DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The doctoral program is a five-year program designed to provide scholarly and professional training in the discipline of political science and mastery of the methods of research. The four fields of study available to Ph.D. students are American government, public policy, comparative government, and international relations. No course with a grade below a B- will be counted toward degree requirements. No courses can be double-counted in meeting the requirements of different fields. (Also see grading standards for the methods sequence.)

Course Work Before taking doctoral preliminary examinations and beginning dissertation work, students satisfy the 54-hour course work requirements: 12 hours (4 courses) in each of two fields, including the core seminar in each; 9 hours (3 courses) in the methods sequence; 3 hours for the Fundamentals of Mathematics course, taken in the first semester in the program; 3 hours for the game theory course; 3 hours for the research practicum; and 12 hours for 4 elective courses.

Methods Sequence There is a three-course methods requirement for doctoral students. Students are required to achieve a grade of B or higher in each of the three methods courses. Those earning B- are permitted to continue in the sequence, but are required to retake the course at its next availability and raise the grade. Students receiving C+ or lower are required to retake the course before taking any other course in the sequence.

The first two courses in the sequence are to be taken in the student’s first year: POS5736 Research Design in the fall and POS5737 Political Science Data Analysis in the spring. POS5746 Quantitative Analysis in Political Science is taken in the second fall term. Students wishing to delay one of these courses until a later semester must obtain prior permission from the GD. Such permission is typically granted only for part-time students. A fourth course, POS5747 Advanced Quantitative Analysis, is optional with varying topics, offered in spring semesters. Students may take this course upon completion of the first three methods courses in the sequence.

Game Theory (POS5723) All students are required to complete the game theory course. This course is a survey of game theory with a specific emphasis on utilizing those mathematical models to understand political phenomena.

First Year Research Project As part of the first-year methods courses (POS5736 and POS5737), students are required to complete a research project. The research design is prepared during POS5736 in the fall semester, and the written report is completed and presented during POS5737 in the spring. Students are paired with faculty advisors for this project. The faculty advisor will submit a grade to each Methods course instructor who will integrate the project grade into the final course grade. The specifics of grading will be stipulated in the syllabus for the methods course.

Research Design Competency. During the week following finals in the second semester of study, all first-year students will complete a 3 hour written examination designed to test competence in research design. Students will be given a research question for which they must produce a sound research design by the end of the allotted time. They may not use texts, notes or other materials in preparing their answers. Responses will be graded by a panel of three faculty members who have graduate faculty standing to be appointed by the GD. Students will receive a grade of pass or fail. Students who fail the exam may retake it approximately four weeks later. Failure on that attempt results in dismissal from the PhD program with a recommendation that the student direct his or her coursework toward completion of the master’s degree, which may be accomplished by completing all requirements for the master’s program as discussed in this handbook (see above).
**Research Practicum** The Research Practicum (POS5915) is completed during the second year of a student’s study. Students must develop a research project that culminates in a paper of publishable quality that is defended orally in the fall semester of the third year in the program. Students who successfully defend their papers will be encouraged to submit the paper to a journal for peer review. The Research Practicum is designed to give students hands-on experience with research prior to undertaking a dissertation, and may be on a topic the student pursues for his or her dissertation.

While students formally enroll in POS5915 in the spring or summer semester, they are expected to begin preliminary work on the research project in the prior fall semester. By the end of the fourth week of the fall semester of the second year, the student chooses a faculty advisor for the research project from among the Department’s faculty members who hold doctoral graduate faculty status. By the end of the fourth week of the semester, the student submits (to the AC) a Research Practicum Agreement signed by the faculty advisor that defines the basic research topic. The student should use the remainder of the fall term to plan the design of the study, working closely with the advisor. The bulk of the actual research work and the writing of the paper for POS5915 should take place in the spring and/or summer terms.

The practicum will be defended in an oral examination conducted by a committee of three department faculty members, two from the student's major field and one from another field. The graduate director will consult with the practicum supervisor in appointing members of the committee. Appointments will be made by the end of the first week of the fall semester of the student's third year. Initial oral examinations will be completed by the end of the fourth week of classes during that semester. Students will submit their papers to committee members no later than the end of the first week of classes of fall semester. Following the examination, the committee will assign a grade of Pass, Revise and Resubmit, or Fail. If the student receives a grade of Revise and Resubmit, the student must revise the paper based on comments from the committee and resubmit the work no later than the last class day of that fall semester. Failed papers may be revised during that semester and defended again during the final two weeks of classes during that fall semester. A final grade will be awarded at that time. Students who receive a grade of Fail after presenting and orally defending the research twice will not be allowed to continue in the Ph.D. program. Grades for the practicum will be provided by the GD, in consultation with the members of the practicum committee.

**Required Electives** Doctoral students are required to take 4 elective courses (12 hours) in political science or, with permission of the GD, in other departments. These electives may be extra courses in the student’s declared fields, or in other fields.