

Guide to Graduate Study

For Current Graduate Students

2013-2014



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Program Administration

The Committee on Graduate Studies

The Committee on Graduate Studies (hereafter, the Graduate Committee) — consisting of the Department Chair, the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), and one or two other faculty members — is charged with general supervision of the graduate program.

The DGS has primary responsibility for supervising the early phases of each student's graduate training and keeps records on the progress of all graduate students.

Advising Procedures

In their first year of graduate work in political science, students must plan their program in consultation with the DGS. During their second year, students may select a major advisor to help plan course work or continue to consult the DGS. By their third year, students should have selected an advisor in their primary field of interest — a faculty member who will most likely be their Dissertation Chair. Those who have not done so should consult widely with faculty members in their field before seeing the DGS about their program of studies. Indeed, in every case, students should take every opportunity to discuss their plans and interest with members of the faculty. It is important, however, that students keep the DGS fully informed of their progress (in part, so that disagreements and misunderstandings can be kept to a minimum).

Formal Evaluation of Graduate Students

Annual Review

The faculty will conduct a formal annual review of all graduate students. At the end of each fall term, the DGS will solicit student evaluations from each faculty member about each graduate student. Those with no basis for comment can simply indicate as much. A faculty meeting will subsequently be scheduled where each student will be discussed. This review will be the major factor in decisions concerning future financial support.

First Year Evaluation

In addition to the annual review, all first year Ph.D. students will be evaluated by the full faculty on the basis of their class performance near the end of their second semester. Students will meet with the DGS to discuss their performance.

Both of these reviews will be the major factor in decisions concerning future financial support and students' standing in the program.

Degree Requirements

Requirements for the M.A. Degree

In general, the Department admits students who seek the Ph.D., and discourages applicants who seek a terminal M.A. degree. Students may obtain the M.A. degree, however, en route to the doctorate. In addition, some students who depart the doctoral program before completing the Ph.D. may be awarded the M.A. degree if they have fulfilled the following requirements:

- Successful completion — with a grade of B or better — of 42 credit hours of graduate-level political science classes (plus others approved by the DGS on a case-by-case basis).
- Completion of all of the courses listed under the General Course Requirements for the PhD degree, which include Mathematical Modeling in Political Science (5052), Quantitative Methods I (581), Quantitative Methods II (582), and Game Theory (506).



Degree Requirements, cont.

Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree

Students in the Ph.D. program are expected to acquire:

- a broad understanding of several fields of political science as a discipline,
- methodological competence sufficient to be productive professionals, and
- specialized expertise in a particular field of concentration.

The procedures and requirements described below are designed to facilitate achievement of those objectives. Students who fail to fulfill requirements will be considered in bad standing and will be dismissed from the program.

General Course Requirements

Quantitative Methods I (581), Quantitative Methods II (582), and Game Theory (506) are required for all students. However, students whose major field is political and social theory can choose either Game Theory or Quantitative Methods II to meet the above requirements. In addition, unless a student already has a strong command of college calculus and its application to social science, he or she should enroll in Mathematical Modeling in Political Science (5052) in the first semester, in preparation for the required quantitative methods courses.

Students are also required to enroll in The Practice of Professional Political Science course each semester during their first three years in the program.

- First semester: 5555 The Practice of Professional Political Science I
- Second semester: 5556 The Practice of Professional Political Science II
- Third semester: 5557 The Practice of Professional Political Science III
- Fourth semester: 5558 The Practice of Professional Political Science IV
- Fifth semester: 5559 The Practice of Professional Political Science V
- Sixth semester: 5560 The Practice of Professional Political Science VI

Incompletes

Students are strongly discouraged from accumulating incompletes. The Graduate School prohibits more than nine credit hours of incompletes. The department supports this policy and will consider the number of incompletes that students have accumulated in evaluating their work and in making decisions on financial support.

Fields

For the purposes of classes and field examinations, the department divides the discipline of political science into six fields:

- American politics,
- comparative politics,
- formal theory,
- international politics,
- political and social theory, and
- quantitative methods.

Over the course of their graduate training, students generally take courses in a number of fields. Students must acquire basic competence in quantitative methods. Before writing the dissertation, students also must pass qualifying examinations in two fields, and fulfill requirements for certification in those fields. Field exams and certification are intended to assure that students possess broad familiarity with the literature and material in the fields presented.



Field Exams and Certification

For each field, a committee of two to three faculty members is responsible for the administration of field exams during each academic year. The composition of these field committees may change from year to year. The purpose of the field exam is to demonstrate a broad exposure to the literature in the field.

Students are required to pass two field exams after the end of their fourth semester (before their fifth semester) in the program. Before taking the exams, students are expected to have completed the specific field requirements outlined below. Failure to meet the requirements in two fields is equivalent to failing the field exams and results in dismissal from the program.

The exam in each field will be a one-day examination scheduled by the DGS over a two-week period at the end of the Spring semester. For example, all students seeking to display competency in American Politics will take the American Field Exam on a Monday, all those seeking to qualify in Comparative will take the Comparative Field Exam on a Wednesday, etc. Fields have discretion on the specific format of the exam (open book vs. closed book, written vs. oral exam, the exact duration of the exam in hours, etc.), but all fields share similar standards and all students (regardless of their primary field of interest) will be given the same exam.



Professor Bill Lowry in front of Seigle Hall

Committees will assign grades of high pass, pass, or fail, and students will be notified of the results of the field exam by the DGS. Students who do not pass the exam will have the

option to retake exams in the middle of August at a date specified by the DGS. Students are only allowed to retake a failed exam, and thus cannot switch to a different field exam in August. Exceptions to these rules must be approved by the DGS in consultation with the Department Chair and the Field Committee.

The field requirements are as follows:

American Politics:

Students must satisfactorily (i.e., with a grade of B or better) complete at least four graduate-level seminars in American politics, including PSC 520.

Comparative Politics:

Students must satisfactorily (i.e., with a grade of B or better) complete at least four graduate-level seminars in comparative politics, including PSC 510.



Field Exams and Certification, cont.

Formal Theory:

Students must satisfactorily (i.e., with a grade of B or better) complete the following courses:

- 505 or 507 (Social choice)
- 506 (Game theory)
- 5551 (Seminar in political economy)
- Another 500-level course requiring one of the above as a prerequisite or offered in the Economics Department.

International Politics:

Students must satisfactorily (i.e., with a grade of B or better) complete at least four seminars at the graduate level in international politics. This includes the 500-level graduate sequence and 400 and 500 level political science and economics courses authorized by the international politics committee.

Political and Social Theory:

Students must satisfactorily (i.e., with a grade of B or better) complete at least four graduate-level courses in political theory. The theory faculty recommends, as the best preparation for the field exam, at least two of the History of Political Thought courses and at least two seminars in political theory.

Quantitative Methods:

Students must, with a grade of B+ or better, complete the two semester methods course sequence (currently 581 and 582) and an additional elective methodology course (approved by the faculty).

Research Paper Requirement

In the third year of study, students are required to produce a solo-authored research paper. The expectation is that this paper will be in the same field as student's dissertation and at the level of quality of submission to a peer-reviewed journal.

Students are required to select a Research Paper Chair and Second Reader and obtain their signatures on the *Research Paper Proposal Form* by the start of the fifth semester. Students are expected to consult with both the Research Paper Chair and Second Reader on the research project and are encouraged to submit a draft of the paper to both readers prior to the deadline.



Olin Library



Research Paper Requirement, cont.

Students are also encouraged to fulfill this requirement well in advance of the due date, but the final paper must be submitted to both readers and the DGS by the start of the sixth semester. Students are required to defend this paper publicly during the Spring Semester. The DGS will organize a public presentation for all research papers.

The Research Paper Chair and the Second Reader will evaluate the paper and defense as a pass, fail, or invitation to resubmit. In the event of disagreement between the Chair and the Reader, the DGS will select a Third Reader in consultation with faculty in the student's area of study to evaluate the paper and decide about the final grade. The Research Paper Chair and the Reader(s) will inform the student and the DGS about the final grade, together with an explanation, within two weeks after the defenses have been completed. In the case of an invitation to resubmit, the explanation should include detailed suggestions and a firm timeline for revisions. Students who receive an invitation to resubmit are required to successfully pass their research paper requirement by the end of their sixth semester.

Committee and Prospectus Requirement

Students are required to form a dissertation committee consisting of at least three faculty members by the start of the seventh semester. Forming a committee requires selecting a Dissertation Chair and at least two other faculty members and submitting the *Committee Proposal Form*, which consists of signatures of all committee members. The DGS will make sure the composition of the committee meets the graduate school requirements.

Students are required to have defended the dissertation prospectus by the end of the seventh semester. Dissertation prospectus defenses will be announced in advance and will be open to the public. Students will be assigned a grade of pass, fail, or invitation to resubmit. A resubmitted dissertation prospectus must be defended by the start of the eighth semester in the program.

These are minimum requirements. Students who pass their research paper requirement without an invitation to resubmit are encouraged to fulfill the "Committee and Prospectus Requirement" well ahead of the official deadline of the end of the 7th semester.

In general, this timeline assists students in applying for the NSF Dissertation Improvement Grant by the September 15th or January 15th deadline, depending on their progress with regard to the research paper and prospectus requirements.

Summary Timeline

- *End of 2nd Semester:* Evaluation of class performance and meeting with the DGS.
- *End of 4th Semester (May):* Completion of two field exams. (Exam retakes will be administered in August.)
- *Before the Start of 5th Semester:* Submit *Research Paper Form* (selecting Chair and Reader)
- *Before the Start of 6th Semester:* Submit Research Paper (the research paper requirement must be fulfilled by the end of the 6th Semester)
- *Before the Start of the 7th Semester:* Submit *Dissertation Committee Proposal Form*
- *Before the End of the 7th Semester:* Defend Dissertation Prospectus (Resubmitted prospectus must be defended before the Start of the 8th Semester)



Dissertation and Defense

The requirements for completion of the dissertation are described in the general Degree Requirements by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, which are applicable to all Washington University doctoral candidates and available here: http://graduateschool.wustl.edu/current_students/degree-requirements. Three in particular may be noted and must be satisfied in addition to the departmental Ph.D. requirements described above.

- Residence
- A total of 72 units of graduate work, of which at least 48 units will ordinarily be completed at Washington University.
- Dissertation Presentation and Defense:
Each student must complete a satisfactory dissertation on a topic, the title and description of which is to be filed at least six months in advance of its completion with the Graduate School office. Upon its submission and approval by the Dissertation Committee mentioned above, an oral defense of the dissertation before a committee appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School must be successfully completed.

Foreign Language Requirement

There is no uniform foreign language requirement set by the Graduate School or by the Department. The extent and substance of foreign language competence required shall be determined by the Graduate Committee in consultation with the student and his/her advisor.

Teaching Assistant Responsibilities

Teaching assistant responsibilities vary from course to course, but in all cases consist of attending class and grading papers and assignments. Examples of other responsibilities include running discussion sections or reviews, disseminating course materials, and holding TA office hours.

Graduate students are expected to work roughly an average of 13.5 hours per week. In some weeks this will be considerably less, and in other weeks (usually around midterms and finals) considerably more hours.

Faculty are expected to set expectations on the grading at the beginning the semesters and graduate students should plan accordingly for weeks of heavier grading or other TA responsibilities.



Graduate School Commencement



Funding

Funding decisions for the second, third, and fourth year students will be based on the first year evaluation and/or the annual review of all graduate students.

Funding Beyond the Fourth Year

All students in their fourth year and beyond must apply for funding, detailing their progress and plans for the upcoming year. Forms will be made available to all current fourth year students and beyond in early January. Requests for continued funding will be due annually on February 1. In addition, by the February 1 deadline, all students in their fourth year must have fulfilled the following requirements to receive support from the university.

- All coursework for the Ph.D. is completed; i.e., there are no incompletes on the transcript.
- A form, signed by all members of the student's dissertation committee, certifying that student's dissertation prospectus is completed and publicly defended has been filed with the Administrative Assistant.
- The Title, Scope, and Procedure form has been filed with the Administrative Assistant.

This functionally means that all students who apply for funding beyond the fourth year will be officially ABD, will have a dissertation committee in place, and have a plan-of-attack for the dissertation progress. Students can petition the DGS for an exception.

Funding for Graduate Student Travel to Conferences

The department is committed to providing some funding for graduate students to present their research at professional conferences. Generally, students will only pursue conference participation after they have completed their field exams.

Summer Funding

In order to receive summer funding, students must submit an application to the Administrative Assistant. Application forms will be made available in early February, and will be due annually on March 1. The amount of the award can vary from year to year.

Summer money will be provided for the following activities:

- Formal research assistance for a faculty member. Faculty can use students as regular research assistants or on collaborative projects. Faculty members are encouraged to involve students fully in the research process. The expectation is that students will use their remaining time to work on their own research projects.
- Attending a structured training institute (such as ICPSR, EITM, foreign language training, etc.) with approval of a faculty member. For short programs, such as EITM, students will be expected to work as a research assistant for 14 hours a week for the remainder of the summer.
- Fieldwork or dissertation research that is supervised and approved by the student's advisor and the DGS. This option is only available to advanced students.

Students who choose not to take departmental money can pursue funding from various centers on campus that support graduate students, or find other employment. Students who plan to do paid part-time work in addition to summer funding must let the Administrative Assistant know at the time of applying for summer funding.



Job Market Coordination

The Administrative Assistant, the DGS, and the Department Chair will actively coordinate placement for our graduate students.

Application Materials

The department will provide assistance with sending job application packets. Students must contact the Administrative Assistant to request sending packets. All packets sent by the department will contain a cover letter from the Chair about the student. The Administrative Assistant will make sure all packets are complete, and the letters are up-to-date.

Practice Job Talks

Each student is required to give a public practice job talk before the department will send their job market packets. These talks take place in the summer or in September immediately after the APSA meeting so students will have time to make changes before an interview.

Communication

Students should keep the Administrative Assistant informed of their contacts from other departments, scheduled interviews, and the like. The Administrative Assistant will serve as the information clearinghouse for the department, and will notify the faculty of all interviews.

The DGS and the Administrative Assistant will communicate to the students any more specific arrangements with regard to the job market coordination at the end of each Spring semester.

Academic Exchange Programs

The department has two academic exchange programs. The University of Mannheim exchange allows one Washington University Ph.D. student per year to take classes or conduct research for either a full academic year or for one semester. The Emory University exchange has no cap on the number of students in residence in a given semester. Exchange students are funded through their normal Washington University Stipend.

The purpose of the exchange is to gain additional training or use the exchange as a platform for further dissertation research. Normally, students should be beyond their second year of studies and be in good standing in the department (including no incompletes). Students interested in the exchange should contact the DGS.



University of Mannheim