Pass average must also be met for graduate courses listed in the Political Science department. To remain in good standing throughout their time in the Ph.D. program, students are expected to actively participate in classes and workshops, produce high quality written work, and demonstrate regular progress toward completion of the dissertation. The department regularly offers about sixty term courses for graduate students each year. Courses are conducted as seminars and typically have small enrollments. Four of the courses required for the degree may be in departments other than Political Science (two of these can be advanced language courses with the approval of the director of graduate studies [DGS]).

Each student must demonstrate elementary reading competence in one foreign language. Such competence is usually demonstrated by taking, or having completed, two years of undergraduate course work or by examination. Alternatively, the language requirement can be satisfied by successfully completing two terms of formal theory or two terms of statistical methods at the graduate level (beyond the introductory course in statistical methods offered in the department).

Courses are offered in five substantive fields – political theory, international relations, comparative politics, American politics, and political economy – and three methods fields: quantitative empirical methods, qualitative and archival methods, and formal theory. Courses taken must include one each in at least three of the department’s substantive fields. Courses cannot be counted in more than one field. Each student must demonstrate competence in three fields (two of which must be substantive fields) before the start of the fifth term. Competence can be demonstrated either by passing the comprehensive examination in the field or by course work, provided that each student takes at least two comprehensive exams. The fields of formal theory and quantitative empirical methods offer certification only through examination. For fields to be certified by course work, students are required to satisfactorily complete three courses in the field, where courses in the field are determined by the faculty and the DGS, including one in which a research paper is written and presented. The paper must be submitted to review by the instructor of the course for which the paper was written. The department offers exams twice a year, in late August and in early January. Students are expected to pass their comprehensive examinations by August of their second year. Each examination is based on a reading list compiled by the faculty within the field and updated each year. Each list offers an introduction and framework for study in the field and preparation for the examination. A committee of faculty within the field grades the exams as Distinguished, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory.

Students who successfully complete the Ph.D. in Political Science will often join the faculties of colleges and universities. For that reason, learning what is involved in teaching and gaining teaching experience are also essential components of graduate education. The
department normally expects students to devote themselves exclusively to course work and comprehensive examinations in their first two years in the Ph.D. program. Students in Political Science typically teach in their third and fourth years.

During each year in residence, graduate students are expected to participate actively and regularly in one or more of the many research workshops run by the department. Students beyond their fourth term are required to enroll in at least one of the workshops for credit, and all workshops are graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis. All students are expected to present a research paper of their own at one of these workshops before the end of their fourth year. Workshop participation does not count toward the requirement of sixteen term courses.

Prior to registration for the second year (1) Students must have taken and passed at least seven courses, including the required Introduction to the Study of Politics (PLSC 510), and maintained an overall High Pass average. At least five of these courses must be graduate courses in Political Science. While only seven courses are required, students are normally expected to complete eight courses in the first year to be on track to complete sixteen courses by the end of the second year. (2) Students are strongly encouraged to complete at least one field certification prior to the beginning of their second year. (3) Students are strongly encouraged to attend one of the subfield weekly workshops. (Note that these workshops do not count toward the required number of completed courses.)

Prior to registration for the third year (1) Students must have taken at least sixteen term courses and have received a grade of at least Pass in each of them, including the two-term required Research and Writing course (PLSC 540) for second-year students. Research and Writing is devoted to the preparation of a manuscript based on original research on a topic of the student’s choice and will count as two of the sixteen credits needed to advance to candidacy. (2) Students must have received a grade of Honors in at least two Political Science courses and maintained an overall High Pass average. (3) Students must have completed certification in three fields by the end of their second year. (For purposes of fulfilling this requirement, students registered for the August exams are assumed to have passed those exams when determining eligibility for enrollment in the third year.) At the discretion of the DGS, students who fail an exam may be granted a one-term extension (to January of the third year) for obtaining certification. (4) Students are strongly encouraged to attend one of the required subfield weekly workshops. (Note that these workshops do not count toward the required number of completed courses.)

Admission to candidacy Students must be admitted to candidacy prior to registration for the fourth year of study. Students are recommended to the Graduate School for admission to candidacy by the Department of Political Science after having completed departmental requirements listed above and the Graduate School’s prospectus requirement. As part of admission to candidacy, a student must have a prospectus approved by a dissertation director and two other members of the faculty. This must occur no later than May 1 of the student’s third year of study.

Submitting the dissertation A student’s dissertation research is guided by a committee of no fewer than three faculty members, at least two of whom must be members of the Yale Department of Political Science. One of the committee members is designated as chair. When a dissertation is completed, the student will select two members to write written reports on the final dissertation, at least one of whom must be a member of the Yale Department of Political Science. The DGS will also appoint one additional member of the department to write an additional evaluation.

COMBINED DEGREES

The Graduate School offers a combined degree in Political Science and African American Studies. For details, see African American Studies in this bulletin. Students may also pursue a joint degree with the Law School.

MASTER’S DEGREES

M.Phil. The academic requirements for the M.Phil. degree are the same as for the Ph.D. degree except for the completion of the prospectus and dissertation.

M.A. (en route to the Ph.D.) The M.A. degree is awarded upon completion of a full year of course work in the program (i.e., at least eight term courses) with an average of High Pass or better. The courses must include at least six listed in the Political Science department and one each in at least three of the department’s substantive fields. Language requirements are the same as for the Ph.D. degree.
COURSES
Empirical Analysis and Research Methodology
Political Theory
International Relations
Comparative Politics
Political Economy
American Politics
Research Workshops