

3.14.5 PhD (Political Science)

Programme Code

44687 – 978(360)

Specific Admission Requirements

- A Master's degree, or equivalent, in Political Science, International Studies or a related discipline, with advanced training in Research Methodology.
- If you have a Master's degree but you did not pass a research methodology course at the Honours level, you must take a postgraduate course in social science research methods at Stellenbosch University.
- The Department may require that you follow additional postgraduate modules.

Closing Date for Applications

Apply by **31 October** of the preceding year.

Please send the following documents to the programme leader for initial consideration:

- Academic record (certified copies of degree certificates and certified copies of marks records for all your degrees)
- A brief academic CV
- The name and contact details of an academic referee (preferably your Master's supervisor) who can attest to your potential for undertaking doctoral studies
- A conceptual note (2–3 pages) setting out the proposed topic in terms of importance or motivations, research problem and explanatory framework

Programme Structure

You write a dissertation, under supervision, on a selected topic in Political Science or International Studies. The aim of the programme is for you to acquire an in-depth understanding of political events, processes and tendencies, based on methodologically defensible and theoretically informed research, and to present original theoretical and/or empirical research.

Programme Content

Compulsory Module

44687 : Political Science	978(360)
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Assessment and Examination

A dissertation that is assessed according to the regulations of Stellenbosch University. You must do an oral examination in addition to the dissertation. Also consult Yearbook Part 1 (General Rules) on doctoral studies.

Enquiries

Programme Leader: Prof N de Jager

Tel: 021 808 2107 E-mail: ndejager@sun.ac.za

Website <https://polsci.sun.ac.za/postgraduate>

Postgraduate Programmes

For more information on the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences' postgraduate programmes, consult the University's Postgraduate Prospectus or the various departmental websites.

1. Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Special admission to the postgraduate programmes in the Faculty is available to you if you:

- were denied opportunities to formal learning environments earlier because of systemic or other limitations, but you can demonstrate that you can now participate at a particular level in such learning opportunities; or
- can receive retrospective recognition for them.

If you do not have a Bachelor's degree, you must follow the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) procedure for admission to a postgraduate diploma, Honours, MPhil or MA programme. Not all departments have the possibility of admission by means of the RPL procedure. A Bachelor's degree awarded by a university of technology or a private provider of higher education will be recognised only if your degree is registered with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) on the same level as the required university qualification.

Please note: It remains the responsibility of a Department to establish if your existing qualification is up to standard.

More details of the Faculty's RPL procedure are available from the Faculty Administrator, Arts and Social Sciences, in the Admin A building.

2. General provisions for postgraduate programmes

2.1 Postgraduate diploma

- a) You follow a prescribed course for at least one year after obtaining an appropriate Bachelor's degree.
- b) The following postgraduate diplomas are only offered on a part-time basis over a residential period of two years:
 - Postgraduate Diploma in Knowledge and Information Systems Management
 - Postgraduate Diploma in Public Mental Health
- c) Admission requirements are determined according to your specific programme.
- d) Consult the rest of this chapter for more information on the admission requirements and programme contents of the specific postgraduate diploma you wish to follow.
- e) Consult the section "Postgraduate Qualifications" in Part 1 (General Rules) of the University's Yearbook for basic regulations.

2.2 Honours degree programme

- a) You follow a prescribed course for at least one year after obtaining an appropriate Bachelor's degree.
- b) You must follow the Honours degree programme in one of the major subjects of your Bachelor's degree.
- c) You will be admitted to the Honours degree programme if you –
 - have a Bachelor's degree that has been approved by Senate for this purpose;
 - have passed the subject at third-year/fourth-year level in which you want to take the Honours discipline; and
 - have achieved a final mark of at least 60% or more in the major.
- d) Consult the rest of this chapter for more information on the admission requirements and programme contents of the specific Honours degree programme you wish to follow.
- e) Consult the section "Postgraduate Qualifications" in Part 1 (General Rules) of the University's Yearbook for basic regulations.

2.3 MA degree programme

- a) You can be considered for admission to the MA degree if you –
 - have an appropriate Honours degree approved by Senate for this purpose;**OR**
 - have an appropriate postgraduate diploma approved by Senate for this purpose;**OR**
 - have achieved a standard of proficiency in your specific field of study in another manner that Senate considers as adequate for this purpose and, upon written application, were admitted by the Executive Committee to the Master's programme concerned.
- b) As a MA student you follow an approved curriculum of research and/or advanced study of at least one year (after obtaining an appropriate Honours degree or postgraduate diploma) at this University or another institution approved by Senate.
- c) You must follow the MA degree programme in the same field as the postgraduate diploma or Honours degree.
- d) Consult the section "Postgraduate Qualifications" in Part 1 (General Rules) of the University's Yearbook for basic regulations.

2.4 MPhil degree programme

- a) You can be considered for admission to the MPhil degree if you –
 - have an appropriate postgraduate diploma or Honours degree approved by Senate for this purpose;**OR**
 - have achieved a standard of proficiency in your specific field of study in another manner that Senate considers as adequate for this purpose and, upon written application, were admitted by the Executive Committee to the MPhil programme concerned.
- b) As MPhil student you follow an approved curriculum of research and/or advanced study of at least one year (after obtaining an appropriate Honours degree or postgraduate diploma) at this University or another institution approved by Senate.
- c) Admission requirements for the MPhil degree are determined according to the specific programme.
- d) Consult the section "Postgraduate Qualifications" in Part 1 (General Rules) of the University's Yearbook for basic regulations.

2.5 PhD degree programme

- a) You must, after consulting the departmental chairperson concerned, apply in writing for admission to doctoral study. In your written application you must mention the proposed title of the dissertation and the supervisor.
- b) You can obtain the guidelines for a doctoral research proposal or registration without an approved research proposal from the Faculty Administrator.
- c) Consult the section "Postgraduate Qualifications" in Part 1 (General Rules) of the University's Yearbook for basic regulations.

2.6 DPhil degree programme

- a) The DPhil degree (an advanced doctorate) can be awarded to you if –
 - you have been registered at the University for at least one year, after obtaining the PhD degree in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences of the University, or some other degree or qualification that Senate considers of adequate standard; and
 - a period of at least five years has elapsed since obtaining the PhD degree, or comparable qualification and the conferment of the DPhil degree.
- b) Enquiries regarding the DPhil degree can be addressed to the Faculty Administrator.

Disclaimer:

The content above comes from the 2025 Arts and Social Sciences Yearbook. Make sure to consult the full **Arts and Social Sciences Yearbook** to see this extract in context and to check if there have been any changes. Take special note of additional information in the yearbook under section **2. General provisions for postgraduate programmes**.