 

Department of Education Policy and Social Analysis

Teachers College, Columbia University

**Politics & Education Program**

**Program Study Guide**

**Teachers College Major Code: POLC**

**Degree and minimum point requirements: M.A. (33 points), Ed.M. (60 points).**

**For Incoming Summer/Fall 2023 Students**

***Program Description***: This degree program prepares students for positions as policy leaders at the local, state and national levels, or to pursue advanced work in doctoral programs in education policy, political science, or public policy. Graduates of this program secure positions as policy advisors and researchers for government agencies, foundations and various private agencies committed to looking at and developing policies for the field of education.

Courses are offered in a traditional schedule during the fall, spring and summer terms.

Students are asked to participate in a set of core political science and general foundation courses in education. Each student will also complete methodological requirements including but not limited to statistics, qualitative and quantitative methods. After completing the core, each student is expected to focus his or her studies on a set of political debates in education or a particular political arena.

The program planner shows the thematic areas across which courses should be distributed. Required courses are listed on the planner. Students must consult with their academic advisor before making any substitutions for required courses, including using transfer credits to meet requirements.

***Culminating Integrative Experience:*** Students have two options available to them for their culminating experience. They complete either a comprehensive exam or research paper. The comprehensive exam for the Master’s in Politics and Education is designed to give students an opportunity to reflect on the material learned during the Master’s program and to test their ability to integrate and apply ideas and evidence they have been exposed to in the course of their program of studies. The four-hour essay examination is usually taken after all or nearly all coursework has been completed.

With special permission, students in the masters programs in politics and education may satisfy the culminating requirement by preparing a masters paper. This paper takes the form of a journal article of publishable quality. Students intending to use this option must submit, no later than the beginning of the final term, an acceptable proposal (6-8 pages), laying out the research question, establishing its significance, and outlining a research design. It must be emphasized that the standard for evaluating these papers will be extremely high. Do not plan on employing this option unless you have strong support from both the program coordinator and a full-time faculty member who is an expert in the issue you intend to write about and is willing to serve as your advisor.

***Breadth Requirement****:* All Teachers College students must complete a prescribed number of points outside of their program or department. For this degree program, all students need to complete at least 6 credits of coursework outside of the program core (in other programs or departments).[[1]](#footnote-1) Also, up to 12 points can be completed at Columbia University.[[2]](#footnote-2) This enables students to receive a more complete understanding of their fields of study.

***Ed.M. Program Transfer Credits****:* Students may transfer up to 30 points from a previous degree or institution into this degree program with the approval of their faculty advisor. The faculty advisor will review all courses to determine what is relevant to the Politics and Education program, and what was recently completed. The faculty may ask students to submit additional documentation to assist in this process (i.e., annotated bibliography or syllabus).

***M.A. Program Transfer Credits:*** Students may not transfer points from a previous degree or institution into this degree program.

***Expectations for Satisfactory Progress:*** Students are expected to make satisfactory progress toward the completion of degree requirements. It is the policy of the Department of Education Policy and Social Analysis that all students must enroll in at least three credits per term (fall and spring) until their program is completed. Exceptions to this requirement may be granted under special circumstances, and students must contact their advisor about this. Program faculty will annually review each student’s progress. Where there are concerns about satisfactory progress, students will be informed by the program faculty. If a student is performing below expectations, he/she may be required to complete additional course work. The program will provide a plan and timeline for remediation so students know the expectation for them to continue in the program. If satisfactory progress is not maintained a student may be dismissed from the program.

***Beginning in the Fall 2018 term, all students who enroll in a degree program must register for courses beginning with their initial term of entry and continuing each fall/spring term until their degree requirements have been met. To meet the continuous enrollment requirement master’s students must do one of the following: A) register for course work, B.)  register as a master’s candidate (requires the College fee), C.)  request and receive a leave of absence (medical, military, or personal) according to TC’s leave policy. For a full description of the new policy on continuous enrollment see*** [***https://goo.gl/esMBDK***](https://goo.gl/esMBDK)*.*

***Services for Students with Disabilities:*** The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students are encouraged to contact the Office of Access and Services for Individuals with Disabilities for information about registration (301 Zankel Bldg.) Services are available only to students who are registered and submit appropriate documentation.

***Statement on Academic Conduct:*** A Teachers College student is expected to refrain from any conduct, including cheating, plagiarizing, or purchasing documents submitted for academic evaluation, that calls into question his/her academic and/or professional probity. Decisions regarding academic evaluation in all aspects of students’ work at the college, including course work, certification examinations, clinical or field experiences, and preparation of dissertations, are within the sole jurisdiction of the faculty concerned, including as appropriate, the department or program staff members. Disciplinary actions (e.g., reprimand, suspension, or dismissal) in cases of academic misconduct can be imposed by the Vice Provost or the Committee on Student Conduct.

***Resolution of Student Academic Program Concerns:*** Any student who has a concern regarding an academic matter may seek assistance. The procedure for resolving academic program concerns (see note of grade correction process below) begins with either the faculty member (if the concern is related to a course) or the student’s advisor. If the student is not satisfied with the response or resolution achieved at this first level, or if speaking with the faculty member presents a conflict of interest for the student, the student should proceed to speak with the Program Coordinator in the area in which the academic concern resides. If the student is not satisfied with the response or resolution achieved through the Program Coordinator, the student should proceed to speak with the Chair of the academic department in which the academic concern resides. If the student is still not satisfied with the response or resolution achieved through the Department Chair, or if speaking with the Department Chair presents a conflict of interest for the student, the next step is to contact the Office of the Vice Provost. At any stage of the process, students are welcome to seek the advice and guidance of the Ombudsman, who is charged with attempting to informally resolve student dissatisfaction of an academic nature on a completely confidential basis.

***Grade Correction Procedure:*** The instructor for a course has the responsibility for setting the requirements for a course and making an evaluation of students’ work. Once a grade has been given, the instructor is not free to change the grade unless the instructor indicates to the Registrar that an error was made in the original grade transmitted. If a student believes that an error has been made, he/she must take the initiative in bringing about the necessary correction prior to the conclusion of the semester immediately following the semester in which the course was taken. The normal procedure for effecting a correction would be through direct discussion between the student and the instructor. If redress cannot be attained through such discussions, the student may next appeal to the department chairperson of the department offering the course. If resolution cannot be attained through appeal, the student may next appeal to the Dean. In situations where the student feels that such an appeal process might not be in the student’s interest, counsel and assistance can be sought from the Office of the College Ombudsman and the Office of the Vice Provost (more at [Teachers College Policies and Procedures](https://www.tc.columbia.edu/catalog/policies/)).

1. Program core courses, for the purpose of this requirement, include all courses with an EDPP designation, plus the following subset of EDPA courses: Public Policy and Education, Education Policy Implementation, Law & Educational Institutions, and History and Politics of Urban School Reform. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Non-TC courses at Columbia frequently have a higher tuition rate and TC does not cover that differential. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)