

Political Science

Admission Criteria and Degree Requirements

The JMU graduate school requires that prospective students submit official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate course work and GRE test scores. International students must achieve a TOEFL score of at least 550. The Department of Political Science requires that students submit a written statement of educational and professional goals, GRE writing examination scores, curriculum vita or resume, and two current letters of recommendation from professors, employers and other professionals qualified to judge the applicant's ability to complete graduate studies. Students must also submit a statement of language proficiency and a statement of policy interest.

Once admitted to the program, to remain in good academic standing students must comply with the requirements of the JMU graduate school and those imposed by the Political Science program. Students must complete the EU Policy Studies concentration in a consecutive 11-month period. Students withdrawing from the EU concentration may be permitted to re-enter the program at the same point in subsequent years. Students must meet the JMU graduate school requirement of a 3.0 GPA or higher to qualify for graduation.

Mission

The Master of Arts in Political Science program focuses on comparative and international politics. This program is designed to directly engage students in comparative and international politics via studies abroad and practical experience.

Learning Objectives

When students complete the Master of Arts in Political Science program, they should have:

- Comprehensive knowledge of the relevant subfields of political science that pertain to their area of concentration in the program.
- Comprehensive knowledge of the processes that shape politics and policies and the complex interrelationships of political, economic, cultural and ideological interests that influence them in their concentration area.
- Expertise in contemporary policy issues in political science in their concentration area including international security, immigration, human rights, environmental protection, welfare provision, health and human services, and information technology and their underlying political philosophies.
- Analytic and language skills, the ability to express themselves in written and verbal form, the ability to formulate and execute a final in-depth project or apply their learning and skills in a practical situation, and broad intercultural competence.

European Union Policy Studies Concentration

This concentration involves an intellectually rigorous program with a theoretical and practical orientation. It provides students with a comprehensive understanding of the Political Science literature on the European Union in general (its historical development, current institutions, and practices and future prospects).

The European Union concentration also places particular emphasis on public policy in three domains: economic policy, justice and social policy, and science and technology policy. Students will focus their studies on one of these policy areas. The concentration is designed as a one-year residential program based in Florence, Italy.

This concentration is intended:

- to improve understanding of the European Union as a system of governance and as a multinational actor;
- to promote awareness and understanding of the growing importance and expanding scope of the transatlantic partnership between the European Union and the United States; and
- to train students to be effective future participants in this partnership.

Concentration Requirements ¹	Credits
POSC 601. Theories of European Integration	3
POSC 602. The Politics of European Culture and Identity	3
POSC 603. Political Institutions and Policy-Making in the European Union	3
POSC 620. The EU: Contemporary Issues and Controversies	3
POSC 640. Seminar in EU Policy Analysis	6
POSC 641. Topics in Economic Policy ¹	3
POSC 642. Topics in Justice and Social Policy ¹	3
POSC 643. Topics in Science and Technology Policy ¹	3
POSC 690. Tutorial in EU Policy Studies	6
POSC 692. EU Seminar	3
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	33

¹In their area of policy specialization, students will take one course twice (with different topics) for a total of six credits.

Typical Curriculum for European Union Studies

Fall Semester ¹	Credits
POSC 601. Theories of European Integration	3
POSC 602. The Politics of European Culture and Identity	3
POSC 603. Political Institutions and Policy-Making in the European Union	3
POSC 620. The EU: Contemporary Issues and Controversies	3
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	12

Spring Semester	Credits
POSC 640. Seminar in EU Policy Analysis	6
POSC 641. Topics in Economic Policy ¹	3-6
POSC 642. Topics in Justice and Social Policy ¹	3-6
POSC 643. Topics in Science and Technology Policy ¹	3-6
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	12

¹In their area of policy specialization, students will take one course twice (with different topics) for a total of six credits.

Summer Semester	Credits
POSC 690. Tutorial in EU Policy Studies	6
POSC 692. EU Seminar	3
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	9

Course Offerings

POSC 601. Theories of European Integration. 3 credits.

This course is a comprehensive introduction to normative and empirical theories of European integration. It covers the “European visions” of historical figures and the history of European integration since World War II. The course requires intensive analysis of twentieth and twenty-first century empirical theories of integration, including neofunctionalism, intergovernmentalism, historical institutionalism, multi-level governance, constructivism and Europeanization.

POSC 602. The Politics of European Culture and Identity. 3 credits.

This course examines the dynamics of cultural identity in Europe. It canvasses alternative theoretical approaches to identity (primordialism, instrumentalism, constructivism) and addresses the interplay among sub-national, national, and supranational identities in various European states. The course also considers the ways that political actors express and modify identities in an enlarging and increasing multi-cultural Europe.

POSC 603. Political Institutions and Policy-Making in the European Union. 3 credits.

This course is a comprehensive consideration of the EU’s institutions and policy-making processes. It analyzes the various roles of the EU’s institutions and advisory bodies. It examines the ways that groups outside of the EU’s institutions—including interest groups, media outlets, non-EU states and international institutions like the Council of Europe and the World Trade Organization—affect decision making in the Union. It explains and traces the implications of the diversity of policy-making processes that characterize EU decision-making. Finally, the course engages debates about the “democratic deficit” in Europe and considers whether meaningful action can be taken to decrease the democratic deficit.

POSC 620. The EU: Contemporary Issues and Controversies. 3 credits.

This course offers a deep look into contemporary issues and debates in EU politics. The particular subject matter changes from semester to semester; contemporary issues include the EU Constitutional Treaty, enlargement to eastern Europe, relations with Turkey and EU foreign policy. Regardless of its specific focus, this course considers the historical background of the debate, the positions of different member-states and policy players, and the likely future of the issue. The course involves guest lectures from involved policy players and requires active engagement with contemporary media coverage and scholarly literature.

POSC 640. Seminar in EU Policy Analysis. 6 credits.

This course offers an intensive immersion into the methods and concepts of EU policy analysis. It introduces students to policy-analysis techniques, requires students to apply those techniques in case-based projects, and allows students to present and defend policy analyses to public audiences.

POSC 641. Topics in Economic Policy. 3 credits.

In-depth exploration of specialized topics in EU economic policy. The course involves direct contact with involved policy players. The topics for each semester will vary and may include the EU budget, taxation, industrial or competition policy, trade policy, and economic and monetary union.

POSC 642. Topics in Justice and Social Policy. 3 credits.

In-depth exploration of specialized topics in EU justice and social policy. The course involves direct contact with involved policy players. The topics for each semester will vary and may include immigration policy, asylum policy, efforts against organized crime, anti-terrorism policy, efforts against human trafficking, drugs policy, agricultural policy, regional development policy, consumer protection policy and gender equity policy.

POSC 643. Topics in Science and Technology Policy. 3 credits.

In-depth exploration of specialized topics in EU science and technology policy. The course involves direct contact with policy players. The topics for each semester will vary and may include environmental policy, biotechnology policy, health policy, energy policy, transportation policy, space policy and policies regarding the privacy of personal data.

POSC 690. Tutorial in EU Policy Studies. 6 credits.

A tutorial requiring students to pursue one of the following: a service learning project, a practicum or internship, or in-depth original research. Students integrate prior coursework and knowledge as they serve in government, NGO or business settings or develop a thesis in their policy specialization area. They are further exposed to and directly maneuver within specific EU policies and procedures.

POSC 692. EU Seminar. 3 credits.

This is the capstone seminar for the program designed to address students’ professional development. The course will integrate individual students’ experiences and give further consideration to topical issues in the European Union. It seeks to build students’ professional networks and to aid their transition into the professional realm. Course work includes speakers, roundtable discussions, research colloquia and study tours.