

MA in Governance

Awarding Institution:
Teaching Institution:
Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences

The University of Reading
The University of Reading
Programme length: 12 months/24
months P/T
Date of specification: 14 Aug. 2003

For students entering in October 2004
Programme Director: Dr. Jonathan Golub
Board of Studies: GIPIS
Accreditation:

Summary of programme aims

The programme aims to provide students with a thorough knowledge of governance across a wide range of political systems and in light of the international political context. Specifically the programme focuses on comparative politics, public administration and public policy. It aims to equip students with a good understanding of the theoretical and empirical issues that inform the study of governance and guide cutting-edge research. The programme aims to enable students to develop their analytical skills in evaluating primary and secondary source material and in conducting their own research.

Transferable skills

The programme will develop students' bibliographical skills by requiring them to compile bibliographies for their essays and dissertation. It will encourage students to develop their IT skills, by the use of a range of electronic databases and WWW resources in their research for essays and dissertation. It will enhance their presentational skills by making them present seminar papers to a group of students. The dissertation element will develop students' research skills and personal initiative as well as training them in structuring and summarising complex subject matter and in evaluating and presenting their own thoughts on a subject in a coherent and precise manner.

Programme content

The MA in Governance consists of 180 credits; a taught element (120 credits) and a dissertation (60 credits). Students take the compulsory core taught module Nature of Governance, which runs for two terms (Autumn and Spring). In addition, students choose options totalling 90 credits from the list below [or one 30 credit option plus the full complement of research training (60 credits)], which run concurrently with the core module. Students may take up to 40 credits in another MA programme subject to the approval of the Director of GIPIS. The students' dissertation is planned in consultation with their supervisor and is submitted for assessment in September following completion of the core module and the optional modules.

Module Code	Module Title	Credits	Level
<i>Compulsory Modules</i>			
PIM04	Nature of Governance	30	M
PIM12	Dissertation	60	M

	Research Methods (for MA with research training):		
PIM01	Philosophical Issues in the Social Sciences	10	M
PIM02	Data Collection and Analysis	20	M
EDMES1	Essentials of Research Methods for Social Sciences	20	M
EDMES2	Transferable Skills for Social Sciences	10	M

Option Modules (subject to availability in any given year)

ECM42	Development Beyond Central Planning I	20	M
ECM43	Development Beyond Central Planning II	20	M
PIM19	Domestic Politics and Foreign Policies of the Middle East	30	M
PIM15	Political Integration in Europe	30	M
PIM08	The International Politics of the Asia-Pacific	30	M
ECM48	Issues in Euro-Asian Studies I	20	M
ECM49	Issues in Euro-Asian Studies II	20	M
PIM16	State and Society in Western Europe	30	M

Part-time/Modular arrangements

The programme can be followed on a part-time basis over 24 months or on a part-time modular basis over 72 months.

Progression requirements

None

Summary of teaching and assessment

The programme is taught primarily through seminars with student presentations (both individually and in groups) and structured discussion, with lectures where appropriate. Other teaching provision includes: individual tutorials, training sessions in the library, and role-playing political simulations.

The core and option modules are assessed by course work and examination. Failed coursework has to be re-submitted at the latest by 1st September the same year. If the examination is failed it has to be re-sat in September the same year. A failed dissertation has to be re-submitted within 12 months.

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

<u>Mark</u>	<u>Interpretation</u>
70 – 100%	Distinction
60 – 69%	Merit
50 – 59%	Good standard (Pass)
<u>Failing categories:</u>	
40 – 49%	Work below threshold standard
0 – 39%	Unsatisfactory Work

For Masters Degrees

To pass the MA students must gain an average mark of 50 or more overall including a mark of 50 or more for the dissertation *and have no mark below 40 in any module*. The total credit value of all modules marked below 50 must be less than 60 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more overall including a mark of 70 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 50 will be eligible for a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more overall including a mark of 60 or more for the dissertation and have no mark below 50 will be awarded eligible for a Merit.

For PG Diplomas

To pass the Postgraduate Diploma students must gain an average mark of 50 or more *and have no mark below 40 in any module*. In addition the total credit value of all modules marked below 50 must be less than 60 credits.

Students who gain an average mark of 70 or more and have no mark below 50 will be eligible for the award of a Distinction. Those gaining an average mark of 60 or more and have no mark below 50 will be awarded eligible for a Merit.

For PG Certificate

To pass the Postgraduate Certificate students must gain an average mark of 50 or more *and have no mark below 40 in any module*.

Admission requirements

Entrants to this programme are normally required to have obtained:

2:1 BA/BSc Hons Degree or equivalent. Students whose first language is not English must have an IELTS score of 7.0 or equivalent.

Admissions Tutor: Dr R. J. McKeever.

Support for students and their learning

University support for students and their learning falls into two categories. Learning support includes IT Services, which has several hundred computers and the University Library, which across its three sites holds over a million volumes, subscribes to around 4,000 current periodicals, has a range of electronic sources of information and houses the Student Access to Independent Learning (S@IL) computer-based teaching and learning facilities. There are language laboratory facilities both for those students studying on a language degree and for those taking modules offered by the Institution-wide Language Programme. Student guidance and welfare support is provided by Programme Directors, the Careers Advisory Service, the University's Special Needs Advisor, Study Advisors, Hall Wardens and the Students' Union.

Students meet with their Director of Studies once a term to assess their progress. A formative essay is written by students at the beginning of the Autumn term. This essay does not contribute to the students' degree but enables their Director of Studies to spot any academic difficulties at an early stage and to agree with the student concerned appropriate strategies to resolve them.

Career prospects

Students with an MA in Governance can find work, for example:

- in the diplomatic service,
- in EU institutions
- in Non-Governmental Organisations,

- in Research Institutes,
- in Journalism for print media, radio and TV
- in financial and investment firms.

The emphasis in the programme on analytical abilities, independent research, the summarising and presentation of complex arguments and empirical evidence, oral and written presentations, and group work mean that students may go on to pursue careers in a wide range of fields such as teaching, business, IT, civil service, and local government. A number of students go on to further post-graduate studies at PhD level, both at The University of Reading and elsewhere.

Opportunities for study abroad or for placements

The programme allows for formal exchanges with the Université Libre de Bruxelles and with Charles University Prague.

Educational aims of the programme

To provide a detailed and challenging introduction to the study of governance.

To enable students to evaluate the design, function and evolution of political institutions.

To enable students to understand the policymaking process within different countries.

To enable students to assess the power and limits of various theories of comparative politics.

To provide the analytical and intellectual basis for further academic research on governance or for careers that require a thorough understanding of governance.

To develop further students' critical and analytical skills through their engagement with a range of challenging theoretical and empirical literature and to demonstrate these in essays, presentations and examinations.

Programme Outcomes

Knowledge and Understanding

A. Knowledge and understanding of:

1. the structure and function of political institutions in different states,
2. the theoretical and conceptual debates underpinning the study of governance,
3. the issues surrounding the formulation and legitimacy of public policies.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The programme is taught primarily through seminars with student presentations and structured discussion, with lectures where appropriate. Other teaching provision includes: individual tutorials, training sessions in the library and role-playing political simulations.

Students are given wide ranging bibliographies covering the subject area, including basic and advanced texts. Essays, seminar and exam questions are set at a level that will stretch students' capabilities and ensure that they must be using sources that are at the forefront of the scholarship of the subject. Students are obliged to locate and use appropriate sources for their reading that are informative and significant within the subject area.

Assessment

Students' knowledge is tested through a combination of coursework, examination and dissertation.

Skills and other attributes

B. Intellectual skills – able to:

- 1) conduct independent analysis informed by a sound understanding of appropriate theoretical, conceptual and methodological approaches,
- 2) undertake substantial independent research and demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge.
- 3) use the scholarly literature to develop their own research.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Through seminar presentations and the following structured discussions students are encouraged to develop their own analysis backed up by the ability to justify their position with reasoned argument and empirical evidence and a good knowledge of the relevant theoretical approaches.

Lectures provide an introduction to the relevant theoretical, conceptual and methodological approaches to the subject area. This is backed up by a reading list which covers everything from basic to advanced literature on the subject area.

Students are encouraged from the first seminar to seek out new sources on the subject matter. Thus students are pushed to undertake independent research from the beginning of the programme. The challenging nature of the seminars encourages them to develop originality in their application of knowledge.

Through the process of devising and writing a dissertation on one aspect of the subject area with supervision from a tutor, the student is further encouraged to develop their research skills and an originality in the application of knowledge.

Assessment

All these intellectual skills are assessed throughout the programme in essays, exams and the dissertation

C. Practical skills – able to:

- 1) identify, locate and use written sources,
- 2) memorise and be able to recall written arguments and empirical evidence,
- 3) identify appropriate resources including the internet for the study of the subject.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

Students will be familiarised with the relevant archives, library collections and internet resources in the Core and Optional modules and will be given advice on how to use these resources effectively. Students will develop these skills throughout the programme, but will gain greatest experience in the dissertation module.

Assessment

1 and 2 are assessed throughout the programme in coursework. The other skill (3) is not formally assessed but its effective use will enhance the performance in the modules undertaken

D. Transferable skills – able to:

- 1) amass evidence derived from textual sources,
- 2) evaluate evidence using reasoned arguments,
- 3) structure complex arguments,
- 4) articulate their own thoughts in a coherent fashion,
- 5) give oral presentations,
- 6) put together a bibliography,
- 7) manage their time,
- 8) use IT and other resources.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

The intellectual skills represented by 1, 2, 3, and 4 are taught in all components of the course, with 3 and 4 being of special importance for the dissertation module. Among the other skills that of giving an oral presentation (5) will be acquired in the modules taught during the first two terms of the programme. Bibliographical skills and the use of IT (6 and 8) will be developed throughout the course but especially in the dissertation module. The latter will also be very important for teaching time management skills.

Assessment

1,2,3, and 4 are assessed throughout the programme in coursework. The other skills are not formally assessed but their effective use will enhance performance in the modules undertaken

Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably expect to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module can be found in module and programme handbooks.