

**UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE  
GRADUATE HANDBOOK**

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## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

### I.a. Departmental Policies

This handbook is meant to be a helpful guide that translates both Departmental and Graduate School rules in a way that is easy for students and faculty to use. It is updated when the DGS finds useful information to add. If the handbook conflicts with Graduate School rules/regulations, the Graduate School rules are the ones students/faculty should follow. If such a situation arises, please contact the DGS to let him/her know about the discrepancy so that the handbook can be updated.

Students bear full and sole responsibility for understanding and abiding by the regulations and procedures required to attain a graduate degree in Political Science. Graduate students are governed by rules and regulations of the Department of Political Science, the Graduate School, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the University. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) in the Department is the students' official liaison for all questions relevant to their degree progress. The two primary documents relevant to successfully completing a graduate degree in Political Science are this handbook and the Graduate School Bulletin.<sup>1</sup> There is a "checklist" for the Ph.D. degree in Political Science included at the end of this handbook, which can serve as a general guide to progress. We suggest that students copy the checklist relevant to their degree and keep it handy throughout their academic tenure at the University of Kentucky. At a minimum, we also suggest that students browse the department website<sup>2</sup> and the Graduate School website<sup>3</sup> in order to become familiar with institutional structures, organization, and requirements.

### I.b. Academic Load

The normal graduate student course load during the Fall and Spring Semesters is 9-12 credit hours in each.<sup>4</sup> Typically, a student who is a Teaching Assistant (TA) will take 9 credit hours per semester. The academic load of a TA shall not exceed 10 credit hours in any semester. Students on Fellowships or other similar types of funding may enroll for 12 credit hours. Students enrolling for more than 12 credit hours must obtain permission from their advisor and the DGS. Under no circumstances may a student exceed 15 credit hours in one semester. A student enrolled in 9 credit hours or more in a semester is considered to be full time. See the Graduate School Bulletin for more information. All courses from any department or program numbered 500 through 799 may be counted for credit toward a graduate degree provided they are approved as an appropriate part of the student's graduate program by the student's advisor and the DGS. Courses offered by any other department or program that are numbered 400G to 499G may be counted for graduate credit. Ph.D. students in Political Science generally are discouraged from taking courses below the 600 level.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/CurrentStudents/bulletin.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://polisci.as.uky.edu/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.rgs.uky.edu/gs/> Note that the DGS handbook at this link may also be very helpful to both professors and graduate students. To view the DGS handbook, hover over "For Faculty & Staff" and then click on "For Directors of Graduate Studies." The DGS handbook is on the right.

<sup>4</sup> See Section III.h for special rules regarding full-time states for PS767 for students who are taking qualifying exams or already ABD.

### **I.c. Student Advising**

The department's graduate program is designed to facilitate close collaboration among faculty and students with shared areas of interest. Consistent with this philosophy, each student will select a professor who will act as his or her major advisor. The advisor's role is to assist the graduate student with any problems that may arise in his or her program, to advise on matters such as course selection, proposal design, grant writing, conducting research, and to serve as an intellectual mentor during the student's tenure in the department. Students are expected to consult regularly with their advisor. The DGS typically acts as temporary advisor for first-year students until each selects an advisor. Students generally select an advisor during their third semester in residence. In all cases, advisor assignment is contingent upon agreement by both parties. Ph.D. advising is a privilege of full graduate faculty membership (i.e., only tenured faculty with full Graduate School status may serve as advisors). Any student, with the approval of the DGS, may change advisor at any time during her or his tenure in the program. It is understood that changes might occur as a student defines or re-defines her or his area of interest or otherwise changes focus and direction in the graduate program.

The student's advisor serves as the Chair of the student's Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee includes the Chair and at least three other members.<sup>5</sup> At least one committee member must be from outside the department. All members of the committee must be members of the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kentucky (with rare exceptions) and three (including the advisor) must possess Full Graduate Faculty status.<sup>6</sup> Additional members of the committee are permitted. Except in unusual circumstances, the core of the Committee must be kept at its full complement throughout the student's program. In the event of a vacancy on the Committee, an appropriate replacement must be arranged prior to any committee decision.

Once the Advisory Committee is formed, the student must formally request approval of the committee through the Graduate School.<sup>7</sup> All decisions of the Advisory Committee are by a majority vote of its Graduate Faculty members. Advisory Committee decisions are reported to the DGS who transmits them to the Graduate School when necessary. In addition to advising and program planning, the Advisory Committee undertakes administration of the Qualifying Examination, supervision of the Dissertation, and administration of the Final Examination.

### **I.d. Financial Aid and Funding**

Financial aid (funding) decisions are made on an annual basis for both applicants and currently enrolled students, and are based primarily upon academic merit and, in the case of currently-funded students, academic progress. Applicants to the program should indicate their interest in funding as part of the application package and are subject to application deadlines.

Currently enrolled students must follow two steps to be eligible for funding:

1. Complete and submit the Graduate Student Self-Assessment to the DGS by January 18.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.rgs.uky.edu/gsbulletin/bull9800/bulletin.html> It is possible to have more than 4 total people on the advisory committee.

<sup>6</sup> "Full" graduate school status effectively means that the professor is tenured. While it is possible for an assistant professor to have full graduate school status, it is quite rare for that to happen. When thinking of the committee, students should think in terms of having at least 3 of the 4 (or 5) member committee being tenured.

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gsbulletin/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gsbulletin/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm)

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/DGS.htm>

2. Meet with his/her Advisory Committee no later than February 8.<sup>9</sup>

Funding decisions are made during the Spring term. The DGS will in every case contact each graduate student in writing no later than March 1 with information concerning the subsequent year's funding. Once awarded funding, the department makes every attempt to support Ph.D. students for four years. Ongoing funding support is contingent upon the availability of funds, the individual student's good academic progress, the terms of the student's admissions letter, and any terms specified in the student's annual funding/retention letter.

Students should be aware that decisions about funding and retention are made by the DGS in consultation with the Graduate Committee. While the "Graduate Student Self-Assessment" form should give students a good idea as to how they will be evaluated, members of the Graduate Committee will use all available information in making funding and retention recommendations about individual students.

In order to encourage student application for support external to the department, the funding 'clock' may be stopped for any period during which a student is funded through sources external to the department and which the student has garnered through his or her own effort. Determination of appropriate "external support" must be approved by the DGS (in consultation with the Graduate Committee), and the decision must be recorded in the student's permanent record. In general, "departmental support" includes Teaching Assistantship Appointments, UK Fellowships for which the Political Science Department nominates a student (whether through internal competition or not), and any other assistantship or fellowship where the initial offer of support is generated by, through, and on the behalf of the Political Science Department. In every case, approval to stop the funding clock also is dependent upon the timing of the request (i.e., last minute decisions which inconvenience the department and are not the result of planning and consultation with the DGS may not be approved).

### **I.e. Conference Travel Support**

Students are encouraged to attend conferences. Both the Graduate College<sup>10</sup> and the department (when able) may provide funds for conference travel. However, students are discouraged from presenting work without close supervision of a faculty member, particularly during their first three years in the graduate program. Thus, students who wish to present single-authored papers or papers co-authored with other graduate students must take the following steps before presenting work at a conference if they wish to be considered for these funding opportunities.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> /\*Professors, the Chair of the student's Advisory Committee will receive the Graduate Self-Assessment form from the DGS during sometime around 01/18. Following the student's meeting with the Advisory Committee, the Chair of the Advisory Committee must notify the DGS in writing about the outcome of the meeting by February 15. The 'Advisory Committee Review Report' is the preferable mechanism to relay this information. This form is available at: <http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/DGS.htm> \*/

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/StudentFunding/supportfunding.html>

<sup>11</sup> Students who wish to present work co-authored with professors do not have to follow these steps to be eligible for either Graduate College or Departmental funding.

1. The student must meet with his/her advisor before submitting a proposal to a conference.<sup>12</sup> The advisor must endorse the student's proposal before the student should submit a conference proposal. Whether or not the student is ready to submit the proposal is entirely up to the discretion of the advisor. The student should record the outcome of this meeting on the "Conference Proposal" form<sup>13</sup>, and then submit the form to the DGS.
2. Students wishing to obtain travel funding from the Graduate School must apply for travel funding from the Graduate school on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month prior to the month of travel. This application must be approved by the DGS. The DGS will not approve the application without the "Conference Proposal" form having been signed by the student's advisor.
3. Students wishing to obtain travel funding from the Department must apply for travel funding by submitting a copy of the "Conference Proposal" form to the Chair's Administrative Assistant. The student will not be considered for departmental travel funds without the form having been signed by the student's advisor.

Students should be aware that they must present documentation to be reimbursed for conference participation. The smart advice here is to keep documentation for everything (e.g., registration receipts, meal receipts, conference program). These must be original receipts (not copies).

### **I.f. Graduate College Awards**

The Graduate College offers several awards for both incoming and current students.<sup>14</sup> These awards are broken down into two categories: (1) DGS-nominated awards and (2) student self-nominated awards.

Below are the awards that are particularly applicable to Political Science graduate students. Given that each award requires effort on behalf of the DGS and/or other faculty members, students should follow the following timeline if they wish to apply for each award:

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<sup>12</sup> Note that this must happen prior to submitting a proposal, not prior to presenting. This will likely need to be done months prior to the conference date. Please also note that the advisor's signature is needed on this form. Though the paper may be written under the supervision of another faculty member, ultimately the advisor's reputation is most on the line when a student presents at a conference. An email supporting the project from the advisor will be acceptable when the advisor cannot be reached to sign the form.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/DGS.htm>

<sup>14</sup> Full descriptions and procedures for applying for these awards is available at: [http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/StudentFunding/fellowship\\_opportunities.html#Dissertation](http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/StudentFunding/fellowship_opportunities.html#Dissertation)

DGS-nominated awards<sup>15</sup>

	Grad College Deadline	Deadline to notify DGS	Materials due to DGS
Dissertation Year Fellowship	Mid December	November 15	December 5
President Graduate Fellowship	Late January	January 1	January 20
Northern KY... Alumni Club Fellowship	Early February	January 15	February 1
Dissertation Enhancement Award (awarded on a rolling basis)	Mid of June, Sept, Dec and Mar	One month prior to selected deadline	Two weeks prior to selected deadline

Self-nominated awards<sup>16</sup>

	Grad College Deadline	Deadline to notify letter writers	Materials due to letter writers
UK Woman's Club	Mid October	September 15	October 5
Emeriti Faculty Endowed Fellowship	Late October	September 20	October 15
A&S Outstanding TA Award <sup>17</sup>	Early March	February 1	February 15

**I.g. Departmental Awards**

The department offers four awards to Graduate Students. Students should review the following information in preparing to receive these awards:

*Malcom E. Jewell Award (\$100):* Awarded to the Outstanding Political Science Graduate Student. Faculty must submit a formal letter of nomination to the DGS to be considered by the Graduate Program Committee. Any Graduate Student is eligible to receive this award. All materials for this award are due to the DGS on April 8. Students wishing to be considered for this award should contact a faculty member who is willing to write a formal letter no later than April 1, and should provide the professor with any materials that might be relevant in writing the letter (e.g., CV, writing sample, unofficial transcript).

*Sidney Ulmer Graduate Student Research Paper Award (\$100):* Awarded to a graduate student for the best research paper completed by a graduate student between April 15 of the previous year and April 15 of the current year. The paper must be based upon original research in any area using any method. Graduate students may self-nominate or be nominated by a faculty member. A copy of the paper must be submitted in an electronic form to the DGS by April 8. The Graduate Program Committee will make the award. Any Graduate Student is eligible to receive this award.

<sup>15</sup> For DGS-nominated awards, the DGS will attempt to notify acceptable candidate about each award for which s/he may wish to apply. However, it is ultimately the graduate student's responsibility to seek out and apply for awards. Thus, the department strongly recommends that students keep themselves informed about all potential awards.

<sup>16</sup> Self-nominated awards do not require a letter from the DGS. The dates for notifying letter writers and submitting materials to letter writers should be viewed as guidelines. It is up to the letter writers when the need to know about the student's application (either earlier or later than the recommended dates) and whether or not they want to see the student's full application materials.

<sup>17</sup> The College usually allows the department to nominate 3 students for the TA Award. Students are encouraged to notify the DGS as soon as possible if they want to be nominated by the department. If more than three students wish to be nominated, the DGS (in consultation with the graduate committee) will determine which three students will be eligible for the award.

*Ulmer Award (\$500)*: Awarded to support the research of an outstanding graduate student in the area of Judicial Process or American Political Process. The nomination must include a letter from the student outlining the research project and a letter of support from the student's advisor. The Graduate Program Committee will make the award. All materials are due to the DGS by April 8.

*Karen Mingst Emerging Global Scholars Award (\$100)*: Awarded to the graduate student who shows the most long-term promise for having an impact on the fields of either Comparative Politics or International Relations. The winner of this award will be determined by a vote of the Comparative and IR faculty. All students whose major field is either Comparative or IR are automatically nominated for this award each year.

### **I.h. Graduation**

Advanced degrees may be conferred at the close of either semester or the second summer session, but Commencement exercises are held only in May. Students who are eligible to receive degrees at the end of the summer session or the fall semester may participate in the next Commencement exercise.

To be eligible for a degree, a student must file an Application for Degree Card<sup>18</sup> with the Graduate School within 30 days after the beginning of the semester (15 days in the summer session) in which they expect to graduate. Students should also confirm that they have covered all requirements by consulting the “Check Sheet for Doctoral Students.”<sup>19</sup>

### **I.i. Summer Programs/Institutes**

The departmental commonly sets aside funds for students to receive training outside of the University of Kentucky at places like the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), the Empirical Implication of Theoretical Models (EITM) Institute, and the Institute for Qualitative and Multi-method Research (IQMR). Given that these funds are limited, the department must make difficult decisions in regards to how we allocate the funds. Students requesting funding to help defray the costs of these programs/institutes are required to submit the “External Studies Funding Request” by April 1.<sup>20</sup> Please note that it is very uncommon for students to receive departmental funding for these during their first year of graduate school. Decisions regarding allocation of funding will be made by the departmental chair in consultation with the DGS. Students will be notified about funding decisions before May 1.

### **I.j. Traveling Outside the US**

The University offers insurance for those who are traveling outside of the US for University-related business. It also has a travel registry for communication in case of emergency. The cost is minimal, and the department encourages students to take advantage of this when traveling beyond the border. For more information, see <https://ihss.uky.edu/>

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<sup>18</sup> <https://ees.as.uky.edu/sites/default/files/DegreeCard.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/forms.html>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/DGS.htm>

## II. M.A. PROGRAM

The Graduate Program at UK is designed primarily for Ph.D. students. Students seeking admission for the Master's degree only will be accepted only under unusual circumstances and are very unlikely to receive funding.

The M.A. Degree may be earned under either one of the following two plans:

**Plan A** (M.A. with a thesis):

Plan A requires at least 24 hours of coursework with a grade point average of 3.0 or higher, satisfaction of either a language facility in one language or demonstration of analytical skills, and the writing of a thesis. At least two-thirds of the coursework must be in Political Science, and outside courses must be approved by the DGS. At least one-half of the required hours must be in 600 or 700 level courses. The student's thesis advisor will oversee work on the thesis, and the thesis must be defended before a three member committee, composed of the thesis advisor and two other faculty members.

Students following Plan A should consult the "Check sheet for Master's Thesis Students (Plan A)" to assure that they follow all requirements to attain their degree.<sup>21</sup>

**Plan B** (M.A. without a thesis):

Plan B requires at least 30 hours of coursework with a standing of a 3.0 or higher, satisfaction of the language or alternative skill requirement, and the passing of both major and minor Field Exams as explained under "III. Ph.D. Program" below. Both of these fields may be in Political Science. However, with the approval of the DGS, the student may choose one field outside of Political Science. At least two-thirds of the coursework must be in Political Science courses, and at least one-half of the required hours must be earned in 600 or 700 level courses. All students pursuing the M.A. degree must take PS 671 (Strategies of Inquiry).

Students following Plan B should consult the "Check sheet for Master's Thesis Students (Plan B)" to assure that they follow all requirements to attain their degree.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> [http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/MA\\_checksheets.pdf](http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/MA_checksheets.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> [http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/MA\\_checksheetsB.pdf](http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/MA_checksheetsB.pdf)



### **III. Ph.D. PROGRAM**

#### **III.a. Introduction**

The purpose of the Ph.D. degree is to provide students with advanced knowledge in the philosophy, methodology, and practice of Political Science. Emphasis is placed on providing the theoretical capacity and the methodological skills enabling the student to make significant and original research contributions.

Students should work closely with their advisor and Advisory Committee to design a suitable and comprehensive scholarly program focused on one of the Department's research strengths. Additionally, students will need to know the principles and rules governing the Advisory Committee and Residency Requirements. Common parlance designates the student seeking a Ph.D. as a 'doctoral student' prior to sitting the Qualifying Exam, and as a 'doctoral candidate' after successfully passing the Qualifying Exam. It is during the candidacy stage that one might be referred to as "ABD" (all but Dissertation).

Students may be admitted directly to the Ph.D. program. It is not necessary to pursue the M.A. degree first. The Ph.D. program is divided into a general phase and a specialized phase.

#### **III.b. General Phase**

The purposes of the general phase are (1) to familiarize students with a specific approach to inquiry and research, and expose them to other important approaches that have been taken to the study of Political Science; (2) to introduce students to some of the techniques of Political Science research, particularly quantitative techniques; and (3) to familiarize students with conceptual approaches, substantive information, and research techniques in as many of the major fields of Political Science as possible, while helping to develop critical skills in the study of such fields.

During the general phase, the student is required to take the following courses: (1) PS 572 - an introduction to statistics in Political Science; (2) PS 671 - dealing with strategies of inquiry in Political Science, (3) PS 672 – focusing on techniques and methods used in carrying out Political Science research and analyzing data. Except under rare circumstances, these courses will be completed during the student's first year in the program.

The student must complete at least three substantive pro-seminars. One pro-seminar must be either American Political Institutions (PS680) or American Political Behavior (PS681), and one pro-seminar must be either Comparative Politics (PS620) or International Relations (PS674). These courses will generally be completed within the student's first two years in the program. Students who have previously taken comparable graduate work at another institution may be exempted from some of the general phase requirements, though the student should communicate with the DGS when such situations arise to get his/her approval.

During the spring semester, all graduate students must be reviewed by the DGS in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee and with invited participation by all faculty. One of three actions must be taken for each student being evaluated:

1. Conclude that the student has completed the year satisfactorily and recommend the student for continuation in the Ph.D. program.

2. Conclude that while there have been positive aspects to the student's performance, serious doubts remain over the student's ability to complete the Ph.D. program. In this case, the student will be afforded the opportunity to complete an M.A. degree (requirements above). The Graduate Program Committee will consider the student's re-application to the Ph.D. program upon completion of the M.A. degree.
3. Conclude that the student's performance is clearly unsatisfactory. In these cases, the student is dismissed from the Ph.D. program. Any student who receives two or more C's in their first 18 hours of study will be dropped from the Ph.D. program. Unsatisfactory performance includes poor classroom performance or substantial documented academic or professional issues.

Students will be informed of the decision of the DGS by March 1.

### **III.c. Specialized Phase**

The purposes of the specialized phase of the Ph.D. program are to provide the student with (1) in-depth familiarity with his or her major and minor fields of specialization, (2) experience and training in research through research papers and Independent reading courses, and (3) sufficient preparation and oversight of the doctoral Dissertation. During the specialized phase, the student will devote her or his time primarily to 700 level courses, which are seminars placing emphasis on research.

During the third semester of graduate work, the student must find an advisor (committee Chair) and an "Advisory Committee," which shall include the advisor, two additional members of the Department of Political Science, and one individual from outside the department. The student must formally declare his/her Advisory Committee by notifying the Graduate College with the "Doctoral Advisory Committee Request" form.<sup>23</sup> Any student who is in his/her fourth semester or beyond and has not formally declared an advisory committee will not be considered to be in good standing, and risks being removed from the program or having funding revoked.

The advisor and committee help the student prepare a program of study for the specialized phase. A program is a coherent and specially designed course of study drawing upon materials from the major and minor fields. It should have a theoretical focus, should provide for the courses in methods and techniques that will adequately prepare the student for his research, and should lead directly to the preparation of a Dissertation. The program should be defined in terms of two of the departmentally recognized fields or sub-fields of Political Science. The student should also define those fields in which he or she is prepared to teach or to do research.

The Department of Political Science offers specialized training in several fields. A student must declare a major field and a minor field on his/her annual self-assessment.

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<sup>23</sup> [http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm)

Beginning in fall 2015<sup>24</sup>, the three major field options include:

1. American Politics
2. Comparative Politics
3. International Relations

Beginning in fall 2015, the seven minor field options include:

1. American Politics
2. Comparative Politics
3. International Relations
4. Institutions
5. Behavior
6. Policy
7. Methods

Please note that the major and minor options are not mere guidelines, but are official departmental policy. It will not be possible for a student to major in a field listed as ‘minor only,’ for example. The DGS will not sign a qualifying exam card if the student’s fields deviate from the major/minor options listed above.

The student’s advisory committee, in consultation with the DGS if necessary, makes the final determination of the specific courses that count for the major and minor. To provide some guidance on these decisions, the table below lists the courses commonly taught in the graduate program that are likely to count for the major and minor requirements.

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<sup>24</sup> Student who began the program prior to fall 2015 were offered six fields as major/minor options. These include: American Political Institutions (including Judicial Processes and Politics), American Political Behavior, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Public Policy, and Methods (minor only). Students who began prior to fall 2015 have the option of continuing under these major/minor options or pursuing major/minor options described above.

Guidelines for Major and Minor Fields and Related Courses

	Majors			Minors						
	Amer	CP	IR	Amer	CP	IR	Inst	Behav	Policy	Meth
680 Inst prosem	X	O		X	O		X			
681 Behav pro	X			X				X		
780 Legis behave	O			O	O		O			
711 Presidency	O			O			O			
760 Judicial	O			O			O	O		
750 Part/elec	O			O			O	O		
711 Elec/voting	O			O	O			O		
711 Pub opin	O			O				O		
620 CP prosem		X			X					
711 CP behave	O	O		O	O			O		
711 CP inst	O	O		O	O		O			
735 Democ		O			O					
756 Regional		O			O					
674 Ir prosem			X			X				
711/731 Intl confl			O			O				
733 IPE			O			O				
711 Civil conf			O			O				
711 Intl security			O			O				

Note: “X” above indicates that the course is required for the major/minor listed at the top of the column. “O” above indicates that the course is likely to count as an elective for the major/minor listed at the top of the column.

The Political Science Department requires all Ph.D. students to prove competence in one analytical skill. The Advisory Committee will determine which mode of meeting the requirement will enhance the student’s overall program and objectives. The two possibilities include: 1) additional graduate work in Statistics, Computer Science, Mathematics, or methodology within the Political Science Department; or 2) completion of the equivalent of the third year (6 semesters) of a foreign language relevant to the student’s research and teaching interests. In recent years, some students have satisfied the research skills requirement by attendance at the ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Methods of Social Research. More commonly, students take methods courses outside of the department or courses offered as part of the PSCI/SOC methods collaboration.

### **III.d. Qualifying Examination**

#### **III.d.1. Rules and procedures for students who entered prior to fall 2015<sup>25</sup>**

The qualifying examination (aka “comprehensive exam” or “comp”) is an exam taken before a student begins the dissertation phase of his/her study. Once the student passes the qualifying exam and passes the prospectus, s/he is considered ABD (all but dissertation). The qualifying examination must contain a written and an oral component. The student requires at least 36 hours of coursework with a standing of a 3.0 or higher to sit for the qualifying exam or to graduate. Students must submit a request to schedule the qualifying exam to the Graduate School a minimum of 2 weeks prior to the planned date.

When taking the qualifying exam, all members of the advisory committee must be present at the exam. This includes the outside member of the committee. The rule is that all members must be physically present. If you would like someone to participate via skype, this needs to be approved by the graduate school. They are likely to approve this request, but it must be made well in advance of the defense (four weeks is a good rule of thumb).

In regard to scheduling the exam, some advisors do this, while others make this the responsibility of the student. Just be sure that you and your advisor are on the same page about who is going to take this responsibility.<sup>26</sup>

There have been several rule changes to the qualifying examination over the last decade, so this process can be confusing. For starters, there are two components to becoming ABD: (1) comprehensive exams and (2) prospectus defense. Regardless as to whether it comes before or after the qualifying exam, the prospectus defense is dealt with “in house.” This means that the graduate school has no idea that the prospectus defense happens in terms of scheduling, content, and outcome. The comprehensive exam is official and is referred to as the “qualifying examination” by the Graduate School. It must be scheduled with the graduate school, and it must be reported officially to the graduate school. The primary sources of confusion lie in what these components actually are, when they happen, and what needs reported to the graduate school. This is confusing because the answers to these questions vary depending on when the student entered the program.

For students who entered in fall 2012 or later, the comprehensive exams must be taken before the prospectus defense.<sup>27</sup> The comprehensive exam consists of two written take-home exams completed during a 2 week period. The written exams are to cover material in the major and minor fields which the advisory committee has approved as a program of study. There must be one written question on the comprehensive exam that is related to the dissertation prospectus. Following the written exam portion of the qualifying exam is an oral examination of the two

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<sup>25</sup> Students who entered prior to fall 2015 have the option of following the rules outlined in section III.d.1 below.

<sup>26</sup> [http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm)

<sup>27</sup> For students who entered the program before fall 2009, the prospectus must be defended before the comprehensive exams are taken. For these students, the comprehensive exam consists of two written exams completed at scheduled times during a five day period. The major Field Examination is a one-day, eight-hour exam. The minor Field Examination is a four-hour exam.

substantive fields. Both portions of the exam must be passed, generally in the fifth or sixth semester of graduate study.

### **III.d.2. Rules and procedures for students who entered in fall 2015 or after**

Students entering the PhD program in fall 2015 and afterwards must complete two Field Exams prior to defending the prospectus. The prospectus defense, which should take place following the second Field Exam, serves as the official “qualifying exam” for these students. Students are eligible to take Field Exams once they have successfully completed 4 major field courses and 3 minor field courses.

Students must pass a Field Examination in both their major and minor fields. Major and minor field options are listed in Section III.c of the handbook. Students may take Field Exams in any order they wish, and both Field Exams may be taken during the same semester. Under normal conditions, fall Field Exams will take place in the first week of October, and spring Field Exams will take place in the first week of March. All Field Exams must be taken in the computer lab where Internet capabilities will be removed from computers before the exam begins. All Field Exams will be 8 hour, closed book exams. As clarified below, students taking major Field exams must also sit for an oral defense.<sup>28</sup>

The Field Exams cover any material that the Field Committee deems relevant to the field. This material need not be specific to the student’s research interests or program of study. Students taking Field Exams must answer 3 questions among 6 options.<sup>29</sup>

Below is an outline of initial procedures for all Field Exams.

1. Students wishing to take a Field Exam must notify the DGS by September 1 (for fall exams) or January 15 (for spring exams). The Graduate College does not need to be notified about Field Exams (including scheduling, format, outcome, etc.).
2. Based on the exams that need to be covered, the DGS will be responsible for constituting Field Committees. The DGS will appoint a chair of each Field Committee. The DGS will make a good faith effort to rotate through available faculty to serve on Field Committees. Any faculty member of the given field wishing to serve on Field Committees may serve upon request.
3. The Field Committees will be responsible for constructing the Field Exams under the leadership of the Field Committee chair.<sup>30</sup> When constructing exams, there is no need to differentiate between ‘major’ and ‘minor’ Field Exams.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> If the student has a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, the student should see the DGS prior to scheduling Field Exams. Field committees will make accommodations in accordance with the student’s Letter of Accommodation.

<sup>29</sup> While students must answer 3 questions among 6 options, Field Exams can be set up in sections. For example, an IR exam may be split into (1) theory, (2) conflict processes, and (3) research methodology. In cases like this, students may be required to answer one question in each section, but each section must have more than one option.

<sup>30</sup> Questions for Field Exams can come from anywhere, including from faculty members who may not be members of the Field Committee.

<sup>31</sup> For example, in any given semester student A taking a *major* field exam in Comparative will take the exact same exam as student B taking a *minor* field exam in Comparative.

4. Once the Field Committees construct exams, it is the Field Committee chair's responsibility to give the exam to the DGS. It is then the DGS's responsibility to administer the exams and relay student answers to the Field Committees.

Steps 1-4 above are identical for students taking either major or minor Field Exams. Beyond the written portion of the exams, however, the final steps are different depending on whether the student is taking a major or minor field exam. These final steps are clarified below.

5a. Final steps for students taking *minor* field exams:

After receiving the exam answers from the DGS, the Field Committee will grade the exams and vote on an outcome. Options include: *pass*, *reservations*, and *fail*. A majority of the Field Committee must agree for either a pass or fail outcome. Otherwise, the outcome must be reservations. The Field Committee chair will communicate in writing the outcome of the written evaluations to the student.

- a. If the exam is *pass*, the result will be reported to the DGS by the Field Committee chair. The student will move to either (1) their other Field Exam if they have not taken it yet or (2) the Prospectus.
- b. If the result is *fail*, the result will be reported to the DGS by the Field Committee chair. The student must re-take the Field Exam in a subsequent semester. If the student fails a Field Exam twice, s/he will not be allowed to sit for a future exam in that field.
- c. If the outcome of the exam is "reservations," the student will be required to sit for an oral defense. It is the student's responsibility to organize and schedule the oral defense. The DGS need only be notified only after a final pass/fail determination is made.

5b. Final steps for students taking *major* field exams:

After completing the written part of the major field exam, students will be required to sit for an oral exam. It is the student's responsibility to schedule the oral exam, and it is preferable that the oral exam take place within 2 weeks of the written exam. Once both the written and oral exams have taken place, the Field Committee will vote on an outcome. Options include: *pass* or *fail*. Field Committee members can use their discretion in how they weigh the oral and written components when arriving at their final pass/fail vote. The final pass/fail outcome will be determined by a majority vote of the Field Committee. The Field Committee chair will communicate in writing the final outcome of major Field Exam to the student.

- a. If the exam is *pass*, the result will be reported to the DGS by the Field Committee chair. The student will move to either (1) their other Field Exam if they have not taken it yet or (2) the Prospectus.
- b. If the result is *fail*, the result will be reported to the DGS by the Field Committee chair. The student must re-take the Field Exam in a subsequent semester. If the student fails a Field Exam twice, s/he will not be allowed to sit for a future exam in that field.

### ***Prospectus Defense***

Students are eligible to sit for their Prospectus Defense provided that they (1) have passed the Field Exams (for their major and minor field), (2) have the equivalent of 2 years of residency (36 hours), (3) have letter grades assigned for all courses previously graded as “I” or “S,” and (4) have a GPA of 3.00 or higher. The Prospectus Defense is given by the student’s Dissertation Advisory Committee. To sit for the Defense, the student must prepare a written Prospectus for his/her Dissertation, and be examined orally on it by the Advisory Committee. The Prospectus should include a review of the relevant literature and a statement of the Dissertation proposal, its theoretical importance, and the contemplated research design, methods and procedures. The Prospectus is a test of the students writing ability, creativity, grasp of the literature, and methodological competence.

The student must request to schedule the Prospectus Defense (known as the “Qualifying Examination” by the Graduate College) a minimum of two weeks in advance of the planned date.<sup>32,33</sup> The prospectus may be defended in the same term as the Field Exams, but it must come after the student passes both Field Exams. If the Prospectus Defense is passed, the student becomes a Ph.D. Candidate and moves towards the Dissertation phase of his/her graduate career.<sup>34</sup>

### **III.e. The Dissertation**

The Dissertation is expected to be a work of original scholarship which adds to the store of knowledge and demonstrates maturity in research. It is written under the direction of the Chair of the Advisory Committee. Procedures for undertaking and writing the Dissertation are outlined in the Graduate School's Manual for Theses and Dissertations.<sup>35</sup> The Dissertation must be complete in all ways before the Final Examination can be scheduled. Students should be aware that there is an option to submit the Dissertation in an electronic format.<sup>36</sup>

While writing the dissertation, students should register for PS 767 (Dissertation Residency Credit). The student will receive a grade of S (satisfactory) or U (unsatisfactory) in each term in which the student is enrolled in PS 767. If the student receives 1 unsatisfactory grade in PS 767, s/he will be re-evaluated for continuation in the program. It is the student’s responsibility to maintain consistent communication with his/her advisor (and advisory committee, when appropriate) in order to assure that satisfactory progress is being made on the dissertation. While

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<sup>32</sup> [http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm)

<sup>33</sup> /\* Professors, once the student formally requests to defend his/her Prospectus with the Graduate College, the DGS will approve of the request if the student has completed all requirements as listed above. Once the defense is scheduled, the Graduate College will send a “Qualifying Examination Card” to the DGS. The DGS will then forward this card to the Chair of the Advisory Committee. The Prospectus cannot be defended without this card. All members of the Advisory Committee must be present at the Prospectus Defense. The results of the defense must be reported to the DGS as soon as possible following the defense. The DGS must report the result of the defense to the Graduate College within 10 days of the defense. A majority vote is required to pass the examination. If the student fails the defense, the Advisory Committee Chair should consult with the DGS for clarification on how to move forward. \*/

<sup>34</sup> If the student fails the prospectus defense, the department will follow the Graduate School rules and procedures (page 24 at <http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/FacultyandStaff/Documents/manual-14-final-0714.pdf>).

<sup>35</sup> [http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/CurrentStudents/theses\\_prep.html](http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/CurrentStudents/theses_prep.html)

<sup>36</sup> For details, see [http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/CurrentStudents/electronic\\_dissertation\\_instructions.html](http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/CurrentStudents/electronic_dissertation_instructions.html)



writing the dissertation, a student's good progress towards a degree will be assessed twice each year.<sup>37</sup> These assessments include:

**Fall assessment:** At the end of the fall term, the chair of the student's advisory committee (i.e., the student's dissertation advisor) must relate information to the DGS about the student's progress on the dissertation. The DGS will assign a U or S grade based on the advisor's assessment.

**Spring assessment<sup>38</sup>:** The spring assessment will be undertaken by the DGS in consultation with the graduate committee and the student's advisory committee. The first step in this process is for the student to submit a "Self assessment" by January 18<sup>th</sup>.<sup>39</sup> Failure to submit this form will result in an automatic U for the spring term. Consistent with all graduate students and the directions provided on the self-assessment form, students writing their dissertations will submit a self-assessment, and then meet with their advisory committee to discuss their progress.<sup>40</sup> After this meeting, the chair of the advisory committee will submit a recommendation for a U or S grade to the DGS.<sup>41</sup> The final determination as to whether or not the student is making good progress (i.e., whether or not the student should receive a U or S for the spring term) will be made by the DGS in consultation with the graduate committee.

### **III.f. The Final Exam (aka "Dissertation Defense")**

Final examination on the Dissertation will be conducted by a committee appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School. Such a committee normally includes the members of the student's Advisory Committee as well as an outside person appointed by the Graduate School. Though the Final Exam is commonly referred to as the "Dissertation Defense," it may cover all aspects of the doctoral candidate's program.

At least one academic year, but no more than five years, must elapse between the Qualifying Examination and the Final Examination.

The Final Exam entails a series of "form filing" requirements as follows:

- The Notification of Intent to Schedule a Final Doctoral Examination must be filed at least eight weeks before the exam (defense) date.<sup>42</sup> This form will only be approved by the

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<sup>37</sup> The procedure for assessing a student's "good progress" aligns with the policy from the Graduate School. For documentation, see page 27 at <http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/FacultyandStaff/Documents/dgshandbook.pdf>.

<sup>38</sup> As of 01/17/14, the procedures described in this paragraph are pending a final vote of the faculty. Thus, this procedure will NOT be in effect in Spring 2014. Students should expect it to begin in Spring 2015.

<sup>39</sup> The Self-Assessment is available at: <http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/DGS.htm>

<sup>40</sup> Meetings done via skype or conference call are acceptable, particularly for those students who are away from Lexington.

<sup>41</sup> /\*Professors, the Chair of the student's Advisory Committee will receive the Graduate Self-Assessment form from the DGS during sometime around 01/18. Following the student's meeting with the Advisory Committee, the Chair of the Advisory Committee must notify the DGS in writing about the outcome of the meeting by February 15. The 'Advisory Committee Review Report' is the preferable mechanism to relay this information. This form is available at: <http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/DGS.htm> \*/

<sup>42</sup> See [http://www.gradschool.uky.edu/CurrentStudents/doctoral\\_forms.html](http://www.gradschool.uky.edu/CurrentStudents/doctoral_forms.html) or [http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm). This form prompts the Graduate School Dean to appoint an outside examiner to represent the Graduate School (and ensure proper procedure) at the Final Exam.

DGS once each member of the student's advisory committee confirms that s/he (1) believes that the student can reasonably be ready to defend his/her dissertation during the time period specified on the form and (2) will be available during the time period specified on the form.

- The Application for Degree Form must be filed by the published deadline of the semester in which the student plans to graduate.<sup>43</sup>
- The Request for Final Doctoral Examination form must be filed at least two weeks prior to the Final Exam.<sup>44</sup> This form will only be approved by the DGS once each member of the student's advisory committee confirms that s/he (1) has had an opportunity to suggest revisions to the dissertation and (2) can meet at the date/time specified on the form.

Students should pay particular attention to the first and third bullet points above. While it is common for students to work primarily with one or two faculty in development of the dissertation, it is also necessary for students to keep all members of the advisory committee apprised of their progress (e.g., by circulating chapters frequently). Though the precise procedure for how this is done is largely up to the student and his/her advisor, all members of the committee should have seen enough of the dissertation to feel comfortable with the DGS approving of the defense when the "Notification of Intent" is submitted. The DGS will not approve the "Notification of Intent" until s/he receives confirmation from each advisory committee member that the committee member feels comfortable with the student defending within 8 weeks. In other words, having the approval of the dissertation chair is not enough for the "Notification of Intent" to be approved by the DGS. All advisory committee members must be on board with the defense at least 8 weeks before the defense takes place.

The third bullet point places a second check on each committee member's right to provide input to the dissertation. When the "Request for Final Doctoral Examination" is submitted, all committee members should have already received the dissertation and should have already had the opportunity to suggest revisions. This does not mean that a student must get confirmation from each committee member that s/he is ready to pass the dissertation because only a majority vote is needed for a student to pass the defense. However, it does mean that, at a minimum, they have had the opportunity to read and make suggestions. Though deadlines and timelines for these are likely to vary by committee member, a good "rule of thumb" will be for students to have completed drafts of the dissertation provided to all committee members for comments at least 6 weeks prior to the intended defense date.

The Final Exam must take place no later than eight days prior to the last day of classes of the semester in which the student expects to graduate. Final examinations are public events and must take place while the University is officially in session. If the candidate passes the Final Examination, s/he will be recommended for conferral of the Ph.D. degree. The examination committee may choose to suggest additions or revisions in the Dissertation at the time of Final Examination. If revisions or additions to the Dissertation are required, the Committee Chair or a designate will oversee the work.

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<sup>43</sup> <http://www.gradschool.uky.edu/forms.html>

<sup>44</sup> [http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm)

The final, corrected copy of the Dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate School within 60 days of the Final Examination or all graduate work concerning the Dissertation must be repeated. If the candidate fails his or her Final Examination, the committee may recommend to the Dean of the Graduate School the conditions under which the candidate may have another examination. This examination will be administered by as many of the original committee members as are available, with new members appointed by the Dean to fill any vacancies.

### **III.g. Getting your MA along the Way**

Though Ph.D. students are not required to file for their MA degree after passing their comprehensive exams, the department encourages them to do so and it is free. The process is not as straight-forward as one might expect, though it should take students little time to complete the application. The following steps should be taken for a PhD student to apply for their MA degree<sup>45</sup>:

1. This should only be done by those who have passed their qualifying exams. If you have not passed qualifying exams, do not do anything right now.
2. Fill out the “Master’s / Specialist Final Examination Online,” which is available at: [http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/CurrentStudents/masters\\_forms.html](http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/CurrentStudents/masters_forms.html)
3. On the form, you need to:
  - a. Check ‘PLAN B’ under ‘MASTER’S DEGREE’
  - b. Check ‘ORAL EXAM’ under ‘FOR PLAN B’
  - c. The date/time of the examination should be the date/time that you passed your qualifying exam
  - d. Next to ‘EXAMINATION COMMITTEE’ type ‘Qualifying exam to stand in lieu of Master final examination.’
4. Fill out the “Graduate School Application for Degree” form, which is available at: <http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/forms.html>
5. Give both forms to the DGS for his/her signature, and then submit them to the DGS’s office assistant once you have the DGS’s signature. The DGS’s office assistant will submit them to the Graduate College for you.
6. Wait for a week or two as some bureaucratic stuff happens, and then check with the DGS’s office assistant to make sure everything is in order. It will take about 30 days to see the degree posted on your transcript and another 60-90 days to receive the diploma in the mail.

### **III.h. Incompletes and clarification of PS796 & PS767<sup>46</sup>**

#### ***Incompletes***

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<sup>45</sup> Note that I wrote this when we were using an old form. The online one might be slightly different, but it should be pretty straight-forward to follow these steps. I haven’t seen much confusion with this, so I suspect that it’s simple anyway. Please just let me know if I need to revise these steps. I can’t log in as a student, so I’m not really sure what you’re seeing.

<sup>46</sup> Full documentation for Incomplete procedures can be found on pages 14-15 at: <http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/FacultyandStaff/Documents/dgshandbook.pdf> and <http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/Code/Section%20V.pdf>

An incomplete (“I”) grade may be assigned to a graduate student if a part of the work of a course remains undone and there is a reasonable possibility that a passing grade will result from completion of the work. All “I” grades must be replaced by a regular final letter grade within 12 months of the end of the academic term in which the “I” grade was awarded or prior to the student’s graduation, whichever occurs first. If an “I” grade has not been replaced within the allowable period, the University Registrar shall change the “I” grade to a grade of “E” on the student’s permanent academic record and adjust the student’s grade-point standing accordingly, unless otherwise approved because of exceptional circumstances by the Dean of the Graduate School on recommendation of the DGS in the student’s program. In exceptional circumstances, the Dean of the Graduate School will consider one semester extensions of “I” grades beyond the 12 month period only (the combined summer terms count as one semester).

In addition, the Instructor of Record must specify the remaining work necessary for the satisfaction of the course requirements, and the time frame over which this work will be completed. All work must be completed, and the grade assigned by the last day of final exams for the semester in which the extension is granted. Note that there are certain courses (seminars, independent work courses, research courses) in which a grade of “S” may be more appropriate than an incomplete; the grade of “S” is not affected by the policy described above.

Instructors of Record who assign an I grade should file with the student’s Director of Graduate Studies information which includes 1) the name of the student, 2) the course number and hours of credit, 3) the semester and year of enrollment, 4) specific information on the work to be completed before a final grade can be assigned, and 5) the time frame in which the specific requirements are to be met (not to exceed 12 months).<sup>47</sup> Graduate students are urged to consult with their Director of Graduate Studies concerning procedures relative to the awarding of I grades and the conditions under which they may be removed.

### ***PS796***

According to the course description, PS796 is for “Individual research in a particular field of political science under the supervision of selected faculty. Open to advanced graduate students who are prepared for intensive study and research beyond that offered in regular classes in each field. May be repeated to a maximum of six hours. Prereq: Consent of the instructor and the director of graduate studies.”

Students and professors are often confused about when it should be taken and the purpose of this course. First, be aware that this course *must* be taken at some point. This is a departmental rule, and it is a rule that benefits the student. Second, regarding *when* PS796 should be taken, it is most advantageous to take this course sometime before the semester in which the student takes his/her qualifying exam. It can be taken during the term in which the student takes the qualifying exam, but it seems advantageous to take PS767 during the qualifying exam term (see below). Third, regarding *what* is should be varies depending on the goals of the student and instructor.

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<sup>47</sup> Instructors, the “Record of Incomplete (I) Grade” form is available at: <http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/DGS.htm>. This is the preferable method to communicate the information pertaining an I grade to the DGS. Please note that this form (or a comparable alternative) should be submitted to the student’s DGS, which may not be the PSCI DGS if the student is from another department.

Most commonly, students taking this course will be focusing on the early stages of their dissertation. This means that they might be writing their prospectus, collecting pilot data to see if their early dissertation plan is feasible, reading research not covered in courses but necessary for the dissertation, or writing grant proposals to help fund their dissertation work.

Regarding ‘full time,’ students must take 9 credit hours to remain full time, and PS796 has no special status for this (unlike PS767, see below). Thus, students cannot take PS796 alone and remain full time; they must enroll in other courses if they wish to maintain full time status.

### ***PS767***

According to the course description, PS767 is “residency credit for dissertation research after the qualifying examination. Students may register for this course in the semester of the qualifying examination. A minimum of two semesters are required as well as continuous enrollment (Fall and Spring) until the dissertation is completed and defended.”

There are several sources of confusion with PS767 that are cleared up in the DGS handbook.<sup>48</sup> First, residency is not a requirement for this. The “student need not be physically present on campus while enrolled for credit after the qualifying examination” (I have no idea why it’s called “post-qualifying *residency*”). Second, students enrolled in PS767 (2 credit hours) are considered full-time. Thus, this course (and only this course) can be taken both in the term of the qualifying exam and afterwards. Third, once students are ABD, they must continuously enroll in this course if they want to stay in the graduate program. Failure to enroll in this course means that the student is automatically removed from the program, and will have to re-apply if they want to get back into the program. Given that we do not have a separate re-admission procedure, the re-admission procedure is the exact same thing as the admission procedure. Students who fail to register for PS767 when writing the dissertation, therefore, risk being rejected from the program when they apply for re-admission and waste a lot of time generating a full application package for re-admission. Finally, this course *can* be taken in the term in which the student takes the qualifying exam. This means that a student wishing to take qualifying exams in a certain term can take this course (and only this course) to maintain full time status. If the qualifying exam is not taken or is failed, then the DGS must remove the PS767 registration and retroactively replace it with another course.

Please pay close attention to that last point because students often screw this up. Let’s say that you want to take your qualifying exam in spring 2018. In that case, it’s just fine to register for 767 (and only 767) in spring 2018. In fact, the DGS will likely recommend that you do exactly this. However, you should not register for 767 in fall 2017 because you are not taking qualifying exams in fall 2017. And no – you cannot get away with this. The grad school will notice if you register for 767 and do not take qualifying exams in the same semester. The DGS will get an email from them, and you’ll have to have an add/drop form signed to replace the 767 with 795. When you say, “I wasn’t sure what to do” or “I didn’t know” or “It wasn’t clear in the

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<sup>48</sup> To see the DGS handbook, go to <http://www.gradschool.uky.edu/>. Hover over “For Faculty & Staff,” and then choose “For Directors of Graduate Studies.” The DGS handbook should be on the right. This is updated frequently, so there’s no permanent link to the handbook.

handbook,” the DGS will focus your attention to this paragraph and probably say something really sarcastic.

Taken together, it makes a lot of sense to pay close attention to PS796 and PS767 when students are heading towards ABD status. If a student wants to take qualifying exams in their 6<sup>th</sup> semester, which is common, then it would make a lot of sense to take PS796 (and two other courses) in fall of their third year to make sure that the prospectus gets moving. During the sixth semester, students likely will want to focus on the comprehensive exams and the prospectus. If that’s the case and the student is certain that s/he will take (and hopefully pass) the qualifying exam in the sixth semester, it seems most advantageous to enroll in PS767 (and nothing else) in the sixth semester. This paragraph should be read as a ‘rule of thumb.’ The student’s decision on what to take should come from discussions with his/her advisory committee.

#### **IV. TEACHING**

Teaching is an integral part of the graduate student experience. The department prides itself on providing excellent undergraduate instruction, and Teaching Assistants (TAs) are frequently some of the best teachers in the college. Below are some guidelines that are meant to help students fulfill their roles as a Teaching Assistant (TA).

##### **IV.a. TA Types, Responsibilities and Assignments**

The University defines Teaching Assistants (TAs) into one of four types<sup>49</sup>:

Type 1: A Teaching Assistant who has primary responsibility for teaching a class.

Type 2: A TA who teaches a class or lab under the direct supervision of a course coordinator.

Type 3: A TA who serves in a supporting classroom or lab role (i.e., recitation leader or lab assistant) to a primary instructor.

Type 4: A TA serves in a supporting role outside the classroom (i.e., grader).

TAs are assigned as one of the four types listed above as early as possible before the term begins. These decisions are based on a number of factors, including the needs of undergraduates, the TA’s experience and educational history, and the preferences of the TAs. TAs wishing to express their ideal teaching preferences are encouraged to communicate with the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS) at least one semester in advance. Though the DUS will try to accommodate all requests, students should realize that the DUS must balance many needs beyond what the TA desires.

Aside from Type 1 TAs, all other TAs are under the direct supervision of their advisor. The role of Type 2-4 TAs varies immensely as advisors have great discretion on what they expect from their TAs. In these cases, TAs should assure that they fully understand their responsibilities and frequently meet with their advisor if anything is unclear.

##### **IV.b. Head Teaching Assistant<sup>50</sup>**

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<sup>49</sup> Further information about TA types, qualifications and responsibilities can be found at: [http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/FacultyandStaff/TA\\_types.html](http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/FacultyandStaff/TA_types.html)

At the beginning of each academic year, the DGS in consultation with the Graduate Committee will assign one TA to be the “Head TA.” Among other things, the head TA will be chosen based on teaching evaluations, leadership, teaching experience and effective mentorship. The Head TA will receive a stipend of \$1000/year (in addition to the regular TA stipend amount).

The Head TA will have two primary responsibilities:

1. The Head TA should be the “point person” for all TAs. While all TAs have faculty mentors who should provide general guidance and advice, the Head TA will be responsible for helping all TAs with “day-to-day” tasks (e.g., explaining how to use scantron forms, run the copier). When in doubt, the head TA should always advise the TA to contact their faculty mentor for guidance.
2. Under the guidance of the DGS, the Head TA will be responsible for ongoing training for all TAs.<sup>51</sup> This includes organizing at least two ongoing training sessions per semester that best meet TA needs.
3. The head TA will be responsible for keeping graduate students informed of all workshops that might help them as their progress through the program (e.g., QIPSR and CELT workshops). Keeping a list updated on the department’s website will likely be the best place for these items.

#### **IV.c. Course Preparation**

TAs have significant responsibilities to assure that they prepare quality lectures, assess students in a fair and transparent manner, and abide by all university regulations. This is particularly true for students teaching their own courses. The information below is meant to help students in this process, though TAs should keep themselves informed of any updates or additional information that becomes available.

Two main areas of support are provided to help students develop a course syllabus. First, the Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELТ) provides several suggestions for syllabus development, and provides a very useful syllabus template to help get TAs started. Students should be aware that many university rules need to be included in the syllabus, so the template is likely the best way to get started in designing a syllabus.<sup>52</sup>

Second, while the department encourages creativity in how TAs design and present their courses, it is often useful to see how others have taught the course. There is often little reason to ‘reinvent the wheel’ when teaching courses, and students should feel free to copy/paste information from others’ syllabi. The Department houses a list of syllabi from previous courses that will hopefully be useful in this regard.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> This position will begin in academic year 2014-15. The department has committed funds to this position for AYs 2014-15 and 2015-16. Future funding for this position will depend on the availability of funds and evidence that this policy is meeting its objectives.

<sup>51</sup> For more information, see “Mandatory Ongoing Training for TAs” on page 48 at: <http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/FacultyandStaff/Documents/dgshandbook.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.uky.edu/celt/syllabus.php>

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/DGS.htm>. Please be aware that these syllabi may not include all necessary information as required by the university (either due to rules that have changed or the instructor mistakenly omitting

TAs teaching their own courses will have to think about a plethora of other matters to assure that they are ready to present their course. These include ordering textbooks, reserving materials at the library, setting up a course on Blackboard, and assuring that the course is accessibility/ADA ready. Students are advised to check the CELT course preparation list<sup>54</sup> well before the beginning of the semester.

#### **IV.d. Teaching Effectively**

Learning how to be a good teacher takes time, and all instructors who care about teaching constantly update their material and teaching techniques. TAs in the Political Science department have three main sources to improve their teaching skills.

First, each TA is assigned a faculty mentor at or near the beginning of each term. The faculty mentor's role is to ensure that undergraduate instruction is the highest quality possible. The mentor is required to observe at least one class session of each TA (except Type 4 TAs as defined above). The faculty member must submit the TA Class Observation Form<sup>55</sup> by the end of the semester. The TAs must sign this form, and TAs are encouraged to meet with their advisor for additional feedback following the observation. TAs are encouraged to meet with their teaching mentors as much as necessary to improve their teaching performance. TAs are also encouraged to observe faculty in the classroom.

Though they are not required, the department strongly encourages students to focus on five points when working with their teaching mentors:

1. Get the mentor's approval of a syllabus before copying and distributing it.
2. Work with the mentor to assure that the student is observed in two of the class meetings so that the mentor can fill out and submit a TA Observation form, which may be arranged in advance or the mentor may choose to conduct unannounced.
3. Run all major course assignments (e.g., exams and paper prompts) by the mentor to get advice/direction before copying and distributing them.
4. Consult with the mentor whenever course policy issues arise that, handled badly, could pose a threat to the fundamental integrity of the course in regard to fairness or consistency with University rules.
5. Have final course grades finished early enough that the mentor can look over them before they are submitted to the registrar.

Second, the Center for Learning and Teaching (CELT) offers a plethora of resources for instructors. These include consultations with individual instructors, workshops and lunch discussions on a variety of teaching and learning topics, and mid-semester course feedback. Students are strongly encouraged to visit the CELT website and use their resources to become better instructors.<sup>56</sup> Aside from these more general topics, CELT provides detailed guidelines and advice on smaller matters that frequently make TAs apprehensive about teaching (e.g., what

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information). Thus, the syllabus template provided by CELT should always be examined to assure that the TA's syllabus meets all university guidelines.

<sup>54</sup> <http://www.uky.edu/celt/prelist.php>

<sup>55</sup> /\* Professors, this form can be found at: [http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/FacultyandStaff/TA\\_supervision.html](http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/FacultyandStaff/TA_supervision.html) \*/

<sup>56</sup> [http://www.uky.edu/celt/CELT\\_welcome.php](http://www.uky.edu/celt/CELT_welcome.php)



to say on the first day, how to write good multiple choice questions, duties for students with disabilities).<sup>57</sup> TAs are encouraged to visit this website early and often to assure that they are presenting the best course possible and to assure that they are meeting all university guidelines.

Third, the university provides two more formal programs to support graduate students in developing their teaching skills and teaching portfolios.<sup>58</sup> The first is the Preparing Future Faculty program, which is meant to provide professional development guidance to graduate students who wish to become professors one day. This program is geared towards research, teaching and service.<sup>59</sup> A related program focuses more specifically on teaching: The Graduate Certificate in College Teaching and Learning.<sup>60</sup> This is 12-credit-hour certificate program. Students are encouraged to apply for this program early in their graduate studies.

#### **IV.e. Problems with Students**

The vast majority of potential problems with students can be taken care of by writing a thorough syllabus and consistently abiding by the syllabus. For example, procedures for dealing with late assignments, attendance/participation policies, and plagiarism should all be explained thoroughly in the syllabus. TAs should also fully understand their responsibilities in abiding by the syllabus, including keeping on schedule, grading in a fair and transparent manner, and being present during office hours. However, difficult situations inevitably arise that are not confronted clearly in the syllabus (e.g., the line between sloppy work and plagiarism, accusations of harassment, accusations of unfair grading). When such situations arise, students should immediately contact their teaching mentor (or DGS if the mentor is unavailable) for instruction on how to deal with the situation. This should happen before communicating with the student about the matter. If unsure about anything, TAs are advised to seek advice before moving forward.

#### **IV.f. Professionalism**

Students should maintain a high level of professionalism when dealing with undergraduate students. This includes many ‘common sense’ issues (e.g., not dating and partying with students) and other not-so-obvious issues. From the past, three problems seem to re-occur that should be avoided:

1. TAs should dress professionally when teaching. The norm is ‘business casual.’ Neither a tie nor a dress is required, but jeans and t-shirts should definitely not be worn in front of students. Though TAs might observe professors teaching in more casual clothing, TAs should not emulate this.
2. TAs should be present at all scheduled office hours. Though no rule exists, students should schedule 3+ office hours per week at times that are accessible to the students (i.e., during

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<sup>57</sup> <http://www.uky.edu/celt/teaching.php>

<sup>58</sup> Before enrolling in either of these two programs, students are strongly encouraged to talk with their advisors to assure that the benefits of the programs are likely to outweigh the costs. The department encourages students to improve their teaching, but realizes that each student’s advisor is in the best position to decide whether these programs are worth each student’s time – time that could be spent developing other skills. As such, students should understand that the department as a whole (including the Graduate Committee) is unlikely to view participation in these programs as either beneficial or detrimental to the student’s record.

<sup>59</sup> <http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/StudentDevelopment/PFF.html>

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.gradschool.uky.edu/StudentDevelopment/CTLCertificate.html>

normal business hours). TAs should also be available to meet with students who cannot reasonably attend scheduled office hours.

3. TAs should respond quickly to all emails/phone calls from students. As a rule of thumb, all emails and calls should be returned within 24 hours during the week, and ASAP following the weekend. It is never acceptable to simply ignore a student.

#### **IV.g. Additional Employment**

The Graduate School does not allow either TAs or RAs with full-time assistantships (20 hours, 0.5 FTE) to have additional salary or employment. This is to assure that the student maintains his or her academic focus. Exception can be granted in rare circumstances, however. Details are available on the Graduate School's website.<sup>61</sup>

As of 09/14/15, the College now plays a role in determining whether or not students are eligible for working beyond their normal .5 TA/RA load. In order to work in any paid capacity beyond the normal TA/RA load, students should take the following steps:

1. Create a document that describes the work being pursued. This document should include: (1) the nature of the assignment, (2) the number of hours of work per week required, and (3) how the work will promote the student's career development and/or not impede progress toward degree.
2. Get approval from both the advisor and the DGS for the work.

Once steps 1-2 have happened, the DGS will email the request to [asresearch@uky.edu](mailto:asresearch@uky.edu). If approved, it is then the student's responsibility to get approval from the Graduate School. Details are available on the Graduate School's website.<sup>62</sup>

#### **IV.h. Teaching Assignment Guidelines**

Assigning Teaching Assistants to undergraduate course sections is a complicated process led by the curriculum coordinator (i.e., the Department Chair or his delegate) in consultation with the rest of the faculty, not a procedure that can be reduced to a few bright-line rules. However, the Department seeks to follow these guidelines:

3. In their first year, TA's assist lecture-hall professors rather than teach their own sections (which they're not allowed to do if they lack 18 graduate credit hours in the field).
4. At least once in their second year, TA's teach their own lower-division course
  - i. in which they've previously assisted a faculty member, and/or
  - ii. in a field for which they've taken a proseminar.
5. At least once after their second year, TA's may teach an upper-division course, a privilege that is more likely the closer they are to defending their dissertations and if the teaching requests are courses
  - i. in which they've previously assisted faculty members,
  - ii. closely related to their dissertation topics,

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<sup>61</sup> <http://www.gradschool.uky.edu/studentfunding/tarainfo.html>

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.gradschool.uky.edu/studentfunding/tarainfo.html>

- iii. part of the standard undergraduate curriculum rather than a topics course, and/or
  - iv. for which they're uniquely suitable (e.g., they've published peer-reviewed work on the topic, lived/studied in the region, worked in the industry).
4. TA's will almost never be allowed to teach courses that may enroll graduate students, although in cases of extreme departmental need a section of such a course could be created that specifically excludes graduate enrollment.
  5. On occasion, a TA may be assigned to a non-classroom role, such as to serve as a roving grader or program assistant. However, even in those exceptional cases, rules require that the dominant component of any TA assignment must be activities that contribute directly to Political Science classrooms.

## V. DEPARTMENTAL CITIZENSHIP

The department places great emphasis on a collegial and nurturing academic environment. While we realize that the nature of academic scholarship, especially in the social sciences and humanities, often favors the autonomous and independent researcher, the department nevertheless works to foster a sense of departmental citizenship which transcends the individual faculty or staff member and student. While the responsibilities of departmental citizenship may be somewhat vaguely understood as a commitment to the success of the community as a whole (as a department, within the College of Arts and Sciences, within the Graduate School, within the University, within the discipline of Political Science) in a positive working environment, more mundane considerations include, but are not limited to, a number of ongoing departmental practices. Examples include: Seminar participation that realizes the benefits of working through literatures as a group with sometimes disparate and varied levels of previous experience and preparation; a funding decision matrix that privileges the success of the entire graduate student cohort over individual concerns; the expectation of attendance at all departmental colloquia; student membership on departmental committees; participation at regional and national conferences and papers submitted to refereed journals. Good departmental citizenship extends to all of the identities that every graduate student embodies, whether as individual, scholar, or teacher.

Students should be aware that the department takes issues of departmental citizenship very seriously in making decisions about funding and retention. While we may not formally grade students on things such as participation in talks, dealing professionally with peers and faculty, preparing for effective conference presentations, and dealing professionally with students, we do take these issues into account when making decisions.

Students should also be aware of all issues dealing with sexual (and other forms of) harassment, which are dealt with by the Office of Institutional Equity and Equal Opportunity.<sup>63</sup> These issues apply how the student is treated by faculty, how TAs treat their students, and how graduate students treat one another. When in doubt about any behavior, students are strongly encouraged to talk with the DGS (or any other trusted faculty member). Though the DGS (and others) will do all they can to protect a student's identity in sensitive situations, students should be aware that revealing some types of information (e.g., clear examples of when they have been harassed, including names and events) the DGS/professor has no choice but to report the incident or risk losing their jobs.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> <http://www.uky.edu/EVPFA/EEO/>

<sup>64</sup> Specific procedures for dealing with complaints are available at:  
<http://www.uky.edu/EVPFA/EEO/pdf/Discrimination-and-Harassment-Procedures.pdf>

## VI. Ph.D. CHECKLIST<sup>65</sup>

### Tasks that must be completed every year

- \_\_\_\_\_ Review external funding opportunities, particularly those listed on the Graduate College website.<sup>66</sup>
- \_\_\_\_\_ Review internal (departmental) funding opportunities.<sup>67</sup>
- \_\_\_\_\_ Graduate Student Self-assessment form due to the DGS by January 18.<sup>68</sup>
- \_\_\_\_\_ Meet with Advisory Committee (or DGS for those who do not yet have an Advisory Committee) by February 8.
- \_\_\_\_\_ If funding is requested from either the Graduate School or the Department, the student must file the Conference Proposal Form with the DGS prior to submitting a proposal.<sup>69</sup>
- \_\_\_\_\_ For TAs, assure that teaching mentors observe student teaching and submit the teaching observation form.<sup>70</sup>
- \_\_\_\_\_ For students working on their dissertation, communicate frequently with the advisor to assure that satisfactory progress is being made on the dissertation.

### Courses that must be taken

- \_\_\_\_\_ PS572
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS671
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS672
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS620 or PS 674
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS680 or PS 681
- \_\_\_\_\_ PS772 or advisory committee-approved alternative

### Committee

- \_\_\_\_\_ Advisory committee identified (2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> semester), registered w/ DGS & Graduate School<sup>71</sup>

### Becoming an ABD<sup>72</sup>

- \_\_\_\_\_ Dissertation Proposal scheduled w/ committee & room reserved at least 2 weeks prior notice
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dissertation Proposal defended
- \_\_\_\_\_ Qualifying Examination Request form filed with the Graduate School at least 2 weeks prior to the Exam.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> These deadlines and procedures are subject to change. It is also possible that this handbook does not include all relevant information due to an accidental omission by the author. It is the student's responsibility to assure that requirements have been met to move forward and complete the program. See the following website for more information and to check on any changes:

[http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/Forms/Check\\_sheet\\_Doctoral\\_Students.pdf](http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/Forms/Check_sheet_Doctoral_Students.pdf)

<sup>66</sup> [http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/StudentFunding/fellowship\\_opportunities.html#Dissertation](http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/StudentFunding/fellowship_opportunities.html#Dissertation)

<sup>67</sup> <http://polisci.as.uky.edu/polisci-honors-awards>

<sup>68</sup> <http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/DGS.htm>

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/DGS/DGS.htm>

<sup>70</sup> [http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/FacultyandStaff/TA\\_supervision.html](http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/FacultyandStaff/TA_supervision.html)

<sup>71</sup> [http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm)

<sup>72</sup> Rules for "Becoming ABD" (e.g., qualifying exam, comprehensive exams, field exams) vary depending on when students entered the program. See the text in this document for these rules.

<sup>73</sup> [http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm)

\_\_\_\_\_ Qualifying exam written. Answers distributed to committee at least two weeks before schedule oral exam.

\_\_\_\_\_ Oral Qualifying Exam. Passing means that the student is now a Ph.D. candidate (ABD)

### The Dissertation

\_\_\_\_\_ The Notification of Intent to Schedule a Final Doctoral Examination must be filed at least eight weeks before the exam (defense) date.<sup>74</sup>

\_\_\_\_\_ The Request for Final Doctoral Examination Form must be filed at least two weeks prior to the Final Exam.<sup>75</sup>

\_\_\_\_\_ Final Examination scheduled with advisor, committee, and identified external Member (Graduate School representative)

\_\_\_\_\_ Final copy of the Dissertation is filed with the Graduate School. Must be done within 60 days following the Final Exam defense.

### Graduation

\_\_\_\_\_ The Application for Degree Form must be filed by the published deadline of the semester in which the student plans to graduate.<sup>76</sup> It is due 30 days after the beginning of the semester (15 days for 2nd summer session).<sup>77</sup> Students must resubmit the application for degree the following semester if they do not graduate.

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<sup>74</sup> [http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm)

<sup>75</sup> [http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection\\_Screen.cfm](http://www.research.uky.edu/cfdocs/gs/DoctoralCommittee/Selection_Screen.cfm)

<sup>76</sup> <http://myuk.uky.edu/> Click on Student Services / myRecords / Graduate Degree Application

<sup>77</sup> See <http://www.uky.edu/Registrar/AcademicCalendar.htm> for specific deadlines.