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Dear prospective student:

Thank you for your interest in the Department's graduate programs. This letter contains information about the Graduate School, its admissions process, our programs, financial aid opportunities, and the nature of the department, in that order.

The application deadline is Monday, December 4, 2009 for Fall 2010 admission for both domestic and international students. The university (and the department) *strongly* encourage on-line application, which assures a timely and more accurate assessment of your file. Application materials are available at <http://artsandsciences.virginia.edu/grad/admission/>. Supporting documents consist of two academic letters of recommendation, official GRE scores [ETS reporting code: R5820], transcripts of all completed work, and a writing sample. Foreign students must also submit TOEFL scores. Confidential copies of these documents (except the writing sample) should be uploaded on-line or sent to:

**GSAS Admissions Office**  
**P.O. Box 400775**  
**University of Virginia**  
**Charlottesville, Virginia 22904-4775**

Please note that this single application is used to determine admission as well as Departmental financial aid decisions. We expect that in 2010-2011, in-state tuition and fees will be about \$14000; out of state tuition and fees will be about \$24000. We expect tuition to rise by about \$1000 per year for the next few years. General Graduate School information is available at <http://artsandsciences.virginia.edu/grad/index.php>.

*International students* now face substantially tighter immigration / visa requirements and slower processing of visas. Please see the list of requirements here: <http://www.virginia.edu/iso/issp/>. And the more general information here: <http://www.virginia.edu/intlstudents.html>. Do not delay in seeking the appropriate visa.

It is very important that you be aware of **four** aspects of Departmental policy as you prepare your application.

**First**, we do not look favorably upon applicants whose overall GPA is less than 3.20 or who have a combined verbal and quantitative GRE score of less than 1200. Applications with GPA < 3.0 and GREs < 1100 are almost always rejected. The three year rolling average for applicant GREs is 1310 and for admitted students is 1390. Average GRE/GPA data for the past 8 years are available at the end of this document. Foreign applicants whose native language is not English must take the TOEFL and attain a score of 600 (paper) or 250 (computer) or 90 (IBT), unless they have an undergraduate degree from a US institution. We also prefer foreign students to have a TWE over 5.0.

**Second**, on the application form it is essential that you enter the appropriate degree program in which you wish to enroll. If you do **not** plan to continue on toward a Ph.D. in our Department, please enter “M.A.” or the appropriate code number for “M.A.-Foreign Affairs” or “M.A.-Government.” Note that “Foreign Affairs” covers the fields of Comparative Politics and International Relations, while “Government” covers the fields of American Politics and Political Theory. If you plan to go on for the Ph.D. please enter “Ph.D.” or the appropriate code number for “Ph.D.-Foreign Affairs” or “Ph.D. Government.” Note that if you do not already have an M.A. in political science, you must obtain an M.A. in our Department, after which you will be evaluated to determine your suitability for further work at the Ph.D. level. In general students who do apply with an MA in political science can be admitted directly into the PhD program; however in some cases these students will be asked to fulfill part of the UVa MA requirements. *If you wrote an MA thesis for your prior MA please be sure to send the department a copy at the time you apply for entry into the PhD program, as this is often the critical determinant for admission directly to the PhD.*

**Third**, merit-based financial aid is not available for students whose intended terminal degree is the M.A. We are able to offer financial aid for the first year to approximately 70% of the Ph.D. students who are accepted into the program; in years 2 through 4 all students in good standing are funded via Teaching and Research Assistantships or Departmental Fellowships; in subsequent years approximately 85-90% of Ph.D. students are funded through a wide variety of sources. Financial aid awards are made each year in late March. The minimum package provides approximately \$10800 in cash in hand, tuition, and a health insurance voucher that obtains the basic student insurance package in return for 6 sections of TA work (3 each semester, 20 students per section). Some students will have access to fellowship aid without a TA requirement and many packages are larger than this minimum.

**Fourth**, your writing sample is the most important part of your application. Please send us what you think is your *best* and *longest* piece of analytic writing. Send it attn: Cassandra Thomas at PO Box 400787, Politics Department, University of Virginia, Charlottesville VA 22904-4787.

You can obtain considerable information about the Politics department on the web. The department’s graduate information, including rules, graduate student publications, and placement outcomes, can be found at: [http://www.virginia.edu/politics/grad\\_program/index.html](http://www.virginia.edu/politics/grad_program/index.html). General information about the department can be found at <http://www.virginia.edu/politics>. This will also provide you with a link to a listing of faculty, most of whom have personal web pages with important information about their interests – this will give you a general sense of whether or not your interests will mesh with ours. Finally, both the Miller Center for Public Affairs <http://millercenter.virginia.edu/>, and its American Political Development program and Governing America in a Global Economy at <http://millercenter.virginia.edu/programs/apd/index.html>, and the Center for Politics <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/> provide important non-departmental intellectual and financial resources for Politics graduate students.

Please read this information and then if you have questions feel free to email me or Cassandra Thomas ([cdw@virginia.edu](mailto:cdw@virginia.edu), 434-924-3603), who is the graduate secretary, with your questions.

Yours,



Herman Schwartz

## Financial aid at the University of Virginia Department of Politics:

There are two kinds of financial aid:

fellowship money, which requires no work

non-fellowship money, which requires work, and which is further divided into:

RA wages: research assistantship, currently paying \$10.00 per hour.

Graders: currently paying between \$900-\$1200 per course graded.

TAs: teaching assistantship: a full time TA, defined as 3 sections of 20 students each per semester, times 2 semesters – gets \$8800 in direct wages, a health insurance voucher, tuition remission for the equivalent of in-state Virginia tuition (projected at \$14000), and the possibility of a tuition differential (the difference between out of state and in-state tuition, currently \$10,000), plus a fellowship top-up.

*Who gets what:* From year 2 to year 4 of the graduate program, all PhD bound graduate students (including MA-PhDs) in good standing receive financial aid, generally as a TAship. TAships are sometimes topped up with fellowship money. In year 5 there is sometimes the possibility of a TAship, and we also nominate students for internal departmental and university wide dissertation fellowships. Internal fellowships provide about \$12,000 and fees to allow students to write up their dissertations without the distraction of other work. University fellowships vary.

*Incoming students:* Aid can range from zero to a “presidential” fellowship package worth \$18,000 in direct cash, a health insurance voucher, and tuition (in-state or out of state as the case may be), which runs for 4 years (with TA work in years 2-3). Roughly 3 presidential fellowships are awarded annually out of a typical entering PhD bound class of about 15. Another 7-9 students typically get some form of aid. Incoming students with an MA are often offered a TAship.

***Students who are MA only (terminal MA) cannot receive fellowships or TAships.***

All figures above are subject to change from year to year, and all aid is conditioned on continued acceptable performance in the program, even when students are given multi-year guarantees.

**Placement Summary** (see also: [http://www.virginia.edu/politics/alumni/where\\_grads.html](http://www.virginia.edu/politics/alumni/where_grads.html))

From 1994/5 through 2008/9 there were 111 permanent placements of PhDs, of which 76 were academic and 35 were non-academic. Typical placements 2000/01-2008/09 are:

Daniel Disalvo, City College of New York	Anne Peters, Wesleyan College
Joshua Dunn, U of Colo., Colorado Springs	Ryan Pevnick, New York University
Lori Fritz, Government Accounting Office	Jesse Rhodes, Univ. of Massachusetts, Amherst
Robert Hume, Fordham Univ	Sophie Richardson, Human Rights Watch Asia
Bonnie Jenkins, Ford Foundation	Patrick Roberts, Virginia Tech
W. Dale Lawton, State Department	Rob Saldin, University of Montana
Rick Mayes, University of Richmond	Ryan Saylor, University of Tulsa
Patrick McGuinn, Drew University	Larry Schack, Microsoft
Jean McSween, Government Accounting Office	Ranjit Singh, University of Mary Washington
Spencer Meredith, Rochester Institute of Tech.	Gregory Smith, Pew Foundation
Agniescka Paczynska, George Mason Univ.	William Walldorf, Auburn University

A detailed breakdown of *known* MA placements and all PhD placements is available– email me @ [schwartz@virginia.edu](mailto:schwartz@virginia.edu).

**Politics Department, University of Virginia  
Summary M.A./Ph.D Program Rules and Timing**

**Effective AY1999/01, as amended through July 2002**

**I. Requirements**

*1. M.A.*

- A. 24 credits (8 courses) plus 6 credits *non-topical research*, including PLAD709 Research Methods or PLPT501 Nature of Political Inquiry
  - B. Research Methods/Statistics (PLAD709 and PLAD710) *or* Language Masters Thesis
- May take 2 595 (directed readings) + 2 grad level courses outside Dept

*2. Ph.D.*

- A. 30 additional credits (10 courses, including 2 supervised research courses). PLAD709 or PLPT501 required; 775 and 875 optional.
  - B. 2 Comprehensive Exams (American, Comparative, International, Theory)
  - C. Research Methods/Statistics sequence (PLAD709 and PLAD710) *and* one Language *or* two Languages
  - D. Ph.D. Dissertation
- 18 Hours of Non-Topical Research (no work, filler hours for full time status)  
May take 2 more 595 (directed readings) + 2 more grad courses outside Dept

**II. Timetable**

*Enter without an MA:*

- Year 1: Course Work (8 courses possible) (if terminal MA: complete Thesis during summer with 6 non-topical research credits)
- Year 2: Finish MA course work, MA thesis, begin Ph.D. course work  
Go through evaluation process to proceed to Ph.D. level (EPPP)
- Year 3: Finish Ph.D. course work and comprehensive examinations
- Years 4-5: Finish all requirements including Ph.D. dissertation

*Enter with MA:*

- Year 1: Course Work (6-8 courses possible as 3+3 or 4+4)
- Year 2: Finish Course Work (4+0); comprehensive exams; write proposal
- Year 3-4: Dissertation write up

**III. Funding** All Merit Based, Decided in March each year

- Year 1: Optional RA work in addition to funding packages from Spring recruitment
- Year 2: Teaching Assistantship each semester (3 discussion sections/semester)  
RA work
- Year 3: Teaching Assistantship each semester (3 discussion sections/semester)  
RA work; possibly fellowship in place of TA
- Year 4: Teaching Assistantship each semester (3 discussion sections/semester)  
RA work; possibly fellowship in place of TA
- Year 5: Possible support from Department through teaching own classes, possible teaching at area colleges and Universities, possible support through outside grants and fellowships

## What we think we are doing:

UVa's Politics department stresses the long-term development of political and economic institutions, and the way that organized or potentially organized groups try to create or maintain positions of power through those institutions. The department is thus much more historically oriented than the typical department, much more comparatively oriented (in the sense that it is willing and able to contrast American phenomena with phenomena elsewhere), and much more concerned with understanding actors' ethical motivations in both a normative sense and in the classic Weberian sense. The department has this orientation because most of its faculty believe that this is best way to understand the long term evolution of the political structures that shape the range of acceptable political behaviors and policies, the typical kinds of conflicts that arise over public goods and redistributive issues, and the patterns, if any, in the way that those conflicts play out. However it is clear that neither the typical approach nor ours is perfect, and that neither possesses any exclusive claim to truth. The department is thus committed to broad training in all methodologies, and to matching the appropriate methodology to the question at hand. Graduate training in the department is not hampered by divisions between traditional sub-disciplinary fields, and we strongly encourage work with faculty in other UVa departments.

### Average GPA / GRE scores past 8 years

<b>(1) PhD APPLICANTS (includes MA-PhD track)</b>	<b>2008-09</b>	<b>2007-08</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2001-02</b>
Numbers (PhD only)	127	126	153	152	121	138	172	155
GPA	3.67	3.54	3.61	3.56	3.48	3.5	3.53	3.52
Verbal GRE	636	626	620	601	619	608	597	594
Quantitative GRE	692	686	683	664	674	671	673	674
Total GRE	1328	1312	1302	1265	1293	1279	1270	1268
<b>(2) ADMITTED</b>								
Numbers	38	35	38	44	37	45	65	66
% Admitted (2 as % 1)	30%	28%	25%	29%	31%	33%	38%	43%
GPA	3.75	3.65	3.71	3.66	3.59	3.68	3.64	3.64
Verbal GRE	685	682	662	635	652	649	653	629
Quantitative GRE	727	719	703	695	696	702	687	702
Total GRE	1412	1402	1365	1338	1347	1351	1340	1331
<b>(3) ACCEPTED</b>								
Numbers	11	10	14	16	13	15	16	13
% Accept (3 as % of 2)	32.9%	29%	37%	36%	35%	33%	25%	20%
GPA	3.64	3.52	3.58	3.53	3.72	3.67	3.6	3.62
Verbal GRE	673	665	648	631	642	649	641	604
Quantitative GRE	715	683	711	662	684	689	700	703
Total GRE	1388	1348	1359	1326	1326	1339	1341	1306