

Political Science Accelerated Masters Program

The Accelerated MA program in the Political Science department allows a student to receive a BA and an MA degree in five years. Early entry into the MA program will enable students to complete graduate hours under their TOPS or other undergraduate scholarship and to graduate from the MA program typically one year early. To participate, students must meet the criteria for acceptance into the Political Science Master's Program. If the student maintains a 3.5 GPA and is in good standing within the department, they will be eligible to attain full acceptance to graduate school immediately following graduation from the BA program.

Admission Requirements

1. To apply to the program, the student's overall GPA must be at least 3.5.
2. The applicant must have completed 60 hours of credit (including AP credit) overall.
3. Transfer students must complete at least one semester at LSU and also have a 3.5 overall GPA at their prior institution.

Application procedure

1. Students should select a faculty advisor based on their area of interest.
2. The Accelerated Master's Program application form is available here: <https://itservice.lsu.edu/TDClient/37/gradschool/Requests/ServiceDet?ID=91>
3. Students should submit the Accelerated Master's Program application form (without the required signatures), a statement of purpose, a writing sample, unofficial transcripts, and a letter of recommendation from the student's primary advisor. Students should submit all application materials to the Director of Graduate Studies in Political Science. The letter of recommendation should be sent directly from the student's primary advisor to the Director of Graduate Studies.
4. Applications are normally accepted in the Spring semester in order to begin taking graduate-level courses in the Fall semester. Applications are due by April 15 (or the preceding Friday if April 15 falls on a weekend).
5. The Political Science Department will review all applications and submit a recommendation to the Department Chair on the decision to admit each applicant before the Chair signs the Accelerated Master's Program Application form.
6. Students will be notified of the decision on their application by the end of the semester in which the application was submitted.

Details and Suggested Timeline for the Accelerated MA Program:

1. during semester 6 (Spring semester, Junior Year)
 - a. BA student seeking admission to the Accelerated MA Program applies for admission and selects a graduate faculty member from the department who will act as the advisor for the MA thesis.
 - b. A decision on the application will be made by the end of Semester 6.
2. during Semester 7 (Fall semester, Senior Year)
 - a. BA student enrolls in POLI 7961 and POLI 7962.
 - b. Optional: enroll in an additional 3-credit hour graduate course or enroll in POLI 7000 (1 credit hour). Students may not do both.
3. During Semester 8 (Spring semester, Senior Year)

- a. BA student enrolls in 3 Political Science graduate courses (these can be either pro-seminars or electives) for 9 hours of credit.
- b. It is expected that during Semester 8, the BA student will be admitted to the LSU Graduate School
4. During Semester 9 (Fall semester, 5th Year)
 - a. MA student enrolls in POLI 7000 (1 credit hour) if not taken during Semester 7.
 - b. MA student enrolls in 2 Political Science graduate courses (pro-seminars or electives)
 - c. MA student enrolls in 3 credit hours for MA thesis
5. During Semester 10 (Spring semester, 5th Year)
 - a. MA student enrolls in 2 Political Science graduate courses (pro-seminars or electives)
 - b. MA student enrolls in 3 credit hours for MA thesis.
 - c. Optional: If the student enrolled in 9 credit hours of graduate course work in Semester 7, they may enroll in 6 credit hours for their MA thesis and only take 1 3-credit hour graduate course this semester.
 - d. MA student defends MA Thesis by end of the semester.

MA Program (Thesis Track) Details

The departmental-level academic course plan for each student will be developed in consultation with and approved by the student's graduate advisory committee. The committee will include the student's major advisor and at least two additional members of the graduate faculty.

The MA degree requires a master's thesis. 34-37 hours of credit at the graduate level must be earned for the MA, including a maximum of nine hours of credit for the thesis. The curricular requirements include:

- A principal field consisting of a minimum of nine hours of earned credit in a specified field of study.
- A secondary field consisting of a minimum of six hours of earned credit in a different field of study.
- Two required seminars (POLI 7961 and POLI 7962).
- A one-credit professional development seminar (POLI 7000).
- Six hours of electives or a Minor Field in another department.
- Six to nine MA thesis hours.
- A master's thesis, with an oral defense.

Students in the Accelerated MA program are limited to taking two 4000-level courses for graduate credit. Accelerated MA students wishing to take a 4000-level course for graduate credit must receive prior approval from their primary advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies.