Department of Political Science
University of North Carolina

Graduate Program Policies and Regulations

(For students entering Fall 2007 or later)

June 2007

I. Fields of Study

There are six principal fields of study in the Department:

American Politics
Comparative Politics
International Relations
Methodology
Political Theory
Public Policy and Public Administration (minor only)

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, and IR every year, and the core courses in Theory and Public Policy and Public Administration no less often than every other year.

A. Field Coursework Requirements for the Ph.D.

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) and The Politics of Development and Change (731)
International Relations: Theories of International Relations I and II (750 and 751)
Methodology: 783, 784, 787 and 789
Political Theory: Classical Political Theory (774), Modern Political Theory I (771), and Modern Political Theory II (pending approval)
Public Policy and Administration (721)

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.

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

Students may petition to take social 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 Social 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. A qualifying examination is not required for this second, optional minor. 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 <u>and</u> 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 offering that field as a major or minor field.
- Plan course offerings in the field.
- Compile, and update on a regular basis, field bibliographies to assist students in preparing for Ph.D comprehensive exams.
- Evaluate students majoring in that field on an annual basis.
- Supervise the preparation and grading of comprehensive exams.
- 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 these courses must be political science courses other than the core statistics courses (783 and 784/optional for Theory majors), the teaching course (881), and MA thesis and Ph.D. dissertation courses. Students with previous graduate work may receive transfer credit for six courses.

All candidates for the Master of Arts in Political Science must complete 10 courses in Political Science or related disciplines including the MA thesis course. Eight of these courses must be in political science. Students with previous graduate work may receive transfer credit for 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.[1] For students on financial aid not requiring service commitments, the normal course of study is four courses per semester in the first year and three per semester in the second year. 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 third year, students should take their comprehensive exams. Students are permitted to defend their dissertation proposal as soon as they complete their comprehensive exams. 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

[1] 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.

most fields, these courses will include two statistics courses (783 and 784 or their equivalents), Scope and Methods (780), a teaching seminar, and two core courses from different fields. For students in political theory, the two statistics courses are optional. 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 to the fall of the second year.

Students on departmental instructional funding will act as an Instructional Assistant for a course. The first semester students will assist in classes as a grader and with other duties but will not lead a discussion section. The second semester, students will normally lead one discussion section of 20 students. The instructional assistant duties will be limited to an average of 12 hours of work per week or less.

B. Second Year

During the second year, students should complete six courses. The Master's Thesis, at the end of the second year, is the first formal hurdle to be faced in progress toward the Ph.D. During the second year students should also begin to make a firm decision on major and minor fields and develop further relations with potential thesis and dissertation supervisors.

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. Both qualifying exams should be taken.

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

Students may take Political Science 881, Teaching Political Science, in this year or in the fourth year.

D. Fourth Year

Dissertation work. The proposal must be defended by October 1.

Students on departmental instructional funding will 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. Students who did not take Political Science 881 in the third year must do so in this year.

E. Fifth Year

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

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

The Department is committed to funding each student in their 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.[2]

- Any student who does not complete the MA Thesis by the announced deadline at the end of the fourth semester will forfeit financial aid for the following semester and until the thesis is completed.

- Any student who does not pass comprehensive exams by the end of the third year is subject to forfeit of financial aid until s/he passes the exams.

- Any student who does not defend a proposal by October 1 of the fourth year is subject to forfeit of financial aid until the proposal is completed.

Unsatisfactory work is defined as

[2] 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.

- 2 or more incompletes
- 3 or more L's
- 1 F
- Failing any two comprehensive exams (major or minor)
- Failing any one comprehensive exam taken after the third year
- Failure to maintain normal progress

V. Advising

Each student must have a formal advisor. The student is free to choose her/his advisor, but by default the advisor will be assumed to be:

First year: The field chair. Students should be encouraged to switch to a faculty member in her/his major field with whom she/he has had a course. This is important for the yearly evaluation process. Students are required to state by the end of January who her/his advisor for the remainder of the year will be.

Second year: The MA thesis chair. Students must notify the Director of Graduate Studies of their choice of MA thesis chair by the end of September.

Third year: Initially the MA thesis chair, to be changed to the dissertation chair during the year.

Fourth year and beyond: The dissertation chair. Students must notify the Director of Graduate Studies of their choice of dissertation chair by the end of September.

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 advisor 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, and the Committee shall make an advisory recommendation to the student as to whether or not it believes that he or she should proceed to work on the Ph.D. degree. This evaluation will take into account the report of the student's MA committee, in addition to all the other material typically considered in the evaluation process.

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 Scopes and Methods in Political Science (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) (with exceptions)
Political Theory: Language if required by the dissertation topic

The language requirement is to be satisfied by passing a departmental exam that measures the student's capacity to do scholarly research in that language. 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 Ph.D. 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 M.A. degree cannot be bypassed. All students must either complete an M.A. degree at UNC or have completed an M.A. degree elsewhere.

Students typically will register for 3 hours of MA Thesis credit in the Spring of the second year. The thesis must be successfully defended no later than May 15; 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. The student shall 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 advisor.

Once the committee members have had an adequate opportunity to review a draft of the M.A. thesis, an oral defense of the thesis, which is the final M.A. degree oral examination, is held. The student's main thesis advisor 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 advisor is responsible for verifying that the changes required by the committee have been made. Following the M.A. 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.

IX. Students Entering with Graduate Credits or an MA Degree

Students who have done graduate coursework in Political Science or related field[3] 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 Ph.D. degree (6 hours toward the MA degree). Up to two courses may be counted in the major field and one course in the minor field. A student who has taken substantial coursework in a field at another university may, in exceptional circumstances, be permitted to take the minor exam in that field without additional coursework at Carolina.

Students who enter with an MA degree earned without writing a thesis are required to submit a "by-pass paper," which should be roughly comparable to the thesis required of MA candidates at Carolina. The paper will be evaluated (acceptable or unacceptable) by three members of the relevant field, appointed by the Director of Graduate Studies on the recommendation of the field chair. The by-pass paper requirement should be satisfied no

[3] 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.

later than the third semester of coursework.

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. Ph.D. Comprehensive Exams

Ph.D. Qualifying Exams will be given in one "major" and one "minor" field.

Exams will be given over two days during a two week period. Fall exams will begin on Monday after Labor Day. Spring exams will begin on the Monday after Spring break.

Exams will be given each week normally on Monday and Tuesday. No student will be required to take two exams in the same week. Questions for the first day will be distributed at 8 am and answers collected at 5 pm. On the second day, the major field exam will run from 8 am to 5 pm; the minor field exam will run from 8 am to 12:30 pm.

For both major and minor field exams, the student will be required on the first day to answer one or two questions of a broad theoretical nature. On the second day, major field students will be required to answer two, three or four questions. Minor field students will be required to answer one. The same questions will be asked of major and minor field students. On the second day, the major exam may be divided into "parts," but minor field students will be allowed to select the question that they answer from the full range of questions asked that day.

The two exams shall be taken no later than the spring semester of the third year. The dissertation proposal must be defended by the beginning of the fall semester of the fourth year. 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 November 1 or June 1 of the preceding 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 December 1 of the preceding semester for spring exams and by July 1 for the fall exams. Committees will be composed by the Director of Graduate Studies on the recommendation of 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 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. In most regards, the exam will not be specially tailored for individual students. On the second day exam the committee shall, however, attempt to allow each student the opportunity to answer one (but only one) question -- formulated by the committee, not the student -- on a topic or within a subfield that has been of special interest to the student. The second day exam will include questions of a general nature also. A file of past examinations (questions only) shall be kept in the Graduate Office.

Taken together, the two parts of the exam imply that the minor field exam requires a) general mastery of the principal theoretical issues of the field (breadth"), and b) special competence ("depth") in one, but only one, standard substantive area. In other words, the major and minor field exams are differentiated principally by the range of expertise expected. Readers will be told which exams are minor field exams.

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.) The chair of the examining committee will submit a report indicating the bases for the committee's collective evaluation.

The use of notes and books will be permitted, but extensive bibliographic references are not expected in answers. 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.

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

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 Ph.D.

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

Semester one: Teaching Seminar conducted by the department

Semester two: Act as an Instructional Assistant in a course leading one discussion section.

Second or third year: TA in at least one course. Normally, students will TA in several courses during their graduate education in order to receive university financial support.

Prior to or concurrent with the student's first semester acting as a Teaching Fellow (TF, teaching one's own course), depending on the structure of the course: Take Political Science 881, Teaching Political Science.

The sequence will vary for students wholly or partly on support which requires no service or service other than teaching. The minimum requirement for the PhD degree are the completion of 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 each semester they teach. 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. A committee of three department faculty members appointed by the Chair of the department in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies will evaluate the oral language skills of non-native English speaking students in the second semester of the first year. The Director of Graduate Studies will enroll all non-native English speaking new graduate students in GRAD 810, Communication in the American Classroom, for the fall semester of their first year. This course requirement can be waived by passing an oral examination conducted by the aforementioned faculty committee in the week before the beginning of fall semester classes.

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 TA, as evaluated by the professor in sectioned courses or by the Director of Graduate Studies 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. However, in exceptional circumstances, students who have attempted to qualify for North Carolina residency will have priority in TF and TA assignments over those who have not done so.

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.

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. This deadline applies to students on leave, off campus, or on alternative funding as well as students in residence currently on departmental funding.

XIV. 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://www.ais.unc.edu/sis/admissions/grad/gradhome.html. 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.