

# Graduate Program in Political Science Requirements, Rules, and Regulations

Current as of March 2, 2023

## 1. Graduate Director

The Chair of the Political Science department will appoint a Graduate Director who will be a member, ex officio, of the Graduate Program Committee. The Graduate Director will be available to all graduate students for consultation about applicable rules and their interpretation and for any other matters pertaining to student progress in the Program. Students may appeal rulings of the Graduate Director to the Graduate Program Committee and from there to the Chair of the Political Science Department.

## 2. Normative Time to Degree

The normative time to degree for Ph.D. students in Political Science is six years, the maximum time to degree is seven years. Exceptions to these rules can only be made under extraordinary circumstances.

## 3. Undergraduate Preparation-Statistics

Students are expected to have successfully completed course work resulting in knowledge of basic introductory statistics. (This means that students need to know basic descriptive and inferential statistics, including the use and calculation of a mean, standard deviation, variance, proportion, correlation coefficient, regression coefficient, z-score, t-value, chi-square, and the construction and interpretation of a confidence interval and a hypothesis test. They should also know the meaning of "significance" and how to construct and interpret a contingency table. This is normally completed in three quarters of undergraduate statistics.) Students who do not have this preparation must acquire the equivalent background during the first or second year in graduate school. Undergraduate statistics courses are considered to be remedial, and thus will not count toward graduate course credit needed for the Ph.D. They can, however, count toward the 48 credits needed for an M.A. degree, but must be counted as non-political science classes. This requirement may be also satisfied by taking two graduate level courses in statistics.

## 4. Advising

The Graduate Director will assign each graduate student a provisional faculty advisor for consultative purposes, especially regarding the substance of the student's program. These assignments are for up to one year only. After the first year, the provisional assignment expires and the student has to choose an advisor. The advisor can be changed at any time at the student's request. To make such a change, the student should submit a change of advisor form signed by the new advisor.

## 5. Research Skills Requirement

University rules require a student to pass a proficiency test in a foreign language. For the Ph.D. in Political Science, students may substitute mastery of an advanced

quantitative skill or an advanced qualitative skill in place of a foreign language. This requirement should be fulfilled before advancing to candidacy. Students should select a skill whose mastery is necessary for preparation of the dissertation.

To acquire a quantitative skill (which could involve coursework in such disciplines as economics, mathematics and computer science, or statistics), students must complete at least one year of upper-level, undergraduate or graduate coursework in mathematics, economics, computer science or statistics beyond the required minimum of two quarters of introductory statistics, and they must receive a grade of at least a "B" in each quarter. For example, this requirement could be met by taking such courses as econometrics, linear algebra, advanced multivariate regression, or courses in computer science.

To acquire a qualitative skill, students must complete at least one year of graduate-level coursework in qualitative or interpretive research methods, and must receive a grade of at least a "B" in each quarter. Students may also use a combination of qualitative and quantitative courses for this requirement.

A student electing to meet the foreign language requirement should select a foreign language which is useful for research in his or her dissertation or in which there is a substantial body of scholarly literature. The language exam will require the student to translate a professional article in the foreign language into English, in limited time, using a dictionary, with summarizing permitted for much of the material. The language requirement need not be completed before advancing to candidacy (although this is strongly encouraged), but must be completed before the Ph.D. is awarded.

Each field within the department may require additional skill development for students who chose to specialize in that field.

## **6. Course Requirements**

Prior to advancement to candidacy, each graduate student must complete a minimum of 18 graduate courses (72 units) of which at least 12 (48 units) must be in the Department of Political Science and up to 6 (24 units) may be in cognate disciplines.

During the first two years in the doctoral program, students must successfully complete three of the following five seminars: Field Seminar in American Politics, Field Seminar in Comparative Politics, Field Seminar in International Relations, Field Seminar in Political Theory or Foundations of Political Science. Each doctoral student must complete a major field that must come from the following list: American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations and Political Theory. (See the Department website for field-specific requirements.) Each student must complete a second field, which may come from (A) one of the four listed above, (B) from an area of faculty strength, such as democracy studies, political psychology, public choice, ethics, methodology, critical theory emphasis, race and ethnicity or public law, or (C) from a specialized area of interdisciplinary study. If the student chooses the specialized area of interdisciplinary study (C), this area must be approved by the student's advisor and the graduate committee.

Students must complete 3-5 courses in their first field and 3-5 courses in their second field. The precise number is to be determined in each field by the field faculty. The field seminar in

each field counts as one of the required courses. (See Appendix 1 for detailed rules for second fields.)

All graduate students will be required to perform satisfactorily in a minimum of three courses (twelve units) each quarter for two years, for a total of eighteen courses (seventy-two units). If graduate students are Teaching Assistants, the requirement will be only two courses per quarter. Of these eighteen courses, a minimum of twelve must be approved as graduate courses in political science. The Graduate Director may certify some courses taught by other departments as “political science” for purposes of this requirement (no more than two). Any student who is unsure about whether a course counts as a “political science” course for the purposes of meeting this requirement should speak to the Graduate Director. Of the three courses each quarter, two must be graduate level and one may be upper division undergraduate, Pol Sci 299, Pol Sci 290, or Soc Sci 399 (which can be taken during quarters in which a student is appointed as a Teaching Assistant). The above requirements are minimums. Students are free to take additional courses in any quarter and are encouraged to do so.

Note: By University rule, a student must enroll in three upper-division or graduate courses each quarter to maintain satisfactory progress. Any graduate student serving as a Teaching Assistant may enroll in Pol Sci 299 (pre-advancement) or Pol Sci (post-advancement) with their advisor to meet this three-course requirement for full-time enrollment. These courses do not count, however, towards meeting the Program requirement of eighteen graduate-level courses and students receive S/U grades. Please see next section for additional information. Upper-division courses taken to fulfill workload requirements also do not count towards the Program requirement of eighteen graduate courses, unless specifically approved (see “100 level courses” below).

### **7. 290 & 299 Courses**

PS 299 courses have two distinct purposes: to satisfy full-time status for those TAing and as independent studies with a faculty member. In the first case, students must email their primary advisor or the graduate director prior to the start of the quarter and provide a brief overview of what they intend to work on during that quarter. This form of 299 courses, similar to SS 399 is graded on an S/U basis and does not count toward departmental requirements. A student who has completed all coursework may register in PS 299 for 1-12 credits in order to maintain full-time status. This course may be taken repeatedly with the student’s advisor. Students who have advanced to candidacy should enroll in their advisors’ Poli Sci 290 class for 1-12 credits.

The second type of PS 299 courses allow students to cover material not offered in existing graduate seminars. This requires the willingness of a professor to oversee the independent study. A student may normally obtain credit for no more than two 299’s to be counted toward the 12 required courses in political science for the Ph.D. Any courses that are to be counted must be graded (i.e. not S/U). To be graded, some written work must be completed, with its content to be agreed upon between the student and the faculty member sponsoring the course.

### **8. 100-level (upper-division) Courses**

100-level (upper-division undergraduate) courses count toward full-time status, but (with the

exception of statistics) cannot be counted toward the 48 units needed for the M.A. or the 72 units needed for the Ph.D. degrees. A student seeking to take a course at the 100 level and wishing to obtain graduate credit should register for it as a 299 (directed study) and do work that the instructor will certify in writing is worthy of that done for graduate credit.

### **9. Additional Courses**

Students may take more than 18 graduate level classes prior to advancement to candidacy. Additional courses and/or independent study courses may be advisable in individual cases.

### **10. Credit for Courses Taken Elsewhere**

Where a student has an M.A., Ph.D., or coursework from a creditable institution, we will allow a transfer of credits for up to six courses. No more than three of these will count toward the requirement to take twelve graduate-level courses in Political Science.

Students can obtain credit for courses only after admission to the Program and only after approval by the Graduate Director. Students should fill out the request for previous course credit form and include the syllabus, coursework, and official transcripts. Each course should be combined into a single PDF file in the following order: request form, syllabus, and coursework. Students only need to send one copy of their transcripts (assuming all classes were taken at the same institution).

### **11. Twelve courses in political science required for PhD**

Normally, the number of courses in Political Science taken at our Department must be at least twelve. Students may petition the Graduate Director to count other courses for the purposes of fulfilling this requirement. Available options include 299 courses (no more than two); courses taken at other departments (no more than two); courses transferred from other M.A. or Ph.D. programs (no more than three). After subtracting all releases described above, the total number of courses in Political Science taken at the Department must be at least nine.

### **12. Qualifying Papers for Candidacy**

In addition to completing at least 18 graduate-level courses prior to advancement to candidacy, students must complete two qualifying papers. The first qualifying paper must be completed and approved by the end of the Winter quarter of a student's second year in the program; the second qualifying paper must be completed and approved by the end of the Winter quarter of a student's third year in the program. There must be two faculty readers on each qualifying paper and only one faculty reader may serve as a reader on both papers.

These papers will be proposed by the student and each will require consultation with two faculty members. Each paper will be accepted as meeting the requirement when approved by both members of the supervisory committee. One of the two faculty supervising each paper must be from within the Department of Political Science. In choosing their topics students will be expected to pursue wide-ranging methodological skills and to develop knowledge about diverse political systems and cultures in different geographic areas. More information regarding this process can be found in Appendix 2.

### **13. Credit for Master's Degree—Substitution for One Qualifying Paper**

A student who has a Master's degree from some other institution or unit of the University and who has written a substantial paper in fulfillment of the requirement for this degree may submit that paper to the Graduate Director for approval in lieu of one of the two required papers. The master's paper so submitted will be assessed by at least two faculty members for possible approval as a substitute for a qualifying paper.

### **14. General Qualifying Examination – Advancement to Candidacy**

Students who have completed their coursework and paper requirements should consult with the Graduate Director or their advisor on the procedure for advancement to candidacy.

A student ready to qualify for Ph.D. candidacy will meet with faculty members twice. The first time, the student will meet with his/her candidacy (or "advancement") committee for an oral qualifying exam. At the advancement exam, the student will be examined on two fields of his/her choice, in accord with that student's qualifying papers and coursework (his/her first and second fields). Passing this exam constitutes advancement to Ph.D. candidacy. The second time (meeting), within six months following the advancement to candidacy exam, the student will meet with his/her dissertation committee for a dissertation prospectus review. At the second meeting, the student will be queried about the dissertation prospectus, which he/she will distribute to the committee ahead of time. Both examinations are oral examinations.

~~All students must pass the advancement to candidacy examination by the end of their 10<sup>th</sup> quarter in the Ph.D. program. Students who do not advance to candidacy as required will lose financial support and face possible termination from the Ph.D. program. The advancement to candidacy examination is an oral examination.~~

Students who face extraordinary circumstances may petition the Graduate Director for an exception to these rules. The Graduate Director will decide on these petitions in consultation with the Graduate Committee and the student's advisor.

The student plus members of the advancement to candidacy committee in consultation with the committee chair will establish the parameters of the exam one month prior to the scheduled date of the exam. At the exam, the student will be expected to be conversant with the material covered in courses in the two fields s/he has chosen which may include material from reading lists drawn up in consultation with committee members; and be prepared to discuss the general topics covered in her/his two qualifying papers. He/she will be expected to be conversant with the principles, theories, broad concerns and themes, major works, and methodologies pertinent both to the papers and to the modules within which they lie (as covered in relevant course syllabi or as suggested in reading lists prepared by the committee members).

Effective Spring 2023, the advancement examining committee (Candidacy Committee) for the qualifying exam must consist of three departmental faculty members. Outside members will no longer be required. However, advancement committees may consist of up to five members with or without outside members if the student or student's dissertation chair feels it is appropriate. If the student wishes to include a member who is not a faculty member at UCI, s/he should speak to the graduate director well in advance of the advancement exam. The

inclusion of a non-UCI faculty member as an advancement committee member must be approved by the Department and the Office of Graduate Studies.

The Dean of Graduate Studies retains sole authority to grant these exceptions, which must be submitted in writing by the chair of the academic unit at least two weeks prior to the scheduling exam, and must be accompanied by a c.v. of the individual for whom the exception is being requested. The Graduate Director will consult with the student when nominating this committee. The actual appointment of Committee members is made by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Given the various steps of approval, students must submit their Approval of Advancement to Candidacy Committee Form at least two weeks prior to the qualifying (advancement) exam.

The student should prepare copies of both qualifying papers for each member of the committee. If one of the papers is in the same area as the proposed dissertation, the student should indicate that to committee members. If none of the papers is related to the dissertation, the student should indicate that to committee members.

### **15. Student Progress Evaluation and TA Eligibility**

At the end of each year a written evaluation of each student will be prepared by the faculty. Suggestions will then be made to the student about his or her program and progress. A copy of this evaluation will be given to the student and another copy placed in the student's file. Evaluations are based upon a wide range of criteria, including GPA, TA evaluations, class performance, quality of written work, number of incompletes, number of qualifying papers completed, and outside activities, if any (conference paper presentations, fellowships awarded, and publications). A positive evaluation is called being in good standing. Declaring a student to be in good standing doesn't mean that the student completed all requirements or that such requirements were waived. Students are responsible for completing all requirements according to the schedule.

Except under extraordinary circumstance to meet departmental needs, the Department will not normally appoint as Teaching Assistants students who do not complete one qualifying paper by the end of the Winter quarter of a student's second year in the program. Students who do not successfully advance to candidacy by the end of their 10<sup>th</sup> quarter in the Ph.D. program will lose financial support and face possible termination from the Ph.D. program.

Several other circumstances will normally result in the loss of TA eligibility. No student with an incomplete in a Field Seminar course that is more than one year old (from the beginning of the quarter in which the Field Seminar course began) will receive a TAship. No student, prior to advancement to candidacy, may have an incomplete for more than two years and receive a TA appointment. No student with three or more incompletes received in the space of three consecutive quarters will receive a TAship until the total number of incompletes in the most recent three quarter period is reduced to two or fewer. No student with four or more incompletes will receive a TAship until the total number of incompletes is reduced to three or fewer. All students must complete the undergraduate statistics requirement (or be exempted from it) by the end of the second year in the program in order to maintain TA eligibility.

Exceptions to these rules can only be made under extraordinary circumstances.

### **16. Master's Degree**

Students will be admitted only to study for the Ph.D. However, upon a student's request, they may be awarded a Master's degree. Students must meet the following requirements:

- Completion of 48 units of graduate course work, not counting 299's, with a grade of B or better in each course. No more than 12 of these units may be from work at other institutions, and at least 24 must be from courses taught within the Department.
- Completion of the Department's undergraduate statistics requirement or exemption from it at the time of admission.
- Completion and acceptance of one qualifying paper, written within the department and judged by the committee to be of sufficient quality.

NOTE: A university requirement for the M.A. degree is that a student be "advanced to candidacy for the M.A." in the quarter before the degree is granted. Therefore, students must submit that request one quarter prior to their petition for the MA. Both forms can be found in the forms and regulations section of the departmental website.

### **17. Doctoral Thesis Committee**

The Doctoral Committee supervises the final phase of the student's graduate study and approval of the dissertation. It ordinarily consists of three members. The Chair must be a member of the Department of Political Science. At least half of the members of the committee must be from the Department of Political Science; the total number of members on the committee is variable, with three as the minimum. The Doctoral Committee is nominated by the Candidacy Committee at the time of the qualifying examination with the concurrence of the student, the Doctoral Committee chair, and the Graduate Director.

If necessary, changes may be made at a later date by submitting a memo to the Division of Graduate Studies. This should be done by the chair of the committee. Ordinarily, members of the Candidacy Committee continue as members of the Doctoral Committee, but others may be nominated. The Dean of Graduate Studies appoints members of the Doctoral Committee based on the nominations.

### **18. Prospectus Defense**

For the thesis prospectus defense (which must take place within six months following the advancement to candidacy exam), the student should supply the members of the thesis committee (see article 16 above) with a 15-30 page proposal, specifying the intellectual issue to be addressed, the methodology to be employed, and an overview of the pertinent literature and types of data to be consulted/utilized. The session will entail discussion of these matters and will aim to reach agreement between the committee members and the student as to how to proceed.

### **19. Colloquium**

Each student will give a presentation to a department colloquium on her or his dissertation research before obtaining the Ph.D. degree. This presentation is normally scheduled when the student is preparing for the job market: it can thus serve both as a job talk at which the student can obtain useful feedback and an important socialization tool for other students in the program. It also keeps the department abreast of how and what our students are doing.

Under exceptional circumstances which might delay a student's graduation, s/he may petition to substitute the colloquium talk with another invited presentation or workshop. The substituted presentation should be roughly equivalent to the department colloquium, in that the student should give a substantial presentation and get substantial feedback. In such instances, the student should make a written request to the Graduate Director with the description of all presentations. The Graduate Director may consult with the Graduate Committee on the merits of the request.

### **20. Oral Defense of the Dissertation**

Students will be examined orally on the dissertation. They may also expect this examination to cover the field in which the dissertation was written. All members of the doctoral committee must attend this meeting in person or electronically.

### **21. Policy regarding termination of graduate students on grounds of excessive time in program**

Students should pass the advancement to candidacy examination before the end of their 8<sup>th</sup> quarter in the Ph.D. program. All students **must** pass the advancement to candidacy examination by the end of their 10<sup>th</sup> quarter in the Ph.D. program. Students who do not advance to candidacy as required will lose financial support and face possible termination from the Ph.D. program. All students should complete their degree at the end of their 18<sup>th</sup> quarter. All students **must** complete their degree by the end of their 21<sup>st</sup> quarter.

These times do not include formal leaves of absence during which the student was absent from scholarly work. The Graduate Director will implement this rule in consultation with the Graduate Committee and the Department as a whole. In implementation, they may consider whether:

- At least two faculty members in the department are willing to advise the student.
- There is evidence of potential for completion of the degree.

Any student who exceeds the time limits will normally lose eligibility for further financial support from the department.

### **22. Concentration in Public Choice**

Students can earn the Ph.D. in political science with a concentration in public choice. All of the program rules above apply. Additionally, students are expected to take the concentration's core course sequence among their 18 graduate courses, and to write a dissertation on a topic related to the concentration. The public choice core sequence is 3-quarters long.

## APPENDICES

The rules detailed here supplement and provide greater elaboration on the Graduate Program Rules above. They may be changed annually by the Graduate Director to reflect changes in rules, requirements, course offerings, etc.

### APPENDIX 1: RULES FOR SECOND FIELDS

The second field may come from:

(A) One of the four main fields. The rules for main fields apply.

(B) From an area of faculty strength. Such fields provide a brief description and a list of associated faculty, have a designated coordinator, list relevant courses, how many of them must be taken and which are required.

Present fields include (contact the coordinator to confirm; the list will be updated periodically):

- public law (Mary McThomas)
- political psychology (Kristen Monroe)
- ethics (Kristen Monroe)
- methodology (Ines Levin)
- public choice (Bernie Grofman)
- democracy studies (Louis DeSipio)
- critical theory emphasis (Kevin Olson)
- race and ethnicity (Davin Phoenix)

(C) From a specialized area of interdisciplinary study. This area must be approved by the student's advisor and the Graduate Committee. The student must email the Graduate Director a brief description of proposed field and a list of courses that s/he plans to take.

General rules applicable to all options: Each student must take 3-5 courses in the field. Only one course may count for two fields. The second field cannot be a simple subset of the first field.

Under unusual circumstances, students may petition the graduate director for waivers. Before choosing the second field, students should talk to the coordinator to confirm reasonable course availability in the field over their course of study.

## **APPENDIX 2: RULES FOR QUALIFYING PAPERS**

When a student gets consent from two faculty to be readers, it is expected that:

1. The review process by a faculty will be normally concluded within one month from submission with two extra weeks if needed. If a faculty is on leave or if the paper is submitted shortly before summer break, those deadlines are negotiable.
2. The decision of a faculty member must be one of the following: Accept (A), Revise and Resubmit (R&R), Reject (R). The decision is supplemented by a list of specific changes that the student is supposed to implement;

A: No further action by the student is needed in order to conclude the review process by this particular reader. The student is not required to make any changes - they are optional;

R&R: The student must prepare a revised paper. S/he must provide a precise description of all changes that were implemented, i.e., unless the reader marks certain comments as not requiring response, for EVERY comment there must be a detailed reaction describing the changes that were made in response to this comment and the specific place in the revised paper where they appear (or an explanation why changes were not made). When a paper receives R&R, it is normally expected that the next decision will be made within one month after submitting the revised version. This revision process will be repeated if necessary.

R: The student may abandon the paper or look for another faculty to review it. Every request for reviewing a paper that was rejected in the past must be accompanied by a list of faculty who accepted and rejected the paper before.

The qualifying paper is accepted when it is accepted by two faculty members.

In addition to receiving and responding to detailed comments, it is expected that students and faculty will discuss the paper's strengths and weaknesses, so that the student knows how to improve. The process of R&R is essential for helping to socialize students into academic writing with the goal of producing strong dissertations and publications.