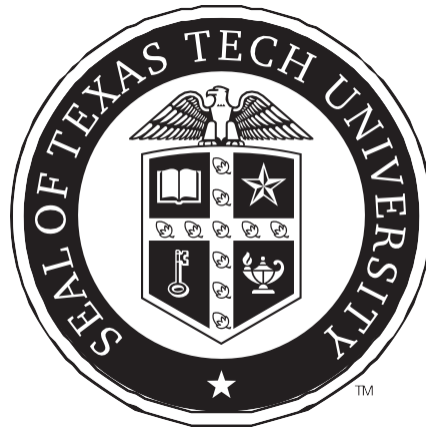


# Graduate Student Handbook

Department of Political Science  
Texas Tech University



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This handbook has been prepared as a guide for both applicants and current students to graduate study leading to the Master of Arts (M.A.) and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degrees in Political Science at Texas Tech University.<sup>1</sup> Information for applicants interested in our graduate programs is also available on the department's web site, [www.depts.ttu.edu/politicalscience](http://www.depts.ttu.edu/politicalscience). Applicants should review that information in addition to material in this Handbook.

From time to time changes may be made in our curriculum, requirements, policies, and similar material described in this handbook. Any such changes, unless specified otherwise when adopted, will apply to both new and continuing students regardless of whether or not the changes are included in this handbook. The Department of Political Science reserves the right to correct any errors of omission or commission contained in this handbook. This handbook is not intended to replace official Graduate School or University policies or requirements as contained in Graduate School or University publications.

## **1 Basic Information**

### **1.1 Program Management**

Administrative responsibilities for M.A. and Ph.D. programs in the Department of Political Science are vested in the Director of Political Science Graduate Programs, sometimes referred to later in this document as the Graduate Advisor, Graduate Director, or the Director of Graduate Studies. Questions about admission or program requirements should be directed to the Graduate Director.

The Department also maintains a Graduate Affairs Committee, of which the Graduate Director is a member. This committee reviews applicants for admission, conducts annual reviews of graduate students, prioritizes applicants and current students for financial assistance and most graduate student awards, and develops general policy for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. The Graduate Director and Graduate Affairs Committee report to the Department Chair and/or to the Political Science faculty.

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<sup>1</sup>While the Department of Political Science also contributes to other graduate programs such as the Masters in Public Administration (MPA) and the Interdisciplinary Master of Arts in International Affairs (MAIA), those programs are administered separately from the Political Science M.A. and Ph.D. programs. Contact the directors of these other programs for their standards and requirements.

## 1.2 Degrees Offered

The Department of Political Science currently offers the following graduate degree programs:

- *Combined B.A. and M.A. Degrees:* Current Texas Tech undergraduate political science majors may apply for the combined B.A./M.A. program whereby both degrees may be completed in approximately 5 to 5½ years.
- *M.A. Only:* The terminal M.A. is for students possessing a bachelor's degree and expecting to stop their Texas Tech graduate study at the Master's level.
- *M.A./Ph.D. Program:* The combined M.A. and Ph.D. program is for students who have completed their bachelor's degree and plan to study for the Ph.D. in Political Science at Texas Tech. Applicants may be admitted directly into the Ph.D. program and will, upon acceptable performance, be awarded the M.A. degree during, and without interrupting, their doctoral study.
- *Ph.D.:* The Ph.D. program is for students who have completed an M.A. degree in Political Science at Texas Tech or another accredited University.

## 1.3 Degrees Objectives

- *Ph.D.:* The Ph.D. program in political science is designed to provide intensive work in selected Political Science fields, and to develop within students the necessary skills for scholarly research. Students receiving the Ph.D. degree from this program will be qualified to engage in research and teaching at the college level.
- *M.A.:* The terminal Master of Arts degree program provides substantive knowledge and selected research skills for those planning careers in government, foreign service, other forms of community or public service, or community college or secondary school teaching, or areas of the private sector where knowledge of American government, foreign governments, international relations, data analysis, or social research methodology would be useful.

## 1.4 Areas of Specialization

At present, the Department offers major fields of specialization in the areas of American Politics (Institutions and Behavior), International Relations, Public Administration, and Comparative Politics. In addition, the department offers minor fields of study in the above areas as well as in Research Methodology. To keep up with both changes in the discipline of political science and changes in the interest and expertise of the Texas Tech faculty, discrete

areas of specialization available to graduate students shift from time to time. Contact the Graduate Advisor for information on any changes to fields of specialization.

## **2 Application Process**

### **2.1 Application**

To be considered for admission to any of the graduate programs listed above, applicants must complete the application procedures required by both the Graduate School and the Department of Political Science. The Graduate School requires an application form, payment of an application fee, and transcripts of prior collegiate coursework. Applicants to the M.A., the M.A.-Ph.D., and the Ph.D. program are required to take the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) and arrange to have official grade reports sent to the Graduate School. **Applicants to the joint B.A.-M.A. Program are not required to take the GRE Exam.** Application forms and requirements of the Graduate School may be found at the Graduate School's web site, <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/>, or by writing to:

Graduate Admissions  
Texas Tech University  
P.O. Box 41030  
Lubbock, TX 79409-1030  
Phone 806.742.2781  
fax 806.742.4038

In addition to the Graduate School's requirements, the Department of Political Science requires its own application form and both letters and evaluation forms from three referees. It is preferred that letters of reference and the accompanying evaluations forms come from faculty at a student's prior institution(s). The department's application and letter of reference forms may be found at the department's web site, <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/politicalscience/>, or by writing to:

Director of Political Science Graduate Programs  
Department of Political Science  
P.O. Box 41015  
Texas Tech University  
Lubbock, TX 79409-1015  
Phone: (806) 742-3121  
fax: (806) 742-0850  
email: polsgrad@ttu.edu

There is one departmental application form for those interested in admission to the M.A., Ph.D., the combined M.A./Ph.D. programs and the joint B.A./M.A. degree program.

## **2.2 Application Review**

Once an application is complete, the Director of Political Science Graduate Programs will submit the application to members of the Graduate Affairs Committee for its review. The Department uses a holistic evaluation process, examining an applicant's GRE scores, GPA, prior courses taken, reference letters, areas of interest, personal statements, and other elements of the application.

## **2.3 Application Deadlines**

Applications will be considered at any time throughout the year. However, to be fully considered for all available financial assistance, completed applications should be submitted by January 15 of the year the student expects to begin graduate study. Applicants to the BA/M.A. program must meet certain requirements prior to entry into the program. First, BA/M.A. applicants must have a 3.5 GPA or higher in order to be considered for the program. Second, BA/M.A. applicants need to complete POLS 3314 prior to entering the program. Third, BA/M.A. applicants are required to take POLS 5381 and POLS 5382 in their first semester of the program and POLS 5383 in their second semester of the program. Finally, BA/M.A. applicants should submit completed applications at least two months prior to beginning their senior year of undergraduate work. The BA/M.A. program is not open to students who are in a completely online Texas Tech BA program.

## **2.4 Beginning Study**

Those admitted to one of our political science graduate programs are expected to begin their study in the fall semester. On very rare occasions, beginning graduate study in the spring may be allowed. Students will need to provide written justification for this exception to the Department.

## **2.5 Full Time Study**

Except in unusual circumstances, all students pursuing a graduate degree are expected to be enrolled full time. Normal full-time enrollment is 9 hours in a regular semester and 6 hours in a summer session.<sup>1</sup> Doctoral students not on campus who are enrolling to simply satisfy their continuous enrollment requirement are required to register for no more than one credit hour.

## **2.6 Temporary Admission Status**

The Graduate School will sometimes admit students on temporary, labeled "G-temp"

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<sup>1</sup> Full-time enrollment is not required in summer. 3-hour enrollment is required for summer funding. However, students in dissertation hours should maintain the continuous enrollment status even during the summer.

or “non-degree”, status. Such students may, at the discretion of the Department, take graduate courses in Political Science. Such students should be aware, however, that they must be formally admitted into one of our graduate programs in order to pursue a graduate degree in Political Science. **Successful completion of one or more courses taken while a G-temp student (even with a grade of “A”) is no guarantee of admission into any of our programs.**

## **3 Degree Programs**

### **3.1 The Master of Arts Program**

#### **3.1.1 Thesis vs. Comprehensive Exams**

There are two basic plans for master’s degree work:

- *Thesis*: Under the thesis plan, the student is required to complete 30 hours of course work plus 6 hours of thesis for 36 hours total. Under the thesis option, students declare a single major field of study drawn from American Politics, International Relations, or Comparative Politics. The student will need to complete 9 hours of courses in this field beyond the pro-seminar, for a total of 12 hours. Under the guidance of a thesis chair and committee, thesis students will write, and must successfully defend, a thesis to receive the M.A. degree.
- *Comprehensive Exam*: Under the comprehensive examination plan, students complete 36 hours of graduate courses. The student must declare a major field drawn from American Politics, International Relations, or Comparative Politics, along with a minor field drawn from these three or from Political Methodology. The student must complete 9 hours of courses beyond the pro-seminar in their major field (for a total of 12 hours) and 6 hours beyond the pro-seminar in their minor field (for a total of 9 hours). At the culmination of the student’s coursework s/he must pass written comprehensive examinations in each field.

#### **3.1.2 Standardized First-Year Curriculum**

M.A. students under either plan are required to begin their graduate study through courses in our standardized first year curriculum:

- *Research Methods*: POLS 5381, POLS 5382, and POLS 5383.
- *Field Pro-seminars*: POLS 5322, POLS 5360, and POLS 5370.

#### **3.1.3 First-Year Core Curriculum Grade Requirement**

Students are required to achieve a grade of B- or higher in each of the first-year core curriculum courses. Students receiving a C+ or lower grade in any of these courses are permitted to continue taking other courses but are required to retake the course at



its next availability and raise the grade to at least a B-. A first-year student receiving a C+ or lower grade in POLS 5382 will not be allowed to take POLS 5383 in the next (spring) semester. The student should consult with the graduate director to find an introductory graduate method course outside the department. A successful completion of the remedial method course would help the first-year student to be better prepared for his or her retake of POLS 5382. The credits earned from the remedial course do not count toward the student's degree plan.

### **3.1.4 Transfer Credits**

Under either plan, and with the approval of the Graduate Advisor or Graduate Affairs Committee, a maximum of 6 hours of graduate coursework not taken in this department may be counted toward the degree. The six-hour limit includes courses either transferred in from another institution or taken in a different department at Texas Tech. See section 3.4 for a fuller discussion of transfer credits.

### **3.1.5 Enrollment**

Terminal M.A. students are expected to enroll for at least six hours per semester, or a total of 12 hours during the academic year. Occasional enrollment for fewer than six hours per semester may be approved upon petition to the Graduate Director, but all requirements for the M.A. degree should be completed within three academic years. Any request for exception to these rules must be submitted to the Graduate Director and include a semester-by-semester plan for completing the degree in a timely manner. The decision on whether or not to accept the plan will be made by the Graduate Affairs Committee and the Graduate School.

Students receiving financial assistance from Department funds are expected to maintain a minimum enrollment of 9 hours during each semester they are receiving the assistance.

### **3.1.6 Residency Requirement**

All M.A., but not B.A./M.A., students are required to enroll full time (i.e., 9 hours) for their first two long semesters (not including summer sessions).

### **3.1.7 Language or Research Tool**

There is no language requirement for the Master's degree, though in some cases a student's major professor may recommend language training as part of, or in addition to, the degree requirements. Students must successfully complete POLS 5381, POLS 5382, and POLS 5383 before advancing to candidacy. Successful completion is defined as receiving a grade of "B-" or higher.

### **3.1.8 Thesis**

When the student is ready to begin work on the thesis, she will, in consultation with the Graduate Advisor, identify a member of the political science graduate faculty who is willing to direct the thesis. The student and this thesis advisor will then select two supporting political science faculty members to serve on the thesis committee. Where appropriate, and with the approval of the Graduate Affairs Committee, the third member of the committee may be a member of the graduate faculty from outside this department. The thesis advisor has primary responsibility for directing the thesis, but appropriate revisions and additions may be proposed by the other members of the thesis committee, and the final draft must be approved by the entire committee. Under the thesis plan, a final oral examination will be administered by the thesis committee on the field of the thesis. Once the student begins the thesis, all changes in committee membership must be approved by the thesis advisor and the Graduate Affairs Committee.

As a courtesy to faculty, we recommend that all students provide a complete copy (i.e., all necessary chapters, front matter, bibliography, etc.) of their theses to their committee members and the director of graduate studies no less than 4 weeks before their scheduled defense date. However, all students must provide a complete copy (i.e., all necessary chapters, front matter, bibliography, etc.) of their dissertations or theses to their committee members and the director of graduate studies no less than 3 weeks before their scheduled defense date. The submitted version cannot be substantially changed prior to the defense. Failure to meet these requirements could result in the cancellation of the scheduled defense date.

### **3.1.9 M.A. Comprehensive Examination**

Under the comprehensive examination plan, a final written examination based on the major and minor fields of concentration will be administered by the department examination committee(s). Written examinations are scheduled twice each year, normally at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. Students are eligible to take exams while completing their last semester of coursework or in the first semester after completion of coursework – the latter is recommended – during the scheduled exam period. Students must take exams no later than the next regular semester after completion of coursework.

It is the student's responsibility to inform the Graduate Advisor at least two months before the beginning of the semester in which he or she expects to take the comprehensive examination. It is also the student's responsibility to inform the Advisor in which fields she or he will be examined.

The M.A. comprehensive examination, for students adopting this option instead of a thesis, follows the same basic requirements, procedures, and timing as qualifying examinations for the Ph.D. M.A. students following the comprehensive exam option will take the examination in both their major and minor fields. M.A. comprehensive

examinations may be shorter, and the time allowed for completion less, than is the case for Ph.D. qualifying examinations. Those decisions will be made by the committee creating the exam. Most importantly, the standards for passing differ. To pass the M.A. comprehensive examination in each field the student should exhibit a knowledge of the basic literature, the ability to deal with concepts, and insight into the interrelationships between concepts and literature. Further, M.A. comprehensive examinations, though requiring significant knowledge of a field, do not require the same breadth of knowledge expected for Ph.D. qualifying examinations.

### **3.1.10 Other Requirements**

Each student is responsible for meeting other general requirements of the Graduate School as specified in its catalog.

### **3.1.11 M.A. Students Interested in the Ph.D. Program**

Students admitted to the Master's program who are considering pursuing a Ph.D. degree at Texas Tech should discuss that interest with the Graduate Director promptly. The terminal M.A. program and the combined M.A./Ph.D. program have different requirements and follow different tracks. It is possible to take a set of courses that will simultaneously fulfill the Master's requirements and make progress toward a Ph.D. Should the student progress too far in the terminal M.A. program before identifying an interest in the Ph.D. program, she may encounter some otherwise avoidable delays in completing the Ph.D.

## **3.2 The Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Program**

There are two basic tracks for doctoral degree work: the Ph.D. track and M.A./Ph.D. track. The Ph.D. degree track is provided for students who have already completed their Master's degree. The M.A./Ph.D. track is for students who want to pursue doctoral work and have been awarded a bachelor's degree but will not have received an M.A. degree at the time they enter the program.

### **3.2.1 M.A. / Ph.D. Track**

A student with an accredited bachelor's degree can apply directly for admission into the Ph.D. program via the M.A./Ph.D. track. The M.A. portion of this degree plan requires 36 hours of doctoral level course work and the completion of the 2nd-year research paper requirement. All political science courses taken at Texas Tech and applied to the master's degree will be counted toward the coursework requirements for the Ph.D. degree.

Students in the M.A. / Ph.D. track should not complete their M.A. via the thesis

option, nor will thesis hours necessarily be counted as credit toward the Ph.D.

### **3.2.2 Ph.D. Program**

Students who already have the master's degree can apply for admission directly into the Ph.D. program. Upon admission and arrival at Texas Tech, these students should consult with the Graduate Advisor regarding any requests for transfer of coursework. See section 3.4 for a fuller discussion of transfer credits.

### **3.2.3 Course Requirements**

The Ph.D. degree requires a minimum of 60 semester hours of graduate work beyond the bachelor's degree, exclusive of credit for the dissertation. Depending upon a student's preparation, performance, and interests, the student's dissertation advisor, advisory committee, or the Graduate Affairs Committee may require coursework beyond the 60-hour minimum before the student takes the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination.

### **3.2.4 Major and Minor Fields**

Students are required to complete three substantive fields, two major fields and one minor field. Students must complete at least 12 hours of coursework in each of the major fields and 9 hours in the minor field. The two major fields must be chosen from International Relations, American Politics, Comparative Politics, or Public Administration. The minor field may also be one of those above, or selected from the area of Political Methodology.

Students interested in a Public Administration major or minor field must obtain permission of the Director of the Public Administration Program before taking classes in the field. The MPA Director and its faculty have the right to not admit a student into a Public Administration major or minor course of study.

Should any graduate student select Political Methodology as a minor field, the course requirements (six hours for an M.A. minor, nine hours for a Ph.D. minor) must be satisfied by courses over and above the required methodology courses for the degree. If the department does not offer enough methodology courses during the graduate student's progression through the program to satisfy these requirements, then the student may fulfill these requirements with methodology courses offered outside the department, provided the student obtains prior approval from the Graduate Director for such out-of-department methodology courses.

It is possible for a minor field, as described above, to be taken entirely in a related Department or in a combination of courses in this Department and/or in one or more other departments. It is also possible to declare an "official minor" recognized by the

Graduate School. An official minor requires a minimum of 15 hours in a different department or program. However, any minor must have a cohesive character and clearly contribute to the student's professional development as a political scientist.

Any proposed minor other than those described in the prior paragraph must be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Affairs Committee.

Occasional courses taken outside the department not constituting either a departmental or official minor may be taken if approved by the Graduate Director or the Graduate Affairs Committee.

Students are advised to carefully consider and discuss with their advisor taking courses outside the department. It is possible, compared to taking all courses inside the department, that doing so may detract from the student's preparation for the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination in political science, or require additional coursework before the student is fully prepared for the Qualifying Examination.

### **3.2.5 Standardized First-Year Curriculum**

All doctoral students will be required to take the standardized first-year core curriculum, or its equivalent. That curriculum includes:

- *Research Methods*: POLS 5381, POLS 5382, and POLS 5383.
- *Field Pro-seminars*: POLS 5322, POLS 5360, and POLS 5370.

### **3.2.6 First-Year Core Curriculum Grade Requirement**

Students are required to achieve a grade of B- or higher in each of the first-year core curriculum courses. Students receiving a C+ or lower grade in any of these courses are permitted to continue taking other courses but are required to retake the course at its next availability and raise the grade to at least a B-. Students will not be allowed to take comprehensive examinations until achieving a grade of B- or higher in each of the core curriculum courses.

A first-year student receiving a C+ or lower grade in POLS 5382 will not be allowed to take POLS 5383 in the next (spring) semester. The student should consult with the graduate director to find an introductory graduate method course outside the department. A successful completion of the remedial method course would help the first-year student to be better prepared for his or her retake of POLS 5382. The credits earned from the remedial course do not count toward the student's degree plan.

### **3.2.7 Teaching Course**

All Ph.D. students are required to take POLS 5100 during their second semester of

their first year. This one-credit course will be focused on familiarizing students with professional norms and teaching techniques.

### **3.2.8 2nd-Year Research Paper Requirement**

All Ph.D. and M.A./Ph.D. students are required to submit an independent (i.e., solo authored and not part of a larger research project with faculty or other students), article-length research paper to a committee of three political science faculty members (all must be members of the Graduate Faculty at TTU) during the second semester of their second year. The student will select one member of the committee and the graduate advisor will select another. The student and graduate advisor representatives will select a third member.

The committee will evaluate the paper to determine whether the student has demonstrated sufficient progress in their theoretical and empirical research skills to continue the program. The second-year paper process must be successfully completed by the end of the semester in which students are defending. If a student fails to successfully defend the second-year paper by the deadline, they may request an extension. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the committee, in consultation with the graduate director. Students who do not obtain committee approval will not be allowed to advance in the program. Specifically, students will not qualify for future department financial aid and cannot take Ph.D. qualifying exams.

The student is also required to present the second-year paper to the department faculty. Students who do not present their papers will not be eligible for future department financial aid and cannot take Ph.D. qualifying exams until the student presents their paper in some type of forum before faculty members.

For M.A.-Ph.D. students, the 2nd-Year Paper requirement will serve as the oral examination for these students to be granted their M.A.

Under extraordinary circumstances (i.e., significant illness or other similarly grave unforeseeable circumstances, etc.), the Graduate Affairs Committee can waive or give students an extension for the 2nd-year Paper requirement.

### **3.2.9 GPA Requirement for Ph.D. Students**

Doctoral students should maintain a grade point average significantly above 3.0. A grade point average falling below 3.0, the receipt of two or more grades below B-, or any single grade below a C (including C-) may be grounds for termination.

### **3.2.10 Residency Requirement**

All M.A./Ph.D. and Ph.D. students must enroll full time (i.e., 9 hours) for their first

four long semesters (not including summer sessions) unless a specific exception is granted by the Graduate Affairs Committee.

### **3.2.11 Language Requirement**

There is no formal language requirement for the Ph.D. However, each student must develop appropriate language or methodological skills based on his or her research and teaching interests. Doctoral students whose primary field is comparative politics may be expected by their dissertation advisor and/or advisory committee to develop language skills appropriate to their region of interest.

### **3.2.12 Degree Plan and Advisor(s)**

The student will meet with the Graduate Advisor and the Graduate Director as needed, to develop a degree plan. The degree plan should be filed with the Graduate School when necessary and in consultation with the Graduate Advisor and Graduate Director. The Graduate Director may, from time to time, schedule meetings with students to discuss and advise them on their degree plan.

### **3.2.13 Ph.D. Qualifying Examinations**

A student is eligible to take qualifying examinations upon satisfaction of the following requirements:

1. Approval of the doctoral degree plan by the Graduate School.
2. Completion of all language and tool requirements specified on the degree plan.
3. Completion of all courses specified on the degree plan or currently enrolled in the final courses required by the degree plan.
4. Verification by the relevant instructor(s) that any incomplete grades on the student's current records have been satisfied and the student qualifies for an acceptable course grade.

Students must take their qualifying examination no later than the first long semester after all courses listed on their degree plan have been completed. If a student fails to do so for any reason, including not being allowed to take qualifying examinations because of outstanding incomplete grades, he or she risks dismissal from the program. For most doctoral students, courses will be completed by the end of their third year of coursework in the program and the student will sit for qualifying examinations at the beginning of their fourth year.

Written qualifying examinations will be administered separately in the student's two major fields of study. Notice of the student's intention to take the examinations must be provided to the Graduate Director at least two months prior to the beginning

of the semester in which the examinations will be taken. Qualifying examinations are normally given twice a year, at the beginning of the Fall and Spring semesters. Qualifying examinations are not given during summer sessions for Ph.D. students.

The Graduate Director will select a committee composed of members of the graduate faculty in the field to prepare the qualifying examination in that field. One member of the committee will be identified as the exam coordinator and will be responsible for coordinating committee efforts to produce the exam and provide a copy of the exam to the Graduate Director in a timely manner. The examinations will be in essay format and students will be provided some choices among the questions. Students will be informed in advance of the format (in-class, take-home) and length of time available to complete each exam. Qualifying examinations in the student's two major fields will take place on different days.

To pass the examination or a particular question, the student must exhibit knowledge of important literature in the field, ability to deal with concepts and theories in the field, and the ability to analyze strengths and weaknesses in the literature. Qualifying examinations require a substantial knowledge of the field and will not be tied solely to courses a student may have taken. Students should consult regularly with advising professors, as well as other faculty in their major fields, to ensure they have the breadth and depth of knowledge appropriate for performing well on qualifying examinations.

Upon completion of the exam, the committee writing the examination will grade each exam, though they may invite additional members of the graduate faculty to participate in grading one or more questions on the exam as they deem necessary. Grading faculty will assign either a passing or a failing grade to each exam answer. A majority of passing marks will constitute an acceptable answer for any particular question. The committee will then meet to evaluate the exam as a whole. Under most circumstances it is expected that a student will receive a majority of passing marks on each answer to pass the exam, but the final pass/fail determination is decided by a majority vote of the committee regarding whether the student has met the standards described in this section and is ready to progress to the dissertation prospectus. Written results, including written evaluations by faculty graders, will be submitted to the Graduate Director by the field examination coordinator.

If the student passes the qualifying examinations in both of her major fields, and successfully completes required coursework for the minor field, the Graduate Director will recommend to the Graduate School that the student be admitted to candidacy for the Ph.D. Each student must be formally admitted to candidacy by the Graduate Council, upon recommendation of the department, at least four months prior to the proposed graduation date.



If the student does not pass the qualifying examination in one or both of her/his major fields, she/he must retake the exam the next time it is offered. If the student passes the exam in one field but not both, she/he will retake the exam only in the field where she/he did not pass the first time. Students should be aware that the membership of the examination committee might change between the first (failed) exam and the re-take. Failure to pass qualifying examinations in each of the students' major fields upon the second taking of the exam will result in the student's dismissal from the program by the Graduate School.

### **3.2.14 3rd-Year Draft Proposal Defense Requirement**

All Ph.D. and M.A./Ph.D. students must submit a complete "draft" dissertation proposal to their dissertation committee (three members of the Political Science Department on the Graduate Faculty and, if desired, one member from another Department/University) during the second semester of their third year. The prospectus draft must include at a minimum, the research question, theory, review of the literature and a statement of the contribution of the dissertation to the literature. The committee will evaluate the merit of the proposed research and the ability of the student to undertake the proposed research. Students who do not obtain an approval for their draft dissertation proposals in this time frame will not be eligible for future department financial aid and cannot take Ph.D. qualifying exams. The formal defense of the proposal cannot take place, however, until the student has successfully passed their qualifying exams.

Under extraordinary circumstances (i.e., significant illness or other similarly grave unforeseeable circumstances, etc.), the Graduate Affairs Committee can waive or give students an extension for the 3rd-Year Draft Proposal Defense Requirement.

### **3.2.15 Dissertation Committee and Prospectus**

Following satisfactory completion of the qualifying examinations, the student, in consultation with the Graduate Advisor, will find a member of the graduate faculty who is willing to direct the dissertation. The student and the dissertation director will arrange for at least two supporting political science graduate faculty (besides the chair) to serve on the advisory committee. The dissertation chair, and members of the advisory committee, may be, but are not required to be, the same faculty who previously served the student as the draft dissertation prospectus. For students who are writing a dissertation in Public Administration, their committee must contain at least one member of the Political Science faculty.

Where appropriate, one member of the committee may be a member of the graduate faculty from some program other than political science or a member of the political science faculty from another doctoral institution. In any event, the chair of the

committee and two others must be members of the political science graduate faculty in this department. In the case of a dissertation with a public administration focus, at least one member must be from the political science faculty, and at least one member should be composed of public administration faculty in the department; nevertheless, dissertations in the field of public administration must also comply with the requirement that at least three members (including the chair) must be members of the department.

The student's first task will be to prepare in writing a dissertation prospectus and defend it orally in an open session. The prospectus should cover: the research question or issue to be addressed; how the extant literature has dealt with the question; the strategy proposed by the student to address the question; and what unique information the research strategy is expected to produce.

Students must provide a complete copy (i.e., all necessary sections, front matter, bibliography, etc.) of their dissertation proposals to committee members and the director of graduate studies no less than 2 weeks before their scheduled defense date. The submitted version cannot be substantially changed prior to the defense. Failure to meet these requirements could result in the cancellation of the scheduled defense meeting.

The prospectus committee, based on the defense, can either pass or fail the student. Students who fail, must re-defend a new draft. Students must provide the committee chair with the "Report on Results of Oral Defense of Dissertation Prospectus," available from the Graduate Advisor, on which the chair will indicate the result of the defense and submit it to the Graduate Advisor to be placed in the student's file.

Beginning in the 2009-2010 academic year, students are required to defend successfully their dissertation proposals before their dissertation committees by the end of the semester in which they complete their comprehensive exams. Students who fail to meet this requirement will not be eligible for department financial aid in the subsequent semester. In addition, no student will be eligible for financial aid in their 5th year unless they have defended their dissertation proposals.

Under extraordinary circumstances (i.e., significant illness or other similarly grave unforeseeable circumstances, etc.), the Graduate Affairs Committee can waive or give students an extension for the Dissertation Proposal Defense Requirement.

### **3.2.16 Final Examination of Dissertation (Dissertation Defense)**

A final oral examination on the dissertation will be administered by the dissertation committee in an open session. The student is required to both be aware of, and meet, all requirements of the Graduate School regarding arranging the dissertation defense.

As a courtesy to faculty, we recommend that all students provide a complete copy (i.e., all necessary chapters, front matter, bibliography, etc.) of their dissertations to their committee members and the director of graduate studies no less than 4 weeks before their scheduled defense date. However, all students must provide a complete copy (i.e., all necessary chapters, front matter, bibliography, etc.) of their dissertations or theses to their committee members and the director of graduate studies no less than 3 weeks before their scheduled defense date. The submitted version cannot be substantially changed prior to the defense. Failure to meet these requirements could result in the cancellation of the scheduled defense date.

A copy of the dissertation will be made available at least one week in advance of the examination in the Department office. The dissertation must be acceptable to all members of the dissertation committee in order to satisfy the requirements for the Ph.D.

### **3.2.17 Degree Completion**

The student is expected to complete the degree within two years after advancing into candidacy. In the case of a student doing field work, and upon the recommendation of the dissertation committee, the Graduate Affairs Committee may grant the student one additional year. Students exceeding these time limits will be allowed a reasonable amount of time to complete the dissertation but are unlikely to receive continued funding from department sources. Significantly exceeding these deadlines may be the cause for dismissal from the program.

## **3.3 Advising**

The Graduate Advisor will be the primary advisor for students during their first year of graduate study. Students should begin the process of finding advisors during the second semester, as they construct degree plans and develop 2nd-year paper committees. Students are encouraged to consult regularly with professors in the student's fields of interest regarding courses and professional preparation. On a secondary basis, students should also consult regularly with the Graduate Advisor regarding general departmental performance and degree requirements.

## **3.4 Transfer of Courses Work Completed Elsewhere**

Graduate work completed at another accredited institution may be included as part of a student's degree requirements at Texas Tech. Students who wish to transfer such courses must provide to the Graduate Director a full copy of the syllabus for each transfer course requested. The transfer request will be reviewed by the Graduate Affairs Committee in consultation with the Graduate Director. No more than six semester hours of coursework completed elsewhere can be used to satisfy M.A. degree requirements at Texas Tech. More hours may be transferred to satisfy Ph.D. degree

requirements. In all cases, courses will be accepted for transfer only if it is determined that the courses have prepared the student well to meet the expectations of this program.

If a student feels prior coursework may exempt her from one or more of the courses included in our standardized first year curriculum, the student should provide a full copy of the syllabus for the course(s) to the Graduate Advisor and Graduate Director either before, or as soon as possible after, beginning graduate study at Texas Tech. The Graduate Director will consult with faculty members who have expertise on the topic(s) in question as well as the Graduate Affairs Committee. On the basis of that consultation, the Graduate Director will determine whether or not a given course meets our department standards and may be used in lieu of a course in our first-year curriculum.

Waiving a course in the first-year curriculum is not the same as using that course for credit toward a Texas Tech degree. That latter decision, as described above, is made by the Graduate Affairs Committee.

### **3.5 Political Science as an External Minor**

A student taking his or her degree in a department other than the Political Science may include Political Science as a minor field with the approval of the major field department.

For the M.A. degree, a Political Science minor would consist of 2-3 courses (six to nine hours), preferably drawn from the department's pro-seminars. No comprehensive examination will be required unless requested by the major field department.

For the Ph.D., a minor consists of 15 hours drawn primarily from one field of political science or a cohesive series of courses selected from among two or more political science fields and approved by the Graduate Advisor. A written qualifying examination will be required covering the student's field or fields of study. Students are advised that many advanced political science courses may require a research methodology background similar to that required of political science doctoral students.

The Department of Political Science also participates in interdisciplinary minors. Students pursuing such a minor should consult the Graduate Advisor of the Department of Political Science.

### **3.6 Incomplete Grades**

Students are not allowed to have more than one incomplete course on their record at

any given time. Any student who has more than one incomplete course must, immediately upon receiving any additional incomplete grade, develop a plan and timetable for removing all incomplete grades in an expeditious manner. The plan should be provided to the Graduate Director within two weeks of receiving the additional in-complete grade. The Graduate Affairs Committee will review the plan, make any changes they deem appropriate, and return a copy of the approved plan to the student. Students who fail to meet the timetable in the approved plan are subject to dismissal from the program.

### **3.7 Enrollment**

Any graduate student receiving financial assistance from the department is required to enroll, and maintain enrollment, in a minimum of 9 hours during each semester during which the student is receiving financial assistance.

### **3.8 Other Requirements and Deadlines**

Each student is responsible for meeting other general requirements of the Graduate School as specified in the Graduate Catalog.

The Graduate School has a number of requirements and sets a number of deadlines over the course of the academic year and enforces them rigorously. Examples include: requirements regarding the minimum and maximum number of graduate hours for degrees, the maximum number of years allowed to complete a degree, deadlines for completing degree plans, intent to graduate forms, and submitting completed theses and dissertations, to name only a few. If a student fails to meet such deadlines, he or she may not be able to graduate during a given term or may have to pay additional tuition and fees in order to be enrolled for another term. While the Graduate Advisor will usually seek to remind students of Graduate School requirements, it is the student's responsibility to be aware of these deadlines and to adhere to them. These requirements are regularly updated on the Graduate School's web site.

### **3.9 Policy on Independent Study (POLS 7000)**

A graduate student is not allowed to enroll in an independent study course in a regular fall or spring semester but required to take a Ph.D. level political science graduate course, if any, from which the student has not earned credits before. This policy is effective even when the graduate course is outside of a student's major or minor. This policy applies to students who have successfully fulfilled all degree requirements. If a regular Ph.D. level graduate course is unavailable, students are encouraged to seek approval from their advisor and the graduate director to enroll in a graduate course outside the department only for elective credits. Filing a written petition with sufficient reasons for extraordinary circumstances is required for exceptions to these policies. To

make an exception, the petition should be approved by the graduate committee in consultation with a student's academic advisor.

The following policies apply when a student is allowed to have independent studies in a regular semester:

1. The student is restricted from registering for more than one independent study course in a regular semester.
2. Students may include 7000 hours on their degree plans. For any 7000 course to be included on a student's degree plan, the Graduate Director must be provided a copy of the syllabus for the course that includes: a course title, required student readings and / or activities, a schedule of expected meetings between the faculty member and student (e.g. "every Monday at 9:00 a.m."); and standards for awarding a grade.
3. 7000 hours may be offered for variable credit. As required by Graduate School policies, the faculty member supervising the hours must ensure that credit is assigned consistent with the level of student effort or learning in organized courses - i.e., 3 hours of 7000 should include a level of student activity similar to an organized graduate course.

On occasion, an organized graduate course - multiple students enrolled, full syllabus, meeting approximately 3 hours per week - is offered under the 7000 label. Such courses are exempt from the policies and requirements described above.

### **3.10 Policy on Dissertation Hours (POLS 8000)**

Students are eligible to register for dissertation hours while actively working on dissertation research. To enroll in dissertation hours, a student must have successfully fulfilled all major and minor requirements and defended the pre-prospectus. Upon the completion of coursework and the pre-prospectus defense, students may enroll in dissertation hours during the summer preceding the beginning of their fourth academic year.

## **4 Annual Evaluation and Financial Aid**

Graduate study involves a significant time and financial commitment by students. It is in both the student's and the department's interest not to allow this commitment to continue if the student is unlikely to complete the desired degree in a timely manner. Equally important, many graduate students perform at a superior level and deserve to have that performance recognized. Moreover, the department controls financial aid in the form of teaching assistantships, research assistantships, and scholarship

funds that are distributed on a yearly basis.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, the Department will conduct two evaluations of students. First, the Graduate Affairs Committee will conduct an annual evaluation of *all* students. Second, the Graduate Affairs Committee will review applications in order to make recommendations to the Chair concerning the distribution of department financial aid. As such, all students must complete the “Annual Evaluation/Application for Financial Aid” form and return it to the Director of Graduate Studies by the first business day in March. Students in their third year or more must include a letter of recommendation from a professor familiar with their work or, where applicable, a dissertation advisor.

#### **4.1 Annual Evaluation**

Based on a review of a student’s file and the “Annual Evaluation/Application for Financial Aid” form, the Graduate Affairs Committee will assess the overall performance of the student’s record. The committee employs the form provided for annual evaluations by the graduate school. The students will receive written results of the committee decisions. For students allowed to continue with reservations, the committee will indicate the areas in which the student needs to improve.

In this process, the Committee will focus on several factors including, but not restricted to, students’ class performance (e.g., GPA), publication record, department service (e.g., attendance at department functions, job talks, etc.), conference presentations, and demonstrated progress toward the degree completion (e.g., sitting for comprehensive exams in a timely manner or passing the dissertation prospectus in a timely manner). The Committee will also review any other relevant information contained within their department file.

#### **4.2 Department Financial Aid**

The Graduate Affairs Committee and the Graduate Advisor will also make recommendations to the Chair of political science for Department financial aid. Ultimately, financial aid decisions are the responsibility of the Chair of political science and are dependent upon the availability of funds. The Graduate Affairs Committee will make two recommendations for each student. First, the committee will determine whether a student will receive some form of financial aid. Second, the committee will determine the form of this financial aid (teaching assistantship, research assistantship, or scholarship). While the department usually has funds for financial aid, it is possible that in some years there will be less or, in extreme cases, no financial aid funds.

In the financial aid process, the Committee will focus on several factors including, but not restricted to, students’ class performance (e.g., GPA), publication record, department service (e.g., attendance at department functions, job talks, etc.), conference presentations, and demonstrated progress toward degree completion (e.g.,

sitting for comprehensive exams in a timely manner or passing the dissertation prospectus in a timely manner). In addition, the Committee will consider relevant information concerning previous performance as teaching assistants (e.g., teaching evaluations for those students who taught their own classes, etc.). The Committee will also re-view any other relevant information contained within students' department files. All choices will be made with an eye toward the Department's goals, so the following criteria may be considered in making choices: the teaching needs of the Department, students' areas of expertise and experience in the classroom, and the need for recruitment of a sufficiently large incoming class.

It is possible for the Committee to give a student a recommendation to receive financial aid and not receive aid. Financial aid is dependent on department resources, the number of graduate students, etc.; therefore, a Committee recommendation is not a guarantee of aid. Also, previous financial aid awards are no guarantee of future aid. While every attempt will be made to continue funding students as long as they are making good progress, there is no guarantee of continued employment past the agreed-upon term (either one semester or one academic year). The only exceptions to this rule are those that are stated in writing and bear the signature of the Department Chair.

Teaching assistantship (TA) positions are for a fall or spring semester or nine-month academic year. Typically, a TA is assigned to two classes in a long semester. Ninth-month appointments do not include any funding for the summer months. However, if funds are available, graduate students may be given the opportunity to serve in the summer, with advanced graduate students given priority if funds are limited. Primary consideration, however, will always be the department needs. The Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Affairs Committee will use the "Annual Evaluation/Application for Financial Aid" as well as other materials in the students' files to make recommendations to the Chair for these positions.

### **4.3 International Students**

Any teaching assistant whose first language is not English will be evaluated by the International Teaching Assistant program. That program takes place in the summer and new international teaching assistants are required to attend. The student's English language teaching skills will be assessed at the end of the program and a recommendation made to the department. The Department reserves the right to withdraw support from any student who does not possess the language skills necessary to serve as a teaching assistant.

### **4.4 Terms of Appointment**

Teaching assistantship awards will generally be made for one semester or one academic year. Reappointment is only guaranteed if the student is given that assurance in writing by the Department Chair (this will occur only rarely, and usually only in cases of new



student recruitment). The Department will generally require that each teaching assistant be evaluated by his or her students and by the professor under whom he or she has worked (if that is relevant). Regardless of the initial offer of support from the Department, all students who receive poor evaluations from either source might not be re-appointed and may, in exceptional cases, have their assistantships withdrawn in the middle of a semester or year.

## **4.5 Graduate Student Travel Support Policy**

Doctoral students are required to consult with their advisor before submitting a proposal for a conference presentation. Upon proposal acceptance, students must deliver a practice presentation to the department. Additionally, approval from the advisor is necessary for a travel funding application.

The Department will, assuming available funds, support the travel of doctoral students to present research papers at professional conferences. The following conditions apply for receiving such support. Requests for exceptions to any of these rules should be made in writing to the Graduate Affairs Committee. The committee will recommend to the chairperson whether an exception should be granted.

- Support is provided to doctoral students only, which includes students in the M.A./Ph.D. program.
- Support is provided only for the presentation of research papers.
- Support is provided only for participation in significant professional political science conferences, those that members of the department faculty usually attend as well.

To apply for travel funds, students must first apply to the department. Students must work with the department's administrative staff to apply for official leave from the University to attend the conference. This application should be completed in advance following the deadlines recommended by the secretarial staff. This must be done regardless of whether or not the student is receiving support for the travel. In addition, all students requesting travel must get their paper topic approved by their advisors. Advisors must send an email to the department administrative assistant in charge of graduate student travel indicating their support for the travel. Then, students are required to apply to the Graduate School for funds (<http://depts.ttu.edu/gradschool/current/Travel.php>). Students must apply to the Graduate School at least 30 days in advance of travel.

Barring unavoidable circumstances, students accepted for conference participation must have their project completed in a timely manner and present it at the conference. Once accepted for a conference, failure to complete the project and participate in the conference will automatically lead to a review of the student's performance by the

Graduate Affairs Committee and likely restrictions on future travel support.

## **5 Responsibilities of Teaching Assistants and Graduate Part-Time Instructors (TAs and GPTIs)**

### **5.1 Duties of a Teaching Assistant**

Teaching assistants are responsible for an average of up to 20 hours of work per week, which includes time in class, preparation time, and office hours. New graduate students will usually serve as an assistant to a faculty member who is the primary instructor for a large undergraduate course. For doctoral student TAs serving in this position, faculty are strongly encouraged to assist the student in developing the teaching skills needed in the academic profession. This may include such activities as: assisting in developing test questions, conducting exam review sessions, conducting discussion groups, or giving occasional lectures in the course.

Advanced doctoral students may sometimes be given the opportunity to teach their own course. Such an assignment will be made by the Department Chair with special consideration given to the Department's needs. These graduate student instructors will have full authority for their course, developing the syllabus, presenting the lectures, holding office hours, designing and grading all papers and exams, and determining students' final grades.

### **5.2 Course Records**

Regardless of the nature of the student's TA assignment, students must maintain accurate class records when teaching their own course or required to maintain records by the course instructor. Those records must be deposited with the department secretary at the end of each semester.

### **5.3 Department and University Training**

All teaching assistants are responsible for undergoing the required training by the Department and University. This includes, but is not limited to, taking the Department's socialization course on norms in the discipline and college teaching, completing the University's training in sexual harassment policy, and taking any other training that may be required by the University. Please consult with Department staff and the Graduate Catalog to find out when these training sessions are held and how often they are required.

### **5.4 University Operating Procedures**

Teaching assistants are considered members of the faculty and are responsible for knowing and following the Operating Procedures of Texas Tech University relevant to both faculty and graduate student performance and behavior. Copies of University Operating Policies and Procedures are available on the University's web site or from the department secretaries.

## **6 Doctoral Student Placement Packets**

The Department will, at a student's request, maintain a placement file doctoral students may use to apply for positions.

The placement file will contain the student's vita and other material supplied by the student up to a total of 20 pages maximum. Students may supply placement material exceeding this page limit, but will be charged photocopying fees for the additional pages as well as additional postage costs whenever the file is sent out. Reference letters are not included in this page limit. The Graduate Advisor or Department Chair may also provide a cover letter or similar material for the placement file which also will not be counted in this page limit.

In addition to student-supplied material, the placement file will contain letters of reference requested by the student. Unless the student explicitly requests otherwise, and so notifies his or her referees before they compose their letters, all letters of reference will be treated as confidential and will not be available to the student. The placement file can be accessed only by the department's secretarial staff, the Department Chair, the Graduate Advisor, or the student's dissertation advisor. Students wishing to review the material they provided for the file should request one of these individuals to obtain the non-confidential material for the student.

Student requests for their placement file to be mailed for a job opening must include approval by their major professor using the departmental form. The department will cover duplication and standard mailing costs for up to 30 copies of the placement file each academic year. Requests for additional copies to be mailed out will be at the student's expense.

The department will cover standard photocopying and mailing expenses only. Requests for exceptional treatment – such as color copies, faxing, or overnight mail will be at the student's expense.

Requests for placement file copying and mailing will be covered by the department under the guidelines above only after the student has successfully defended the dissertation prospectus. Copying and mailing requests prior to a successful prospectus defense will be at the student's expense.

## **7 Summer Research and Training Scholarships**

The department maintains a limited pool of resources to fund Summer Research and Training Scholarships. The scholarships are intended to fund student research and training during the summer. Students can use the scholarships to fund language training, research trips, methodological training (e.g., ICPSR), etc. To apply for these funds, the students must complete the “Summer Research and Training Scholarship Application” and provide a letter of recommendation from their advisor. These applications will be due on the first business day in March.

The Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Committee will make recommendations to the Chair concerning the award of these scholarships. The Chair will make the final decision on awarding scholarships. Applications will be evaluated based upon the merit of the proposed research and training, the ability of the student to undertake the project, previous scholarships, and information from the student’s department file. While the department usually has the resources to fund these scholarships, it is possible in certain summers that due to the lack of funds no awards will be made.

## **8 State of Texas “99 Hour Rule”**

Texas state law includes what is called the 99-hour rule. The essence of the rule is that the state will provide funds to each state institution for a student’s doctoral study only up to a maximum of 99 doctoral hours.

Every doctoral student needs to be aware of the 99-hour rule and monitor their level of doctoral hours so they can be aware of when they are drawing near to this limit. The 99-hour rule is not a fixed “99 hours and you are out” limit. There is some leeway, but it remains an important rule nonetheless.

As soon as a student accumulates 99 doctoral hours, the State of Texas no longer provides the University any funding assistance for that student. Consequently, the Graduate School closely monitors students who are approaching, or have exceeded, 99 doctoral hours. They request regular reports on the student’s progress and an assurance that the student will complete all degree requirements rapidly. Should a student accumulate 129 doctoral hours, the law allows the State to financially penalize the University by cutting its budgetary appropriation a proportionate amount. Also, the Graduate School is mandated to charge a student full out-of-state tuition and fees for any doctoral hours exceeding 129. At the Department level, once a student exceeds 99 doctoral hours, the Graduate Affairs Committee considers whether the student will be granted continued funding, and will insist that the student present to the Committee a plan for completing all degree requirements promptly. Failure to present

an acceptable plan may lead to the student's dismissal from the program.

Over the last ten years about half of all Political Science doctoral students have comfortably completed all degree requirements within 99 hours. Unfortunately, about half have exceeded the 99-hour limit, some only moderately so and some excessively so. The Department expects its revised curriculum to cut down significantly on the number of students exceeding 99 hours. However, each doctoral student needs to monitor his or her own progress through the program and whether they are nearing 99 doctoral hours.

This Handbook cannot cover all applications of the 99-hour rule. Below, however, are some general guidelines students may use to calculate their doctoral hours.

#### What Hours Count Toward the 99-hour Limit?

- The limit applies to doctoral hours. For students entering our Ph.D. program with an MA, all hours apply. For students who enter our M.A. / Ph.D. program (i.e. enter with only a Bachelor's degree), their first 30 hours are counted as Master's hours and all hours above 30 count as doctoral hours. This is true even though our M.A. / Ph.D. program does not actually award the M.A. until after 36 hours.
- Once you are admitted to our graduate program and begin taking courses, all hours count toward the limit even though some of the courses you are taking may be undergraduate courses, such as language courses or math courses to correct some deficiency. Undergraduate hours do not count toward either the Graduate School's residency requirement or the minimum 60 post-BA hours of regular coursework required for the doctoral degree, but they do count toward the 99-hour rule.
- All "attempted" hours are counted, regardless of whether you complete the course. Once you enroll in and begin the course its hours will be counted even if you later withdraw from the course.
- All hours taken at any state supported institution in Texas. If you were to return home during the summer and, say, take a music course at the University of Houston, that course would count toward the 99-hour limit.

#### What Hours Do Not Count Toward the 99-hour Limit?

- The limit applies to all hours at any Texas state supported institution. Hours taken elsewhere, either outside the state of Texas or at a private institution in Texas, do not count. This is true even if some of those hours are transferred in and applied to your graduate study at Texas Tech.
- Audited courses do not count, either as part of a student's degree plan or against

the 99-hour limit.

### Guidelines for Student Awareness and Self-Monitoring.

- Do not enroll in 8000 (dissertation) hours until you actually start working on your dissertation. Once you first enroll in 8000, you are required to maintain continuous enrollment, including during the summer.
- If offered a summer TA position, you will be required to enroll in summer hours to qualify for support. Make sure these hours contribute toward your qualifying exam preparation or dissertation work. Do not treat them as pro forma.
- If you take supplementary (non-POLS graduate) courses that may benefit your professional skills but do not directly contribute to your qualifying exam preparation or dissertation work, audit these courses instead of enrolling for a grade whenever feasible.
- If you are doing dissertation research off campus for a semester or more, enroll in the minimum hours required, often 1 hour of dissertation only.
- Actively search for outside (non-TTU) grants to support your dissertation. This will both speed up your dissertation progress and may excuse you from enrolling in 9 hours per semester - required if you are receiving TTU funding.
- Do your best to meet department deadlines regarding completion of qualifying examinations, preparation of the prospectus, and defense of the completed dissertation.

## **9 Graduate Students' Code of Conduct**

### **9.1 General Expectations**

Our graduate program is committed to ensuring a transparent, fair, and harassment-free learning environment. Graduate students are expected to be civil and courteous in their verbal or written communications with other members of the department including faculty, staff, and other graduate students. Students are also expected to be intellectually honest and ethical in their academic activities. These expectations hold in and out of the classroom. The following sections list types of misconduct that may lead to funding termination and dismissal from the program.

### **9.2 Sexual Misconduct and Discriminatory Harassment**

Complying with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the department strictly prohibits all forms of sexual misconduct including (not limited to) sexual or gender-based discrimination, harassment, exploitation, coercion, intimidation, and assault. Non-consensual sexual requests, comments, contacts, stalking, repeatedly soliciting a romantic relationship without consent, and dating violence are also considered as sexual misconduct. For more information about the University policy on sexual harassment and misconduct, see [System Regulation 07.06](#), [University Sexual Misconduct and Title IX Procedures for Students](#), [Student Handbook Section I](#), and [Code of Student Conduct](#). The Title IX office provides a lot of useful information about how to file a report, what procedures a complainant or a respondent of a case should follow, and what supportive measures are available for a victim. Senate Bill 212 requires all responsible employees (faculty and staff) to report any incidents of sexual misconduct against a student or an employee. Graduate students who are hired as GPTIs and TAs are also considered as mandatory reporters. The department also prohibits any discriminatory behavior including (not limited to) hostile and derogatory remarks, offensive jokes and actions, and any disparaging treatment against one's race, age, gender, disability, religion, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, and other protected categories. For more information about the University policy on non-discrimination and anti-harassment, see [System Regulation 07.10](#), [Student Handbook Section C](#), and [Code of Student Conduct](#).

Once the department receives an official notice of sexual misconduct or discriminatory behavior from the Title IX office or the Office of Student Conduct, the graduate affairs committee may decide to have a student's assistantship withdrawn in the middle of a school year. Graduate students who experience or witness any incident of sexual misconduct are encouraged to report the case to the Title IX office and/or the Office of Student Conduct. The department is not responsible for investigating and adjudicating cases of such misconduct but allowed to take actions to accommodate a victimized student's academic concerns and hardships. In addition, the department is expected to keep the record of misconduct in a student's file.

### **9.3 Academic Integrity**

The Graduate School does not tolerate academic misconduct. According to the TTU Student Handbook, "Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, misrepresenting facts, violations of published professional ethics/standards, and any act or attempted act designed to give unfair academic advantage to oneself or another student." The examples include (are not limited to) (1) copying from others' academic work, tests, and assignments, (2) soliciting, transmitting and obtaining from another individual the contents of a test and an assignment, (3) falsifying and fabricating research data and report, (4) using others' ideas, writing, computer code, and other research materials without proper citations, (5) submitting the same academic work more than once without the previous and the current instructors' permission and/or without proper citations, (6) unauthorized collaborations with another person to complete academic work, test, or assignment, (7) falsifying academic records of the department and/or of the University, (8) using unauthorized materials during a test or assignment, and (9) misrepresenting facts on a resume and other academic information. Detailed examples of each type of academic misconduct can be found in the [Section B of the Student Handbook](#).

Regarding self-plagiarism, a graduate student is allowed to use his or her previous academic work (including a term paper and other academic reports as part of course requirements) only once for another class upon the permission of instructors of the previous and current classes. A student is required to provide the entirety of previous academic work from another class. The instructor may require a student to change and develop the previous work significantly. The reused academic work may be subject to stricter grading criteria.

The faculty will report any academic integrity violations to the department (including the chair, the graduate program director, the academic advisor) as well as to the Office of Student Conduct. Upon receiving an official violation report, the graduate affairs committee can terminate a graduate student's assistantship in the middle of a school year. Repeated academic integrity violations and/or serious offenses may be grounds to dismiss a graduate student from the program after consultation with the Office of Student Conduct and the Graduate School.

## **10 Appendix: Basic Graduate Program Schedules**

### **10.1 Doctoral (Ph.D. and M.A./Ph.D.) Program**

#### **• First Year**

- Fall Semester (9 Total Hours)
  - \* POLS 5381, Research Design
  - \* POLS 5382, Data Analysis
  - \* POLS 5360, Pro-Seminar in International Relations
- Spring Semester (9 Total Hours)
  - \* POLS 5322, Pro-seminar in American Politics
  - \* POLS 5370, Pro-seminar in Comparative Politics
  - \* POLS 5383, Advanced Data Analysis
  - \* POLS 5100, Socialization and Teaching Course

#### **• Second and Third Years**

- Substantive seminars in the student's field
- M.A./Ph.D. Students undergo oral M.A. exam during the spring semester of their second year and receive M.A. degree at the end of that semester.
- Completion of 60 hours of post BA coursework, not including dissertation hours
- Complete and obtain approval of draft dissertation prospectus at the end of the student's third year.

#### **• Fourth and Fifth Years**



- Take Ph.D. qualifying exam at the beginning of the fall semester of the student's fourth year.
- Develop and defend dissertation prospectus at the beginning of the spring semester of the student's fourth year.
- Write and defend dissertation during fourth and fifth years.

• **Notes**

- The above is a general schedule and is not meant as a requirement. Schedules and length of time in the program will vary across individual students.
- Pro-seminars are first year courses emphasizing a review of the literature and major issues of a field, with course activities and papers normally emphasizing knowledge of a field rather than independent student research.
- The Socialization courses familiarize students with the political science profession via discussion of such topics as: conferences, journals, grants, vita preparation, applying for jobs, major research issues in each field, and more.
- Any student who feels her background may exempt her from one or more of the required first year courses should consult with the Graduate Director.

## **10.2 M.A. in Political Science (Terminal)**

Students expecting to complete M.A. degrees at Texas Tech and then transfer to a doctoral program elsewhere should follow as closely as possible the schedule for Ph.D. students. The description below is based upon full time study. Part-time M.A. students will take fewer courses each semester but should strive to complete first year courses listed as soon as possible in their studies. Though described below as a three-semester program, students often take four semesters and sometimes more to complete the degree. Because of variations in funding and student fields of interest, the department makes no commitment that sufficient courses in the required fields will be available for students wishing to complete degree requirements within three or four semesters.

• **First Year**

- Fall Semester
  - (a) POLS 5381, Research Design
  - (b) POLS 5382, Data Analysis
  - (c) Pro-Seminars (POLS 5322, 5360, or 5370)
  - (d) By the end of their first semester, or completion of 9 hours of coursework, whichever comes later, terminal M.A. students must declare whether they will take the thesis or comprehensive exam option.

- Spring Semester
  - (a) Pro-Seminar (POLS 5322, 5360, or 5370)
  - (b) POLS 5383, Advanced Data Analysis

- **Second Year**

- Summer/Fall Semester
  - (a) MA students are recommended to have an independent study with their faculty advisor in their major field during the summer semester between the first and second years. This will facilitate an MA student's fulfillment of 12 credit hour requirement for the major.
  - (b) Thesis students: Any additional substantive courses required, plus 6 hours of thesis.
  - (c) Comprehensive exam students: 12 hours of course work in major or minor fields, followed by a comprehensive exam. Comprehensive exams are normally given only at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters, not during the summer.