

**The Masters of Arts Program in Politics  
The Wilf Family Department of Politics  
Graduate School of Arts & Science  
New York University**

**Student Handbook**

*Last Revised August 2018*

Welcome to the Wilf Family Department of Politics. We are happy that you have decided to join us and we are committed to making your experience at New York University rewarding and productive.

The Master of Arts in Politics is a terminal master's degree. The curriculum is designed to expose students to substantive knowledge and scholarly research in political science in order to help students develop critical thinking, analytical, research, and writing skills. Our MA program offers foundational training in the study of politics, and we are committed to providing our students with both practical skills and sound theoretical knowledge. Alumni of the program have embarked on successful professional careers in government and the public sector, non-profits, and the private sector, while others have gone on to pursue a Ph.D. in political science or other related fields.

The faculty who teach in the MA Program in Politics include both full-time and part-time faculty of the Department of Politics. Many of our faculty are leaders in their field, and their research is influential in contemporary political science. Members of the part-time faculty bring their own real-world experience to the classroom. Our curriculum and courses will expose you to a broad range of what political science entails and to different methodological approaches.

This handbook is designed to provide you with the necessary information concerning degree requirements and departmental policies and procedures. Please note that GSAS and University rules and regulations supersede this handbook.

**MA Program Contact Information**

The MA program offices are located in the Department of Politics, 19 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor.

MA Program Director:      Professor Nicole Simonelli  
   Room 215  
   (212) 992-8084  
   nicole.simonelli@nyu.edu

Graduate Program  
Administrative Aide:      Carlos Rios

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Room 202  
(212) 998-8530  
carlos.rios@nyu.edu

You can also send any questions to [politics.masters@nyu.edu](mailto:politics.masters@nyu.edu).

### Master of Arts in Politics

The Masters of Arts in Politics is a terminal master's degree program. The department offers four fields of study: political philosophy and theory, American politics, political economy, and comparative politics. The MA in Politics is a 36-credit program. Most students attending on a full-time basis typically complete the program in a year and a half to two years. A full-time course load consists of 12 credits.

#### *MA Degree Requirements*

**Course Requirements:** Students are required to pursue a total of 36 points (credits) consisting of the following: eight courses (32 points); an internship and corresponding supervision course (2 points); and a Master's Thesis and corresponding seminar (2 points). The course work must consist of the core course in the student's major field of study, three additional courses in the major field of study, and a core course in a second field. The internship seminar may be substituted with a 2-point reading and research course approved by the MA Program Director.

Course requirements are as follows:

Major Field Core Course	4 points
<i>Political Philosophy and Theory</i> : History of Political and Social Thought (POL-GA 1100)	
<i>American Politics</i> : American Politics Theories and Arguments (POL-GA 1300)	
<i>Political Economy</i> : Political Economy (POL-GA 1400)	
<i>Comparative Politics</i> : Comparative Politics (POL-GA 1500)	
Three additional courses in major field	12 points
Second core course	4 points
Electives	12 points
Internship Seminar (POL-GA 3995) or Reading and Research (POL-GA 3991)	2 points
Master's Thesis Seminar, POL-GA 4000	2 points
Total	36 points

**Foreign Language Requirement:** Students must demonstrate proficiency in one language other than English, or with permission of the MA Program Director, in statistics.

Students demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language by passing the GSAS foreign language proficiency examination or by completing a fourth semester (intermediate-level) undergraduate foreign language course with a grade of B or better during the MA program or no less than two years prior to commencing their studies in the MA program. Students demonstrate competency in statistics by completing Quantitative Analysis II (POL-GA 2127) with a grade of B or better.

A student can petition to waive the foreign language requirement if he/she is a foreign national whose first language is not English.

**Master's Thesis and Master's Thesis Seminar:** Students must complete a Master's Thesis in conjunction with the Master's Thesis Seminar course. The thesis is a heavily researched academic paper consisting of 10,000-15,000 words related to an important and timely topic in politics related to a student's chosen field of study. The MA Thesis may be an original research project or may develop from a previous seminar paper. If the thesis develops from an existing research paper, it must be distinct enough and expanded, in terms of scope and depth, from the original paper.

The thesis should demonstrate that a student has a sufficient command of the literature and arguments pertaining to the chosen topic. The thesis allows the student to demonstrate his or her ability to undertake and complete independent research and analysis and present that research in a form suitable to the rules and conventions of the academic community.

The MA Thesis must be sponsored and supervised by a relevant faculty member. In conjunction with the MA Program Director and/or the thesis seminar instructor, students choose a faculty thesis supervisor. Students should select their thesis topic in consultation with their thesis supervisor. When appropriate, and with the approval of the MA Program Director, students may choose an advisor outside of the Department of Politics, as long as the advisor is a member of the NYU faculty and has the knowledge and/or expertise that may exceed that of the members of regular faculty in the MA Politics program. Once a thesis topic and supervisor are designated, the MA Program Director must approve any changes to them.

The MA Thesis requires the approval of two faculty members. Once the thesis supervisor has read and approved the thesis, the student may submit the thesis for review. The thesis deadline is established three times per academic year (May, August, and December). Once the thesis is submitted, the MA Program Director selects a second reader for the thesis. The thesis can receive a high pass, a low pass, or not be approved. If the thesis does not pass, the student may revise and resubmit the thesis the following semester. If the revised thesis does not pass after the second submission, the student has one final opportunity to revise and resubmit the thesis. Failure to pass the thesis on the third attempt may result in termination from the program.

The Master's Thesis Seminar provides students with the necessary support and structure to research and write their theses. Students enroll in the thesis seminar during their final semester of study.

**Internships and Internship Seminar:** The internship component is designed to provide students with practical experience in occupational fields related to a Master's degree in politics. The department recognizes the importance that internships play in the educational and professional development of our students and encourages MA students to complete an internship.

For academic credit, the internship requires at least 120 hours of work with an approved organization or agency. The requirement may be fulfilled during the fall or spring semester or during the summer. Per GSAS policy, internship duties may not exceed 20 hours per week during the Fall and Spring academic semesters. An internship requiring more than 20 hours per week must be approved in advance by the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs. Full-time internships are permitted during the summer.

In order to be eligible for academic credit, an internship must be related to a degree in Politics and comply with the "GSAS Policy on Internships for Academic Credit." As such, the internship requires onsite supervision and written evaluation. The internship may be paid or unpaid. The internship must be completed in the United States; exceptions to this require approval of the MA Program Director. Web-based internships are not permissible for academic credit.

Upon securing an internship, the student should have their on-site supervisor complete the "Internship Application Form." The form is to be returned to the MA Program Director. The student must also register their internship through NYU Wasserman Center's CareerNet. Upon completion of the internship, the "Internship Evaluation Form" should be submitted by the internship supervisor to the MA Program Director.

International students planning to complete an internship should contact NYU's Office of Global Services (OGS). Any questions pertaining to Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT) should be directed to OGS.

While completing an internship, students simultaneously enroll in the 2-credit internship supervision course. After enrolling in the course, the student should meet with the MA Program Director to discuss the learning objectives and goals of the internship. In order to receive a grade for the internship course, the "Internship Evaluation Form" must be turned in and the student must submit a final paper. Please see the "Policy and Instructions for Internships for Academic Credit" for further information on the paper.

As previously stated, the internship may be substituted with a 2-credit reading and research course with the approval of the MA Program Director.

## **MA Politics Program Policies and Procedures**

### *Standards of Academic Standing*

**In Good Standing:** To remain in good standing, students must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in course work for the master's degree and maintain a completion

rate of two thirds of points attempted at NYU. Courses with grades of I, N, W, and F are not considered successfully completed.

**Time to Degree:** GSAS mandates specific time limits in which students must complete their degrees. A master's degree must be completed within 5 calendar years of the date of first enrollment in the MA program.

**Academic Probation:** Students who have not maintained a grade point average of 3.0 or better, who have not met a satisfactory completion rate, or who are not within their time to degree will be placed on academic probation. The department will provide written notification of probationary status to the student. The notification will include the specific steps that must be taken to correct the circumstances of the probation and the timeline for doing so. A student on academic probation who does not satisfy the stated terms for returning to good standing may be formally terminated from the program. Students may appeal academic probation or termination by the process outlined in the GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual.

**Incomplete Grades:** An incomplete grade (I) reverts to an F grade one year from the beginning of the semester in which the course was taken. Students are responsible for submitting work for a course in which an incomplete grade was received to the course instructor with ample time for the work to be graded and a grade posted.

Students in the MA Program in Politics may not have more than two incomplete grades on their transcript at any one time. A student cannot graduate with an "I" on their record.

At the request of the MA Program Director and with the approval of the course instructor, the Office of the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs will review a request for an extension of an incomplete grade. The student must complete the "Request for Approval of Extension of Incomplete Grade" form and submit it to the Graduate Administrative Aide. The request must be submitted before the end of one year from the beginning of the semester in which the course was taken.

### ***Transfer Credits***

Admitted students can transfer up to nine graduate level credits from an accredited institution. Credits are transferred point for point (e.g. a three credit course at another institution is only granted three credits at NYU). Eligible courses must have a grade of B or better, must be relevant to political science, and must not have counted towards a degree that has already been awarded (whether an undergraduate or graduate degree). Transferred courses cannot be substituted for departmental core courses. Transfer of credit for courses older than ten years is not allowed.

Requests to transfer credits earned prior to matriculation in the program must be made within the first year of enrollment. All requests must be accompanied by an official transcript, and translation if necessary, from the institution where the credit was earned. If the request is for graduate credits earned while the student was enrolled in an undergraduate program, the

transcript must explicitly state that the credits were not used towards the undergraduate degree or be accompanied by a letter from the undergraduate institution stating that the credits were not used towards the undergraduate degree.

International transfer credit is awarded in accordance with the current guidelines regarding equivalency as determined by Graduate Enrollment Services.

Students may transfer credits for courses taken at another institution while matriculated at NYU as long as the MA Program Director has given written approval for the course(s) to be transferred in prior to the student's enrollment in those courses. Such approval is only given in extenuating circumstances.

Students previously enrolled in a different program at NYU may exceed the 9 credit limit with the approval of the MA Program Director and within the guidelines stated above.

The NYU Office of the Registrar has final authority to approve credit transfers. The MA Program Director only approves the transfer in terms of the content matter or the course. The department will notify the student of the outcome of the request.

### ***Advisement and Course Registration***

The department mandates that every MA student have an academic faculty advisor. The MA Program Director will assign an advisor prior to the start of the student's first semester. Each student should meet with their MA program advisor every semester to discuss and agree on a course of study.

**Registration:** Newly matriculated students in the program may not register for courses until after their initial advising session with their faculty advisor. Continuing students should consult with their advisor prior to registration to ensure that they are fulfilling degree requirements.

Registration for courses is done via ALBERT. Students should consult the University Registrar's "Registration Calendar" for relevant registration dates. Students cannot register for more than 12 credits via Albert. Registration for more than 12 credits is done through the Graduate Administrative Aide.

Students are responsible for following the registration calendar provided for each semester by the University Registrar, including deadlines for adding and dropping classes and withdrawing from courses.

**Reading & Research:** Students may register for a "Reading & Research" course (i.e. an independent study) with the permission of the MA Program Director. Before registering for the course, the student must have a faculty sponsor for the reading and research course and an agreed upon description of the research to be conducted in conjunction with the course and what work will be submitted for evaluation. The student should then submit the "Application for Reading and Research" form to the Graduate Administrative Aide.

**PhD Courses:** MA students may register for courses listed as “PhD/MA” on the MA course schedule. Students may register for courses listed as “PhD/MA with permission” after consultation with their faculty advisor and with the permission of the course instructor. The faculty advisor will make sure the student has met any prerequisites and has the appropriate background for the course.

**Non-Politics Courses:** MA students may take up to eight graduate-level credits outside of the Department of Politics. If interested in a non-Politics course, the student should discuss with his or her faculty advisor whether the course is appropriate for the MA degree. Courses in other departments may require the approval of the course instructor. Please note that some NYU schools follow different registration procedures and calendars than GSAS. Courses outside of the department may also have varying credit.

**Additional Credits:** Students may not exceed the 36 required credits without the permission of the MA Program Director.

**Withdrawal from a Course:** If a student withdraws from a course in the first two weeks of the semester, a grade of W will not appear on the student’s transcript. If a student withdraws from a course after the second week through the ninth week of the semester, a grade of W will appear on the student’s transcript. Students may not withdraw from a course after the ninth week of the semester. Any tuition refund will be in accordance with the refund schedule published by the Bursar’s Office.

**Retaking Courses:** A student may not retake a course in which they received a grade other than F.

### *Enrollment*

MA students must maintain continuous enrollment in the program from the time of matriculation until graduation. Students must enroll in the program each fall and spring semester until the degree is granted.

**Maintenance of Matriculation:** Students who have completed their MA coursework must maintain continuous enrollment until receiving their degree. MA students maintain matriculation by registering for MAINT-GA 4747.001. Payment of matriculation fees entitles students to use the libraries and other University facilities, consult with members of the faculty, and participate in University activities. Matriculation must be maintained through the semester in which students receive their MA degree.

A student who has not attempted enough credits for the degree may only enroll in Maintenance of Matriculation with approval of the MA Program Director and the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs. These semesters count towards the time to degree limit.

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**Readmission:** Any student who has not enrolled for two or more consecutive semesters, excluding summer, is considered to have withdrawn from the University and must apply for readmission to GSAS. Requests for readmission are submitted through the MA Program Director and must be approved by the Office of Academic and Student Affairs. All lapsed semesters count towards the five year time to degree limit.

**Full-Time Equivalency:** Students must be enrolled in at least 12 credits of coursework in any fall or spring semester. Students registering for less than 12 credits in a given semester may request full-time equivalency with the permission of the MA Program Director. To qualify for full-time equivalency, a student must be working on research, an internship and/or coursework totaling 40 hours per week for the duration of the fall or spring semester or entirety of the summer. Students will be granted full-time equivalency in their final semester if they need less than 12 credits to complete the requirements of the program (for example, only the MA Thesis Seminar is remaining). International students on an F-1 visa must be enrolled full-time or have full-time equivalency.

Full-time equivalency must be entered no later than the end of the third week of the semester. The maximum time allowed for full-time status and equivalence for Master's students is three years. Part-time students do not need full-time equivalency.

**Leave of Absence:** A student in good standing who is obliged to withdraw temporarily for national service, serious illness, compelling personal reasons, such as a serious family or legal crisis, or parental leave related to childbirth and newborn care may request a leave of absence.

A student who wishes to obtain a leave of absence must submit a written request explaining the circumstances of his or her request to the MA Program Director. The student should include supporting documentation when applicable such as a doctor's recommendation or evidence of military service. If the department approves the request, the department will send a Leave of Absence Request Form along with supporting documents to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs. The final decision is made by GSAS. Students should not initiate the term withdrawal on Albert until instructed to do so by the Graduate Administrative Aide. International students must contact the Office of Global Services upon receiving a leave of absence.

A leave of absence can be approved for up to one year, except in cases of compulsive military service, in which case the leave would be for the duration of the service. A leave of absence does not count towards time to degree. A student on an official leave of absence does not enroll, does not accrue fees, is not eligible for full- or half-time equivalency, may not use University resources, and may not enroll in any other university for the purpose of transferring credits towards their NYU degree.

**Conferral of Degrees:** MA degrees are conferred in September (summer term), January (fall term), and May (spring term) of each year. GSAS convocation and University commencement ceremonies take place in May. Participation in convocation and/or commencement ceremonies is not the equivalent of earning the degree.



### ***Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty***

Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct are unacceptable behaviors and will be addressed accordingly. Plagiarism involves taking credit for someone else's work, whether one intended to or not. Among other things, plagiarism includes taking a phrase, sentence or passage from another writer's work without using quotation marks, as well as taking another's ideas without referencing the source of the idea.

In cases of cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct, the disciplinary process is initiated at the departmental level. If a student cheats or engages in plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct, the faculty member with knowledge of the facts shall file a complaint with the MA Program Director and the Department Chair. The MA Program Director will provide notice of the filing of the complaint to the student within two working days of receipt of the complaint. The MA Program Director will meet with the student, describe the complaint, and offer the student an opportunity to respond. The student shall be informed of his or her right to accept or reject a departmental resolution. After considering all relevant information, the MA Program Director will inform the student of the terms upon which the Department is willing to resolve the matter, including the imposition of a sanction where appropriate. Where the student agrees in writing to the terms of the departmental resolution, a binding consensual resolution shall exist between GSAS and the student. Where the complaint is not resolved by consensual resolution, the department will forward the complaint to the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs for referral to the FAS Committee on Discipline. Please refer to the GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual for further information.

### ***Other Forms of Misconduct***

In cases of other forms of misconduct, as discussed in the GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual, a complaint will be filed with the GSAS Assistant Director of Student Affairs by the department.

### ***Grievance procedure***

Students who wish to file a grievance may do so in writing with the MA Program Director. If the grievance is not resolved, the matter will be referred in writing to the Department Chair. Grievances not resolved at the departmental level are adjudicated either within GSAS or at the University level. Please refer to the GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual for grievance rules.

## **Directory of Important NYU Offices**

***Graduate School of Arts & Sciences***

<http://gsas.nyu.edu/>

**GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual**

<https://gsas.nyu.edu/content/nyu-as/gsas/about-gsas/policies-and-procedures/policies-and-procedures-manual-and-forms.html>

**GSAS Graduate Enrollment Services**

One-half Fifth Avenue

(212) 998-8050

[gsas.admissions@nyu.edu](mailto:gsas.admissions@nyu.edu)

**GSAS Office of Student and Academic Affairs**

6 Washington Square North, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

(212) 998- 8060

Academic Affairs: [gsas.academicaffairs@nyu.edu](mailto:gsas.academicaffairs@nyu.edu)

Student Affairs: [gsas.studentaffairs@nyu.edu](mailto:gsas.studentaffairs@nyu.edu)

**GSAS Office of the Master's College**

One-half Fifth Avenue

(212) 992- 7960

[gsas.masterscollege@nyu.edu](mailto:gsas.masterscollege@nyu.edu)

<http://gsas.nyu.edu/content/nyu-as/gsas/student-life/the-masters-college.html>

***Office of Global Services (OGS)***

561 LaGuardia Place

(212) 998- 4720

<https://www.nyu.edu/students/student-information-and-resources/student-visa-and-immigration.html>

***Office of the University Registrar***

25 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street

(212) 998-4800

<http://www.nyu.edu/registrar/>

***Office of the Bursar***

25 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street

(212) 998-2806

<http://www.nyu.edu/bursar/>

***Office of Financial Aid***

25 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street

(212) 998-4444

[financial.aid@nyu.edu](mailto:financial.aid@nyu.edu)

<http://www.nyu.edu/admissions/financial-aid-and-scholarships.html>

***Student Health Center***

726 Broadway, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Floors

(212) 443-1000

[health.center@nyu.edu](mailto:health.center@nyu.edu)

<http://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-wellness/student-health-center.html>

***Wasserman Center for Career Development***

133 East 13<sup>th</sup> Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor

(212) 998-4730

[career.development@nyu.edu](mailto:career.development@nyu.edu)

<http://www.nyu.edu/life/resources-and-services/career-development.html>