

Political Science, PhD

Requirements

The Doctor of Philosophy program in political science requires a minimum of 72 s.h. of graduate credit. Students must maintain a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.40.

The program is designed to prepare students for research, teaching, and scholarly endeavor in academic settings and private or governmental institutions. It produces graduates who are deeply committed to the study of politics, familiar with fundamental knowledge about political processes, well trained in methods and techniques for careful investigation of basic and applied research questions, and determined to make contributions to the discipline of political science and to society.

The department usually admits six to eight PhD students each year, so students work closely with faculty members, often collaborating on research and publication. Graduate students know one another and enjoy supportive, congenial working conditions.

Five fields of study are available: American politics, comparative politics, international relations, formal theory, and research methods. Each student chooses three fields of study for qualifying examinations.

Doctoral study usually lasts four to five years. The first-year curriculum for all students consists of core courses equally divided between substance and methodology. Emphasis is on basic research methods, including quantitative methods, that political scientists must understand thoroughly. Special attention is given to research design, collection of observations, and data analysis and interpretation.

The second and third years of study are spent in small seminars with focused, substantive topics. Papers written for these seminars might be submitted to journals or read at professional meetings. Students must complete their qualifying examinations by the end of the third year. They take their comprehensive examination (oral defense of the dissertation proposal) by the middle of the first semester of their fourth year.

The fourth and fifth years are spent on dissertation research and writing. Students who do basic research and gather data abroad often require an additional year to complete the dissertation.

The following courses are required during the first and second years of graduate study.

Course #	Title	Hours
First Year, Fall Semester		
POLI:5000	Introduction to Political Analysis	4
POLI:5001	Introductory Methodology	4
	A field seminar numbered 5100-5700 (see "Field Seminars" below)	4
First Year, Second Semester		
POLI:5003	Intermediate Methodology	4
	Two field seminars numbered 5100-5700 (see "Field Seminars" below)	8

Second Year

POLI:7003	Advanced Methodology	4
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Field Seminars

The field seminars numbered 5100-5700 are as follows.

Course #	Title	Hours
POLI:5100	American Politics	4
POLI:5400	Comparative Politics	4
POLI:5500	International Politics	4
POLI:5700	Introduction to Formal Models in Political Science	4

Students must complete the appropriate course numbered 5100-5700 before enrolling in a course numbered 7000 or above. In unusual circumstances and with the permission of the instructor teaching the higher-level course, a student may enroll in that course and a course numbered 5100-5700 at the same time.

Graduate students are expected to take at least 12 s.h. of coursework per semester through their second year of graduate study. Typically, this is in regularly scheduled courses rather than readings courses. During the third year, students are expected to take a minimum of 12 s.h. of regularly scheduled coursework; readings courses should be limited to the second semester of the third year. Students may take up to 12 s.h. in readings courses (not counting coursework accumulated in summer terms, when readings courses are often all that is available).

Core Graduate Courses

Course #	Title	Hours
POLI:5000	Introduction to Political Analysis	4
POLI:5001	Introductory Methodology	3-4
POLI:5100	American Politics	4
POLI:5400	Comparative Politics	4
POLI:5500	International Politics	4
POLI:5700	Introduction to Formal Models in Political Science	4
POLI:6635	Crossing Borders Seminar	2-3

Advanced Graduate Courses

Course #	Title	Hours
POLI:5003	Intermediate Methodology	4
POLI:5111	American Public Policy	3
POLI:5117	Bureaucratic Politics and Public Administration	3
POLI:5200	American State Politics	3
POLI:7002	Topics Methodology	4
POLI:7003	Advanced Methodology	4
POLI:7100	Modeling American Politics	4
POLI:7150	Problems in American Politics	4
POLI:7202	Public Opinion and Electoral Behavior	4
POLI:7270	Responsible Research in Political Science	1
POLI:7450	Problems of Comparative Politics	4
POLI:7502	International Institutions and Cooperation	4

POLI:7503	International Conflict and Cooperation	4
POLI:7550	Problems in International Politics	4
POLI:7701	Dynamic Models of International Politics	2-4
POLI:7900	Readings Tutorial	arr.
POLI:7901	Research Tutorial	arr.
POLI:7910	PhD Dissertation	arr.

Quantitative Methods

All doctoral students must demonstrate at least minimal competence in quantitative methods. Students must earn at least a B grade in POLI:5001 Introductory Methodology, POLI:5003 Intermediate Methodology, and POLI:7003 Advanced Methodology. Students who do not meet this requirement must take a substitute course selected by faculty members who teach the quantitative methods courses.

Postcomprehensive Registration

Graduate College regulations require that students be registered at the University of Iowa each semester after passing the comprehensive examination until their degree is awarded, and that this registration accurately reflects the amount and type of work undertaken, the use of university facilities, and the amount of consultation with the faculty. After passing their comprehensive examination, students working on their dissertation research should register in POLI:7910 PhD Dissertation. No more than 30 s.h. are granted for dissertation preparation.

The Guide to Doctoral Study, available from the Department of Political Science and on its website, provides a comprehensive statement of departmental requirements.