

POLITICAL SCIENCE

The Department of Political Science offers MA and PhD programs in the following fields:

- Rights, Justice, Citizenship, and Identity (MA)
- Canadian Politics (PhD)
- Comparative Politics (PhD)
- Gender, Race, Indigeneity, and Sexuality (PhD)
- International Relations (PhD)
- Law and Politics (PhD)
- Public Policy and Governance (PhD)

Administrative Staff

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Graduate Faculty

This list may include Regular Graduate Faculty, Associated Graduate Faculty and/or Graduate Faculty from other universities.

Dennis Baker

BA McMaster, LLB Toronto, PhD Calgary - Associate Professor
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BA Guelph, MA Calgary, PhD Queen's - Professor
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Adam Sneyd

BA Queen's, MA York, PhD McMaster - Associate Professor
Graduate Faculty

Dave Snow

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Ian S. Spears

BA Toronto, MA Queen's, PhD McGill - Associate Professor
Graduate Faculty

Deborah Stienstra

BA Alberta, MA, PhD York - Professor
Graduate Faculty

MA Program

The MA program revolves around the field of Rights, Justice, Citizenship, and Identity while allowing flexibility for students to pursue their various interests. Within the broader framework of Rights, Justice, Citizenship and Identity, the Department has particular strengths in Public Policy and Administration and Global Justice and Politics and offers a number of courses related to those topics.

Our broad range of course offerings and routes to complete the degree allow students to tailor their experience towards their future employment or academic goals. Graduates of the program are engaged in a wide range of careers with academic institutions, government and public sector agencies, non-governmental organizations, and industry.

Admission Requirements

The department requires an Honours BA degree (4 years) in political science (or its equivalent) with at least a 'B+' average for consideration for admission to the program. A methodology course equivalent to The Systematic Study of Politics, POLS*3650 Quantitative Methods of Data Analysis, in the Department of Political Science undergraduate program, is necessary for admission to the graduate program. Students not satisfying this requirement may be admitted with the provision that it be satisfied by completing the requisite extra course.

Application Procedure

Program offices should be consulted for admission deadlines and required documents <https://www.uoguelph.ca/polisci/masters/how-apply/>. Complete application submission instructions can be found at <http://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/apply/>.

Graduate students are admitted each Fall semester.

Program Requirements

Students enroll in one of three study options:

1. course work only,
2. course work and major research paper or
3. course work and thesis.

Thesis

In order to satisfy the degree requirements, the student will complete three courses plus POLS*6900 Communications, POLS*6940 Research Design and Methods and complete a Thesis.

Three courses with at least two of them from the following core courses:

Code	Title	Credits
POLS*6050	The Politics of Identity	0.50
POLS*6130	Rights and Public Policy	0.50
POLS*6150	Constitutionalism and Judicial Politics	0.50
POLS*6400	Citizenship and Social Policy	0.50
POLS*6510	Political Participation and Engagement	0.50
POLS*6730	Development and Global Justice	0.50

Plus:

Code	Title	Credits
POLS*6900	Communications	0.25
POLS*6940	Research Design and Methods	0.75

Or an approved equivalent from another department

Thesis ¹

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A thesis of approximately 10,000 to 15,000 words (approximately 80 to 100 double-spaced pages). The written thesis is defended in an oral examination.

Course Work and Major Research Paper

In order to satisfy the degree requirements, the student will complete four courses plus POLS*6940 Research Design and Methods, POLS*6900 Communications, for a total of six courses and complete POLS*6970 Major Paper.

Four courses with at least two of them from the following core courses:

Code	Title	Credits
POLS*6050	The Politics of Identity	0.50
POLS*6130	Rights and Public Policy	0.50
POLS*6150	Constitutionalism and Judicial Politics	0.50
POLS*6400	Citizenship and Social Policy	0.50
POLS*6510	Political Participation and Engagement	0.50
POLS*6730	Development and Global Justice	0.50

Plus:

Code	Title	Credits
POLS*6900	Communications	0.25
POLS*6940	Research Design and Methods	0.75

Or an approved equivalent from another department

POLS*6970	Major Paper ²	1.00
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The research paper is approximately 10,000 to 12,500 words (approximately 40 to 50 double-spaced pages).

Course Work

In order to satisfy the degree requirements, the student will complete POLS*6940 Research Design and Methods and POLS*6900 Communications, plus five additional courses.

Five courses with at least three of them from the following core courses:

Code	Title	Credits
POLS*6050	The Politics of Identity	0.50
POLS*6130	Rights and Public Policy	0.50
POLS*6150	Constitutionalism and Judicial Politics	0.50
POLS*6400	Citizenship and Social Policy	0.50
POLS*6510	Political Participation and Engagement	0.50
POLS*6730	Development and Global Justice	0.50

Plus:

Code	Title	Credits
POLS*6940	Research Design and Methods	0.75
Or an approved equivalent from another department		
POLS*6900	Communications	0.25

PhD Program

Admission Requirements

Students are expected to have completed an MA in Political Science with at least an A- average for consideration for admission to the program. Students with a MA in a Social Science other than Political Science, are encouraged to apply on the condition that they take additional courses upon their entry into the program.

Application Procedure

Graduate students are admitted each Fall semester. Program offices should be consulted for admission deadlines and required documents <https://www.uoguelph.ca/polisci/masters/how-apply/>. All applications must be submitted on-line. Complete application submission instructions can be found at <http://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/apply/>.

Program Requirements

Students are required to major in one field and minor in the other. The Department has wide-ranging and various expertise in each of the fields—please consult the Department’s website for more information.

The PhD program is designed both for students interested in pursuing academic positions and also for students interested in working in research capacities in the public, non-profit or private sectors.

Students are required to successfully complete a minimum of six graduate courses:

- Two PhD field courses, one course in the student’s major field and one course in the minor field (selected in consultation with the student’s Advisor)
- Two research methods courses:
 - POLS*6940 Research Design and Methods
 - POLS*6500 Qualitative and Quantitative Data Analysis
- Two elective courses
- A written qualifying exam and an oral qualifying exam. The qualifying examination will take the form of a written take-home examination followed by an oral examination and will be based on the reading lists for the core courses in the major and minor field. Normally the examination will involve three questions based on the major field of study and two questions from the minor field.
- A thesis
Each candidate will be required to write and submit a thesis on the research carried out by the candidate on a topic approved by the Advisory Committee. The thesis is expected to be a significant contribution to knowledge in its field and the candidate must indicate in what ways it is a contribution. A thesis is expected to be no less than 200 double-spaced pages in length. The thesis must demonstrate mature scholarship and critical judgement on the part of the candidate, and it must indicate an ability to express oneself in a satisfactory literary style. Approval of the thesis is taken to imply that it is judged to be sufficiently meritorious to warrant publication in reputable scholarly media in the field.

Collaborative Specializations

International Development Studies

The Department of Political Science participates in the MA in International Development Studies (IDS) collaborative specialization. Please consult the International Development Studies (calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/collaborative-specializations/international-development-studies/) listing for a detailed description

of the MA collaborative specialization including the special additional requirements for each of the participating departments.

IDS graduates hold positions in government in Canada and abroad with NGOs, international organizations and private consultancies. Many also enter PhD programs.

The Department of Political Science also participates in the PhD collaborative specialization in International Development Studies (IDS), which provides an opportunity to engage in interdisciplinary study of international development issues. Applications are part of the general PhD application, and go directly to the Political Science Department. In addition to the Political Science PhD requirements, IDS applicants are expected to have a strong background in the social sciences, a demonstrable track record of experience in the course-based study of development issues, development research and/or development practice and a stated research interest relating to international development. The IDS designation also requires two core courses in international development theory and research methods. Please consult the International Development Studies listing for more information about the requirements and expectations of the PhD collaborative specialization in IDS.

One Health

The Department of Political Science participates in the collaborative specialization in One Health. Master’s and Doctoral students wishing to undertake thesis research or their major research paper/project with an emphasis on one health are eligible to apply to register concurrently in Political Science and the collaborative specialization. Students should consult the One Health (calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/collaborative-specializations/one-health/) listing for more information.

Sexualities, Genders and Bodies

The Political Science program participates in the collaborative specialization in Sexualities, Genders and Bodies. MA and PhD students wishing to undertake thesis research or write their major research paper in the area of sexualities, genders and bodies are eligible to apply to register concurrently in Political Science and the collaborative specialization. Students should consult the Sexualities, Genders and Bodies (<https://calendar.uoguelph.ca/graduate-calendar/collaborative-specializations/sexualities-genders-and-bodies/>) listing for more information.

Courses

A number of graduate courses are cross-listed with intensive, senior undergraduate seminars. In these cross-listed offerings, which are identified as such in the course descriptions, course and grading expectations will be tailored to graduate students.

Students should also consult the fourth year undergraduate course selection. Graduate students, with the approval of the instructor and the Graduate Program Coordinator, may take a fourth year undergraduate course in the Political Science Department. This course is taken as POLS*6950 Specialized Topics in Political Studies. Course requirements are modified so that they are comparable to other courses offered at the graduate level.

POLS*6050 The Politics of Identity Unspecified [0.50]

This course engages theoretical approaches of identity and identity politics in the global north and/or south. Topics may include contestation over indigenous, racial, ethnic, cultural, sexual, gender, and women's rights.

Offering(s): Annually

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6120 Theories of International Relations Unspecified [0.50]

This course examines Western and non-Western theories of international relations, such as realism, liberalism, and constructivism, as well as Marxist, critical, indigenous and gender approaches. It will engage with established and emerging theories, exploring contestation and debates within the discipline.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6130 Rights and Public Policy Unspecified [0.50]

Students will study how individual rights can be restricted, protected or expanded through public policy, and how rights considerations and discourse may shape policy and the policy process.

Offering(s): Annually

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6150 Constitutionalism and Judicial Politics Unspecified [0.50]

This course investigates how the constitution and the judiciary affect political processes and decision-making, and how politics shape constitutions and judicial process. Canadian or comparative examples will be examined.

Offering(s): Annually

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6160 Multi-Level Governance in Canada Unspecified [0.50]

This course considers the evolving relationship among levels of government in Canada. The growth of cities, the growth of policy responsibilities of provinces, the influence of international organizations, and the development of Indigenous governments in Canada all challenge the conventional study of federal-provincial relations in Canada. From year to year, this course examines one or several of these contemporary dynamics. Offered in conjunction with POLS*4160. Extra work is required for graduate students.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of POLS*4160 or POLS*6160

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6170 Courts and Parliament Unspecified [0.50]

The course critically examines the complex relationship between the judiciary and representative institutions. By comparing the treatment of current political controversies (assisted suicide, prostitution, drug treatment), students will better appreciate the often-subtle exchanges between the two institutions and further enhance their research abilities in regards to both legal and legislative processes. Offered in conjunction with POLS*4070. Extra work is required for graduate students.

Offering(s): Annually

Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of POLS*4070 or POLS*6170

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6180 Women, Justice and Public Policy Unspecified [0.50]

This course will use gender-based analysis in examining a series of justice and public policy issues affecting the lives of women, including equality rights, pay and employment equity, domestic violence, sexual assault, family policy, health care policy, and pornography. Offered in conjunction with POLS*4100. Extra work is required for graduate students.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of POLS*4100 or POLS*6180

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6200 Law and Politics Unspecified [0.50]

This course explores advanced topics in law and politics depending on the interests of the instructor. Potential topics include investigating the law and politics of social change or analyzing debates about the political power of courts in Canada or in comparative perspectives. Offered in conjunction with POLS*4050. Extra work is required for graduate students.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of POLS*4050 or POLS*6200

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6210 Conceptions of Canada Unspecified [0.50]

This course will explore evolving conceptions of Canadian identity and nationalism through consideration of political culture, institutions and constitutional arrangements. Possible topics include: multiculturalism, aboriginal identity and community, Quebec nationalism, social citizenship, rights and representation, as well as Canada's global role and significance.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6380 State-Building and Regime Change Unspecified [0.50]

Students will explore theories of states, regimes, state-building, regime change, and democratization. The course critically engages dominant debates and reviews empirical examples.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6390 Resource Scarcity and Conflict Unspecified [0.50]

This course examines domestic, international and global dimensions of environmental governance and resource conflict, as well as stakeholder perspectives on resource politics. Topics may include climate change; the resource curse; commodity production, trade and consumption; food and human security; political ecology and extractive industries.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6400 Citizenship and Social Policy Unspecified [0.50]

Students will study citizenship and the allocation of social goods through social policies. Normative debates, theoretical frameworks, and empirical perspectives in a range of social policy fields - such as health care, pensions, childcare, education, and housing - may be examined.

Offering(s): Annually

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6500 Qualitative and Quantitative Data**Analysis Unspecified [0.50]**

This course introduces both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. Students will engage theoretical material on the subject and develop data analysis skills through practice.

Offering(s): Annually

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6510 Political Participation and Engagement Unspecified [0.50]

Students will study how individual citizens engage in the political process. Informal channels such as social movements or more formal organizations such as interest groups and political parties may be examined.

Offering(s): Annually

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6520 International Political Economy Unspecified [0.50]

The course relies on theoretical approaches in IPE to examine relationships between politics and economics across national and regional levels. The evolution of the global political economy and its governance structures is explored, as well as contemporary debates about globalization and state and non-state actors' responses. Issue-areas may include: money and power, technology, trade, development and the environment. Offered in conjunction with POLS*4200. Extra work is required for graduate students.

Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of POLS*4200 or POLS*6520

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6530 Human Rights, Ethics and Development Unspecified [0.50]

This course will examine the political and ethical consequences of adopting a human rights framework in national and international contexts by both state and non-state actors. This subject will be explored from a range of historical, theoretical and practical perspectives. Offered in conjunction with POLS*4300. Extra work is required for graduate students.

Offering(s): Annually

Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of POLS*4300 or POLS*6530

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6540 Topics in Comparative Politics Unspecified [0.50]

This course considers theories and problems in comparative politics and government in developing and industrialized countries. The geographical and theoretical focus of the course will reflect the interests of the instructor. Offered in conjunction with POLS*4710. Extra work is required for graduate students.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of POLS*4710 or POLS*6540

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6550 Topics in Public Management Unspecified [0.50]

This course will examine various topics related to governance, such as public management reform, public sector leadership, third sector organizations or budgeting and human resources. Offered in conjunction with POLS*4250. Extra work is required for graduate students.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of POLS*4250 or POLS*6550

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6560 Topics in Public Policy Unspecified [0.50]

This course will examine various public policy issues such as social policy or health care policy in a Canadian or comparative context. Offered in conjunction with POLS*4260. Extra work is required for graduate students.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of POLS*4260 or POLS*6560

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6570 International Relations of the Middle East Unspecified [0.50]

This course is designed as an advanced introduction to the international relations of the Middle East. The course focuses on theories of international relations and their applicability to specific case studies of Middle Eastern politics. The course provides a critical examination of conflicts in the region, and contextualizes those conflicts within both realist and neo-realist theories of international relations. Offered in conjunction with POLS*4730. Extra work is required for graduate students.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of POLS*4730 or POLS*6570

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6580 Topics in International Relations Unspecified [0.50]

This course considers theories and problems in the field of International Relations. The theoretical and/or geographical focus of the course will reflect the interests of the instructor. Offered in conjunction with POLS*4720. Extra work is required for graduate students.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of POLS*4720 or POLS*6580

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6590 Advanced Topics in Rights and Liberties Unspecified [0.50]

The course explores rights and liberties from various perspectives depending on the interests of the instructor. Potential topics include exploring the political, social, and legal factors and theories that explain the development of rights and liberties; rights and liberties in a comparative and international context; or the philosophical and policy debates surrounding rights and liberties. Offered in conjunction with POLS*4740. Extra work is required for graduate students.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Restriction(s): Credit may be obtained for only one of POLS*4740 or POLS*6590

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6630 Approaches to Public Policy Analysis Unspecified [0.50]

This course introduces students to the main theoretical approaches utilized in understanding public policy making and outcomes. Throughout the course, particular attention is paid to varying conceptions of institutions, ideas and interest and the role of these conceptions in various explanations of policy change and stasis.

Offering(s): Annually

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6640 Canadian Public Administration: Public Sector Management Unspecified [0.50]

This course examines the growth of the administrative state in Canada, especially in the post World War II period. It critically reviews issues such as the concept of public sector management, the delegation of authority, personnel management, accountability and the ethics of ministers and officials to Parliament and the public.

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6730 Development and Global Justice Unspecified [0.50]

Students will study Western and non-Western theoretical perspectives on the politics of development and global justice. Topics may include human rights and development, global inequality, environmental justice, indigenous politics, humanitarian ethics, intercultural competency, and faith-based development.

Offering(s): Annually

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6820 PhD Field Course in Canadian Politics Unspecified [0.50]

Students will help to identify and critically engage with key scholarship in the field of Canadian Politics. The course will provide a breadth of understanding of the field, but a portion of the Canadian reading list can be tailored to the student's particular interests.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6830 PhD Field Course in Comparative Politics Unspecified [0.50]

Students will help to identify and critically engage with key scholarship in the field of Comparative Politics. The course will provide a breadth of understanding of the field, but a portion of the reading list can be tailored to the student's particular interests.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6840 PhD Field Course in Gender, Race, Indigeneity, and Sexuality Unspecified [0.50]

Students will help to identify and critically engage with key scholarship relating to Gender, Race, Indigeneity and Sexuality. The course will provide a breadth of understanding of the field, but a portion of the reading list can be tailored to the student's particular interests.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6850 PhD Field Course in International Relations Unspecified [0.50]

Students will help to identify and critically engage with key scholarship relating to International Relations. The course will provide a breadth of understanding of the field, but a portion of the reading list can be tailored to the student's particular interests.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6860 PhD Field Course in Law and Politics Unspecified [0.50]

Students will help to identify and critically engage with key scholarship relating to Law and Politics. The course will provide a breadth of understanding of the field, but a portion of the reading list can be tailored to the student's particular interests.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6870 PhD Field Course in Public Policy and Governance Unspecified [0.50]

Students will help to identify and critically engage with key scholarship relating to Public Policy and Governance. The course will provide a breadth of understanding of the field, but a portion of the reading list can be tailored to the student's particular interests.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6900 Communications Fall and Winter Reg Required [0.25]

This course trains students in crucial academic skills, in particular writing and presentation skills. Some course elements may be offered through workshops in conjunction with other units, such as the Learning Commons.

Offering(s): Annually

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6940 Research Design and Methods Unspecified [0.75]

This course focuses on the elements of designing and writing a research question and proposal. It examines the principles of research design and research ethics, and surveys the strengths and weaknesses of a variety of methods of data collection.

Offering(s): Annually

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6950 Specialized Topics in Political Studies Unspecified [0.50]

This course is intended to be an elective course for students wishing to pursue an area of investigation not covered in the other courses offered by the department. This course may also be chosen by students who want to further pursue a subject area to which they were introduced in a previous course.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6960 Directed Readings Unspecified [0.50]

This is an elective course for students wishing to pursue an area of investigation not covered in other courses offered by the department. This course may also be chosen by students who want to further pursue a subject area to which they were introduced in a previous course.

Offering(s): Occasional years

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph

POLS*6970 Major Paper Unspecified [1.00]

The major paper is an extensive research paper for those who do not elect to complete a thesis. It may be taken over two semesters. The length of the major paper is not to exceed 10,000 words.

Department(s): Department of Political Science

Location(s): Guelph