

# **THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY**

## **DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**2020-2021**

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## I. General Information for Graduate Students

### A. The Graduate Studies Committee

The Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) and other related graduate committees are composed of faculty members chosen by the department head. The GSC and related committees are chaired by the Director of Graduate Studies, and their work is assisted by the Graduate Staff Coordinator. The main functions of these committees are:

- to assist in administering the graduate program,
- to propose and consider revisions in the program and the curriculum,
- to make recommendations on departmental awards, including travel awards, and scholarships
- to review and accept applicants for admission to graduate study in political science, and
- to make recommendations concerning the renewal of graduate student assistantships

### B. Health Insurance (this information is drawn from the University Health Service website)

Graduate assistants and fellows are eligible to receive University-subsidized health insurance through the Graduate Assistant and Graduate Fellow Health Insurance plan. The University pays 80% of the premium for students in this plan. The remaining 20% of the student premium will be deducted from the September through May stipend checks. The coverage runs through the summer, with deductions for summer (June and July) taken out of spring stipend checks. By default every graduate assistant and fellow is automatically enrolled in the health insurance plan every year. The University also offers subsidized dental and vision plans (these are not mandatory for international students and international dependents).

Again, by default, each graduate assistant and fellow is automatically enrolled in the dental and vision plans every year. There will be no more mailing of medical card for the medical insurance. You can go onto the Aetna website and print the card or request a card be mailed to you directly from Aetna.

Graduate student must go to the University Health Services first for treatment or a referral, during hours of operation <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/health>. If an emergency or the office is closed you can go to Mount Nittany Medical Center.

Domestic students are required to submit their health insurance coverage information via LionPATH after registering for classes. We strongly encourage students who do not have adequate insurance coverage to purchase the Penn State Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP).

All international students are required to provide proof of health insurance coverage that meets a certain set of criteria or purchase the Penn State SHIP. International students can provide proof of coverage through LionPATH after they register for classes and after open enrollment begins. Students are automatically enrolled in this health insurance plan by default; information about waiving enrollment can be found on your LionPATH or Workday accounts, must be sure to follow the proper procedure by the appropriate deadline to waive health insurance or to add their dependents to the plan. International students who want to decline the medical insurance must also complete a waiver application online with Aetna Student Health [www.aetnastudenthealth.com](http://www.aetnastudenthealth.com), if the waiver application is not approved, you will need to be enrolled in the student health insurance plan (SHIP).

The University pays 76% of the premium for partner or children. The remaining 24% will be deducted from the September through May stipend checks. **If you have dependents, you must re-enroll them every fall semester. Dependents are not automatically reenrolled.** To enroll dependents, you must fill

out a Dependent Enrollment Form by the appropriate deadline every academic year. For more information on this form, contact the Student Health Insurance at 302 Student Health Center (814/865-7467). Please see the Student Insurance Office website at <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/health-wellness/health-insurance/graduate-assistant-fellows-and-trainees> or contact the Student Insurance Office at [uhs-insurance@psu.edu](mailto:uhs-insurance@psu.edu) for additional information or questions.

### **C. International Students**

The Directorate of International Student and Scholar Advising (DISSA), located in 410 Boucke Building, provide students with many services (e.g., assistance with government regulations regarding immigration and taxes; academic adjustment and personal counseling; emergency loans). In addition to the services which international students can expect from DISSA, students have a responsibility to provide DISSA with current information, including changes in academic programs or status, and plans to bring family from the home country. In general, the DISSA office should be kept apprised of student activities.

International students with student visas must normally maintain full-time academic status during the fall and spring semesters. Full-time status is maintained by registering for a minimum of nine credits. Exceptions to full-time study must be cleared, in advance, through the Foreign Student Advisor in the DISSA office. Specific questions regarding visas, academic status, work permits, and the like should be directed to the DISSA office.

### **D. Computing Facilities**

The department provides graduate students with computer support in the form of access to a computer lab with PCs (including Apple machines) and a printer as well as shared access to PCs and printer in some of the graduate student offices. In addition, students are provided space on the department server to be used for research or teaching purposes. Computer support is provided both through the College of Liberal Arts (<http://it.la.psu.edu/>) and through Penn State's IT services (<http://it.psu.edu/>).

There are many computer labs on campus with connections to the University's network of computers. The Information Technology Services staff conducts a variety of workshops. Interested students should plan to attend such sessions.

### **E. CIC Programs Available to Graduate Students**

Penn State is a member of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC), an academic consortium of the Big Ten Universities, plus The University of Chicago, the University of Illinois at Chicago, and the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee. The CIC sponsors the Traveling Scholars Program, which provides Ph.D. candidates and honors undergraduates the opportunity to study for a year at another CIC university. Supplemental support to attend CIC summer programs is available from the department (and sometimes from the University as well). In addition, the Course Share program allows students to enroll via distance learning in courses at other universities, many less commonly taught languages can be studied in this way. You can contact the graduate office for more information.

### **F. Job Placement Assistance**

Placement assistance is available for students who are completing (or have completed) their Ph.D. In the months before the job search process begins, the Director of Graduate Placement works with students to help them prepare their job packet materials (e.g., curriculum vitae, cover letters, teaching portfolio), to

arrange mock job interviews, and to develop and schedule practice job talks.

Additionally, the Department's placement service coordinates the transmission of confidential materials (e.g., letters of recommendation and transcripts) to hiring departments. Students are responsible for applying for jobs well before each job's deadline. When a student has applied for a job, he or she should notify the Graduate Staff Coordinator. The Graduate Staff Coordinator will provide these materials to the hiring department separate cover. The Graduate Staff Coordinator should be given at least one week's notice to provide those materials to a hiring department.

Students are eligible for placement assistance for three years after receiving their Ph.D. Students seeking placement assistance after three years must receive approval from the Director of Graduate Placement.

### **G. Additional Sources of Graduate Information**

Students should consult the *Graduate Degree Programs Bulletin* (a publication of the Graduate School) for additional information. The websites for the Graduate School (<http://gradschool.psu.edu/>) and the Graduate & Professional Student Association (<http://gpsa.psu.edu/>) also contains useful information.

## II. Degree Requirements

### A. Advising

The Director of Graduate Studies has an initial advising meeting with each of the incoming graduate students prior to the start of classes. At that session, the graduate director assigns the student an advisor, advises the student about fall classes, reviews credits the student may have completed or wishes to transfer, and discusses whatever other issues and questions the students may have. After this initial session, students should remain in frequent contact with their advisors regarding fields of study, course selection, timing of examinations, and the completion of degree requirements. Note that the choice of advisor is up to the student and may be changed by the student at any time (normally after consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies). In order to change advisors, students submit to the Graduate Staff Coordinator a form indicating a change in their major advisor.

Once a student begins to work on his or her master's essay, the essay advisor typically replaces the initial academic advisor. Similarly, as a student begins to draft a dissertation prospectus, the faculty member(s) who will (or are expected to) advise the dissertation and chair the doctoral dissertation committee becomes the student's advisor. This advisor should be selected by the time the student defends the dissertation prospectus as part of his or her oral comprehensive/qualifying exam.

Advisor changes that occur any time before a student passes his or her comprehensive/qualifying exams and advances to ABD (all but dissertation) status need only be submitted to the Graduate Staff Coordinator using the department form. Once students are ABD, any changes to their advisor or doctoral committee require the submission of a form to The Graduate School. Students should contact the Graduate Staff Coordinator to initiate the submission of this form.

All students must arrange a meeting with their advisory committees each year in late March or early April. For all students, the advising committee is comprised of the student's primary advisor and at least one other faculty member (if second year or beyond the member should be from his or her MA or PhD committees). For students defending their Master's essay, the student may be advised in the same session as the oral defense of their Master's essay as long as they are provided separate advice about their coursework and future plans of study. The advising meeting for all other students should be used to review performance (particularly in the past year), to gauge their progress toward an MA or PhD, and to discuss students' plans for the upcoming summer and subsequent academic year. In addition, students and their advisory committees should address the following questions that are relevant during the meeting:

Students who are ABD: What is the status of the student's dissertation research? How much progress has been made since the student completed comprehensive exams? When is the student planning to go on the job market? What type of job is the student aiming for? What is the status of the student's attempts to convert papers to publications? What is the status of the student's portfolio as they embark on the job search?

Students who are approaching or have just completed their oral comprehensive exams: What is the status of the student's dissertation prospectus? What is the status of the student's progress on the dissertation proposal (due within six months of the oral exam)? When is the student planning to go on the market? What progress has the student made in developing a portfolio consistent with the student's career goals?

Students who are preparing for comprehensive exams: Will the student be able to complete the coursework needed for field exams? Has the student had difficulty developing a topic for, executing the research for, or completing the master's essay? Does the student have dissertation ideas that are emerging from previous seminar papers or a master's essay? Does the student appear to be motivated to begin the dissertation (e.g., is the student discussing possible ideas with members of the advisory committee)? Has the student acquired all the research skills they will need to complete their potential future research?

Second year students: Is the student on track to complete his or her master's essay? Has the student had difficulty developing a topic or executing the research for the master's essay? How is the student performing in seminars (including whether the student is interested in the material and motivated to do the work, able to think critically as well as generate and execute original research ideas, and able to write clearly and concisely)? Does the student tend to complete course and GA assignments promptly? Does the student have any deferred grades? Plans to teach, need to talk to Associate Head now to get on next years teaching schedule?

Note that the advising session/qualifying assessment for first year students is described on p. 10-12.

Advisors will draft a written summary of the advising session and submit it to the GSC prior to the annual meeting in which faculty discuss graduate students. The purpose for the annual meeting, which generally takes place in late April or early May, is to develop collective strategies for training graduate students who are doing well, and to identify and develop strategies for working with students who are not performing adequately. Advisors may be asked to modify the advising summary based on the discussion in the faculty meeting. The summary will then be added to the student's file (and available to the student) after the faculty meeting. If appropriate, advisors will be asked to meet again with students who are having difficulty.

## **B. Course Selection and Course Load**

Courses for the first semester in the program will be selected in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies during an initial advising session that occurs prior to the start of fall semester classes. A student's advisor should be consulted prior to all subsequent course registration.

All graduate students in the political science department are required to take at least nine credits per fall and spring semester until they have completed the course credit requirements for a Ph.D. (or a master's degree if they are leaving the program after receiving a master's degree). Nine credits are necessary to maintain full time status, which is a necessary condition for receipt of a graduate assistantship.

The Graduate School requires students receiving assistantships to register for no more than 12 credits per semester. Students may apply for one credit beyond this limit, provided they have the approval of their academic advisor, and the department head. Course overload is routinely checked by the graduate school and a satisfactory explanation is required for any violation. Students who have successfully passed their comprehensive exams may register for 3 credits (either as an auditor or for credit) in addition to signing up for the appropriate 601 class. Students who wish to take a course for credit must submit an application to the department for approval to take the additional courses for credit. The Graduate School does not allow students who have successfully completed comprehensive exams to register for more than 3 additional credits.

The Graduate School requires students to have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or better to



graduate. However, the departmental generally expects students to maintain a grade point average of 3.4 or better to be considered in good standing for receiving graduate assistantships.

### **C. Graduate Core Courses**

A select set of courses covering research design and basic statistics are central to the graduate program in political science at Penn State. These courses will be useful for more advanced work in research seminars. The three core courses in the program – PL SC 501, 502, and 503 – are taken during the first year of graduate study.

### **D. Speech Communication and Writing Courses**

The Graduate School requires that the department evaluate each student's English competency in speaking and writing. Spoken and written proficiency in English is made on the basis of oral presentations and written assignments in all graduate seminars. Students whose spoken and written English is judged unsatisfactory are required to enroll in a speaking course in a summer session or upcoming fall. These courses fill up quickly and you will need to consult with your advisor and Graduate Director. You will need to inform the Graduate Staff Coordinator if you are planning to enroll in the course. After satisfactorily completing the required course, students will make a formal presentation (oral or written, depending upon the deficiency) to their advisor early in the fall semester (or early spring if course is taken in the fall). Students who fail to receive a satisfactory rating from their advisors may not continue in the program.

In addition, all international graduate students who have been offered assistantships must take and pass an oral language proficiency test. Penn State's American English Oral Communicative Proficiency Test (AEOCPT) is administered at the beginning of each semester (January, June, and August), but students can only take the test once in a 12-month period. Students' test scores determine when they may assume teaching duties as a teaching assistant. Depending on the score, a student may be required to complete ESL 115G, ESL 117G, and/or ESL 118G before serving as a teaching assistant. See the Linguistics and Applied Language Studies website for additional information (<http://aplng.la.psu.edu/programs/about-the-aeocpt>)

### **E. Scholarship and Research Integrity (SARI) Requirements**

All graduate students in the College of Liberal Arts entering graduate programs on or after Fall 2009 are required to complete a unit on Scholarship and Research Integrity that is appropriate for their field of study prior to receiving a Master's or Ph.D. from Penn State. In the department of Political Science, the SARI requirement is fulfilled by a) successfully completing PL SC 511 (Professional Norms in Political Science) with a passing grade; b) attending at one departmental brownbag on a SARI-related topic; c) attending at least one workshop sponsored by the Office of Research Protection (ORP) and d) receiving certification in the CITI On-Line course. Proof of completion of these requirements must be provided to the Graduate Staff Coordinator so that the department can certify a student's completion of the requirement to the Graduate School.

In addition, all students are required to complete successfully PLSC 513 (Writing and Professional Development in Political Science) with a passing grade.

Attendance will be taken at all departmental sponsored SARI brown bags. Students are responsible for providing proof of attendance at ORP sponsored workshops to the Graduate Staff Coordinator. No

substitutions can be made for these two requirements without prior approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. Students must provide certification that they passed the CITI On-Line course in “Social and Behavioral Human Subjects Research” with a grade of 80% or better. Instructions for enrolling in the on-line courses are found here: <http://www.research.psu.edu/training/sari/citi>.

## F. Special Course Registration

There are a number of courses that graduate students may enroll in that require the assistance of the Graduate Staff Coordinator. These courses are:

PL SC 594: supervised research projects; to be taken for a non-quality grade of R during the summer.

PL SC 595: supervised off-campus internships.

PL SC 596: individual/independent study and non-thesis research; a specific title may be entered on a student’s transcript if the 596 is arranged at least six weeks prior to the start of the semester in which the course is to be taken.

PL SC 599: graduate-level foreign study at an overseas institution.

PL SC 600: thesis credit; to be taken by students who are doing research on campus and who have *not* passed the oral comprehensive exam and two-semester residence requirement (students should register for a minimum of nine credits of PL SC 600). **Notes:** Students registered for PL SC 600 will not receive a “quality” grade (i.e., A, B, C, etc.). Rather, the symbol R will be used to indicate “that the student has devoted adequate effort to the work scheduled” (Graduate Degree Programs Bulletin, p. 42). R grades do not affect a student’s GPA.

PL SC 601: thesis credit; to be taken by students who are on campus, doing thesis work for the Ph.D., *who have passed (ABD)* the oral comprehensive examination and satisfied the two-semester residence requirement. Students registered for PL SC 601 may take up to three additional credits of course work for audit without formal approval by the department or college. Students may also take up to 3 credits for course credit after passing comprehensive exams but this must be approved prior to registration by the Department and College of Liberal Arts. Enrolling in three credits either for audit or credit will be the maximum a student may take along with PL SC 601 without additional special approval by the Graduate School.

PL SC 610: thesis credit; to be taken by students who are doing research off campus (students can maintain *continuous enrollment* while off campus with one credit of PL SC 610 but doing so does not constitute full-time status).

PL SC 611: thesis credit; to be taken by students who are engaged in part time thesis research, and who meet all the requirements for PL SC 601. Students who enroll in PL SC 611 may *not* register for other courses.

When a graduate research seminar is cross listed within the department in two different subfields (e.g., PL SC 552 is offered for credit in either American or comparative politics), students must decide when they register in which subfield credit is to be assigned. Once a subfield is selected for the credit to be assigned, a student’s seminar research project must be in that same subfield (i.e., if 552 is taken for credit in comparative politics, then the student’s research project must also be in comparative politics).

Assignment of credit should be consistent with the student's areas of specialization and program of study. Assignment of credit must be approved by the course instructor and the Director of Graduate Studies.

### **G. Transfer Students**

Students may request to transfer a maximum of 10 credits towards the 30 credits required for a master's degree. Students who have earned a master's degree in political science from an accredited university may request to transfer up to 30 credits towards the 60 credits required for the Ph.D. Successful transfer requires approval of the Director of Graduate Studies (in consultation with relevant faculty).

*Core field seminars (PL SC 504, 540, 550, 560) must be completed in residence.* Therefore, transferred courses with similar titles will normally count as electives and will not satisfy requirements for field seminars. Students wishing to satisfy the department's methods core requirements of PL SC 502 and PL SC 503 by graduate courses taken elsewhere will normally be expected to pass 504 or another advanced statistics course within the department with a grade of B or higher before the statistics requirement is considered met.

### **H. M.A. Degree Requirements**

The Department of Political Science does not offer a separate program of study leading to the M.A. degree. Instead, students complete their M.A. as a first step toward the Ph.D.

Requirements for the M.A. degree consist of a total of 30 credits. Students may take a maximum of 6 credits for work in independent studies and internships (PL SC 595 and 596). The one exception is 596 credits that are taken at ICPSR. Students should complete the M.A. requirements within four semesters.

As a part of the general requirements for the M.A. degree, students must complete three core courses – PL SC 501, 502, and 503, and all SARI requirements.

In addition, the M.A. candidate must complete 12 credits in one of the department's four major fields, including the core seminar (PL SC 504, 540, 550, or 560) in that field. Students must also complete six credits in a minor field, including the core seminar in that field. For students majoring or minoring in methodology, these 12 (for majors) or six (for minors) credits must be more advanced than the 501, 502, and 503, core methods sequence. Students completing a dual M.A. with Women's Studies must complete 12 credits in these fields instead of the six credits in a minor field. The dual degree in women's studies also requires that the student take WMNST 501, 502, and 507 prior to completing the M.A. and the M.A. essay be on a women's studies related topic.

While neither African studies nor Asian studies has a dual degree MA degree, students in these dual degree programs should write M.A. essays on subjects related to these fields of study. They should also consult the section on their dual degree below as well as the Director of Graduate Studies in their dual major on course selection every year.

Students must also take 511 -- the 1.5 credit "Professional Norms in Political Science" in the spring of their first year in the program, which includes completion of online CITI programs and additional training in issues of scholarship and research integrity. Students must receive a passing grade in this class in order to receive their MA degree. Students must also complete other SARI requirements described on p. 6/7.

Students are required to complete a major research paper, written under the supervision of their master's

essay advisor. The essay may originate as a seminar paper presented in connection with formal course work. It should demonstrate significant research accomplishment and have the scope and length of a major journal article.

Students are required to successfully defend their master's essay before their master's committee before they can receive their MA. Candidates for a master's degree will schedule their oral defense of their master's essay after (a) submitting a complete draft of the essay to their advisor and receiving the advisor's approval to move ahead with the defense; and (b) submitting a complete draft of the essay to the other members of the master's committee. The essay will be the primary focus of the oral exam. In some cases, the master's committee may wish to discuss a student's essay-related coursework.

The student's master's committee will consist of their master's essay advisor and two additional members of the graduate faculty. The student's master's essay advisor must be in his or her major field of study. For students completing a dual M.A. with Women's Studies, one faculty member from Women's Studies should be included on the master's committee, and the thesis topic must reflect their inquiry in women's studies. Students completing a dual degree with African or Asian studies should also pick a topic that reflects their regional focus.

## **I. Ph.D. Degree Requirements**

### **1. Courses and Areas of Study**

The department requires a minimum total of 60 credits of major field, minor field, and dissertation coursework. At least 45 credits of work must be in political science. Students also are required to complete the designated core courses listed below in sections (a) and (b) before taking their Ph.D. qualifying/comprehensive exams, and to complete coursework in a major and two minor fields.

#### a. Fields of Study

Students should consult with their advisor about their selection of fields. Major and first minor fields may be selected from the following:

- American Politics: includes the study the study of political institutions and political behavior in the United States.
- Comparative Politics: concerns the cross-national study of political institutions and behavior, including such questions as the relationship between the state and society, the development of democracy and dictatorship, and the origins and ramifications of domestic political conflict.
- International Relations: includes the study of international conflict, conflict resolution, and international political economy.
- Political Methodology: includes the application of quantitative, qualitative, and formal methods of analysis to study politics.
- **NOTE:** Political Methodology may not be used as a major field if the student chooses to pursue the Dual Ph.D. in Political Science and Social Data Analytics.

Second minors, i.e., “third fields,” are fields defined by the student and that are relevant to the student’s academic interests. The third field may be one of the program’s existing fields, or it may be comprised of courses from a range of fields or academic disciplines. Three courses are sufficient to meet this third-field requirement. The coherence and relevance of those three courses should be established to the student’s committee’s satisfaction.

b. Methodology Core Requirement

Courses in the methods core should be completed as early as possible in a student’s program of study. The typical core sequence includes PL SC 501 (Methods of Political Analysis), PL SC 502 (Statistical Methods for Political Research), and PL SC 503 (Multivariate Analysis for Political Research), for a total of nine credits.

c. Professional Development

Students are required to complete two, 1.5 credit professional development seminars. The first of these seminars is generally taken in the spring of the student’s first year (Professional Norms in Political Science) and includes completion of online Collaborative IRB Training Initiative programs and additional training in issues of scholarship and research integrity (students must complete other SARI requirements on their own). The second is taken in the student’s third year of the program (Writing and Professional Development in Political Science). These three credits are Pass/Fail and do not count towards the student’s required 60 credits of coursework for the Ph.D. Students are also required to attend at least one workshop sponsored by the Office of Research Protections.

d. Introductory Field Seminars

Students are required to take one proseminar in their major field, first minor field, and – if appropriate – second minor (third field) field if those fields are methods, American, comparative or international politics.. The proseminars offered in the political science department are PL SC 504 (Methods), PL SC 540 (American politics), PL SC 550 (Comparative politics), and PL SC 560 (International relations).

e. Field Credits

The department requires that a student complete a minimum of 15 credits of course work in their major field, and nine credits in each of the two minor fields. Credits earned in the introductory field seminars may apply toward this requirement (exception: for political methodology, nine credits must be taken beyond 501-502-503).

f. Independent Study and Internships

Students are permitted to take a maximum of 12 credits of coursework in independent studies and internships (PL SC 595 and 596). 596 credits taken for attending ICPSR will not count against the 12-credit maximum.

## 2. Ph.D. Qualifying Examination

### a. Purpose

At the end of the fall semester, each second year the graduate student has a meeting with his or her advisor and two other faculty members. This session has two main objectives. First, the session offers the advisory committee an opportunity to assess a student's initial progress in the program, to provide feedback on that student's progress, and to work with him or her to plan a future course of study. Second (and relatedly), it is the occasion for the student's committee to formally recommend whether the student should be admitted to doctoral candidacy. This session satisfies the Graduate School's requirement for a "Qualifying Exam." The outcome of the qualifying exam is either pass, fail, or decision deferred. If a student passes, he or she is officially a candidate for the Ph.D. A failure in the qualifying exam reflects the examining committee's view that the student should not continue to pursue a Ph.D. at Penn State. A deferred decision means that the committee is uncertain about whether the student is a promising candidate for the Ph.D. If the decision is deferred, the committee will indicate a time for reassessment (see below).

### b. Format

As noted above, the session has two objectives. One of these objectives is to give students' committees a chance to assess their initial progress in the program, to provide feedback on their progress, and to work with students to plan a future course of study. The materials in a student's file, as well as the materials a student circulates to his or her committee will provide the basis for this assessment and discussion. Students should be prepared to discuss: their first two semesters and a half in the graduate program; some ideas about research interests and plans; the course work students plan to undertake in order to write and complete both a master's essay and dissertation; a proposal for master's essay and/or dissertation research; students' summer plans; and any other topics students feel it is important to discuss. Students should also come to the session with questions about their program of study.

The second objective is to assess a student's qualifications to pursue the PhD. Because the department does not administer a written qualifying exam, a student's record, and the ensuing discussion of it in the advising session, will serve as the basis for the advising committee's assessment of a student's likelihood of success in the Ph.D. program, and thus his or her suitability for continuation in the program. If the committee determines that a student is doing well in the program, he or she will be admitted formally to doctoral candidacy. If a student has had significant problems – for instance, with course work or with GA responsibilities – the advisory committee may recommend steps that a student can take to address these problems in the short term. The advisory committee may follow up on deficiencies discussed in the session by requiring a second assessment session at a later date (in which case the qualifying decision would be postponed). In the case of serious deficiencies or problems, the committee may recommend that a student complete a terminal master's degree, or that a student leave the program at the end of the semester (under these circumstances, a student would obviously not be formally admitted to the PhD program).

Although student circumstances vary, faculty will consider these general guidelines in making decisions about the qualifying exam.

*A decision to pass* means that the student shows promise for completing the Ph.D. at Penn State. Students who pass the qualifying exam will have positive seminar evaluations, they will have done well in their courses, and they will be able to articulate a relatively clear research topic or area of interest.

*A decision to fail* reflects the examining committee's view that the student should not continue to pursue a Ph.D. at Penn State. Students who fail the qualifying exam include those who are struggling in their courses, show insufficient motivation in seminars, and/or cannot articulate research interests. Students who fail the qualifying exam may continue in the program to complete their master's degree.

*The decision is likely to be deferred* if the committee is uncertain about whether the student is a promising candidate for the Ph.D. If the decision is deferred, the committee will provide a clear statement of what the student will need to accomplish to demonstrate adequate progress and fitness to pass the exam. The committee also must indicate a time for reassessment, but in any event prior to the end of the third semester of coursework (not including summer session). Advisors will prepare a written summary of the advising committee's recommendations. The summary will be added to each student's file.

#### c. Advisory Committee

Students must put together an advisory/qualifying exam committee prior to the session/exam. The committee will consist of the student's advisor, the graduate director or another faculty member from the Graduate Studies Committee, and one other faculty member (of the student's choosing) with whom the student has taken or is taking a seminar. Students in dual degree programs must include faculty from Political Science as well as at least one faculty member from the dual program. In some cases, a dual-title faculty member from Political Science may serve this role.

#### d. Preparation

Students must schedule their qualifying exam with the Graduate Staff Coordinator at least 2 weeks prior to the date. The Graduate Staff Coordinator will reserve a room for the session and prepare paperwork that will need to be signed by your committee the day of the exam.

At least one week in advance of the session, students must distribute to their advisory committees four documents: a CV; a brief (one page or so) statement of research interests indicating the questions, topics, and/or puzzles they would like to study; an agenda of courses to be taken prior to comprehensive exams; and a backward calendar from receipt of Ph.D. to the semester subsequent to the qualifying exam.

Students may also distribute papers or other written work from their courses to members of their committees. If materials beyond those that are required are distributed, students should include a cover memo that describes to their committee the reason(s) for including the additional information.

In addition to these data, the graduate studies office will collect some basic information about students' fall seminar performance for students and their committees to review. Specifically, faculty who are teaching graduate seminars will be asked to complete an evaluation checklist in

early October for each second-year student in their class. The evaluation forms will be placed in each student's file.

Students should discuss with their advisor both the materials they are preparing for the session, and the format of the session. A memo regarding qualifying exams will be distributed to students in early fall.

### 3. Doctoral Committee

As a student begins to work on the ideas for the dissertation, she or he should also start to put together a committee to advise the dissertation. Typically, one member of the department's graduate faculty is selected to serve as the primary doctoral advisor. In some cases, it is possible to arrange for two members of the department's graduate faculty to serve as co-advisors. The doctoral committee consists of at least three members of the Department of Political Science and at least one member from another department (the outside member). The doctoral advisor must be in the student's major field. For students in dual-degree programs, the doctoral committee must include at least two members who are affiliated faculty in their dual major. In some cases, a person with a joint or affiliate appointment in both programs may count as both a political science advisor and a dual degree advisor. In cases where the most appropriate advisor is a faculty member who is not tenured, a co-advisor arrangement may be permitted subject to approval by the Director of Graduate Studies or the department head.

### 4. Dissertation Prospectus<sup>1</sup>

Student may choose to write a dissertation prospectus prior to taking the written comprehensive exams (Track I) or choose not to do so (Track II). Under Track I, a student will submit a prospectus to the departmental members of her/his dissertation committee **no later than** two months prior to the scheduled major field written comprehensive exam for approval. The committee within two weeks of that submission must approve or not approve the prospectus. An affirmative vote by majority of the committee is required for approval of the prospectus; the committee chair must be included in that

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1 For purposes of this document, a "prospectus" is written by a student under Track I and submitted to her or his committee at least two months prior to the date of the major written comprehensive exam. The style and length of an acceptable dissertation prospectus varies. Generally, a fifteen-page prospectus is expected, but a doctoral committee may request a longer and more detailed document. The prospectus at this stage is intended: 1) to permit the committee to judge the student's ability to undertake a dissertation in political science; 2) to determine whether the proposed dissertation topic is promising; and 3) to demonstrate mastery of the literature relevant to the proposed research.

The "proposal" (see Section 7, below) is written by all students, regardless of the track chosen, and submitted to the doctoral committee prior to the oral comprehensive exam. The amount of specificity in a proposal will vary from case to case and ultimately will depend on the judgment of the doctoral advisor and doctoral committee. In some cases, the doctoral advisor will urge the committee to approve a short, general proposal that permits the student wide latitude in exploratory research. In others, the committee may desire a very specific plan before encouraging a student to invest time and effort in field research, data collection, or analysis. Given this wide range of expectations, students are advised to maintain frequent communication with their primary doctoral advisors as the dissertation idea evolves.

Generally, it is expected that a student pursuing Track I will incorporate much of the prospectus into the proposal. The prospectus is intended to provide a foundation for the proposal and to facilitate the proposal's development and completion.



majority. If the prospectus is approved, the student may opt out of the afternoon portion of the major field examination in political science.

If the prospectus is not approved, the student must take the morning and afternoon portions of the major field exam when the exam is next offered. That is, a student whose prospectus is not approved cannot, under normal circumstances, delay taking her or his written comprehensive.

A student wishing to pursue Track I is required to get her/his advisor's written approval by the end of the second week of the semester in which the prospectus will be submitted.

Students are expected to consult with their advisor about what constitutes an acceptable prospectus.

## **5. Written Comprehensive Examinations for the Ph.D.**

Students must pass written comprehensive examinations in their major and first minor field. The student must also submit a portfolio of work from courses comprising the second minor (third) field.

The comprehensive examination should be scheduled within a year of completion of all required course work to provide students with timely assessment of their ability to complete their dissertation, but it must be scheduled no later than five years following the passing of the Qualifying Examination.

The comprehensive examinations require the student to demonstrate mastery of critical literature and key debates in the field, to summarize and synthesize arguments across the literature, to apply their knowledge of the literature to answer questions about the state of the discipline, and to identify gaps in and directions for further research.

Written comprehensive exams are offered two times each year, in January and in May. Under special circumstances and in consultation with their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies, students may also receive permission to take exams in August. Students should plan to take their comprehensive exams as soon as they are ready, as determined in consultation with their advisors. Students entering Penn State with a bachelor's degree or master's degree in political science should take exams in January of their third year; the exam also could be taken in May after completion of the third year.

At the time that the written comprehensive examination is administered a student must:

- have a minimum graduate GPA of 3.00 (at Penn State); and
- have no deferred grades.

The major field examination will be a full day exam, while the minor field exam is typically half a day. *Exceptions:* 1) students in dual degree programs take a full day exam in their dual major, with the exception of students with a dual major in Social and Data Analytics, who will take a half-day exam in that field; 2) students taking the political methodology qualifying exam as their major field will also give an oral presentation on an advanced methods topic; and 3) students who have had prospectuses accepted under Track I need not take the afternoon session of the major field exam in political science.

Major and minor field examinations typically are administered approximately five days apart.

The comprehensive examination questions for each field are written and graded by two or more subfield examiners appointed by the department head. In the case of the Women's Studies minor qualifying exam, at least one examiner each will be appointed by the political science department head and by the Women's Studies program head.

Each examiner gives a grade of “Superior,” “Above Average,” “Pass,” or “Fail” to the written examination. To pass, both examiners must give a grade of “Pass” or higher. In cases where there are more than two examiners, at least two-thirds must vote to pass.

Students may review past written comprehensive exam questions. These questions are available from the Graduate Staff Coordinator.

Students who fail their major and/or minor comprehensive examinations may petition the Director of Graduate Studies for permission to re-take the examination(s) at the next regularly scheduled administration. Under no circumstances will a third attempt be permitted.

## **6. Oral Comprehensive Examination**

*The oral comprehensive exam must follow the written comprehensive exam within the same semester.* Students are encouraged to complete the oral exam as soon as possible after the outcome of the written exam is known. The oral exam must be completed no later than the end of the semester in which the written exam was completed. Thus, students taking the written qualifying exam in May must check with each member of their doctoral committee in advance to ensure that all members will be in town during an appropriate period in the summer.

Students are responsible for arranging a date and time for the oral examination with their committee, and for providing this information to the Graduate Staff Coordinator *at least three weeks prior to the oral exam*. The three-week window is needed to process and submit the appropriate forms to The Graduate School.

At the time that the oral comprehensive examination is administered a student must:

- satisfy the English competency requirement
- satisfy the Department’s foreign language/research skill proficiency requirement (see Appendix F below); and
- register as a full-time or part-time student.

The oral comprehensive examination is administered by the doctoral committee. The examination focuses on the dissertation proposal (see below), as well as the student’s preparation to undertake dissertation research as evidenced by the student’s written qualifying examinations, third field portfolio, course preparation, research experience, and overall record of performance in the program. The doctoral committee may, at its discretion, bring in an additional member or members of the major or minor fields to assist in administering the comprehensive examination.

The doctoral committee grades the student’s oral comprehensive examination performance using the scale “Superior,” “Above Average,” “Average,” “Below Average,” or “Fail.” In order to pass the exam, two-thirds of the committee must provide grades of “below average” or higher. In cases where a student fails an exam and the failure is due to a specific weakness in preparation, the doctoral committee shall explain this in a memo to the Director of Graduate Studies and propose a timetable for the student to address this weakness and retake the comprehensive examination. Examples of specific weaknesses include inadequate language preparation or statistics background needed to undertake the proposed dissertation, a third field portfolio that is judged inadequate, and a dissertation proposal that is deemed poorly conceived. In any case of failure, the student may appeal to the Director of Graduate Studies to retake the

examination in the next semester. In no instance shall a student be permitted to take the oral comprehensive examination a third time.

Passage of the comprehensive examination denotes advancement to ABD (all but dissertation) status.

If six years elapse between passing the comprehensive examination and completion of the degree program, the student must re-take and pass written and oral comprehensive examinations before the final oral defense of the dissertation will be scheduled.

## **7. Dissertation Proposal**

Within six months of passing the oral comprehensive examination, a student must submit to the Director of Graduate Studies a proposal approved by the members of the student's doctoral committee. In some cases, the initial proposal will be approved and satisfy this requirement. In other cases, however, the doctoral committee will require a revised proposal to contain more detail about the conduct of the dissertation research.

As some superior dissertations require more time to formulate than others, the six-month period may be extended by the Director of Graduate Studies upon written request by the student's doctoral advisor. This request must describe the student's progress to date and an anticipated timetable for submitting an approved proposal.

In some (perhaps most) cases, the doctoral advisor may request that the committee reconvene for a formal oral defense of a revised proposal.

The proposal requirement must be met in order for the student to be in good academic standing and eligible for departmental financial assistance, teaching assignments, or use of the placement service.

## **8. Dissertation and Final Oral Defense**

The final oral defense is administered by the doctoral committee. Students are responsible for arranging a date and time for the final oral defense with their committee, and for providing this information to the Graduate Staff Coordinator *at least three weeks prior to the defense*. The three-week window is needed to process and submit the appropriate forms to The Graduate School.

The Graduate Staff Coordinator will announce each student's oral defense to members of the department. The defense is open to the public and anyone may attend. Requirements for the dissertation are noted in the *Graduate Degree Programs Bulletin* (online at <https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/>). The dissertation must meet at least two minimal requirements. First, it must represent an original contribution to our knowledge and understanding of politics. Second, it must be sufficiently ambitious to demonstrate the candidate's ability to undertake and competently complete original and independent research projects after completing the degree.

If six years elapse between passing the comprehensive examination and completion of the degree program, the student must re-take and pass written and oral comprehensive examinations before the final oral defense of the dissertation will be scheduled.

## **J. Dual Ph.D. in Political Science and African Studies**

The Department of Political Science and the African Studies Program offer a dual degree in Political Science and African Studies. This is a special combined Ph.D. degree. Official application to and enrollment in the program is handled through the African Studies program.

Upon acceptance by the African Studies admissions committee, the student is also assigned an African Studies academic advisor. Students take 18 credits in African related coursework including a required overview course. The courses should have an integrated intellectual thrust that probes a thematic, national or regional issue and complements the student's specialty in Political Science. A representative of the African Studies program will serve on the student's committee, and the dissertation must be on a topic appropriate to both political science and African Studies. The African Studies program offers graduate assistantship or fellowships with duties determined by the African Studies director. For more detailed information about the dual-degree program, please contact the African Studies program (<https://africanstudies.la.psu.edu/>)

### **Requirements for the Political Science-African Studies Ph.D.**

The Ph. D. in Political Science and African Studies is awarded to students who are admitted to the Political Science doctoral program and admitted subsequently into the dual-title degree in African Studies. The minimum course requirements for the dual-title Ph.D. degree in Political Science and African Studies are as follows (also, see Table 3 below).

- A minimum of 60 post-baccalaureate credits. Course work accepted for the M.A. in Political Science will count toward the 60-credit requirement. At least 45 credits, exclusive of dissertation research credits, must be in Political Science.
- Completion of coursework in two major fields (the first of which is a Political Science subfield as detailed in the Political Science graduate handbook, and the second of which is in African Studies) and one minor field (in a regular Political Science subfield).
- Completion of the designated core of courses in methodology (PL SC 501, 502, and 503).
- Completion of two 1.5-credit seminars on teaching, writing, and professional development in Political Science.
- Completion of introductory field seminars appropriate to one's two political science fields of study.
- 18 credits of Africa-related coursework at the 400 or 500-level of which the following are required: AFR 501 (3); and a minimum of 6 credits from SOC/AFR 527 (3), AFR 530 (3), AFR 532 (3), AFR 534 (3), AFR 536, and AFR 537.
- Up to 6 of the 18 credits may come from Political Science, as approved by the student's Political Science and African Studies Program academic advisors.
- The remaining credits can be taken in AFR or in any department other than Political Science.
- Of the 18 credits, no more than 6 credits may be taken at the 400-level and no more than 3 combined credits may come from 596 and 599 listings.
- Communication and foreign language requirements will be determined by the student, the Political Science and African Studies Program advisors in accordance with the existing Political Science language requirements.

The language requirement for a student in the Dual-Title Doctoral Degree Program will be determined by the student and the Political Science and African Studies Program advisors in accordance with the existing Political Science language requirements.

The qualifying examination committee for the dual-title degree will be composed of graduate faculty from Political Science and at least one graduate faculty member from the African Studies Program. The doctoral committee of a dual-title doctoral degree student must include a minimum of four Graduate Faculty members, i.e., the chair and at least three additional members. The committee must include at least one member of the African Studies graduate faculty.

The doctoral committee of a dual-title doctoral degree student must include a minimum of four faculty members, i.e., the chair and at least three additional members, all of whom must be members of the Graduate Faculty. The committee must include at least one member of the African Studies graduate faculty. The chair of the committee must either be a faculty member in both Political Science and African Studies or must be accompanied by a co-chair that is a member of the unrepresented program.

After completing all course work, doctoral candidates for the dual-title doctoral degree in Political Science and African Studies must pass a comprehensive examination that includes written and oral components. Written components will be administered on a candidate's major Political Science subfield and African Studies. The African Studies representative on the student's doctoral committee will develop questions for and participate in the evaluation of the comprehensive examination. The African Studies component of the exam will be based on the student's thematic, national or regional area of interest and specialization in African Studies.

Upon completion of the doctoral dissertation, the candidate must pass a final oral examination (the dissertation defense) to earn the Ph.D. degree. Students enrolled in the dual-title program are required to write and orally defend a dissertation on a topic that reflects their original research and education in Political Science and African Studies.

### **K. Dual Ph.D. in Political Science and Asian Studies**

The Department of Political Science and the Asian Studies Program offer a dual degree in Political Science and Asian Studies. This is a special combined Ph.D. degree. Official application to and enrollment in the program is handled through the Asian Studies program. Graduate students in the Asian Studies dual degree program are required to take 15 credits of Asia-related coursework at the 400 or 500 level. At least 6 of these 15 credits will come from Asian Studies 501 and 502-- a year-long Asian Studies Seminar on Theories, Methods, and Archives. Students are required to take an additional three credits in Asian studies or a department other than Political Science. The remaining 6 credits may come from Asian Studies or from Political Science, and must have a substantial Asia-related component, as approved by the student's doctoral adviser and the Asian Studies program director of graduate studies. The year-long Asian Studies Seminar on Theories, Methods, and Archives, and must show strong all-skills proficiency in one Asian language and have either two years' college study (or equivalent knowledge) of another Asian language, or an alternative proficiency appropriate to the student's field. A representative of the Asian Studies program serves on the student's committee, and the dissertation must be on a topic appropriate to both political science and Asian Studies. Additional scholarships are available from Asian Studies to support summer research or travel for students in this dual degree. For more detailed information about the dual-degree program, please contact the Asian Studies program (<https://asian.la.psu.edu/>).

### **Requirements for the Political Science/Asian Studies Ph.D.**

The doctoral degree in Political Science and Asian Studies is awarded only to students who are

admitted to the Political Science doctoral program and admitted to the dual-title degree in Asian Studies. The minimum course requirements for the dual-title Ph.D. degree in Political Science and Asian Studies are as follows:

- A minimum total of 60 postbaccalaureate credits. Course work accepted for the M.A. in Political Science will count toward the 60-credit requirement. At least 45 credits, exclusive of the dissertation, must be in political science.
- Completion of coursework in two major fields (the first of which involves a political science topic as detailed in the Political Science graduate handbook and the second a topic on Asia) and one minor field (in a regular political science subfield)
- Completion of the designated core of courses in methodology (PL SC 501, 502, and 503)
- Completion of two, 1.5 credit seminars on teaching, writing, and professional development in political science
- Completion of introductory field seminars appropriate to one's three fields of study
- 15 credits of Asia-related coursework at the 400 or 500 level. At least 6 of these 15 credits will be from ASIA 501 and 502. As many as 6 may come from Political Science, as approved by the student's doctoral advisor and the Asian Studies Program director of graduate studies. The remaining credits can be taken in ASIA or in any department other than Political Science.
- All-skills proficiency in one Asian language AND two years' college study (or equivalent knowledge) of another Asian language OR alternative proficiency appropriate to the student's field.

Particular courses may satisfy both the Political Science requirements and those of the Asian Studies program. Final course selection is determined by the student in consultation with their dual-title program advisors and their major program advisors.

Students must show all-skills proficiency in one Asian language. All-skills proficiency in a foreign language can be assessed through the following mechanisms: 1) native speaker status, 2) completion of graduate-level research using the foreign language, 3) study abroad, and 4) independent study or examination. All final determinations of all-skills proficiency will be made by a student's Asian Studies doctoral advisor in consultation with the Asian Studies Director of Graduate Studies.

In addition to demonstrating all-skills proficiency in one Asian language, a student must also,

- Complete two years' college study (or equivalent knowledge) of another Asian language  
OR
- Achieve alternative proficiency appropriate to the student's field.

The doctoral committee of a Ph.D. dual-title degree student must include a minimum of four faculty members, i.e., the chair and at least three additional members, all of whom must be members of the Graduate Faculty. The committee must include at least one member of the Asian Studies graduate faculty. The chair of the committee must either be a faculty member in both Political Science and African Studies or must be accompanied by a co-chair that is a member of the unrepresented program.

After completing all course work, doctoral candidates for the dual-title doctoral degree in Political Science and Asian Studies must pass a written comprehensive examination. Students will take a first major exam in a political science field and a minor field exam in Asian Studies. The Asian Studies representative on the student's doctoral committee along with a second representative from Asian

studies appointed by the head of Asian studies will develop and participate in the evaluation of the comprehensive examination.

Upon completion of the doctoral dissertation, the candidate must pass a final oral examination (the dissertation defense) to earn the degree. Ph.D. students enrolled in the dual-title degree program are required to write and orally defend a dissertation on a topic that reflects their original research and education in both Political Science and Asian Studies.

## **L. Dual Ph.D. in Political Science and Social Data Analytics**

### **The Program**

The Social Data Analytics dual-title degree program is administered by the Social Data Analytics Committee, which is responsible for the management of the program. The committee maintains program definition, identifies faculty and courses appropriate to the program, and recommends policy and procedures for its operation to the Dean of the Graduate School. The program enables students from diverse graduate programs to attain and be identified with an interdisciplinary array of tools, techniques, and methodologies for social data analytics, while maintaining a close association with a home discipline. Social data analytics is the integration of social scientific, computational, informational, statistical, and visual analytic approaches to the analysis of large or complex data that arise from human interaction. To pursue a dual-title degree under this program the student must apply to the Graduate School and register through one of the approved graduate programs.

### ***Admission Requirements***

Students must apply and be admitted to the graduate program in their home department and The Graduate School before they can apply for admission to the dual-title degree program. Applicants interested in the dual-title degree program may make their interest in the program known on their applications to the major programs and include remarks in their statement of purpose that address the ways in which their research and professional goals in their chosen home field reflect an expanded interest in Social Data Analytics.

To be enrolled in the Dual Title Doctoral Degree Program in Social Data Analytics, a student must submit a letter of application and transcript, which will be reviewed by the Social Data Analytics Admissions Committee. An applicant must have a minimum grade point average of 3.0 (on a 4 point scale) to be considered for enrollment in the dual-title degree program. Students must apply for enrollment into the dual-title degree program in Social Data Analytics prior to obtaining candidacy in their home department.

General Graduate Council admissions requirements are stated in the GENERAL INFORMATION section of the Graduate Bulletin.

### ***Degree Requirements***

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements stated in the DEGREE REQUIREMENTS section of the *Graduate Bulletin*.

To qualify for the dual-title degree, students must satisfy the requirements of their major doctoral program in which they are primarily enrolled. In addition, they must satisfy the requirements described below, as established by the Social Data Analytics Committee.

The minimum course work requirements for the dual-title Ph.D. degree in Social Data Analytics are as follows:

- Course work and other requirements of the primary program.
- SODA 501 (3 credits)
- SODA 502 (3 credits)
- 12 or more elective credits in Social Data Analytics from a list of courses maintained by the Social Data Analytics Committee. Collectively the elective credits must satisfy the following requirements:
  - (A) Core analytics distribution. 3 or more credits in courses focused on statistical learning, machine learning, data mining, or visual analytics. Courses approved as meeting this requirement are designated (A) on the list of approved electives.
  - (Q) Quantification distribution. 6 or more credits in courses focused on statistical inference or quantitative social science methodology. Courses approved as meeting this requirement are designated (Q) on the list of approved electives.
  - (C) Computational / informational distribution. 6 or more credits in courses focused on computation, collection, management, processing, or interaction with electronic data, especially at scale. Courses approved as meeting this requirement are designated (C) on the list of approved electives.
  - (S) Social distribution. 6 or more credits in courses with substantial content on the nature of human interaction and/or the analysis of data derived from human interaction and/or the social context or ethics or social consequences of social data analytics. Courses approved as meeting this requirement are designated (S) on the list of approved electives.
  - Cross-departmental distribution.
    - 3 or more credits in approved courses with the prefix STAT or that of a primarily social science department.
    - 3 or more credits in approved courses with the prefix IST, GEOG, or that of a primarily computer science or engineering department.
    - 6 or more credits in approved courses outside the primary program.
    - 3 or fewer credits in approved courses at the 400-level.

Students or faculty may request that the Social Data Analytics Committee consider approval of elective designations for any course, including temporary approvals for experimental or variable-title courses. Students are encouraged to take interdisciplinary courses that carry multiple (A), (Q), (C), (S) designations, as well as to select SoDA electives that also meet requirements of the primary program. Within this framework, final course selection is determined by the student in consultation with academic advisers from their home department and Social Data Analytics.

The Social Data Analytics Program maintains a list of background and skills that it recommends students have in place by the time they begin the interdisciplinary coursework required to complete the Social Data Analytics degree.



### **Qualifying Committee Composition**

The qualifying committee must conform to all requirements of the primary program and the Graduate Council. In accordance with Graduate Council, the qualifying committee must include at least one member of the Social Data Analytics Graduate Faculty. Faculty members who hold appointments in both programs' Graduate Faculty may serve in a combined role.

### **Qualifying Exam**

The dual-title degree will be guided by the Qualifying Exam procedure of the primary program and the Graduate Council. In accordance with Graduate Council, there will be a single qualifying examination, assessing candidacy for both primary program and the dual-title program. Because students must first be admitted to a graduate major program of study before they may apply to and be considered for admission into a dual-title graduate degree program, dual-title graduate degree students may require an additional semester to fulfill requirements for both areas of study and, therefore, the qualifying examination may be delayed one semester beyond the normal period allowable.

### **Doctoral Committee Composition**

The doctoral committee must conform to all requirements of the primary program and the Graduate Council. In addition to the general Graduate Council requirements for doctoral committees, the doctoral committee of a Social Data Analytics dual-title doctoral degree student must include at least one member of the Social Data Analytics Graduate Faculty. Faculty members who hold appointments in both programs' Graduate Faculty may serve in a combined role. If the chair of the doctoral committee is not also a member of the Graduate Faculty in Social Data Analytics, the member of the committee representing Social Data Analytics must be appointed as co-chair.

### **Comprehensive Exam**

The dual-title degree will be guided by the Comprehensive Exam procedure of the primary program. After completion of required course work, doctoral candidates for the dual-title doctoral degree must pass a comprehensive examination. In programs where this includes evaluation of a written exam, the Social Data Analytics representative on the student's doctoral committee will participate in the writing and evaluation of the exam, in accordance with procedures maintained by the primary program. In programs where the comprehensive exam involves defense of a dissertation prospectus, the Social Data Analytics representative on the student's doctoral committee will participate in the evaluation of the prospectus, including ensuring the proposed dissertation has substantial Social Data Analytics content.

### **Dissertation and Dissertation Defense**

Upon completion of the doctoral dissertation, the candidate must pass a final oral examination (the dissertation defense) to earn the Ph.D. degree. Students enrolled in the dual-title program are required to write and orally defend a dissertation on a topic that reflects their original research and education in their home discipline and Social Data Analytics. The dissertation must be accepted by the doctoral committee, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School.

### **M. Dual Ph.D. in Political Science and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies**

The Department of Political Science and the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

Program offer a dual degree in Political Science and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. This is a special combined Ph.D. degree. Official application to and enrollment in the program is handled through the Women's Studies program.

A Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies dual degree student must take 18 credits in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, at least 21 credits of which must be at the 500 level. Students take two required Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies core courses: Feminist Perspectives in Research and Training, and Feminist Theory. Dual degree students must pass a written qualifying examination in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and the student's doctoral committee must include at least two faculty members affiliated with the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program. The dissertation must also be focused on an issue or topic related to both political science and the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. The Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program offers several graduate teaching scholarships on a competitive basis to advanced students. For more detailed information about the dual-degree program, please contact the Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies program (<https://wgss.la.psu.edu/>).

Requirements for the Political Science/Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies

*The M.A. Degree (30 credits plus thesis)*

- 12 credits in major political science field (including proseminar)
- Political Science 501: Methods of Political Analysis (3)
- Political Science 502: Statistical Methods for Political Research (3)
- Women's Studies 501: Feminist Perspectives in Research and Teaching (3)
- Women's Studies 502: Global Perspectives on Feminism (3)
- Women's Studies 507: Feminist Theory (3)
- 3 elective credits in Women's Studies approved courses (may double count if in political science field)
- Oral exam and MA essay defense as specified in the Department of Political Science Graduate Student Handbook.

Of these requirements at least 21 credits must be at the 500 level. In addition, there is a 6-credit maximum for independent study and a 10-credit maximum for transfer credits. The student is expected to conduct research for the M.A. essay on a Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies topic.

*The Ph.D. Degree (60 credits)\**

- 15 credits in major political science field (including proseminar)
- 9 credits in 2nd minor political science field
- Political Science 501: Methods of Political Analysis (3)
- Political Science 502: Statistical Methods for Political Research (3)
- Political Science 503: Multivariate Analysis for Political Research (3-6)
- Women's Studies 501: Feminist Perspectives in Research and Teaching (3)
- Women's Studies 502: Global Perspectives on Feminism (3)
- Women's Studies 507: Feminist Theory (3)
- 9 elective credits in Women's Studies approved courses (may double count if in political science field)
- Language requirement
- Ph.D. qualifying exam in major political science field, plus portfolio of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies work.

Of these requirements at least 51 credits must be at the 500 level. In addition, there is a 12-credit maximum for independent study and a 30-credit maximum for transfer credits.

**Qualifying Committee Composition:** Student's Faculty Advisor, a member of Graduate Studies Committee, and an additional faculty member from whom the student has taken a course(s). (One committee member should be affiliated with Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.)

**Qualifying Exam:** In accordance with Graduate Council requirements, the qualifying examination will assess candidacy for both the primary and the dual-title program.

**Doctoral Committee Composition:** In accordance with Graduate Council requirements, the doctoral committee shall contain at least four members. Two of the four members must be affiliated with Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. This requirement may be waived with agreement of heads of Political Science and Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.

**Doctoral Dissertation:** The doctoral dissertation must be on a Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies inflected topic.

Students must pass the Ph.D. qualifying and comprehensive exams and have their dissertation proposal approved as specified in the Department of Political Science Graduate Student Handbook.

## **N. Termination of Graduate Study**

The procedure for termination of a graduate student for unsatisfactory scholarship is set forth in Appendix III of the *Graduate Degree Programs Bulletin*. The major provisions of this document are:

1. When the department head or Director of Graduate Studies determines that a student must be terminated for unsatisfactory scholarship, the student must be given advance notice, in writing, which in general terms shall advise the student of the academic reason for termination.
2. Upon receipt of this notice the student has the opportunity to seek a review of the decision. If the student desires such a review, the student must, within ten days of receipt of the notice, submit a written appeal to the department head or Director of Graduate Studies.
3. If, as a result of a meeting, the termination decision is sustained, notice will be given to the student and the Dean of the Graduate School. Within five days after receiving this notice of termination for unsatisfactory scholarship, the student may make a written request to the Dean of the Graduate School for further review of the decision.

A graduate student will not be permitted to continue in the Department of Political Science if he or she:

1. Fails to attain a grade point average of at least 3.0 by the end of the second semester of full-time study (or 18 credits of coursework) and every semester thereafter.
2. Fails to complete successfully the qualifying exam, or comprehensive examinations.
3. Fails to adhere to the University code of Conduct.

### III. Assistantships and Other Financial Support

#### A. Departmental Assistantships

Assistantships are contracts to provide services to the department in the form of research or teaching assistance for which a stipend is received. A half-time assistantship (the typical assistantship awarded) provides students with a monthly stipend during the fall and spring semesters plus a grant-in-aid of resident education tuition in exchange for research and teaching assistance responsibilities that occupy approximately twenty hours per week. Students with assistantships schedule 9-12 credits of coursework each semester. A student's specific assistantship duties will be determined by the faculty member to whom that student has been assigned. See Appendix B "General Criteria for Awarding & Renewing Graduate Assistantships and Fellowships" for additional information.

Penn State is on a semester calendar system. The period of instruction each semester is fifteen weeks. ***Graduate assistants are appointed for eighteen weeks of activities each semester.*** Although assistantship responsibilities begin and end each semester, the academic year appointment (thirty-six weeks) begins on the Monday following the last day of Summer Session final exams and continues until the last day of exams for the spring semester, less the period of time classes are suspended at Thanksgiving, over the December holidays, and during Spring Break.

For the most part, research assistants are students supported by faculty with externally funded research projects or departmental funding. Continuation of a research assistantship depends on the quality of the work performed and the availability of funds.

It is a general policy to assign graduate assistants largely scholarly tasks that will give them useful teaching and research experience in their fields of study. However, assistantship duties may also include tasks involved in conducting the work of the department (e.g., collecting data for departmental reports to the College), and responsibilities outside a student's areas of interest.

***A graduate assistant may not accept concurrent employment inside or outside the University unless special permission is obtained from the Director of Graduate Studies or department head.***

Assistantship stipends are paid monthly. For the fall semester, graduate assistants will be paid one fifth of the semester stipend at the end of August (if processed in time), and then monthly through December. For the spring semester, graduate assistants will receive one fifth of the semester stipend at the end of January (if processed in time), and then monthly through May.

A student entering the program with a bachelor's degree (or with a master's degree that is not closely linked to the student's coursework in political science) can normally expect funding for five academic years so long as he or she maintains a strong academic record and makes timely progress through the program. The department often provides funding for a sixth year, with preference given to students who have excelled academically; in some cases, preference will be shown to students highly qualified to meet specific a department needs (e.g., teaching a course on a particular topic).

In addition to receiving a grant-in-aid of tuition during the period of appointment, a graduate student may be eligible for other forms of tuition assistance or loans.

## **B. Summer Tuition Assistance Program (STAP)**

This program, funded by The Graduate School, provides tuition assistance to graduate students who have held assistantships or full fellowships for two consecutive semesters (Fall and Spring) so they can continue graduate studies during the summer. Students previously appointed as graduate assistants or fellows may enroll for a maximum of 9 credits during the summer. STAP funding is competitive and requires an application from eligible graduate students. The application can be found online (<https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/stap/>). Students may submit an application beginning in February, and applications are accepted on a rolling basis. The College of the Liberal Arts receives limited STAP funds, therefore, **students seeking summer tuition assistance are advised to apply early.**

## **C. Other Sources of Financial Support**

Students may wish to explore fellowship opportunities from the College of the Liberal Arts (<http://www.la.psu.edu/current-students/graduate-students/student-resources/student-resources-1>), the Graduate School, the National Science Foundation (general graduate and minority student fellowships), and elsewhere.

## **IV. General Administrative Policies and Procedures**

### **A. Department Facilities, Services, and Supplies Available to Graduate Students**

Office space for graduate assistants is generally located in Pond Lab. Assistants typically have access to a desk, a shared computer and printer, and a shared telephone (for local calls only). Printers are available for graduate student use in 214, 224 and 314 Pond. Additional computers are available for graduate student use in the department's computer lab located in 124 Pond. While no limits exist on printing; students are asked to be judicious in their printing, and the department will occasionally monitor printer usage. Students who abuse their printing privileges will be warned and continued abuse of printing privileges may lead to elimination of printing privileges.

Graduate student mailboxes are located in 203 Pond. Students are expected to check their assigned boxes often.

Graduate students will be given keys to access their office space and 224 Pond (the graduate office which houses the high speed printer as well as a refrigerator and microwave oven). Keys as well as the lock combination for 124 Pond (the computer lab) are available in 220 Pond Lab. Supplies, use of the copy and fax machines, and clerical assistance typically are available only in conjunction with the assigned duties of graduate assistants (consult your faculty supervisor for more information). You will be assigned a code for the copying machine (if assigned as TA or instructors) which you will need to enter each time you wish to use the machine for assistantship duties. Typically, the code will be the last 4 digits of your Penn State ID number. If there are duplicates, a random number may need to be assigned.

### **B. Guidelines for Graduate Student Absences or Leaves**

Graduate assistants who serve as research assistants or teaching assistants are generally assumed to be on campus and available during the regular academic year. There are different policies that pertain to short-term absences, medical and family leaves, and parent leaves. Students concerned about longer leaves should consult the graduate school policies on absences and leaves for graduate assistants at <http://www.gradsch.psu.edu/graduate-funding/infoga/paid-leaves/> which pertain only to issues related to the individual as a graduate assistant.

#### **1. Short-Term Absences**

Short-term absences, typically less than one-week duration, are generally not problematic. In these instances, the graduate assistant should make arrangements with their supervising professor. In the cases of foreseeable events, the student should inform his/her supervisor as soon as the circumstances and dates of needed leave are known. For unforeseeable events, notification should be made as soon as possible once the need arises.

Graduate students who are teaching their own classes are expected to meet all scheduled classes and be present at posted office hours. If you know in advance that you must be absent from a class for reasons such as attending a conference, you are expected to notify the department head and Director of Graduate Studies ahead of time and inform them how the class will be handled in your absence. It is not acceptable to reschedule classes, with the exception of independent studies or small graduate courses if this is done in a way that does not shorten the semester or lengthen vacations.

## **2. Medical and Family Leave Policies**

If a graduate assistant is unable to fulfill the duties of his/her assistantship appointment because of illness, injury, or needing to care for an immediate family member for a longer duration, the graduate assistant must submit a written request to the Director of Graduate Studies. The request should be made by the student as soon as it is known that an extended leave will be required. If the leave is approved, the graduate assistant's stipend can be maintained for up to six weeks or until the end of the appointment (whichever occurs first) in the case of personal illness or injury and up to three weeks or until the end of the appointment (whichever occurs first) to care for an immediate family member. In the event that the leave period includes an academic break included in the regular period of appointment, such as the winter break that occurs between fall and spring semesters for an academic year appointment, the leave period includes the academic break and cannot be extended by the length of the break.

Requests for an extended paid leave are generally granted but may be denied for a number of reasons, including but not limited to inadequate documentation, repeated requests for paid leaves, documented unsatisfactory performance, or incompatibility with funding source guidelines.

## **3. Parental Leave Policies**

Penn State's policy is to reasonably accommodate the needs of its graduate assistants when they become parents. A graduate assistant who becomes a parent is eligible for paid leave upon the birth of a biological child or when an adoptive child is placed within the individual's custody and adoption proceedings are officially underway. Graduate assistants desiring a new parent paid leave must submit a written request to the Director of Graduate Studies. Where medical leave is required prior to the birth of a child, or because of complications that may arise during or following the birth of a child, these leave requests are to be handled in the same manner as other illnesses or injuries.

## **4. Denial of Leave**

Should a request for an extended paid leave of any type be denied, the graduate assistant has the right to appeal such a decision by submitting an appeal in writing to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. This appeal must be submitted within 10 days of receiving the notification that the original request has been denied.

## **C. Academic Standards**

Students who wish to submit the same (or a similar) paper in order to satisfy the requirements for more than one seminar must consult with and receive prior approval from the faculty who are leading each of the relevant seminars. The department insists on strict standards of academic honesty in all courses. Any case of plagiarism will be reported to the College Academic Integrity Committee and will be severely penalized. In general, plagiarism can be defined as the act of passing off the work of someone else as your own. Specific information about University policies regarding what constitutes plagiarism and other violations of academic integrity can be found on the website (<http://english.la.psu.edu/undergraduate/plagiarism-policy>) who have questions about academic integrity issues should contact their advisors, another faculty member, or the Director of Graduate Studies.

## **D. Graduate Assistant Evaluations**

All faculty supervising teaching or research assistants are asked to provide a written evaluation of the student's performance at the end of each semester of service. These evaluations will be placed in the

student's permanent file and will be consulted in all decisions for assistantship renewal and for appointment as an instructor.

### **E. Department Appeals Procedure**

Decisions of a faculty advisor or committee may be appealed to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Head. With all appeals, the decision of the Department Head is final.

### **F. University-Level Graduate Student Problem Resolution**

The Code of Conduct and Procedures for Resolution of Problems are contained in Appendices I and II of the *Graduate Degree Programs Bulletin* (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/>).

### **G. Sexual Harassment Awareness and Prevention Training**

The department requires all graduate students to comply with university policy regarding sexual harassment in the workplace. This policy (AD85) is outlined on the following website: <http://guru.psu.edu/policies/AD85.html>

As part of this compliance, graduate students are required to complete Title IX training within 30 days of employment at Penn State.

### **H. Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Training**

The department requires all graduate students to be in compliance with university policy regarding mandatory reporting of child abuse. This policy is stated below:

All Penn State employees and Authorized Adults are required to complete a Reporting Child Abuse training every three years (See Penn State Policies [AD72](#) and [AD39](#)). After you complete the training, you are required to maintain and/or produce a current certificate upon request. If you are classified as an Authorized Adult, you also need to share a copy of the certificate with your program director, manager, or supervisor.



## Appendix A

### Graduate Student Seminar Evaluation/English Competency Assessment

Name of faculty member: \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a brief evaluation of the performance in your seminar of each political science graduate student. These evaluations will be placed in the student's file both for the student to read, and also for the Graduate Studies Committee to consider during the assistantship renewal process.

Questions:	Satisfactory (S) or Needs Attention (N)	Explanation(s) and Recommendation(s):
<b>Interest in the course or subfield, and overall motivations:</b>		
<b>Ability to think critically and generate original ideas and questions:</b>		
<b>Ability to carry our empirical research (as applicable):</b>		
<b>Written work:</b>		
<b>Participation in class:</b>		
<b>Overall performance in the seminar:</b>		

### English Competency Assessment

(1) Based on written work this semester, has the student demonstrated competency in English?  
 Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Undecided\_\_\_

(2) Based on discussion and oral presentations this semester, has the student demonstrated competency in English?  
 Yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Undecided\_\_\_

### Other comments

## **Appendix B**

### **Criteria for Awarding & Renewing Graduate Assistantships/Fellowships**

#### **Overview**

The responsibility for admission to the graduate program and appointment as a graduate assistant is vested in the graduate faculty of the department, acting through the Graduate Studies Committee. For students completing all Ph.D. requirements during their period of funding eligibility, the Committee also recommends (to the Department Head) appointments to the position of Fixed-Term Instructor. The Committee, together with the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Head, shares responsibility for administering the graduate program, consistent with the rules of the Graduate School and the University. The criteria outlined below are designed to ensure the highest degree of excellence and to assure fair treatment to all promising applicants who qualify for both admission to the program and a graduate assistantship.

The number of qualified applicants invariably exceeds the number of available positions. Thus, many qualified applicants will be denied admission to the program. In addition, because assistantship awards are competitive, renewal is not automatic and failure to receive a renewal may reflect the relative merits of those in the applicant pool.

#### **Disqualifying criteria**

Disqualifying criteria include:

- Continuing students who have completed two or more semesters of full time study, with a graduate GPA below 3.4.
- Students with more than one deferred grade (DF). For these purposes, an “administrative F” shall be defined as a deferred grade.
- Students who do not advance to qualifying, complete their master’s essay, pass their comprehensive exams, or make progress on their dissertations in a timely fashion (see below).
- Unprofessional performance as a graduate student or teaching/research assistant shall disqualify a student from renewal of an assistantship. Unprofessional performance may include (but is not limited to):
  - Repeated absence from class responsibilities or office hours.
  - Repeated evidence of poor preparation for class.
  - Repeated missing of deadlines including (but not limited to) supervisor deadlines for completing assistantship tasks.
  - Violation of University rules and policies including (but not limited to) those pertaining to academic integrity and sexual harassment.

## Competitive criteria for awarding assistantships

Letters of award, and annual letters of renewal, indicate a period of eligibility for graduate assistant support. Typically, this period is five years for students admitted with a bachelor's degree. During this period, financial assistance requires demonstration of satisfactory skills and performance as a graduate assistant and demonstration of academic excellence combined with timely progress towards degree completion.

Two important criteria for ranking students for assistantship renewals are academic excellence and progress towards degree completion (initial assistantship awards consider academic excellence). Given these criteria, assistantship decisions will consider the following aspects of a student's portfolio:

1. Academic performance in the graduate program at Penn State as indicated by grades, faculty seminar evaluations, evaluations of qualifying exam, and comprehensive examinations.
2. Research accomplishments such as internal and external research grants, conference participation, and scholarly publications.
3. Timely completion of coursework, distribution requirements, and examinations. Except in extenuating circumstances, the following schedule represents expected progress towards the degree:

<b>Schedule of progress:</b>	<b>Students entering with a bachelor's or a master's degree:</b>
Ph.D. qualifying exam	November of year 2
Defense of M.A. Essay	April/May of year 2
Written comprehensive exams	January in the middle of year 3 or May at the end of year 3
Prospectus and oral comprehensive exam	May at the end of year 3 or August in the fall of year 4

Students failing to meet these goals shall be given lower priority for graduate assistant support, but students may provide evidence of mitigating circumstances. These may include personal or medical circumstances as well as scholarly ones (e.g., an especially ambitious dissertation may require unusual preparation).

Performance as a teaching or research assistant is assessed each semester by supervising faculty. In teaching assistant and lecturer assignments student teaching evaluations are made as well. Two or more evaluations that indicate below average performance, unprofessional conduct or unreliability shall be taken as evidence of below average performance. Although below average performance does not automatically disqualify a student, students with below average performance shall be renewed only when financial resources are ample.

## **Appendix C**

### **Support for Graduate Student Research & Training**

#### **(1) Summer Programs**

All graduate students receive at least partial support to attend special summer programs for at least one summer (for the study of subjects crucial to the student's program of study, such as foreign languages or advanced statistics). Tuition is also covered for most programs at Big Ten/CIC universities.

#### **(2) Membership in the American Political Science Association (APSA)**

All graduate students receive two years of membership in the American Political Science Association. Members receive the *American Political Science Review* (the discipline's leading journal), as well as *PS* (a journal providing information about the profession and the APSA) and *Perspectives on Politics* (a journal that publishes issue- or problem-focused research, as well as book reviews).

#### **(3) Graduate Student Conference Travel Grant Program**

The Department of Political Science awards grants throughout the year to help fund students to present research at national or international professional conferences. All currently enrolled students presenting papers or posters are eligible to apply.

#### **(4) Graduate Research Support Program**

The Research Support Program within the Department of Political Science offers awards to continuing graduate students for specific research-related activities that are tied to their professional development and progress toward the Ph.D. Both the department and the College of the Liberal Arts have funds available to support student research. Several awards may be made each year. College awards are limited to \$2000; the department provides funding up to a slightly higher level. All currently enrolled students are eligible to apply.

#### **(5) Summer Graduate Research Award**

The Department of Political Science Summer Graduate Research Award within the Department of Political Science awards \$4,000 during the summer to select continuing students for the purposes of supporting collaborative faculty/student research leading to a joint or sole student-authored publication. The award pays the student \$4,000 in summer wages, but the recipient will not have any assigned duties beyond those required for the research project in question. Between three and four awards of \$4,000 each are given each year. All currently enrolled students are eligible to apply.

#### **(6) Program in Comparative Politics Graduate Research Award**

These research awards are given to students majoring in comparative politics to enhance their research. The program in Comparative Politics awards funds travel to international conferences or to engage in field work. Graduate students majoring in comparative politics are eligible to apply for funds in any year and may receive an award more than once. Applications for the award will be considered by a committee designated by the Program in Comparative Politics.

### **(7) Outstanding Graduate Student Awards Program**

The Outstanding Graduate Student Award within the Department of Political Science rewards continuing graduate students who have achieved an excellent record of performance in their graduate studies. In recognition of their achievements, funds are made available to students in the form of research accounts to be spent at the student's discretion on educationally relevant expenses. All currently enrolled students are eligible and will be considered for this award by the graduate studies committee.

### **(8) Friedman Teaching Award**

The Friedman Teaching Award within the Department of Political Science rewards an outstanding student instructor. In recognition of his/her achievement, funds are made available to the student in the form of a research account to be spent at the student's discretion on educationally relevant expenses. Students who have taught in the department in the past year are eligible and will be considered for this award by the graduate studies committee.

### **(9) Best MA Essay Award**

The Best MA Essay Award within the Department of Political Science is awarded to one student each year. In recognition of his/her achievement, funds are made available to the student in the form of a research account to be spent at the student's discretion on educationally relevant expenses. Nominations for this award are made by the student's MA essay committee. The graduate studies committee selects the winning nominee.

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## **Internal fellowships**

### **(1) PEIR Fellowship**

This IR Pre-Doctoral Fellowship frees the recipient from all formal assistantship duties during the academic year the student chooses to take it. Each year one graduate student whose major is IR is selected by the IR graduate faculty. The Fellowship will provide an extra year of funding to allow the student to be as strong as possible a job candidate when his/he goes on the market. The student is awarded this early in her/his career and then able to take it the year it is most useful.

### **(2) PEIR Teaching Fellowship**

This PEIR Teaching fellowship is used for a graduate student teaching either in fall and/or spring. This teaching fellowship is area specific but can be counted towards any subfield when there are no IR major students who are available to teach in a particular semester. This award can be given to one or two people for either one or two semesters. A central consideration will be the teaching needs of the department for a particular semester.

### **(3) Political Science Graduate Research Fellowship (PSGRF)**

This PSGRF is for an outstanding student in the graduate program in a given year. Students in each subfield are available. The Graduate Studies Committee will select the recipient each year after soliciting nominations from faculty.

**(4) Florence and Angelo Paterno Graduate Fellowship in the Liberal Arts**

This Paterno Fellowship is designed to support an outstanding graduate student enrolled or planning to be enrolled full-time in the PLSC department. This fellowship frees the recipient from all formal assistantship duties during the academic year it is awarded. This award has no flexibility as to when it is taken. The Graduate Studies Committee or the Recruitment Planning Committee will select the recipient each year as appropriate.

**(5) Bruce R. Miller and Dean D. LaVigne Graduate Fellowship in Political Science**

This Miller/LaVigne is to support an outstanding graduate student enrolled or planning to be enrolled full time in the PLSC department. This fellowship frees all formal assistantship duties during the academic year it is awarded to the student. This award has no flexibility when it is taken. The Graduate Studies Committee or the Recruitment Committee will select the recipient each year, as appropriate.

**(6) C-SoDA (Center for Social Data Analytics) Predoctoral Associate**

The Center for Social Data Analytics Predoctoral Associate is an assistantship with an assignment of 20-hour per week. Eligible students must demonstrate a commitment to quantitative methods and social science as core parts of their graduate training. (Examples include pursuing a first or second field in methodology in the political science PhD, or seeking the certificate in advanced statistical methods in the sociology PhD.) The Fellowship will provide an extra year of funding. The assistantships are designed to facilitate multidisciplinary opportunities for additional training and experience in quantitative methods for social science graduate students.

***(7) The Quantitative Social Science Initiative (QuaSSI) Teaching Fellowship***

The idea is that there will be a single graduate TA assigned for the year to the graduate statistical methods sequence. There will be an application/competition process for the position. The timing will be coordinated with the QUASSI research assistant process. Criteria for selection will include demonstrated mastery/success in 502-503-504-math, and an interest/demonstrated ability to teach/TA the material in an accessible/correct way to others. The student must be at least a 3<sup>rd</sup> year student (must have had the entire core sequence of 502-503-504).

## Appendix D

### **Graduate Student Conference Travel Grant Program**

**Program:** The Department of Political Science awards grants throughout the year to help fund students to present research at national or international professional conferences.

**Eligibility:** All currently enrolled students presenting papers or posters are eligible to apply but preference will be given to students who have completed successfully their master's essay. *Funding requests from first and second year students who have not yet received a master's degree will be supported only in exceptional circumstances.*

**Application Deadlines:** Rolling deadlines linked to conference proposals. Applications for travel grant funds must be submitted when conference proposals are submitted (e.g., applications for travel to APSA are due on November 15). Travel funding will not be awarded retroactively.

**Application Procedure:** Complete the department travel grant application form (attached) and submit your application and the supporting materials listed below to the Graduate Program Coordinator. The supporting materials should include:

- an abstract of your paper or poster;
- a copy of whatever work you have completed toward the paper/poster (e.g., draft or finalized text, output from data analysis);
- a copy of your CV (be sure that this includes past conference presentations, manuscript submissions, and publications); and,
- a detailed list of prior travel grants received, including the semester, amount, conference, and paper/poster title.
- once you have email confirmation of your acceptance to the conference, please forward that email to the graduate staff assistant, this will secure travel award funds.

*Applicants must discuss their proposal ideas with a faculty advisor in advance of the conference proposal deadline.* Applicants should provide their faculty advisors with the conference proposal assessment form (attached). This form must be completed by the faculty advisor and submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator when the conference proposal is submitted.

**Review process:** The graduate studies committee will select award recipients within a month after the application is submitted.

**Criteria for award:** The committee will consider a variety of criteria including:

- Faculty advisor's assessment;
- Student location in program (preference will be given to students on the market and presenting dissertation research);
- Evidence that the student has already made progress on the research for the proposed paper/poster;
- Evidence that the proposed paper/poster will result in publication;
- Success at turning prior conference papers into publications;
- Student progress through the program;
- History of previous travel funding;
- Quality of conference; and
- Appropriateness of conference given research area and topic.

**Follow-up:** Grant recipients must submit a copy of their final conference paper to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

**Yearly Conference Travel Plan  
Political Science Graduate Program**

**\*\*This must be turned in with your Conference Travel Grant Application each academic year you are applying for funding\*\***

Academic Year \_\_\_\_\_  
(Academic year sequence runs: July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Anticipated Conference Travel Requests  
(Rank in order of importance)**

	<u>Conference</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Location</u>
1.	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____

**\*\*NOTE:**

As a graduate student you must complete tasks related to foreign travel:

The Travel Request Form may be found on the Graduate School's webpage: <http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gsad/gsad-900/gsad-920-international-travel/>

Any student or employee traveling internationally must register at <http://tsn.psu.edu/>



**Department of Political Science  
Penn State University  
Graduate Student Conference Travel Grant Application**

---

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Conference Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Conference Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Conference Date(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Advisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Print Name**

**Signature**

**(Please ask your faculty member to submit the conference proposal assessment form on your behalf.)**

**Status of the Proposed Research:**

**(1) I understand by applying for this I must present a practice presentation. I would like the following to attend my practice talk, if possible** \_\_\_\_\_

**(2) How much of the proposed research paper/poster has been drafted?** \_\_\_\_\_

**(3) What is the genesis of the proposed paper/poster (e.g., a seminar paper, a dissertation chapter, a master's essay)?** \_\_\_\_\_

**(4) Explain briefly the importance of the research question of your proposed paper/poster. What is its most important contribution?** \_\_\_\_\_

**(5) Where are you planning to submit your paper to be considered for publication?** \_\_\_\_\_

**(6) When do you expect to submit the paper to that outlet? (You are expected to inform us when you will have submitted the paper.)** \_\_\_\_\_

**(7) I understand I am responsible for identifying a Penn State faculty member or, failing that, a graduate student, to observe my presentation at the conference. I will supply the name of the observer after the meeting.**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Estimated Expenses:**

Airfare \_\_\_\_\_  
Mileage \_\_\_\_\_  
(go to <https://ers.psu.edu/> for current mileage rate)  
Lodging \_\_\_\_\_  
Meals \_\_\_\_\_  
(go to <https://ers.psu.edu/> for current per diem rates)  
Registration fees \_\_\_\_\_  
Other (please describe) \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*\*Any graduate student or employee must register per the Travel Safety Network (travel registry) process, found at: <https://tsn.psu.edu/>. This is for anyone traveling anywhere outside the Continental US, regardless of location\*\*\**

**Other financial support:**

- (1) Does the organization hosting the conference offer financial support to offset expenses?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- (2) If so, how much support can you expect from the organization? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- (3) Do you expect to receive any other support to attend the conference? If so, what is the source and amount of funds you expect to receive? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**If traveling to a “restricted” destination, please check this link:**

<https://global.psu.edu/category/university-restricted-travel>

**Department of Political Science  
Penn State University  
Graduate Student Conference Travel Grant Assessment Form  
(To be completed by the applicant's faculty advisor)**

---

**Faculty advisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant/Advisee:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Conference Name/Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Assessment of the Proposed Research:**

Why? (1) Please provide (or attach) a brief assessment of the overall merit of the proposed paper/poster.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(2) When do you expect that the proposed paper/poster will be ready to submit for publication?

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix E**

### **Graduate Research Support Program Application Package**

**Program:** The Research Support Program within the Department of Political Science offers awards to continuing graduate students for specific research-related activities that are tied to their professional development and progress toward the Ph.D. The department and the College of the Liberal Arts both have funds available to support student research. *College funds are specifically designated for dissertation related research, or for release time from teaching (TA) and research (RA) responsibilities; the College requires ABD status to award funds.* Funds from the Department of Political Science Research Support Program are available before students reach ABD status, although preference will be given to advanced/dissertation-related research. Note that these research support funds are separate from funds designated to support travel to summer statistics and language courses at other universities.

**Number and Size of Awards:** Several awards may be made each year. College awards are limited to \$2000 or a course release; the department does not have a specific ceiling but is likely to provide funding up to a similar or slightly higher level.

**Eligibility:** All currently enrolled students are eligible to apply. Students receiving partial funding in one award cycle may apply again in future cycles, even for the same project, but with a lower probability of success.

**Deadlines:** Application deadlines are October 2 and February 28.

#### **Application Procedures:**

1. For ABD Students: Apply for dissertation support through the College of the Liberal Arts.
  - Follow online application procedures for the *College Dissertation Support Competition*: <http://www.la.psu.edu/current-students/graduate-students/student-resources/funding-opportunities/rgso-dissertation-support-competition> (deadlines are the same as the departmental deadlines of October 2 and February 28.) *Applicants will automatically be considered for department funding after College funding decisions are made.*
  - If a research proposal requires more than the \$2000 College limit (for example, it involves significant travel abroad), students should apply to the College for \$2000 and submit a separate application to the department for the additional funds.
2. For non-ABD students: Apply directly to the department (materials should be submitted to the graduate staff assistant). Applications must include:
  - a brief (1 page) explanation of the research; and,
  - a budget outlining research expenses (with a justification if the rationale for the expenses is not obvious).

**Review Process:** The graduate studies committee reviews applications and selects award recipients.

**Criteria for Award:** The committee will consider a variety of criteria including:

- A. academic performance;
- B. student progress through the program;

- C. quality of proposed research;
- D. the necessity of support for research success;
- E. efforts to secure external research funds (if appropriate); and,
- F. prior receipt of research support.

**Use of Awarded Research Support Funds:** Research support funds can be used for almost any research-related expenses at the dissertation or pre-dissertation stages. Typically, funds are provided for the following research-related expenses:

- Domestic or international travel to conduct fieldwork (e.g., travel to interview sites, archives, libraries). This work may be for preliminary research before a final proposal is approved.
- Photocopying or microfilming costs at archives or libraries.
- Purchase of a data set, source material, or other essential data resources, including specialized texts unavailable at Penn State or through inter-library loan.
- Phone, postage, and/or printing expenses (e.g., mailing expenses to conduct a pilot survey).
- Attendance at a specialized training program.
- Payments to research subjects.

Applicants may request (with justification) support for expenses not listed above.

*Department research support funds may not be used for release time from teaching (TA) and research (RA) responsibilities.*

**\*\*\*Any graduate student or employee must register per the Travel Safety Network (travel registry) process, found at: <https://tsn.psu.edu/>. This is for anyone traveling anywhere outside the Continental US, regardless of location\*\*\***

**If traveling to a “restricted” destination, please check this link: <https://global.psu.edu/category/university-restricted-travel>**



# Appendix F

## Department of Political Science Penn State University Summer Graduate Research Award

**Program:** The Summer Graduate Research Award within the Department of Political Science provides summer support to continuing students so that they can work with faculty collaborators on research leading to a jointly or student-authored publication. The award pay summer wages; the sole duties of the students receiving the awards will be those tasks required for the proposal research project.

**Please read the following statement:**

**By checking this box, you are confirming the summer graduate research award will be your primary summer responsibility (you will not dedicate additional hours to another position or attend ICPSR or other summer programs). If you have other responsibilities, not on the list above and still want to apply for this award, please include the details in your proposal.**

**Eligibility:** All currently enrolled students are eligible.

**Application Deadline:** March 15, 2021

**Application Procedure:** Submit the following items to the Graduate Program Coordinator:

- A joint proposal from the faculty member and the student (not to exceed two pages). The proposal should include a description of the research project and its current status; an explanation of the tasks the faculty member and the student will perform; a timeline for the summer and for the project as a whole; and, an estimate of when a manuscript will be submitted for potential publication.
- Student CV
- A working copy of the student's transcript

**Number and size of awards:** We anticipate making a small number of awards in the amount of \$4000 each.

**Decision process:** The graduate studies committee will select award recipients before the end of the spring semester.

**Criteria for award:** The committee will consider a variety of criteria including:

- likelihood of the project being at or near completion by the end of the summer;
- the quality of the proposed research and its potential for publication;
- the centrality of the project to the student's program of study;
- success at completing independent and/or joint research projects and submitting them for potential publication; and,
- student's progress through the program.

**Deliverable:** Winners of the award are expected to present to the Director of Graduate Studies the paper resulting from the project by September 30, 2021.

**Note:** The award is not intended to support research for a student's MA or PhD thesis.