

# Policies and Regulations

Department of Political Science  
University of North Carolina  
Graduate Program Policies and Regulations  
Revised: April 2024

## I. Fields of Study

There are six principal fields of study in the Department:

- American Politics
- Comparative Politics
- International Relations
- Methodology
- Political Theory

The Department will attempt (but cannot guarantee) to offer two graduate courses per semester in American, Comparative and IR, and sufficient courses in the other fields to satisfy student demand. In addition, the Department is committed to offering the core courses in American, Comparative, IR, and Theory at least every other year.

### A. Field Coursework Requirements for the PhD

Students are required to take a minimum of four courses in a major field and three courses in a minor field. The courses offered to satisfy these requirements must include the field designated core courses, as follows:

- American Politics
  - Core Seminar in American Politics (700)
- Comparative Politics
  - Comparative Political Research and Analysis (Industrial Societies) (730)
  - The Politics of Development and Change (731)
- International Relations
  - Theories of International Relations I and II (750 and 751)
- Methodology
  - Probability and Statistics (783) and Regression Models (784)
  - Advanced Political Data Science (787)
  - Game Theory (789)
- Political Theory
  - Classical Political Theory (774)
  - Modern Political Theory (771)

Note that methodology majors must take three courses in methods in addition to the four core courses. Methodology minors must take two courses in methods in addition to the four core courses. In some circumstances, courses in other departments may substitute for the core courses, contingent on approval.

In addition to their two core field courses, political theory majors are required to take, in consultation with the student's adviser, one course in a discipline outside political science that is relevant to the student's course of study.

Students may petition to take political psychology as a minor field if the field chair of the student's major field deems this useful. The procedure for petitioning for this minor are covered in a separate document entitled "The Political Psychology Minor for Doctoral Students in Political Science."

Students may complete a second minor by taking three courses in the field including the core courses. With the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, students may select a second minor in a related discipline (e.g., Economics, Philosophy) or an interdisciplinary field (e.g., Population, Latin American Studies). Courses taken in the cognate field must not substantially duplicate courses taken or available in Political Science.

Only one readings course may be counted toward the major field and none toward the minor fields. 400-level courses may be approved to satisfy the field coursework requirement only if a similar course is not regularly offered at the 700-800 level and if both the field chair and the instructor approve.

## **B. Field Committees**

Each field is under the immediate supervision of a field committee, made up of all faculty members that regularly teach in that field and one graduate student representative. The Department Chair will annually appoint one faculty member who will serve as field chair. The field collectively shall be responsible to:

- Set core course and other requirements for students selecting that field as a major or minor field.
- Plan course offerings in the field.
- Evaluate students majoring in that field on an annual basis.
- Supervise the preparation and grading of the comprehensive exam.
- Supervise advising first year students.
- Organize additional activities (e.g., brown bag lunches, outside speakers).

## **II. Course Requirements**

All candidates for the doctoral degree are required to take 14 courses in political science or related disciplines. All courses outside of the Department of Political Science must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. Eight of the 14 courses must be political science courses; in

addition, the core statistics courses (POLI 783 and 784 (optional for Theory majors)) are required and count as two of the 14 courses. Scope and Methods (780) and Teaching Political Science (881) are also required and together count as one of the 8 political science courses. One semester each of MA thesis and PhD dissertation courses (993 and 994) can count towards the 14 courses. Students with previous graduate work may receive transfer credit for up to six courses.

All candidates for the Master of Arts in Political Science must complete 10 courses in Political Science or related disciplines. Eight of these courses must be in political science. This includes the core statistics courses (POLI 783 and 784 (optional for Theory majors)), Scope and Methods (780), and Teaching Political Science (881). Scope and Methods and Teaching Political Science together count as one of the 10 courses, and one semester of MA thesis hours (993) counts towards the 10 courses. Students with previous graduate work may receive transfer credit for up to two courses.

### **III. Progress through the Program**

For students on financial aid requiring service commitments, the normal course of study is three courses a semester in the first year and second year. In exceptional circumstances, students may make prior arrangements to take a lighter “normal” load, due to such circumstances as medical problems or family or work responsibilities. Students on financial aid not requiring service commitments might take additional courses in both years. One course per semester may be a language course if this is required by the student’s course of study. Students who must take a language will have to take several courses in the third year in order to complete the 14 courses requirement. Students who enter with an MA will take three courses a semester in the first year and complete the remaining courses in the second year. In the fall semester of their third year, students will take their comprehensive exam. Students are permitted to defend their dissertation proposal as soon as they complete their comprehensive exam. Progress beyond that point is purely an individual matter. For students who have done graduate work elsewhere, up to 6 courses may be counted toward the 14 courses requirement with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

#### **A. First Year**

During the first year, students should complete six to eight courses (including two language courses, if necessary) depending on their service commitments. For students in most fields, these courses will include Probability and Statistics and Regression Models (783 and 784 or their equivalents), Scope and Methods (780), two core courses from different fields, and one elective. Scope and Methods is a 2-credit course but Probability and Statistics is a 4-credit course, so those two courses plus a core course constitute a full-time 9-credit load. For students in political theory, the two statistics courses are optional. If they are not taking statistics, they need to take either a fourth course (in addition to Scope and Methods, a core seminar, and an elective) or a one-credit 890 Directed Readings. Generally, the core courses will be in the fields in which the student is thinking about majoring and minoring. However, it is not necessary to make a firm decision on fields. Students taking language courses and whose financial aid carries a service commitment may delay Scope and Methods (780) to the fall of the second year.

## **B. Second Year**

During the second year, students should complete six courses plus Teaching Political Science (881), which will be offered in the fall semester and is a 1.5 credit course. Students should also begin to make a firm decision on major and minor fields and develop further relations with potential thesis and dissertation supervisors. The Master's Thesis (or for those entering the program with a MA degree, a by-pass paper) is the first formal hurdle to be faced in progress toward the PhD. Students should register for a 993 with their MA supervisor in the spring semester of the second year. The MA thesis has to be defended by the end of the spring semester of the second year, unless an extension has been approved by the adviser and by the DGS.

Students on departmental instructional funding will act as a Teaching Assistant (TA), normally leading three discussion sections in a large course taught by a faculty member. Students whose primary language is not English must be able to demonstrate they can teach in English to be supported in the second year. The department will indicate how English proficiency will be demonstrated.

## **C. Third Year**

All remaining coursework as well as the statistics and language requirements should be completed in the third year. The comprehensive exam for the major field must be taken at the beginning of the fall semester. Students who fail the major field examination will have the opportunity to retake the exam at the beginning of the spring semester of the third year. The dissertation thesis proposal must be defended by the end of the third year, unless an extension has been approved by the adviser and the DGS.

Most students on departmental instructional funding will still assist a faculty member teaching a course, but in some cases, students will teach their own course. In most cases, the course will be one in which the student had previously assisted.

## **D. Fourth Year**

Students on departmental instructional funding may teach their own course. In most cases, the course will be one in which the student had previously assisted. Preferably, the student will teach the same course both semesters.

In the spring, students should meet with the Director of Graduate Placement.

## **E. Fifth Year**

Students will spend the fifth year completing their dissertations. Typically, students on departmental instructional funding will work either as a teaching assistant or teaching their own courses.

# **IV. Financial Aid**

## **A. Normal Progress**

The Department is committed to funding each student in their first, second, third, fourth and fifth year of study, so long as normal progress is maintained and the quality of work is satisfactory. Normal progress is defined as progress according to the schedule outlined in the preceding section.

- Any student who does not take the required number of courses in any two-semester period is not making normal progress and will forfeit financial aid for the following semester and until the situation is remedied. Exceptions shall be permitted only in cases of serious medical problems of the student or his or her family or some similarly weighty problem beyond the student's control.
- Any student who does not complete the MA Thesis by the end of the second year will forfeit financial aid for the fall semester and until the thesis is completed. As noted, extensions may be granted by the DGS upon a petition supported by the MA adviser.
- Any student who does not pass the comprehensive exam by the end of the third year is subject to forfeit of financial aid.
- Any student who does not defend a dissertation proposal by the end of the third year is subject to forfeit of financial aid until the proposal is completed. Extensions may be granted by the DGS upon a petition supported by the dissertation adviser.
- Any student on financial aid requiring service commitments who does not perform TA, TF or RA responsibilities in a competent manner is subject to non-renewal of departmental financial aid.

Unsatisfactory work is defined as:

- 3 or more L's
- 1 F
- Failing the comprehensive exam twice
- Failure to maintain normal progress

## **B. North Carolina Residency**

Funded graduate students (excluding international students) who are considered out-of-state for tuition purposes are expected to apply for in-state residency at the end of the first year and, as necessary, in subsequent years. Note that a number of actions are required BEFORE the semester starts in the FIRST year in order to be successful with the application at the end of the first year. In any given year, if a funded graduate student applies for, but is denied, in-state status, the department may cover the out-of-state portion of the tuition payment during the student's second through fifth years. The department will not pay the out-of-state portion of tuition during the second through fifth years if the student has not applied for in-state status. Students should apply online through the Graduate School website.

## **C. External Support**

Students who bring in extra-departmental resources to support their studies will get a corresponding extension of department funding. Put in other words, semesters funded through scholarships, traineeships, and fellowships won by the student in competition with students from other departments and/or universities do not count against the student's ten semesters of departmental funding. Extra departmental awards awarded competitively by UNC schools or institutes, such as the Graduate School's dissertation completion grants, do qualify under this rule. By contrast, employment on a research grant awarded to a UNC faculty member, for example, does not qualify.

Students are strongly encouraged from their very first year to apply for outside competitive fellowships, such as the NSF pre-dissertation grant.

## **V. Advising**

Each student must have a formal adviser. Students are free to choose their adviser, but by default the adviser will be assumed to be:

- First year: Upon matriculation, the field chair in each student's chosen field serves as a temporary adviser. Students are encouraged to proactively choose an adviser who can support their substantive interests before the end of the first year.
- Second year: The MA thesis chair. Students must notify the Director of Graduate Studies of their choice of MA thesis chair by the beginning of the second semester.
- Third year: Initially the MA thesis chair, to be changed to the dissertation chair during the year. Students must notify the Director of Graduate Studies of their choice of dissertation chair by the beginning of the second semester.
- Fourth year and beyond: The dissertation chair.

## **VI. Annual Review of Performance**

At the end of each spring semester, the Graduate Studies Committee, on the recommendation of each field committee, will evaluate the overall performance and progress of each student in the program. The committees will take into account grades in classes and instructor comments on classroom performance, as well as any other relevant material that is brought to their attention, including the student's progress and satisfactory work as defined above. Each student will be rated Exceptional, Excellent, Good, Marginal, or Poor. "Satisfactory" work for the purposes of funding is defined as evaluations of good through exceptional. Evaluations of poor or marginal indicate that the student's work is below PhD level. Student receiving evaluations of "poor" are not in good standing even if they are making normal progress toward the PhD as defined above. Evaluations of marginal shall be treated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory for funding purposes at the discretion of the Graduate Studies Committee. Following the meetings of the field faculty and the graduate committee in which all continuing students are evaluated, the student's adviser will write a short evaluation letter informing the student of the summary evaluation and

suggesting appropriate steps to move the student's professional development forward and to correct any deficiencies in the student's performance.

Students will be reviewed with particular care at the end of their second year or upon defense of the MA thesis, and the Graduate Studies Committee shall make a recommendation to the student as to whether or not it believes that he or she should proceed to work on the PhD degree. This evaluation will take into account the report of the student's MA committee (or the report by the readers of the student's by-pass paper), in addition to all the other material typically considered in the evaluation process. In the event that the MA Committee recommends against allowing a student to proceed to the Doctoral Degree, the relevant field committee will meet to consider the case. For this meeting, students will be encouraged to make written representations of their plan for completing the Doctoral degree and to present in writing any other relevant information. Overturning the recommendation of the MA Committee will require the written support of at least three members of the field committee, who agree to serve on the student's dissertation committee and one of whom agrees to be the student's main adviser. For MA defenses taking place in the fall semester, the field committee will hold a meeting before the beginning of the spring semester. For defenses taking place after classes end in the fall, the field committee will meet on its regular schedule. Following the meeting of the field committee, a report will be sent to the Graduate Studies committee.

If the Graduate Studies committee upholds the finding of the student's MA or bypass paper committee and field committee that the student be advised not to proceed to work on the PhD degree, the department's obligation to provide further funding for the student to continue in the program ends.

To facilitate the yearly evaluation process, students should check the information in their folder for accuracy annually in the spring. At that point, the student may add any other notable information (grants, conference papers, awards, etc.) to her/his file.

## **VII. Language and Methodology Requirements**

All students are required to complete Scope and Methods of Political Research (780), and all students except those majoring in political theory are required to complete a two-course sequence in statistics (783 and 784 or their equivalents). In some fields, competence in a foreign language or a third course in quantitative methodology is required. These requirements are to be satisfied no later than the end of the third year. The additional major field language and methods requirements follow:

- American Politics: A third methods course (787 or 789)
- Comparative Politics: Language
- International Relations: A third methods course (787 or 789) (or some alternative course)
- Political Theory: Language if required by the dissertation topic

The language requirement is to be satisfied by passing the exam offered by the Graduate School. Courses taken to prepare to meet the language requirement do count toward the required course load per semester requirement but do not count toward the 14 course requirement.

## **VIII. MA Thesis**

The MA Thesis is an opportunity for the student to select, develop, write, revise and defend a piece of scholarly work. It is the one opportunity prior to the PhD dissertation that the student has to engage in a project of independent creative research.

The thesis ordinarily will be a journal-style paper of approximately 30 to 50 pages. Ideally, the thesis will grow out of a paper that is done during the first three semesters of coursework.

The MA degree cannot be bypassed. All students must either complete an MA degree at UNC or have completed an MA degree elsewhere.

Students will register for 3 hours of MA Thesis credit with their adviser in the spring of the second year. They will notify the Director of Graduate Studies of their choice of MA thesis chair before the beginning of the second semester. They will notify the Director of Graduate Studies of the topic and the names of a three person committee no later than February 1. Two members of the committee must be faculty members in the department of political science. Students may add a fourth member with the permission of the Director of Graduate Studies on advice from the student's thesis adviser.

The thesis must be successfully defended no later than the end of the second year; failure to meet this deadline will result in the forfeit of financial aid for the following semester and for all succeeding semesters until the thesis has been successfully defended. The MA Thesis must be filed in the Graduate School by the following semester's Graduate School deadline; failure to meet this deadline may also result in the forfeit of financial aid. To avoid forfeiture of financial aid because of a failure to meet the above defense deadline, the student must submit a request for an extension endorsed by the student's adviser explaining the reason for this delay by April 15. Delays will typically only be granted until the subsequent September 30 and with a clear understanding on the part of the student that a failure to meet this new defense date will result in forfeiture of financial aid for the spring semester and call for an evaluation of the suitability of the student for further study for the doctoral degree.

Once the committee members have had an adequate opportunity to review a draft of the MA thesis, an oral defense of the thesis, which is the final MA degree oral examination, is held. The student's main thesis adviser is responsible to the members of the committee for determining that the draft is an appropriate form for their evaluation. The committee may, at the time of the oral but no later, require alterations and corrections. The main adviser is responsible for verifying that the changes required by the committee have been made. Following the MA oral exam, the examining committee will report to the Director of Graduate Studies on the results of the exam. They will report on whether the student has passed the examination and on the suitability of the student for further study for the doctoral degree. If a majority of the MA examining committee



recommends against the student's suitability for further study for the doctoral degree, this recommendation will be evaluated by the appropriate field committee. If the field and the Graduate Studies committee concur in this recommendation, the department's obligation to provide further funding for the student to continue in the program ends.

## **IX. Students Entering with Graduate Credits or an MA Degree**

Students who have done graduate coursework in Political Science or a related field at another university (or as an evening college student at UNC) may be permitted to transfer up to 18 hours of credit (6 courses) toward the PhD degree (6 hours toward the MA degree), subject to approval by the Director of Graduate Studies. Up to two courses may be counted in the major field and one course in the minor field. The Director of Graduate Studies will determine what counts as a "related field" with regard to transfer credit and the MA thesis requirement on a case by case basis.

All students who enter with an MA degree earned elsewhere are required to submit a "by-pass paper," which should be roughly comparable to the thesis required of MA candidates at Carolina. The student shall notify the Director of Graduate Studies of the topic of their by-pass paper by February 1 of their second year. The paper will be evaluated (acceptable or unacceptable) by a three-member committee of the relevant field; these three members will also make a recommendation regarding the suitability of the student for further study for the doctoral degree. Should the recommendation be negative, the same procedures will be followed as with a recommendation following the defense of an MA thesis. The bypass paper has to be handed in by March 15 of the student's second year. If the by-pass paper is deemed unacceptable (or acceptable only with certain revisions), the student has until the end of the second year to deliver a revised and acceptable version for evaluation by the same committee. The committee shall again report to the Director of Graduate Studies regarding their evaluation of the paper (acceptable or unacceptable) and regarding the suitability of the student for further study toward the doctoral degree. If a majority of the three-member committee recommends against the student's suitability for further study for the doctoral degree, this recommendation will be evaluated by the appropriate field committee. If the field and the Graduate Studies committee concur in this recommendation, the department's obligation to provide further funding for the student to continue in the program ends.

## **X. Degree Time Limits**

According to Graduate School regulations, students pursuing a Master's degree have five calendar years from the date of the first registration to complete all requirements. Students should note, however, the Political Science department requires students to finish the MA by the end of the fourth semester to remain eligible for funding. Graduate School regulations stipulate that students pursuing the doctoral degree have eight years after the completion of the MA degree to complete all requirements.

# XI. PhD Comprehensive Exams

The PhD Comprehensive Exam will be given in the student's major field.

Exams will be given over two days in the fall semester and will begin on Monday after Labor Day. Questions for the exam will be distributed at 8 AM and answers collected at 5 PM on both days.

For the exam, the student will be required on the first day to answer one or two questions of a broad theoretical nature. The purpose of the first part of the comprehensive exam is to assess the ability of students to synthesize and critically evaluate the literature on topics of broad theoretical importance in the field. On the second day, the format of the exam used in American Politics, Comparative Politics, and International Relations differs from the format used in Theory. In the former three fields, students will be asked to describe a specific research design that would contribute to an unresolved theoretical question — an exercise that might form the basis for subsequent dissertation work. The purpose of the second part of the comprehensive exam in Theory is to assess the ability of students to probe deeper into more specific topics. Students will be required to answer two, three or four questions.

The exam must be taken at the beginning of the fall semester of the third year. The dissertation proposal must be defended by the end of the third year. The exam cannot be taken until the MA thesis has been successfully defended or the bypass paper has been approved. A student who received an extension on the MA until after the September date of the exam will have to take the exam at the beginning of the following spring semester. Students planning to sit for an exam in a given semester must give written notice of intention to take the exam to appropriate field chairs and the Director of Graduate Studies by June 1 of the preceding spring semester. If the exam is to be taken in the beginning of the spring semester, the student must give written notice of intention by October 1 of the fall semester. The notice must include a list of courses taken in the field, the grades received for the courses, and the names of the instructors of the courses. If the student has any incompletes in the courses, they must be completed before the examination. The student must be in good standing in order to be permitted to take the examinations. According to Graduate School regulations, students must be enrolled in order to be permitted to take the examinations and defend their proposal.

Exam committees for all fields will be announced by July 15 for the fall exams. Committees will be composed by the Field Chairs. A committee will typically consist of three examiners. A fourth reader may be added at the discretion of the initial committee (by majority vote), either before or after the exam has been taken. The field chair will take into account availability of faculty members and equitable distribution of service workload in the department. The field chair will also attempt to have the committee reflect the diversity of the subfield.

The exam will be written by the committee chair, after soliciting questions from all members of the Graduate Faculty in that field. The committee chair will also meet with all students planning to take an exam in a given semester. A file of past examinations (questions only) shall be kept in the Graduate Office and be available to students.

The use of notes and books will be permitted. A list of references may be handed in by 5 p.m. on the Friday of exam week. All exams must be typed. If the student chooses to write the exam in long-hand, he or she will be permitted to type it (with no revisions of any sort) immediately following the conclusion of the exam period.

Each exam will be graded pass or fail. Exams will be graded independently by each member of the examining committee and a preliminary grade submitted. If all examiners assign the same grade, that shall be the final grade for the exam, unless one or more examiners requests a meeting of the full committee. If different grades are assigned in the initial evaluations, or if a meeting has been requested, each member of the committee will reread the exam and read the evaluations of the other committee members. The committee will then meet as a group to discuss the exam. The final grade for the exam will be determined by majority vote after the discussion. In the case of a tie vote in a four-person committee the chair shall have the casting vote.

Students will be notified of the results of the exam within three weeks. If a student fails the exam, the chair of the examining committee will submit a written report indicating the bases for the committee's collective evaluation. This report will be shared with the student and the student's adviser. The committee chair will meet with the student and explain the report. The other committee members will be available to meet with the student.

Students who fail the major field examination will have the opportunity to retake the exam at the beginning of the spring semester of the third year. The student should make a plan for retaking the exam that is approved by the student's adviser; this plan needs to be submitted to the field chair and the DGS by December 1 of the semester in which the student failed the exam.

A student who has failed a comprehensive exam can file an appeal with the Director of Graduate Studies within two weeks of being notified of the results. Appeals must focus on procedural matters: they should describe a specific policy that was broken. The examination committee's determination about academic merits is only subject to appeal if the student believes the judgement of the academic merit to have been impacted by factors such as arbitrariness, personal malice, or discrimination on behalf of the grader. Any allegations of personal malice or discrimination will require a referral to the Equal Opportunity/ ADA Office. The Director of Graduate Studies shall resolve all appeals regarding procedural matters, though the DGS can solicit additional information and advice as appropriate. If an appeal on procedural grounds is found to be valid, the DGS shall prescribe an appropriate remedy, which may include regrading of the exam, appointment of an additional committee member, or the opportunity to retake part or all of the exam. Should the DGS have been a member of the original committee, the appeal shall be handled by the Department Chair.

As with all academic appeals, the following university policy applies: For an appeal to be considered, it must be based upon one or more of the following grounds and upon allegation that the ground or grounds cited influenced the grade assignment to the student's detriment:

- **Arithmetic** or clerical error

- **Arbitrariness**, possibly including discrimination or harassment based upon the race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression of the student.
- **Personal Malice**
- **Harassment**
- **Discrimination**

The University's Policy on Prohibited Harassment and Discrimination ([www.unc.edu/campus/policies/harassanddiscrim.pdf](http://www.unc.edu/campus/policies/harassanddiscrim.pdf)) prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of an individual's race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Appendix B of this Policy provides specific information for students who believe that they have been discriminated against or harassed on the basis of one or more of these protected classifications.

Students who want additional information regarding the University's process for investigating allegations of discrimination or harassment should contact the Equal Opportunity/ADA Office for assistance:

**Equal Opportunity/ADA Office**

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
 100 E. Franklin Street, Unit 110  
 Campus Box 9160  
 Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27599  
 Telephone: (919) 966-3576  
 Fax: (919) 962-2562  
 Email: [equalopportunity@unc.edu](mailto:equalopportunity@unc.edu)

Any administrator or supervisor, including a department chair, associate dean or other administrator, who receives a student's complaint about prohibited harassment or discrimination must notify the Equal Opportunity/ADA Office within five (5) calendar days of receiving the complaint. If a student raises a claim of prohibited harassment or discrimination during an academic appeal, an investigation of the student's claim must be performed under the direction of the Equal Opportunity/ADA Office. The school or department must await the results of the harassment or discrimination investigation before deciding the student's academic appeal. Should a faculty member be found guilty, the Department Chair will ensure that this faculty member will not serve on any future comprehensive exam committees.

When a student is taking an exam a second time (such that an exam failure would result in discontinuation of graduate studies), the DGS and the relevant subfield chair shall consult each other and jointly determine membership of the examination committee. When possible, the examination committee should include at least two faculty members who were not part of the previous examination committee. (The number of faculty members in some subfields might limit whether this is feasible, and constituting a committee where all evaluators have subject expertise is the higher priority.) For a second exam only, three faculty members must determine the exam to be failing for the overall determination to be failing. Should there be two votes to fail and one

vote to pass, the DGS shall appoint one additional committee member to evaluate the exam, and that person's vote will control the outcome.

The PhD dissertation must be completed within seven years of completion of the comprehensive exam. Students wishing to complete the dissertation beyond this point must retake the comprehensive exam.

## **XII. Graduate Student Teaching Training**

Teaching is an integral part of the professional training of graduate students. Demonstrated excellence in teaching is increasingly required of applicants for positions in institutions of higher education of all ranks, from community colleges to elite research institutions. In addition, graduate student teaching is essential to the department's performance of its undergraduate teaching mission. Therefore, the department requires all students to complete a program of teacher training in order to be awarded the PhD.

The required elements of the teacher training sequence for those students on departmental instructional support are:

- Semester one: follow instruction of the instructor in the course to which you are assigned.
- Semester two: follow instruction of the instructor in the course to which you are assigned. May act as an Instructional Assistant in a course leading one discussion section.
- Second or third year: take the course Teaching Political Science in the fall semester of the second year and TA in at least one course. Normally, students will TA in several courses during their graduate education in order to receive university financial support.
- Third year and beyond: serve as a TA or as a Teaching Fellow (TF, teaching one's own course).

The sequence will vary for students wholly or partly on support which requires no service or service other than teaching. The minimum requirements for the PhD degree are the completion of Teaching Political Science (881), one semester service as a Teaching Assistant, and one semester service as a Teaching Fellow (TF).

In conjunction with their teaching duties, TAs are required to sign a contract specifying the responsibilities of the TA and the professor in the course. Among other things, it specifies that the professor will observe the TA in the classroom at least once during the semester and student evaluations of the TA's section will be distributed at the end of the semester.

In conjunction with their teaching duties, Teaching Fellows are required to arrange for a departmental faculty member, who teaches in the field of the course, to observe them in the classroom at least once during the first semester they teach and again during the semester before the student goes on the job market. The expectation is that the faculty member who observes the student at that second point will be one of the letter writers for the job market. The faculty member shall provide feedback to the student teacher and shall submit a note to the Director of

Graduate Studies indicating that the student has been observed teaching. The TFs will distribute student evaluations of the course at the end of the semester.

With approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, students entering with an MA can be excused from some or all of the teaching training requirements if they had similar training elsewhere.

## **XIII. Criteria for Selection and Assignment of TAs and TFs**

Students must demonstrate oral proficiency in English in order to be eligible for appointment as a TA or TF. Support on departmental instructional funding after the first year is contingent on demonstration of oral proficiency in English. The Director of Graduate Studies will suggest to all new graduate students who are concerned about communication that they enroll in GRAD 810, Communication in the American Classroom, for the fall semester of their first year.

- Students must meet the academic requirements outlined in sections III and IV above in order to be eligible for a TA or TF assignment.
- Students must complete one year of graduate work before TAing for the first time.
- Students must complete two years of graduate work and TA before teaching their first course.
- Competence as a TA, as evaluated by the professor in sectioned courses or by the faculty member observing in student taught courses, is a requirement for continued service as a TA.

Beyond the fifth year, students normally will not be funded by the department. If departmental instructional needs allow assignments past the fifth year, these needs as well as graduate student field evaluations and efforts to qualify for North Carolina residency will guide assignments.

The course offerings in the department are determined by the department's undergraduate teaching needs. Within that constraint, the department will consider the following criteria when assigning TAs and TFs to courses:

- Correspondence of course content with the student's scholarly and teaching interests.
- Opportunity for each student to teach at least one course (as a TF) in their field of interest.
- Minimize multiple course preparations for TFs.

It is the students' responsibility to notify the department that they want to be appointed as a TA or TF in a given semester. They should do so by submitting appropriate forms to the graduate studies coordinator. These forms also give students the opportunity to express a preference ordering for available assignments. The deadline for submission of this form is December 1 for the fall semester and May 1 for the spring semester of the following year, or as announced by the Associate Chair. This deadline applies to students on leave, off campus, or on alternative funding as well as students in residence currently on departmental funding.

## **XIV. Dissertation Formats**

The Department of Political Science has the following rules regarding acceptable dissertation formats.

The traditional format consists of a monograph, with an introduction, several chapters, and a conclusion. The goal is to lay the foundation for the student's first book. Alternatively or in addition, several chapters or combinations of chapters can become journal articles. This work has to be single-authored.

The three-paper format consists of three papers on topics that need not be related. The goal is to bring these papers as close to ready for submission to a journal as possible and thus to lay the foundation for the student's first publications. Articles that are written and published or accepted for publication while the student is enrolled in our Ph.D. program count. Two of these papers have to be single-authored. The third paper may be co-authored if it meets the following conditions:

- The co-author has to be a relative peer, such as a graduate student, post-doc, or an assistant professor.
- The co-author cannot be the adviser or a faculty member in the department.
- There can only be one co-author, unless additional co-authors are approved by the adviser and the DGS.
- The co-authors need to submit a document to the adviser that 1) clearly specifies the division of labor on the paper and 2) establishes that the defending student made a core intellectual contribution to the paper. That document has to be signed by all co-authors.

Grandfather Clause: Students who have defended their dissertation prospectus as of August 14, 2020, may present a paper coauthored with a faculty member.

## **XV. Graduate School Regulations**

The Graduate School of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has a number of regulations governing enrollment, re-admission, incompletes, etc. of all graduate students at the University, which are all contained in the publication, Graduate School Handbook, which is available online at <http://handbook.unc.edu/>. Students are expected to know and comply with these rules. The Graduate School does not accept ignorance of the regulations as grounds for waivers of the rules.