

## **Graduate Study Applications & Admissions: FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) -**

### ***Do I really have to take the GRE? Can I use my LSAT scores instead?***

GRE scores are required for every applicant. Scores must not be more than 5 years old. Other test scores cannot be substituted.

### ***What GRE scores and GPAs are necessary for admission?***

The Graduate Studies Committee considers all elements of the application when deciding admission. While GREs and GPAs are a very important part of the total application package, a range of GRE scores and GPAs have recently been admitted. Recently admitted students have had an average GRE score of around 600(or 148 on newer exam scale)for the quantitative section, 550(156 on newer exam scale)for the verbal section, and 5.0 (or 87%)for the analytical section. Recently admitted students have had an average GPA around 3.5.

### ***What are my chances for funding?***

You are guaranteed consideration of funding only if you meet the January application deadline. Current students interested in funding, must fill out the Application for Teaching Assistantship, available from the department. Each year, the Department of Political Science funds approximately 13 graduate students as Graduate Teaching Assistants - typically 2-4 of these students are new, incoming students. The Department also nominates its best applicants for University Fellowships and Scholarships, but these are university-wide and competitive. Other research assistant and dissertation fellowship opportunities are available for advanced students in our program.

### ***If I do not have a M.A. in Political Science, can I apply directly to the Ph.D. program?***

A M.A. in Political Science from an accredited U.S. institution, is a requirement for the Ph.D. You can signal your intention of pursuing a Ph.D. by applying for the Ph.D. degree, but it will be necessary to complete a M.A. on the way toward the Ph.D. Coursework in the KU Master's program is applied to the course requirements for the KU Ph.D. If you already hold a M.A. in Political Science from an accredited U.S. institution or its equivalent, you should apply directly to the Ph.D. program.

### ***Will my previous graduate coursework transfer to the KU program?***

Our M.A. program allows you to count up to six hours outside the Political Science Department (including outside KU) toward the requirements. For the Ph.D. program, courses taken elsewhere that are similar in content and approach to our courses may be applied to some course requirements, although there is a limit on the number of allowable outside courses per subfield. These must be approved by the student's advisor and the Graduate Director and must not jeopardize the student's preparation for the comprehensive exams.

### ***How long will it take me to complete my degree?***

The time it takes a student to complete a graduate degree varies and depends on the number of courses taken per semester and the student's research interests. Typically, our students complete the MA degree in two years, although it is possible to complete it more quickly. The average time for our doctoral students to complete their degree is 4.9 years. Students with an MA from

KU or an equivalent program tend to finish sooner than those entering the Ph.D. program directly.

***Can I still apply for fall admission if I have missed the January and April deadlines?***

The Department of Political Science only guarantees consideration of applications if they meet the January and April deadlines and are for fall semester admission. Non-degree seeking applications for spring semester admissions will be considered only if they are complete and are made well in advance of the spring semester.

***If I am already in the M.A. program at KU, how do I apply for the Ph.D. program?***

If you are a current M.A. student at KU, you do not have to make a formal application. Please see the Director of Graduate Studies for details on your application process. If you already completed the KU M.A. and are no longer a student, you must go through the normal application process.

***What can I do with an M.A. or a Ph.D. in political science?***

Individuals with graduate degrees in political science have mastered a wide range of analytical, writing, and research skills and can pursue careers in federal, state and local governments, law, business, international organizations, publishing, nonprofit associations and organizations, campaign management and polling, journalism, and precollegiate education. Political science PhDs are also eligible for research and teaching positions in universities and colleges.

Recent graduates from our M.A. program have found a variety of types of employment (at the U.S. State Department and in the Kansas state government, for example). Many others have successfully continued their academic studies in doctoral programs (at, for example, Kansas, Harvard, Minnesota, Ohio State, and Wisconsin). We have also had good success placing our Ph.D. students in recent years at a number of public and private academic institutions (such as University of California State-Chico, Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, Northern Illinois, Midwestern State, Northern Alabama, Wichita State, Southeast Missouri State, University of North Carolina-Charlotte, and University of Wisconsin-La Crosse). Ph.D. students have also secured jobs in the private and public sectors (such as in the Department of Defense).

For other questions, please consult other sections of this website or contact the Graduate Studies Coordinator ([gradpols@ku.edu](mailto:gradpols@ku.edu)) or the Graduate Director, Mark Joslyn ([mjoz@ku.edu](mailto:mjoz@ku.edu))