

Duke University  
Department of Political Science

JD-MA Degree  
August, 2005

The joint JD-MA degree (hereinafter JD/MA) program in political science is designed as a terminal degree program for which continuous Graduate School registration must be maintained. Continued registration requires actually registering for at least one (1) graduate credit for each semester of residence, e.g., Continuation.

The Political Science Program consists of registering for a total of eight (8) graded courses (24 graduate credits) in Political Science, and six (6) research credits for which one (1) or two (2) graded graduate courses may be substituted. Research credits are for internal billing purposes and do not carry academic obligations. Four (4) of the graded graduate courses (12 graduate credits) are also counted by the Law School to reduce from 84 to 72 the number of Law credits needed to satisfy the requirements of the JD degree. Of the eight (8) Political Science courses, all must be at the graduate level and numbered 201 – 399, unless two (2) such courses are deemed by the Director of Graduate Studies (hereinafter DGS), or by a designated faculty member, to be skill courses in which case they may be numbered below 201 in Political Science or below 200 in other Arts and Sciences departments.

Four (4) of the eight (8) courses must be seminars. Four (4) must constitute the student's primary field and cluster in one of the four major sub-fields of political science (American Politics (A), Comparative Politics (B), Political Theory: Normative (C-N) or Empirical (C-E), and/or International Relations (D)); two (2) graduate courses that constitute a secondary field must cluster in another sub-field of the

discipline; at least two (2) electives may be selected from among graduate courses offered in any of the sub-fields.

The eight (8) graduate courses taken to satisfy the requirements of the M.A. degree will ordinarily originate in the Political Science Department, but related elective graduate courses may originate in another Arts and Sciences department, but they may not originate in a professional school (Law, Fuqua, Medical, etc.) unless the course is cross-listed with an Arts and Sciences department. Unless a Law course is cross-listed with an Arts & Sciences department, it may not count toward both the J.D. and the M.A. degrees.

Skill courses, including not more than two (2) of those numbered below the graduate (200) level, or demonstrated proficiency in statistics, social science methodology, and/or foreign languages are not required of students in this joint degree program, but one or more may be deemed important and even essential to success in the program.

The DGS, or a designated faculty member, must approve all Political Science graduate courses chosen and/or substitutions (i.e., courses originating in, or cross-listed with, related Arts & Sciences departments or programs) as well as any other exceptions to the stipulated course of study noted above. All course changes must be made prior to the end of the Arts & Sciences Drop/Add period for the relevant semester.

In addition to the course requirements of the program, candidates for the terminal M.A. degree must submit a master's thesis in a form that satisfies the requirements of the Graduate School. A four-member faculty committee, including at least three (3) members of the Political Science Department, must conduct the oral

examination on the Master's Thesis. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain in a timely manner the explicit consent of each faculty member to serve on his or her Master's Committee.

This joint program is open to law students who enter the J.D. program in the summer of their First Year and who on their application for law school admission signal an intention to pursue the joint JD/MA program. In exceptional cases, a first-year law student who applies in a timely manner, in accordance with application deadlines fixed by the Graduate School and the Department (generally, before April 15 of the student's first year of study), may be considered for entry. A JD/MA candidate must satisfy all requirements of both degree programs before candidate may be awarded either degree.

Although admission to this program does not require a Graduate Records Examination score, it does require favorable action by the DGS of the Department of Political Science. Law students admitted to the joint program in common with all other M.A. candidates are not eligible for departmental financial assistance. Once admitted, JD/MA students (a) are expected to participate fully in the Department's August Orientation program for entering graduate students, and (b) must submit by May 1 of his or her first year a brief essay of not more than 500 words indicating the relevance of the courses selected to his or her study of the law together with a complete proposed course of study subject to later revision).