

## **Degree Requirements for the Public Policy & Political Science PhD Program**

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*\*\* Note that some requirements may change after the time of publication. Similarly, it is likely that not all courses described below are offered each semester. It is the responsibility of the student to verify information about degree requirements with the directors of graduate studies in public policy and political science.*

### **Political Science Department Course Requirements**

#### **Major & Minor Fields**

In the political science doctoral program, a student's coursework is geared toward the completion of a preliminary examination in one major field of political science and two minor fields. For joint students in the joint program, public policy coursework substitutes for the first major field. Joint students are required to complete coursework and pass an exam in their major field, and to complete the necessary coursework in a second minor field (but not pass an exam in this minor field). Preliminary exams are oral or written examinations (depending on field) conducted by faculty and are normally given only during September, January, and April/May. A student must be enrolled the semester during which the final preliminary examination is taken. Registration may be under the PUBPOL 990 or POLSCI 990: Dissertation/ Pre-candidate course number. Failing a preliminary exam for a second time is grounds for dismissal from the program. Requirements for the second minor field can be satisfied through either a preliminary examination in this field or the completion of three graduate-level courses with grades of B+ or better, except when separate field guidelines specify otherwise.

More information about the Political Science requirements can be found in their [Graduate Program Guide](#).

#### **Public Policy Specific Course Requirements**

- 1 course in program evaluation (3 credits) – typically Joint Political Science & Public Policy students take Public Policy 639, Econ 675 or Public Policy 821. Students may petition the PhD Program Director to allow another course to count toward this requirement. See [this document](#) for a list of previously accepted courses that have counted for this requirement in the past.
- 1 course in microeconomics (3 credits) – Students typically take PUBPOL 555: Microeconomics A or PUBPOL 559: Accelerated Microeconomics. Students may petition the PhD Program Director to allow another course to count toward this requirement. See [this document](#) for a list of previously accepted courses that have counted for this requirement in the past.
- 1 course in methods (3 credits) – students often take SURVMETH 600 or POL SCI 680 (if major or second minor is not methods) for this requirement. Note that students who pursue a Major or Minor field in research methods will automatically fulfill this requirement. See [this document](#) for a list of previously accepted courses that have counted for this requirement in the past.

- 2 courses in a substantive policy area (6 credits total) – at least one of these courses must be taken outside the student’s home social science department, and both courses must be approved by the PhD program director. See [this document](#) for a list of previously accepted courses that have counted for this requirement in the past.
- Policy seminar (4 semesters, 1 credit per semester) – Public Policy 810 – This seminar meets bi-weekly and students are required to enroll in this course during their first two years in the PhD program.

### **Public Policy Third-Year Paper Requirement**

Students must complete an original research paper. The third year paper provides students a chance to begin their careers as independent researchers. It should be an original research paper on a policy-related topic. This paper may be related to papers written for doctoral courses and may (but does not need to) lead into the dissertation proposal. The goal is a paper that would eventually be suitable for publication.

### **Annual Student Evaluation**

Reviews for students in the joint Public Policy and Political Science program will follow the general timeline and structure of reviews for doctoral students in Political Science, with an important difference being that reviews for joint students will incorporate feedback from advisors in both the Ford School and the Political Science department, and the feedback will be provided jointly by the director of the graduate studies in Political Science and the director of doctoral programs at the Ford School.

#### *First-Year Evaluation*

The first-year evaluation for Political Science takes place toward the end of the first year in residence. For students in the joint Public Policy and Political Science program, the First Year Evaluation Committee should consist of the student’s current advisors in the Ford School as well as the Political Science Department and, if the student chooses, one other faculty member chosen by the student. In making its evaluation, the First Year Evaluation Committee will take the following information into account:

- The student’s grade record and a list of winter term and proposed courses for the fall term of his or her second year.
- A seminar paper or other piece of work selected by the student as his or her best work so far. This paper may have been prepared prior to admission to the graduate program.

After reviewing these materials, the committee will meet with the student and discuss his or her progress. Following the meeting, the committee will make a formal report, which should identify the degree to which the student has mastered scholarly tools, accumulated substantive knowledge, and become acquainted with the relevant literature.

The DGS in the Ford School and the DGS in the Department of political science will meet to discuss the report and then prepare a joint letter providing the student with a more general assessment of his or her progress.

#### *Second-Year Evaluation*

Like the first-year evaluation, the second-year evaluation is typically conducted during the winter semester and involves a committee of faculty familiar with the student's work. For students in the joint program, the committee should consist of the student's current advisors in the Ford School as well as the Political Science Department, and at least one additional faculty member from the student's major field who can be selected by the student. The committee reviews the student's course work, a recent piece of his or her written work, and the student's plans for achieving candidacy.

In making its evaluation, the committee will examine the same material as for the first-year evaluation, including a more recent piece of written work done by the student while in the department's graduate program. In addition, the student is required to submit a written plan of course work for achieving candidacy. The committee will also inquire into the satisfactory elimination of any deficiencies noted during the first-year evaluation.

At the conclusion of this evaluation, the student will be given one of the following evaluations: encouraged to proceed towards the Ph.D., eligible to proceed, or not allowed to continue in the program. The committee will submit its evaluation to the DGS in Political Science, and it will be maintained in the student's academic folder.

The DGS in the Ford School and the DGS in the Department of Political Science will meet to discuss the report and then prepare a joint letter providing the student with a more general assessment of his or her progress.

Students who are not allowed to continue in the program may appeal this decision to the Director of Graduate Studies, in writing, within one week of the evaluation. Students who appeal will be reevaluated within two weeks of the date of their appeal by a new committee consisting of the Director of Graduate Studies as Chairperson, the coordinator of the student's major subfield or his/her designate, and a third member from the department selected by the student. The decision of this second evaluation committee will be final.

#### *Students in Year 3 and Beyond:*

Doctoral students in political science in year 3 and beyond are evaluated once per year, typically near the end of the winter term.

Students in the joint program in Public Policy and Political Science will be required to complete a self-assessment form in which they will not only describe their progress to date, but also identify their primary advisor in the Ford School and the Political Science department.

The student's advisors will be asked to complete a brief evaluation of the student.

The DGS in the Ford School and the DGS in the Department of political science will review and discuss the student's self-assessment, the advisor evaluations and other relevant material. They will then prepare a joint letter providing the student with a more general assessment of his or her progress.

These assessments will focus on different milestones depending on the student's year in the program. For example, when evaluating a third-year student, the directors will focus on whether the student has or will soon advance to candidacy. For students in years 4 or 5, the directors will focus on whether the student has formed a dissertation committee and defended his or her prospectus.

### **Prospectus Defense**

A student's prospectus defense typically occurs in the 4th or 5th year, although the timing of prospectus varies somewhat with the student's discipline; joint students should follow the norms of their disciplinary department. During this time, a doctoral candidate lays out his/her intended dissertation research to their committee members. The prospectus defense is done in person with as many members present as possible. If necessary, some members are able to call-in. All committee members must approve the prospectus defense.

Prospectus committee members are assumed to be the same as a student's final dissertation committee (please refer to [Rackham's guidelines](#) for the composition rules). We request prospectus committees to consist of at least four faculty members, three of whom are members of the Graduate Faculty, and two of whom are from the doctoral candidate's home program. Furthermore, each joint doctoral program committee must have one committee member from each department (Ford School and Political Science).

**Typical Plan for Public Policy & Political Science Students**

<b>Year 1</b>		
<b>Fall</b>	PUBPOL 810	Policy Seminar
	2 Courses in PolSci Major Field (non-PubPol)*	
	1 Course in Second Minor Field (non-PubPol)*	
<b>Winter</b>	PUBPOL 810	Policy Seminar
	2 Courses in PolSci Major Field (non-PubPol)*	
	1 Course in Second Minor Field (non-PubPol)*	
<b>Summer</b>	<b>First-Year Evaluation</b>	
<b>Year 2</b>		
<b>Fall</b>	POLSCI 993	GSI Training Course
	1 Course in Second Minor Field (non-PubPol)*	
	PUBPOL 810	Policy Seminar
	<u>Methods</u> SURVMETH 600	Fundamental Survey Methods
	<u>Program Evaluation</u> PUBPOL 639	Quantitative Methods for Program Evaluation
<b>Winter</b>	PUBPOL 810	Policy Seminar
	Finish Major and Minor PolSci courses*	
<b>Summer</b>	<b>PRELIM EXAM</b>	<b>Major Field</b>
	<b>Second-Year Evaluation</b>	
<b>Year 3</b>		
<b>Fall</b>	PUBPOL 555	Microeconomics
	<u>Substantive Policy</u> Course #1	See <a href="#">here</a> for course options
	<u>Third Year Paper</u> Course: PUBPOL 830	Immersion in Research
<b>Winter</b>	<u>Substantive Policy</u> Course #2	See <a href="#">here</a> for course options
	<u>Third Year Paper</u> Course: PUBPOL 830	Immersion in Research
<b>Year 4</b>		
	PUBPOL 995 or POLSCI 995	Dissertation Candidate
<b>Year 5</b>		
	PUBPOL 995 or POLSCI 995	Dissertation Candidate

\* Specific courses depend on choice of field and may vary by year. See Political Science Department advisor.