Department of Political Science PhD Program Handbook Fall 2025

The Department of Political Science offers graduate programs leading to Master of Science, Master of Arts, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees. This Handbook summarizes the program requirements for the Ph.D. program. For information on terminal Masters' programs offered in the department, please refer to the Master's Programs Handbook. Information about the MS degree 'in course' associated with the Ph.D. program can be found within the "Doctoral Degree Requirements" section of this handbook. A Graduate and Professional Student Handbook is also available on the Graduate School website: http://gradschool.fsu.edu.

General Program Information

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. Students also receive training in methods of political analysis and formal theory. Normally, students complete 54 hours of required and elective coursework and take preliminary (qualifying) examination in the major field(s). A portion of required course hours may be waived for students who have taken equivalent coursework prior to admission to the program. Once students have passed preliminary exams, they complete a dissertation during their fourth and fifth years.

Admissions and Program Entry Students enter the PhD program in the fall semester of each year. Due to the sequence of required courses, mid-year entry is not possible except under extraordinary circumstances. Applications for admissions to the PhD program are reviewed for acceptance beginning in January of each year. Please see the department website for application deadlines. Students may enter the PhD program directly after receiving their Bachelor's or Master's degree in political science or another field. The time to completion of the program is approximately the same regardless of prior degrees obtained as the number of credits that can be transferred from another program is limited (see section on transfer credits).

Permission/Approval There are various instances where the Graduate Director's prior approval is required, as noted throughout this Handbook. Students must get that approval in writing and see that the Academic Coordinator (AC) receives a copy to be placed in the student's file. The best approach is to put the request in writing for the GD to sign. Failure to have these clearances properly entered into the file may mean difficulties in maintaining progress with program requirements or obtaining clearance to graduate.

Advising Incoming students have informal faculty advisors recommended to them by the Graduate Director (GD) based on the areas of interest indicated in their admission material. This is a non-binding recommendation intended to provide the student with professional guidance beyond the GD's general advice; however, the GD remains available to all students in addition to or instead of this faculty advisor. Students in their second year select a "Practicum" advisor who will serve as their major professor until they select a Dissertation chair following preliminary exams. For doctoral students, the advisor is eventually replaced by – or becomes – the major professor. The Academic Coordinator (AC) can be consulted regarding basic requirements and procedural matters.

Program of Studies Form The doctoral Program of Studies form is the student's guideline as to what will and will not be accepted for satisfying degree requirements. It is designed to help the student plan the courses to be taken, and to provide the GD with some measure of the student's progress.

Students are required to prepare these forms for a one-to-one meeting with the GD during the first semester of study and review them each year as needed. The completed forms are kept in departmental files. Since deviations from the original plan are inevitable, students must update their program of study form each fall in consultation with the GD. The final Program of Studies with required signatures must be filed with the AC no later than the last week of the term before the term in which the student is taking preliminary exams.

Transfer Credits Students may transfer up to 24 semester hours of coursework from a graduate program outside of FSU, provided that 1) the hours were not counted toward a previous degree, 2) the student received a minimum of a 3.0 GPA,

and 3) the hours were taken through a regionally accredited graduate school. Students transferring credits earned at FSU may transfer up to 12 hours provided they did not count toward a previously earned degree and they received an earned grade of at least a B. For a more detailed discussion, please see 'Course Work' below and the University Graduate Bulletin.

Directed Individual Study (DIS) Students may arrange for individual study with a faculty member, but such courses are discouraged where standard course options are available, and do not count toward degree requirements except with the GD's prior approval. A student registered for a DIS is expected to meet regularly with the supervising faculty member and to meet all agreed-to requirements. A DIS course receives a letter grade.

Coursework Taken Outside the Department In some cases, students may benefit from taking an elective course in another department at FSU or another University. Students wishing to take a course outside of the department must obtain pre-approval from a supervising professor, the GD, and in some cases, the Department Chair. Courses taken outside the department may not count towards fulfilling the requirements of either major field. The grades from external courses will not be used in calculating the diagnostic GPA for annual evaluation purposes. Course costs not covered by a department stipend or fees in excess of any department stipend are the responsibility of the student.

Evaluations of Student Performance
Students are evaluated regularly by faculty and the GD as to whether they are making normal progress towards the degree. Normal progress is defined as meeting all program requirements as set forth in the Graduate Handbook, maintaining a GPA that meets or exceeds 3.5, and demonstrating professional development. Professional development includes attending departmental colloquia, demonstrating proper workplace behavior, and evidencing a commitment to skill development and networking in the discipline (See also the section below on Developing Professional Competence). In addition, for students who hold an RA or TA position, normal progress includes satisfactory evaluations from relevant supervisors. Students who are not meeting standards for normal progress in any given semester will be contacted by the GD to develop a remediation plan to improve their performance. Students who fail to adhere to the agreed upon plan of remediation and/or fail to improve their performance may lose eligibility for funding in subsequent semesters or be dismissed from the program.

At the end of each term, faculty members teaching PhD seminars complete seminar evaluation forms for each student, indicating quality of performance in the class and an evaluation of the student's overall academic strength. These forms are kept in the student's departmental file and reviewed by the GD. In addition, each spring semester students are reviewed by the faculty meeting as a group. All faculty members are invited to attend the evaluation meeting with the following required to participate: members of the Graduate Studies Committee, and faculty that have taught a core course or a methods course during the preceding spring or fall term. The GD will provide each student with a summary of the faculty's views and suggestions for improvement.

Grade Standards Except in extraordinary circumstances, students must maintain a 3.5 GPA to be considered in good standing for continuation in the program and/or eligibility for funding. Students who drop below a 3.5 in any semester must meet with the GD to develop a remediation plan to improve their performance. Students who fail to adhere to the agreed upon plan of remediation and/or fail to improve their performance may lose eligibility for funding in subsequent semesters or be dismissed from the program. In addition, per University regulations, a student whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation with the University, and will be dismissed if a 3.0 cumulative GPA is not attained by the end of the next term.

For departmental evaluation, a "diagnostic" GPA will be calculated based only on PhD coursework taken in the department and excluding the summer teaching course. The diagnostic GPA will count the second grade earned in a repeated methods sequence course, but only the first grade earned in any other repeated course. Courses taken outside of the department will not count as part of the diagnostic GPA used for evaluations.

No course in which a student earns a grade below B- can be counted toward his or her degree requirements. No course taken on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U) basis can be counted toward degree requirements, except with the GD's prior approval. In no case are more than six hours of S/U credit permitted on regular coursework.

Incompletes Students are expected to complete all the work required during the semester in which a course is taken. In rare cases, extenuating circumstances may hinder a student from finishing. The Incomplete (I) grade option is intended to assist students who find themselves in an extraordinary or emergency situation. It is the student's responsibility to request an incomplete, and it is the instructor's prerogative to grant it or not. Should such a situation arise, students are urged to complete the course requirements during the break between semesters. Instructors who assign an "I" grade will also provide a "default" grade in case the student does NOT complete the work as assigned. The "I" grade will automatically convert to the default grade the next term of student's enrollment if a grade change is not submitted. There is a procedure for extending Incompletes, but it is the Department's policy not to do so, except in unusual and compelling circumstances. The form for such an extension must be signed by both the instructor and the Academic Dean. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor to pursue these matters. Grade changes and extensions must be processed (through the AC) at least one week before grades are due each term. An assistantship offer may be withdrawn if the student has outstanding Incompletes on August 15 prior to the fall semester of the year for which the assistantship has been awarded.

Developing Professional Competence Developing professional competence involves a substantial time investment outside of assigned coursework. Students in the PhD program are expected to engage in professional development activities throughout their time in the program. Increasingly, students without conference paper presentations or accepted publications and a completed dissertation are finding it difficult to secure good tenure-track positions. This means that some time should be set aside for preparing conference papers and potential publications. This might be done by revising the research practicum paper or a paper written for an advanced research seminar; by conceiving one or more chapters of the dissertation so that they almost stand alone and can easily be converted into journal article submissions; or by collaborating with faculty or other graduate students on a research project and paper. Such supplementary professional activities should be planned along the way and should not be undertaken at the neglect of regular program responsibilities and requirements. One should not wait until the dissertation is completed to think seriously about conference presentations and journal submissions. Conference participation is beneficial not only for its scholarly content but also as a means of meeting others in the profession. While the Department budget for the purpose is limited, some funds are available to assist students with the cost of conference attendance. Students may be required to submit information about their professional development activities as part of their annual evaluations. Participation in professional development activities is considered as a component of "normal progress" in the program. "All proposals to participate in a professional conference must be approved by your faculty advisor before being submitted." Failure to do so may harm your annual evaluation.

English Language Proficiency for International Students The Department realizes that not all international students will be fluent in English upon their arrival at FSU. Since English language proficiency is essential for the student's full participation and ultimate success in the program, those accepting admission must be willing to undertake, if necessary, the additional expense and effort required to improve their English language skills. There are various resources available at FSU, through the English Department and the Center for Intensive English Studies. None of these English language courses can be counted toward degree requirements. The spring evaluation of first-year international students includes a consideration of facility in English. Further, spoken English proficiency (sufficient to lead an undergraduate discussion section) is required for funding beyond the first year, and international students may be asked to undertake a standardized test in that area in order to meet University and department standards. Three outcomes are possible: (1) The student's command of English is deemed sufficient and eligibility for funding continues. (2) The student's command is insufficient but progress and promise are apparent and one semester of funding is granted to allow the student time to reach full proficiency. The student is assigned to assist a faculty member with an undergraduate class and another evaluation is done at the end of that third funded semester. Such a probationary semester will be granted only once. (3) The student's command of English is deemed insufficient with virtually no hope of reaching proficiency, and funding is terminated at the end of the first year. Certification of Spoken English for Graduate Teaching Assistants is required, and international students should consult the AC for additional details on these standards.

Graduate Student Representation Graduate students are encouraged to participate in the Graduate Student Association (GSA), the organization through which they exercise a voice in departmental affairs. Each year the GSA elects: three participants in Department faculty meetings, one of whom serves as a voting member; up to three members to sit on the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC), one of whom serves as a voting member; and one non-voting member of the

Executive Committee. Graduate student representatives do not participate in any issues involving faculty elections, evaluations, promotions, or other personnel decisions, nor attend meetings in which graduate students are evaluated.

Academic Integrity

Double Submission of a Paper A student wishing to revise and submit a paper used previously for another course must inform the instructor in the second course and adhere to that instructor's requirements about the nature of the revisions. The student must submit both versions of the paper to the instructor. A student wishing to submit a new paper (or two papers that are only marginally different) in two courses in the same semester must obtain the permission of both instructors. Failure to comply with these policies is a violation of the academic honor code, and faculty who detect such a violation are required to report it to the GD. The recommended minimum penalty is a zero grade on the paper(s).

Plagiarism and Cheating The Department adheres to the honor system described in the Graduate Bulletin (http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/graduate/information/integrity/). Plagiarism defeats the learning process by enabling students to nominally complete assignments without understanding the relevant material. Plagiarism is representing another's work and ideas as one's own. It includes failure to use quotation marks or other conventional markings around material quoted from any source. Paraphrasing is also plagiarism, if the source is not identified repeatedly. It is also plagiarism to submit or present work in a way that impairs the instructor's ability to accurately evaluate the student's independent abilities and performance. This statement is not an exhaustive list of the activities that might be considered violations of the honor code. The following guidelines govern any suspected cases of plagiarism or cheating. Faculty who believe that a student has plagiarized or cheated in their class bring their suspicions to the attention of the GD who sets up a hearing of the case within one month of being notified. In every instance the hearing body is the Graduate Studies Committee, charged with the responsibility of reviewing the evidence and, if the charges are sustained, assigning all penalties. All decisions are determined by a simple majority vote of the committee members. Student members of the committee may attend the hearing but do not vote. If the instructor bringing the charge is a member of the Committee, she or he does not vote. The accusing faculty member attends the hearing; the student attends and may choose to be accompanied by a faculty member. It is the Department's policy that students found guilty of plagiarizing or cheating in any class are assigned an F as a final grade in that course and dismissed from the Department's graduate program at the end of the semester in which the hearing takes place.

DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

For students entering the program Fall 2025 and beyond (Students entering the program prior to Fall 2025 should refer to the previous versions of this handbook, or contact the AC for assistance):

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 57-hour course work requirements: 12 hours (4 courses) in each of two fields, including the core seminar in each; 15 hours (5 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 9 hours for 3 elective courses.

Course requirements may be satisfied through graduate courses taken prior to admission to the PhD program at this or another institution. Requests to use prior coursework to fulfill a portion of the program requirements must be submitted for approval to the Director of Graduate Studies. The request must include documentation of the course content and an official transcript showing the course grade. The maximum allowable equivalency credits which can be transferred are 24 credit hours. Practicum and preliminary examination prep hours cannot be waived. Except in extraordinary circumstances,

students are expected to complete all major course requirements through coursework in the department. Equivalency waivers cannot be used in fulfillment of the requirements to obtain the Masters-in-course (see below).

Summer Terms
In summer terms, graduate students enroll for 5 credit hours. The specific courses vary by year. For the summer after the first year, students enroll in 5 credit hours of the Profession of Political Science (POS6930). For the summer after the second year, students enroll in 5 total credit hours, 3 hours of Research Practicum (POS 5915) and 2 hours of the Profession of Political Science (POS6930). For the summers after all remaining years, students enroll in 5 hours of Dissertation (POS6980).

Methods Training. In addition to a required Fundamentals of Mathematics (POS5744) course taken in the fall semester, there is a five-course methods requirement for doctoral students and a required game theory course. Students are required to achieve a grade of B or higher in each of the methods sequence 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. Students not receiving at least a B the second time they take the course will be deemed as 'not making normal progress.' The first three courses in the sequence are to be taken in the student's first year: POS5736 Research Design and POS5737 Political Science Data Analysis in the fall, and POS5746 Quantitative Analysis in Political Science in the Spring. POS5747 Advanced Quantitative Analysis in Political Science is taken in the second fall term. POS 5748 Causal Inference is taken in the second spring 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 sixth course, POS5748 (other than causal inference), is optional with varying topics, offered in alternate spring semesters. Students may take this course upon completion of the first four methods courses in the sequence.

Game Theory (POS5723) All students must complete the Fundamentals of Mathematics in the fall semester prior to taking the required game theory course. This course is a survey of game theory with a specific emphasis on utilizing those mathematical models to understand political phenomena.

Students who have taken a course comparable to POS5736 or POS5737, or the POS5744 Fundamentals of Mathematics course, at another institution may request to take the Department's placement test to allow them to omit either or both of these two courses. Incoming students wishing to test out of a required course must contact the GD for an evaluation of prior coursework before July 1 prior to entering the program. The exam, given during the orientation period prior to the fall term, is comparable in coverage to a comprehensive final exam in the course and a grade of A- on the examination is required to place out of either course.

First Year Research Project As part of the first-year methods courses (POS5736, POS5737, and POS5746), students are required to complete a research project. The research design is prepared during POS5746 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.

Programs of Study The Academic Coordinator maintains electronic copies of each student's program of studies. Students are responsible for ensuring these remain correctly correct, by reviewing a copy of the form distributed at the annual pre-Fall student meeting. Per University policy, the program of studies must also be on file with the Dean's Office of the College of Social Sciences and Public Policy no later than the Summer semester following the first year of studies in the program. Upon completion of the coursework for the program and defense of the preliminary examination, a final, signed (by student, major professor, and Director of Graduate Studies) copy of the program of studies must be given to the Academic Coordinator.

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. A detailed pre-analysis plan paired with pilot data as an appropriate Research Practicum. The committee encourages the department Chair to allocate financial support for students to

implement pilot studies of any proposed survey experiments as part of the Research Practicum. 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 summer semester after their second year, they are expected to begin preliminary work on the research project in the fall semester of their second year. By the end of the eighth 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 eighth 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. Students who wish to change projects and/or advisors must file an amended practicum form along with signatures from the original practicum advisor and the new practicum advisor prior to the first week of spring semester. Changes in the practicum advisor after this date will be granted at the discretion of the GD and only in extraordinary circumstances.

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 Pass, the committee will communicate a recommended letter grade to the GD. 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, unless they receive permission from the GD for an alternate deadline. Upon receipt of the revised paper, the committee will communicate a recommended letter grade to the GD. If no revised paper is turned in, the student will receive an 'F' on their transcript and will not be allowed to continue in the Ph.D. program. If the student receives a grade of Fail, the student may revise the paper and redefend 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 receive an 'F' on their transcript and 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.

Master's Degree 'In Course' It is possible to take a set of courses that fulfills the Master's degree requirements and constitutes normal progress toward the Ph.D., provided a MS degree in Political Science was not previously earned from Florida State University or another institution. Students seeking the MS degree "in course' must complete 33 hours of graduate credit toward program requirements, with at least 27 on a letter grade basis, including: two core courses from among those offered in the major fields (CPO5091, INR5007, POS5045, PUP5005); and two methods courses – either POS5736 and POS5737 in the department, or PAD5700 and PAD5701 (and their associated lab classes) in Public Administration. No more than nine credit hours towards the MS can be taken outside of the Political Science department. PAD5700 and PAD5701 cannot be taken on an S/U basis, do not count against the limit of 9 hours outside the department, and require permission from the GD if taken in lieu of POS5736 and POS5737. POS5736 and POS5737 are required for those students who intend to go on to the Ph.D. program.

Preliminary Examinations

Once students have completed their course work, they are required to take doctoral preliminary exams (prelims). The Department conducts prelims during the second week of each spring semester (in rare circumstances and alternate date may be arranged when approved by the GD). According to the Department's standards of normal progress, students should take exams no later than the second semester of their third year in the program. Students may be enrolled in their last required courses during their prelim semester, though it is not advisable that any of these be substantive courses in a tested field.

Students register for the exams (POS8964, a zero-credit P/F course) for the spring semester of exams only using the published course reference number. No later than the last week of the Fall term prior to the term in which prelims will be taken, students must file with the AC (1) a Preliminary Exam Request Form and (2) Seminar Subfield Declaration Form. Upon receiving these forms, the AC will send the student a final Program of Studies Form, which the student must then return with required signatures from the major professor and the GD.

Prelims consist of a written exam and a required oral exam that cover a student's primary field. Students will fulfill the preliminary exam requirements of the second field through demonstrating competency in a minimum of four courses in the second field with an average GPA for field courses of a 3.5. Relevant courses applying to the student's first and second field will be declared on the department's Seminar Subfield Declaration Form. All courses taken in a second field will contribute to the average GPA for that field. Students falling below a 3.5 must complete preliminary examinations for both fields. The Methods field is not included in the preliminary examination process.

Written Examination Students will receive the exam questions at 8:30 a.m. on the Friday of the second week of the semester. Exams will be scheduled by subfield; that is, all students taking an exam in a certain field will receive the exam questions for that field on the same Friday. Students will finish their exam by 4:30 p.m. The AC will distribute completed exams to the appropriate field members along with grading forms on that Friday. Faculty will have one week to grade the written exams. Students will be informed in writing as to whether they passed. Written exams are graded as Pass or Fail. Students must receive a grade of Pass from more than 50% of the faculty members grading that exam.

During the written exam period, students are allowed to make use of notes, readings, or other course materials. However, they are NOT allowed to consult with any other person, including any FSU students or faculty, or AI engine. The work that is turned in must be the student's own. AI tools are not permitted for this exam. All work must be completed independently, without the assistance of AI tools. Violations of this policy will result in academic penalties. Any plagiarism or cheating will be dealt with as described in the Graduate Program Handbook under the Plagiarism and Cheating heading.

Prelims are field exams, which means that they are written and graded by the eligible field members, defined as all Departmental faculty who have offered at least one graduate course or have directed a dissertation in that field over the previous three years. Exceptions may be made to this definition in order to achieve the minimum requirement of three faculty members in a field. The field exams are not necessarily limited to or constrained by the specific courses the student has taken; rather, the student is expected to have gained a broad understanding of the major research approaches and findings in the field selected for examination. Past exam questions are available from the AC.

Students who pass the written exam have their grade for POS8964 determined by their performance on the Oral exam (described below). Students must pass the written exam before continuing to the oral exam. Students who fail the written exam on their first attempt are given a grade of Incomplete for POS8964. To be considered making normal progress, students must make a second attempt prior to the last two weeks of the semester. Students can take the preliminary examination for admission to candidacy only two times. If the student attempts the second exam during the same semester as the first, the second attempt at the preliminary exam shall occur no sooner than six full class weeks after the results of the first attempt are shared with the student. For the purpose of this policy, a "full class week" is defined as a week with five days during which classes are held at FSU. Students must be registered separately for their first and second attempt and must receive either a "pass" or a "fail" grade for each attempt.

Students who fail a written field exam at the second taking are given a grade of Fail for POS8964 and are dropped from the Ph.D. program. Students may not change fields in which they are being examined for the second taking of an exam. There is an appeal process (see below).

Oral Examination The oral exam will normally be conducted within two weeks after the written exam has been graded. The oral exam will be conducted by a three-person committee. Faculty who participated in grading a student's written exam will be eligible to serve on the oral exam committee. The chair of the oral exam committee will be selected by the DGS. The committee chair and the DGS will select the remaining members of the committee. The specific timing of the exam will be coordinated by the exam committee chair and the AC.

Oral exams are graded by the oral exam committee as either Pass or Fail. Students must receive a vote of Pass from a majority of the committee members to pass the exam. The oral exam committee chair will be responsible for conducting and moderating the exam as well as filing a final grade report with the AC. It is expected that the oral exam will typically last approximately one hour. Immediately following the exam, the exam committee will meet to discuss the student's performance. The committee may decide to render its decision during this meeting, but students must be informed of the outcome of the oral exam no later than 24 hours after its completion.

The oral exam is designed to test broadly the student's knowledge of the student's major field. Students may be asked to elaborate on the written answers they provided on their written exams. They may also be asked about other areas not addressed by the written questions. If the committee votes to fail the student at the oral stage, and the student is taking the exam for the first time, the student has the opportunity to undertake the oral examination again. If the student attempts the second exam during the same semester as the first, the second attempt at the preliminary exam shall occur no sooner than six full class weeks after the results of the first attempt are shared with the student. For the purpose of this policy, a "full class week" is defined as a week with five days during which classes are held at FSU. If the student fails the oral exam for the second time, the student will receive a grade of Fail for POS8964 and will be dropped from the Ph.D. program. There is an appeal process (see below).

Substantive Appeals of Preliminary Examinations The examining field committee constitutes the court of last resort on all issues related to the student's competence in the field; therefore, substantive appeals cannot go beyond the field committee. Students who fail the exam on the first try essentially appeal that decision by taking the exam in that field again. If the student fails to achieve a passing score on a second exam in a given field, the student may petition the examining field committee to hold a meeting at which the student may present his/her case regarding whether the exam was substantively fair. Following this meeting, the exam committee will render a decision regarding the substantive fairness of the exam.

Procedural Appeals of Preliminary Examinations Procedural appeals may be initiated after failing the preliminary exam for the first time or the second time. If a student believes that there were procedural irregularities that invalidated the examination process as a measure of his or her knowledge of a given field, he or she may appeal the decision by presenting a written statement to the Graduate Director within 30 days of having received formal notification of failing an exam. The GSC, including its student members but excluding the representative of the field being challenged, will then be called to hear the case. After the student and the field representative have presented their views (each may choose to have the other outside the room when they present), the GSC will excuse both sides, deliberate and reach a final decision on the merit of the appeal. If the student is upheld by 50% of the voting members of the GSC, the student will be permitted to take the exam in question again at its next regularly scheduled time. If the student is not upheld, the procedural appeal process will have been exhausted.

Dissertation Requirements and Procedures

Admission to Candidacy and Dissertation Hours Once students have passed the preliminary exams, they are formally admitted to doctoral candidacy; that is, they are eligible to register for dissertation credits. In fact, Preliminary Exam

Preparation (POS6960) hours carried during the term in which the exams are passed can be converted to dissertation hours provided the student successfully completes the preliminary exam and all secondary field course requirements before the end of the 7th week of classes. Admission to candidacy must occur at least six months prior to granting of the degree. Once admitted to candidacy, students must register for at least 2 hours of dissertation credit each term in which a substantial amount of work is being done on their dissertation and they continue to use campus facilities and/or to receive faculty supervision, including the semester the student defends the dissertation. Students must accumulate a minimum of 24 dissertation hours before the Ph.D. degree can be granted.

Dissertation Committee The student's doctoral supervisory committee is headed by a major professor, who has primary responsibility for directing the dissertation. Members include a minimum of 3 members from the Department, which includes the major professor, and 1 University representative from outside the Department. All members of the committee must hold graduate faculty status (GFS); the major professor and the University representative must be tenured. The student, in consultation with the major professor, may freely select the members of the committee. The major professor need not be a member of the student's major field (as reflected in the Program of Studies), nor are there any restrictions on the field membership of the committee members. Any changes in the committee must be reported to the AC for updating the student's file, and to the Graduate School prior to submission of the dissertation.

Prospectus A student must schedule a prospectus defense by the ninth week of the fall of the fourth year of coursework. The defense is designed to serve as an early faculty intervention into the development of the student's research design. It enables the student's committee to conduct an initial critique of the student's dissertation research proposal. The dissertation prospectus should be 10 - 30 pages in length. It should define the research problem and theoretical rationale for undertaking the study; identify the major concepts and theories found in the literature that the student's research will draw on and build from; and present an overview of the theories and hypotheses to be tested, and a clear outline of the research design, data sources and methods that will be employed in conducting the research. The prospectus defense comes at a point when the student is deciding how to approach the topic, what data to collect, how broad or narrow the focus should be, etc.; the committee's input should serve to center the student's pursuits. The major professor and a majority of the committee members must be present to constitute a valid prospectus defense. It is advised but not required that the representative-at-large be present. A simple majority vote of those present determines the outcome (pass or fail). The representative at-large serves in an advisory capacity and does not cast a vote. The major professor informs the AC of the result of the prospectus defense for the purpose of updating student records. If a student fails the prospectus defense, the student must revise and re-defend it prior to the end of the spring semester. A student who fails the prospectus defense twice is dismissed from the program.

The student should arrange the time and place (usually the Department conference room) of the defense and report those details to the AC in advance of the defense so any required preparation can be undertaken. Students must inform the AC who will serve as the major professor of the dissertation by the end of the Spring semester of the 3rd year. As early as possible, but at latest upon the successful defense of the prospectus, the student should inform the AC of the composition of the dissertation committee and the title of their dissertation. Any changes to either the committee or dissertation title should be reported to the AC immediately.

Timeliness of Doctoral Degree Completion All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed within 5 years of the term in which the student passes doctoral preliminary examinations (usually the spring term of the third year of study). Students failing to meet this five-year deadline will be required to retake an examination in their major field in order to re-establish eligibility. The single possible exception to this requirement may be granted in a case where both the following circumstances are present: (1) the major professor affirms to the GD that the student has completed the vast majority of the work for the dissertation, and (2) the student has had an illness or other medical problem which has prevented work on the dissertation in the two months immediately prior to the expiration of the five-year period. Under these circumstances, the Department may request that the Dean of the Graduate School allow a one-semester extension of eligibility.

Leave of Absence Under special circumstances, graduate students may apply for a leave of absence from the university for a specific period of up to three consecutive semesters (includes summer term). The circumstances justifying a leave include, but are not limited to: personal or family medical conditions, call to active military duty, parental leave, death in

immediate family, or completion of an off-campus internship. It is advised that the student consult with his/her major professor, advisor, or graduate coordinator to determine what constitutes a valid justification for a leave of absence. The policy can be found on the Graduate School's website. It is recommended that International students first consult with the Center for Global Engagement to discuss how a leave of absence affects their immigration status.

Scholarly Engagement Policy The University requires that, after finishing 30 semester hours of graduate work or being awarded a Master's degree (whichever comes first), all doctoral students must be active in the scholarly community. To satisfy this requirement prior to completing preliminary exams, students must attend departmental colloquium events. To satisfy the requirement after completing preliminary exams, students must demonstrate progress each semester on their dissertation and, unless excused by the DGS, attend colloquium events.

Dissertation Defense When serious work on the dissertation begins, the student should obtain the dissertation manual either from the Graduate School or at their page on the FSU Web site. Procedures and guidelines established by that office must be met in completing the dissertation, the defense, and the graduation process. Once the dissertation is approved by the major professor, it must be defended in an oral examination conducted by the student's dissertation committee. The student should, in consultation with the AC, register for POS8985 Dissertation Defense (zero hours) in the term in which the defense takes place. However, only one incidence of POS8985 can appear on the student's transcript, so students should not register for the defense in multiple semesters. A complete draft of the dissertation should be provided to each member of the dissertation committee at least four weeks prior to the defense date. The student should arrange the time and place (usually Bellamy 532) of the defense and report those details to the AC so that the necessary forms can be prepared. The Graduate School must also be notified (a form is included in the manual and at the online site). The results of the defense are usually reported to the student verbally and verified by the committee's signatures on the Department's defense form and on the dissertation cover pages. The signed defense form goes to the AC who in turn reports the outcome to the Dean's office. The dissertation defense is not passed unless the committee gives unanimous consent. The major professor, the University representative, and all committee members must be present (in person, by phone, or via internet conferencing software (e.g. Skype) to constitute a valid defense.

Students should expect that the oral defense, even when successful, will call for some changes in the draft before it can be approved by the committee and submitted to the Graduate School for clearance. Therefore, the student should allow a reasonable period following the defense in which to make final revisions prior to the deadline for submitting the dissertation to the Graduate School; the date is listed in each semester's academic calendar.

Graduation Clearance for the Ph.D. The student must apply for graduation at the Registrar's Office during the first two weeks of the term, even if they do not intend to take part in the graduation ceremony. In addition, the student must undertake the dissertation clearance process through the Graduate School, noting the deadlines listed on the Graduate School Web site and University academic calendar. Graduation clearances are processed by the AC.

Job Placement

Once students have passed the prospectus defense, they should seek the major professor's advice about when to enter the job market, what kinds of position to seek, etc. When the major professor deems that the student's dissertation progress is sufficient, the Department undertakes placement efforts on the student's behalf. A number of job openings close as early as October and early preparation of a placement file and teaching portfolio will help candidates to avoid missing job opportunities. The Department does not want students to accept interviews before they are in a position to present some substantial results from their dissertation research as part of their interview process. It is advisable for students to arrange a practice job-talk within the Department before going to another campus for an interview. The student gives the presentation planned for the interview and faculty and graduate students ask questions and make suggestions about the presentation.

Students may refer to the online listing of jobs published by the American Political Science Association. A list of complete addresses can be given to the AC once it has been approved by the major professor. This approval requirement is intended to save the effort and cost of applying inappropriately and to allow the major professor the opportunity to

make any personal contacts on the student's behalf that might be suitable. These lists should be given to the AC well in advance of the application deadline.

The Department covers the cost of copying and mailing the placement file and the teaching portfolio. This placement service is available for one additional year following the attainment of the first job. Students are responsible for copying and mailing other materials, such as the *vitae* and writing samples. Also, the student must send a letter of application to each institution that will receive the teaching portfolio and/or placement file. Materials related to courses taught at other schools are not included in departmental packet.

The placement file typically contains: three letters of recommendation; a statement of research interests; and a copy of the transcript (students can obtain an official transcript from the Office of the Registrar).The teaching portfolio includes: a statement of teaching philosophy and teaching interests; a list and description of teacher training; an annotated list of courses taught, including enrollment; a copy of each syllabus (only one where a course was taught more than once); copies of the summary reports of student evaluations and graphic illustrations; and at least one letter from a faculty member who has observed the student teach.

Awards and Assistantships

Pruet Award In 1987 the Department established the George W. Pruet, Jr. Award in memory of a loved and respected 1983 graduate of the Ph.D. program. This memorial award, given annually to signify the Department's recognition of the effort graduate students put forth in pursuing their education, goes to the student whose paper is chosen as the best of the preceding academic year. This award, like others of its type, can be a valuable addition to the recipient's *vitae*. Papers from seminars or DIS's are eligible, and must be submitted without revision.

Departmental Assistantships
Departmental assistantships are awarded competitively, not only to provide financial assistance but also to afford outstanding students a structured experience in teaching and research. Such awards are generally granted only to those students who plan to complete a Ph.D. in the Department.

Most assistantships are offered as part of the admissions package to students entering the Ph.D. program and continue for a specified time period provided the student is making normal progress towards the degree and is in good standing with the department. PhD students who are not funded and who are in good standing are considered for funding each year during their first five years in the program. Awards are usually announced during the spring semester but may be offered at any time an opening becomes available.

Graduate assistants generally receive a salary and a 9-hour tuition waiver. The out-of-state portion of tuition is not waived beyond the first year for U.S. citizens, resident aliens, and legal aliens granted an indefinite stay by Immigration and Naturalization Services; in other words, a second-year out-of-state waiver is not granted to those who can be declared a Florida resident. Students in those categories who are not granted state resident status at the time of their admission must petition for a change of that status through the Registrar's Office at the end of their first year (usually in June). Steps to acquire any required residency documents should be taken by students on assistantship as early as possible.

Eligibility criteria for assistantships:

- Non-funded students with a GPA below 3.5 are not eligible for assistantships.
- Funded students are expected to maintain a GPA of 3.5 and meet all standards of normal progress in the department in order to remain eligible for funding (see also section above on Grade Standards and section below on Policy for Dismissal of a Graduate Student for Reasons Other than GPA). Eligibility is normally determined following the annual evaluation of students in the spring semester each year, but eligibility for continuation of funding may be reassessed in any semester if a student deviates substantially from the standards of normal progress.
- International students must demonstrate proficiency in spoken English, as discussed above.
- Assistantships, both during the regular year and for the summer, are awarded on the basis of merit. The following criteria are used by the GSC in determining whether a student merits funding: GPA; performance in department

methods sequence courses; faculty views of the student's academic potential; seminar evaluations; TA and RA evaluations; compliance with normal progress.

- Determinations are made in the spring semester by the GSC. Applicants receiving favorable votes from more than half the committee are funded if the budget permits; others are not.
- An assistantship offer is subject to withdrawal if the student has any outstanding Incompletes as of August 15 prior to the fall semester of the academic year for which the assistantship is awarded.
- A limited number of teaching assistantships for the summer are also usually available; announcements regarding summer funding are made during the spring semester.

While assistantships are the only department-structured method for faculty and students to work together on research outside the classroom, non-funded students are encouraged to make themselves known to faculty whose academic interests they share. Voluntary research assistance can be beneficial to the student, not only in exploring research areas, but also in forging a professional relationship.

Policy for Dismissal of a Graduate Student for Reasons Other than GPA

The University reserves the right to dismiss graduate students and terminate their enrollment in an academic program based on a number of different criteria, beyond that of GPA alone. Oversight is provided by The Graduate School, Office of Faculty Development and Advancement, and Office of the Registrar. Additional details on the steps involved in the process are available for faculty and administrators from the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement and for graduate students at the Graduate School.

Dismissed students will not be permitted to register for further graduate study, including registering as non-degree students, in the degree program or college from which they had enrollment terminated. Graduate students who have been dismissed from one degree program may seek admission to another degree program but will not be readmitted or allowed to add the dismissed degree program back as a second major or degree. This includes seeking admission into a different degree program that shared a joint pathway with the dismissed degree program. Program terminations (dismissal for a reason other than GPA) are generally identified by the faculty with support from the Department Chair (or unit head) in the department/unit or single-unit college level and may occur for a number of different reasons.

As specified by university policy, Graduate policy, or within the unit's Graduate Student handbook, reasons may include but are not limited to: Inability to conduct independent research in a fashion appropriate with the accepted norms of a discipline, Inability to function within a team environment to the extent that it negatively affects the learning, practice and/or research of fellow graduate students, Behavior that does not meet the professional standards of a discipline (typically clinical, social work or school settings, but also including Motion Picture Arts, internship work, etc.), Failure to meet artistic or creative performance standards, Failure to be approved for an Extension of Time (EOT), Failure to complete important degree milestone requirements within a reasonable period of time, Inability to pass the doctoral diagnostic exam, preliminary exam for admission to candidacy in, etc., Failure to complete the doctoral degree or make timely progress towards the research or writing of their treatise or dissertation, Failure to complete the master's degree or make timely progress towards the research or writing of their thesis, or the production of their thesis-equivalent creative project.

In addition, please note that suspension or expulsion from the university may result if a student is found responsible in a formal Academic Honor Policy (AHP) hearing for an egregious AHP violation, or as an outcome from a Student Conduct Code charge for which a student is found responsible.

Changes to this Handbook

Policy changes and any other substantive changes to the requirements listed in this handbook may be made with advanced notice to students that may be affected. However, students will generally remain under the regulations in effect (both in the Handbook and Graduate Bulletin) for the semester they first enter the graduate program.

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