



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

School of Government & Public Policy

Ph.D. Handbook 2026-2027

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In this handbook we provide details regarding the rules and procedures relevant to the Ph.D. program in the School of Government & Public Policy (SGPP) at the University of Arizona.¹ It is the responsibility of students to familiarize themselves with the general campus-wide requirements and information on transfer of graduate credit from other institutions, off-campus graduate study, scholastic standards, forms that the student must submit to the Graduate College, and the time limit for the completion of requirements for graduate degrees.²

¹ For information regarding other graduate degrees offered by SGPP, including the MPP, MPA, and MA ISS programs, please consult the following website:
<http://sgpp.arizona.edu/programs>

² Please consult the Graduate College: <http://grad.arizona.edu> and the University General Catalog: <http://catalog.arizona.edu>

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1. Program Structure

The Ph.D. program in the School of Government & Public Policy (SGPP) at the University of Arizona is a professional research degree that is designed to produce well-rounded scholars suited for positions in research and education in both the public and private sectors.³

The Ph.D. program is designed to be completed in five academic years. Progress towards the completion of the Ph.D. degree is split into two phases—a two-to-three year *pre-candidacy* phase, which culminates with the completion of comprehensive exams, and a two year *candidacy* phase, which culminates with the defense of the dissertation.

1.1. The Minimum Requirements of the Program

Students are typically required to complete a minimum of 66 units⁴:

- a minimum of 6 semesters full-time graduate study;
- approximately 18-24 units (+ comps) in a single major concentration within SGPP⁵;
- 12 units (+ comps) in a minor concentration within or outside of SGPP⁶;
- a minimum of 12 units in political methodology;⁷
- a minimum of 18 units in dissertation credits (POL920);
- 6 units of professionalization workshops (POL697A-F);
- a maximum of 6 units of independent study.

³ Details of job placements for graduates of the program over the past decade can be accessed online: <http://sgpp.arizona.edu>

⁴ students enrolled prior to the 2019-20 academic year are expected to complete at least 63 units, including 3 instead of 6 professionalization courses. 3 new one-credit professionalization courses were added in the 2022-23 academic year, but students enrolled prior to this point are not required to complete these courses given the relevant timing of the courses. Students who began the program in Fall 2019 will be expected to complete 64 credits, as they will only take one of the new professionalization courses (Beyond Academia).

⁵ When completing the online Gradpath plan of study forms, please note that all non-minor credits are considered to be credits towards the major subfield.

⁶ You can find details of minors available outside of SGPP here: <http://grad.arizona.edu/programs/>

⁷ Students wishing to minor in methodology must take a minimum of two additional courses beyond the core. See Table 1 below for more details.

1.2. Concentrations

The program offers expert faculty supervision and specialized course work in five concentrations. One of the priorities of SGPP is to cultivate and explore the various intersections between these all-too-often siloed subfields of our disciplines. Students are, accordingly, encouraged to explore these intersections in their course selection and research agendas.

- *American Politics*. This concentration is home to expertise in political psychology, political participation, public opinion and voting behavior, public law and judicial process, congress and legislative process, political decision-making, political parties, state politics, and gender and politics.
- *Comparative Politics*. This concentration is home to expertise in political economy and development, political institutions and elites, democratic theory, public opinion and voting behavior, Communist and post-Communist systems, Western Europe, Latin America, Middle East, East and South East Asia.
- *International Relations*. This concentration is home to expertise in international conflict and conflict management, civil conflict and terrorism, international structures and integration, international theory, international political economy, and comparative foreign policy.
- *Public Policy & Management*. This concentration is home to expertise in the public policy process, network theory and science, organizational theory, environment and sustainability, collaborative governance, crime and public policy, and public and non-profit management.
- *Research Methodology* (minor only). This concentration is home to expertise in econometric methods, measurement, survey methodology, and other formal, quantitative, and qualitative techniques, including experimental methods, network science, geographic information systems, fieldwork, and agent-based modeling.

1.3 Concentration Requirements

Table 1 details the requirements for completion of a major and/or minor in each of the five concentrations within the School. As noted above, students looking to complete a minor concentration outside of the SGPP should confirm the requirements for that minor with the host unit. Local unit rules and requirements always take precedence.

Table 1: Credit requirements for concentrations

Subfield	Course Requirements
Public Policy & Management (PPM)	POL600 + POL601 + 2 additional courses from POL602—619 + comprehensive exam
American Politics (AP)	POL620 + 3 courses from POL621—639 + comprehensive exam
Comparative Politics (CP)	POL640 + 3 courses from POL641—659 + comprehensive exam
International Relations (IR)	POL660 + 3 courses from POL661—679 + comprehensive exam
Research Methodology (RM) (minor only)	POL680 + POL681 + POL682 + POL683 + 2 courses from POL684—689 + comprehensive exam

1.4 Tentative Schedule of Course Offerings

Table 2 provides a list of Ph.D. courses being offered in SGPP in the 2026-27 academic year.

Table 2: Schedule

Subfield	Semester	Course Name (Number; Instructor)
PPM	Fall 2026	Organization Theory (601; C. Smith)
	Fall 2026	Political Networks (610; Henry)
	Spring 2027	Federalism in Comparative Perspective (606; Schlager)
CP	Fall 2026	Gender and Politics (630; Barnett)
	Fall 2026	Comparative Political Institutions (650; Torres-Beltran)
	Spring 2027	Political and Criminal Violence (669; Osorio)
IR	Fall 2026	Intro to IR (660; Mailhot)
	Spring 2027	Human Rights and Repression (667; Arnon)
Methods	Fall 2026	Research Design (680; Klar)
	Fall 2026	Quant Methods I (681; Westerland)
	Spring 2027	Quant Methods II (682; Gonzalez)
	Spring 2027	Quant Methods III (683; Weber)
	Spring 2027	Experimental Methods (687; Klar)

1.5 *PhD Courses and Cross-Listings By Concentrations*

Table 3 provides a list of Ph.D. courses that are currently on our books. This table also details how courses are cross-listed between concentrations. Cross-listing means that students can elect to complete a class to satisfy core requirements in any ONE of the cross-listed concentrations. Concentrations are denoted as follows: American Politics (AP), Comparative Politics (CP), International Relations (IR), Public Policy & Management (PPM), and Research Methodology (RM). *If a course is not identified as being cross-listed, but a student would like to petition to have it count for a different subfield, the student can discuss this matter with the Ph.D. Program Director.*

Table 3: Ph.D. courses

Course Name	Cross-listed with?
Public Policy & Management	.
POL600: Theories of Policy Making	.
POL601: Organization Theory	.
POL602: History of Thought in Public Management	.
POL606: Federalism in Comparative Perspective	AP, CP
POL608: Theory & Research on the Non-profit Sector	.
POL610: Political Networks	RM
POL612: Energy Policy & Politics	.
POL614: Technology Policy	.
American Politics	
POL620: Intro. to American Politics	.
POL622: Political Institutions	CP
POL625: Political Psychology	PPM, IR
POL626: Political Decision-Making	PPM
POL627: Political Ideology	CP
POL627: Latino Politics	.
POL630: Gender and Politics	.
POL631: Race & Ethnicity	.
Comparative Politics	
POL640: Intro to Comparative Politics	.
POL650: Comparative Political Institutions	.
POL651: Authoritarian Regimes	.
POL652: Democratization	IR
POL653: Comparative Political Economy	AP, IR
POL669: Micro-dynamics of Political and Organized Criminal Violence	IR
International Relations	
POL660: Intro to IR	.
POL663: Scientific Study of Conflict	.
POL664: Scientific Study of Civil War	CP
POL665: Nonviolent Civil Resistance	CP
POL666: Terrorism & Counterterrorism	.
POL667: Human Rights & Repression	CP
POL668: Conflict Management	.
POL670: Global and Regional Governance	.
POL671: Global Political Economy	.
POL673: Regional Analysis in World Politics	.

Table 3: Ph.D. courses (cont'd)

Course Name	Cross-listed with
Research Methodology	.
POL680: Research Design	.
POL681: Quant Methods I	.
POL682: Quant Methods II	.
POL683: Quant Methods III	.
POL684: Causal Inference	PPM
POL685: Panel Data Analysis	.
POL686: Qualitative & Mixed Methods Research	CP/PPM
POL687: Experimental Methods	AP
POL688: Digital Traces	AP
Ph.D. Professionalization	
POL697A: Professional Norms & Teaching (Fall first year)	.
POL697B: Professional Norms in Research (Fall first year)	.
POL697D: Second Year Research Project (Spring second year)	.
POL697E: Preparing the Prospectus (Spring third year)	.
POL697C: The (Academic) Job Market (Fall fourth year)	.
POL697F: Engaging Beyond Academia (Spring fourth year)	.

2. *The Learning Objectives of the Program*

The Ph.D. program is designed to help students to develop the following:

- *Expertise in the subject matter of one of the subfields covered by the School.* This is demonstrated through coursework, completion of the comprehensive exams, and the dissertation.
- *Comprehension of a minor field of study.* The student may select a minor from among those offered in the School or from any appropriate PhD minor offered at the University of Arizona. The student should work closely with their advisor to select an appropriate minor. This is demonstrated through coursework and the completion of the comprehensive exams.
- *Expertise in the research enterprise.* This is developed through a sequence of four methods courses, as well as additional research skills pursuant to the particular dissertation project. This is demonstrated by the second year paper and presentation, as well as by the dissertation.
- *Proficiency in written and oral communication.* This is achieved by completing written assignments for courses, writing and presenting papers at conferences, submitting papers for consideration at peer-review outlets, and by participating in seminars and workshops. This is demonstrated through the second year paper and presentation, the comprehensive exams, the dissertation and dissertation defense.
- *Experience in the design and delivery of teaching.* This is achieved via work as a teaching assistant and an instructor, as well as through participation in School, College, and University-wide training programs. Expertise will ideally be developed across

various platforms, including lectures, discussion sessions, and workshops, and in-person, online, and hybrid formats. This is demonstrated through TA and instructor duties, student evaluations, and peer/faculty review.

- *Professionalism in service to colleagues and the School.* This is achieved through participation in professional activities, including School and College events, conferences and workshops, and through work as teaching and research assistants. This is demonstrated through biannual supervisor and annual faculty evaluations.

3. Departmental Satisfactory Academic Progress

Doctoral students are required to make satisfactory progress in order to be considered eligible for funding and to maintain good standing in the program. Maintaining satisfactory progress does not guarantee funding. All such decisions are made contingent upon available funding. The faculty hold an annual evaluation meeting every spring, at which time they reach a collective decision as to whether or not each student is making satisfactory progress.

3.1. What is satisfactory progress?

The absolute minimum criteria for satisfactory progress include:

- *Maintain a grade point average of no less than 3.50 in all graduate course work. GPA is calculated at the end of each semester.*
- *No final grades below a "B" in major or core methods courses.*
- *Students may not carry more than two "incompletes" at any time.*
- *Successfully complete the research presentation.*
- *Successfully complete both written and oral portions of a comprehensive examination within four years of starting the Ph.D. program. Students must take comprehensive exams no more than 6 months after completing course work requirements.*
- *A formal dissertation proposal must be written, submitted, and approved (by all dissertation committee members). Approval must be gained within 6 months of completing the comprehensive exams.*
- *Satisfactory progress must be made toward completion of the dissertation. If a student has not successfully defended the dissertation within three years of passing the comprehensive exam, they can be deemed as not making satisfactory progress.*

3.2. What is the process for evaluating satisfactory progress?

Faculty evaluate student performance in classes and in assistantships. They hold a student review meeting at the end of each academic year. Furthermore, relevant committees review students completing their research papers and presentations, completing comprehensive exams and dissertation prospectuses, and those defending their dissertations. The faculty also consider student participation in professional activities, including conference participation, article manuscript and grant submissions, and attendance at SGPP colloquia.

Evaluations incorporate all information regarding student progress and performance as required to assess each item listed above. At the conclusion of the spring semester each year, the Ph.D. Committee issues letters to students hoping to continue on the program. Letters indicate the faculty's assessment of the students' work. This review process is used to determine continuing funding decisions.⁸

⁸ See section 5.1 below for more details on School funding practices and procedures.

3.3. What happens when students are deemed to be not making satisfactory progress?

An evaluation of "not making Satisfactory Academic Progress" is grounds for removal of funding by SGPP. Students judged to have academic difficulties (i.e., at risk of failing to satisfy program requirements) will receive written notice from the faculty with specific suggestions as to how these problems might be remedied and the date by which such actions must be taken. This notification is copied to the Graduate College. If students are subsequently deemed not to have remediated in the requisite fashion or time, SGPP will recommend to the Graduate college that they be disqualified.

The Graduate College has guidelines which departments must follow in order to disqualify graduate students from programs.⁹ Students should familiarize themselves with the steps in this process so they know their rights and responsibilities should such a situation arise.

⁹ These guidelines can be found here: <https://grad.arizona.edu/policies/academic-policies>.

If a student wishes to appeal the aforementioned requirements, they should do so in writing to the Ph.D. Program Director. The appeal will be reviewed by an ad-hoc committee of three members of the full SGPP faculty and may include a collective meeting with the student. A decision to accept the appeal will be based on a majority vote. The ad-hoc faculty committee may place additional requirements on the student as a prerequisite for continuing in the program.

4. Year-To-Year Guide

GradPath is the online system that manages the creation, routing, and approval of all Graduate College degree certification forms.¹⁰ This system is discussed in detail in the next section of this handbook.

¹⁰ For more details:
<http://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/gradpath>

In Table 3, we detail an example plan of study for the five years of the Ph.D. program. Students are not bound to follow the structure verbatim. However, this is probably the most efficient pathway through the program. In the remainder of this section, we then discuss the main activities and requirements encountered in each year of the program.

Table 3: Plan of study

Year	Semester	Units	Classes taken	Landmark activity
First	Fall	12	POL680, POL681 (4 units), POL697A, POL697B, Major	Identify advisor
	Spring	9	POL682, Major, Minor	2nd year paper question
Second	Fall	9	POL683, Major, Minor	2nd year paper writing
	Spring	10	POL 697D, Major, Major, Minor	2nd year paper presentation
Third	Fall	6+	Major, Major/Minor	Comps/prospectus preparation
	Spring	7+	POL 697E, Major, Major/Minor	Comprehensive exams
Fourth	Fall	7	POL 697C, POL920	Defend prospectus
	Spring	7	POL 697F, POL920	Dissertation research
Fifth	Fall	3	POL920	Dissertation writing
	Spring	3	POL920	Defend dissertation

4.1. The First Year

4.1.1. Choosing classes

As depicted in Table 2, students take 3 classes in both semesters of their first year, plus two one-credit “professionalization” courses in the fall. Under normal circumstances, this will include two methods classes in the first semester (POL680; POL681)¹¹ and one methods class in the second semester (POL 682). The additional class in the first semester will tend to be taken from the student’s proposed major concentration. The final two classes in the spring will tend to be a combination of coursework from the major and minor concentrations.

¹¹ During orientation week students should select 3 classes for the 1st semester, to include POL680 and POL681.

4.1.2. Advisor/advisee pairings

Early on in the first year, the Ph.D. Program Director will assist incoming students to identify a preliminary advisor. Because incoming students have often not fully developed their research ideas, this advisor serves primarily as a mentor. These mentors provide advice and guidance to the students with a priority on helping the students to settle in to the program as they begin their graduate studies.

Given that student research interests are likely to change throughout the course of the first year, it is absolutely possible for students to request a change in advisor at the end of the first year. Any such changes will first be agreed upon by the student, the old and new advisors in question, and the Ph.D. Program Director. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain frequent contact with their advisor. Moreover, students are strongly advised to get to know multiple faculty members in the period between the 1st year and candidacy; this is especially important for the development and writing of the 2nd year research paper. Generally speaking, this involves staying in touch with a professor about how the student is progressing on their research project(s). Students should avail themselves of opportunities to meet with professors during their office hours, or contact them via email to arrange an appointment at a mutually convenient time.

4.2. *The Second Year*

The second year sees students encounter the first significant assessment on the program: the second year research project, which includes completion of a paper and a presentation to faculty and fellow graduate students. As part of this process, students will also need to select a secondary reader with whom to consult in addition to their advisor.

4.2.1. *Plan of Study*

During the first semester of the second year, the student (in collaboration with their advisor and the Ph.D. Program Director) is tasked with putting together a plan of study for the remainder of their pre-candidacy program. Units counting toward the Ph.D. requirement must be on the Doctoral Plan of Study form. The Doctoral Plan of Study is available on the GradPath system in the student's UAccess Student page.¹² Upon submission of the form it will be forwarded to the Program Director for review and approval.

¹² Students should familiarize themselves with the GradPath system early and often in the program: <http://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/gradpath>.

At least twenty-two units appearing on a Doctoral Plan of Study must be for courses for which regular grades (i.e., A, B, etc.) are given. No more than six credits of independent study may be counted toward the degree. It is possible for earned graduate credits from other institutions to be applied toward the program requirements, pending approval from the student's advisor and the Ph.D. Committee. Up to six units of transfer credits may be approved, although any transfer credits must also be evaluated by the Graduate College for eligibility. This process is initiated via a form on GradPath.

Students must declare a major field of specialization and one or two minor fields. Ph.D. minor fields may be housed in other departments.¹³

¹³ If outside SGPP, refer to the minor field's policies on comprehensive examinations to determine the number of faculty committee members and procedures for testing.

4.2.2. *The Second-Year Research Project*

At the beginning of the Fall semester of the second year, the Ph.D. Program Director meets with all second year students to discuss the basic details for their paper and presentation. All students are encouraged to begin developing this research project in the Fall

semester, or even earlier. This should be done in consultation with their primary advisor(s). In the Spring semester, they will submit a draft of their paper to their advisor and a second reader. Submissions are due sometime in mid-March. They will then receive feedback prior to making a research presentation before the faculty in early/mid-April. A final version of the paper will ideally be submitted to the readers by the end of the semester. The reviews of the paper, the presentation to the faculty, and the students responses to initial feedback, will collectively inform the faculty's evaluation of student performance during the annual student review meeting.

Beginning in Spring 2023, students will take a professionalization course (POL 697D) designed to help them finalize key components of the required research paper and presentation.

4.2.3. A Master's Degree En-Route

Any student enrolled in the Ph.D. program that wishes to earn a Master's along the way may complete the following paperwork, so long as they have agreement and approval of their advisor and the Ph.D. Program Director. The first step is to submit the "Change of Program Request" form to the Graduate College.¹⁴ Students should select the "Adding a second program" box, and enter the degree information and the term in which the new program should be activated. When that form is processed and the new program is active in UAccess Student, the GradPath forms will then be open for the new degree. The student should then go to their GradPath forms and complete the Responsible Conduct of Research form for that plan, and then their plan of study will be initiated. They will submit the plan of study with the minimum number of units required for the MA – the student should list *exactly* 30 credit hours (the maximum number of credits that can be shared across degrees, like the MA and Ph.D.), from any combination of coursework that has been completed in the first two years. When that form is approved, the student will submit the Master's Committee Appointment form. If the student does not yet have a committee, they verify the advisor on that form. There are separate candidacy fees for the M.A. and the Ph.D. degrees. Finally, if a student has already earned a Master's degree in the same or similar field, they may not usually be awarded a second Master's degree.

¹⁴ This can be found here:
<https://grad.arizona.edu/gcforms/sites/gcforms/files/page/changeofprogramform.pdf>

4.3. The Third Year

4.3.1. The comprehensive exams

Before admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree, in addition to completing the degree requirements outlined above, the student must pass the doctoral comprehensive examination. The exam is administered by faculty from the student's major and minor concentrations of study. This examination is intended to test the student's general fundamental knowledge of their major and minor concentrations. It shall include written examinations covering the major and minor concentrations, and upon successful completion of these written exams, an oral examination is conducted by the student's examination committee.

The comprehensive examination, in both written and oral parts, is the occasion when faculty committee members have both the opportunity and the obligation to require the student to display a firm and substantial grasp of their concentration in a broad sense, and a sophisticated depth of understanding in those more limited areas of the discipline in which specialization has been pursued through additional coursework beyond the proseminar(s). As a test of a successful performance, the examining committee will question whether or not the student has demonstrated a qualified knowledge of their concentration(s) to such a degree that they will soon be welcomed as a professional and an academic colleague.

4.3.2. The comprehensive exam committee

The major concentration exam committee consists of a minimum of three members. If the student's minor concentration is housed within SGPP, they must include two faculty members from that concentration. If the student's minor concentration is housed outside of SGPP, they must include at least one faculty member from the unit that houses that concentration. For minors taken outside of SGPP, students must follow the minor exam practices established by that outside unit. Students may request special members on their committees (e.g., non-tenure track faculty). Such requests must be approved in advance of the exam by the Graduate College. All committee members must be present and voting for the oral comprehensive examination, including a retake, if one is required.

4.3.3. *The construction of the comprehensive exam*

The major field written exam will consist of at least three sets of multiple essay questions. The student must answer one question from each set. The minor exam, if the student is also minoring within the School, will consist of two sets of multiple essay questions. The student must answer one question from each set.

4.3.4. *The timing and execution of the comprehensive exam*

The comprehensive exams are to be taken at the beginning of the Spring semester of the student's third year (their sixth semester on the program). The written exam is "open-book" and "take-home." The exam will begin on the Monday prior to the beginning of classes in the Spring semester.

For students both majoring and minoring within the School, the written exam takes place across five days (a full work week). The student receives the full exam prior to 9:00am on the Monday morning and is required to turn in their final answers by 5:00pm on the Friday afternoon.

For students only majoring in the School (minoring in another unit), the written exam takes place across three days. The student receives the full exam prior to 9:00am on the Monday morning and is required to turn in their final answers by 5:00pm on the Wednesday afternoon.

For students only minoring in the School (majoring in another unit), the written exam takes place across two days. The student receives the full exam prior to 9:00am on the Monday morning and is required to turn in their final answers by 5:00pm on the Tuesday afternoon.

The oral exam should take place 2-3 weeks after completion of the written exam, once committee members have determined if the written exam is satisfactory. *The student and their committee members are expected to communicate over winter break or at the very beginning of the spring semester in order to schedule a tentative time for the oral exam to take place (provided the student satisfactorily completes their written exams), ideally at the end of January or in the first two weeks of February. Please inform the Ph.D. Program Director of the date and time tentatively*

arranged for the oral exam. As per the Graduate College guidelines, all committee members – including those from outside the School, if the student is minoring in another unit – must be present for the entirety of the oral exam.

4.3.5. The evaluation of the comprehensive exam

The comprehensive examination is considered to be a single exam, although it consists of written and oral parts occurring at different times. Because students are not permitted to undertake the oral examination until they have performed satisfactorily on the written examination, there shall be an initial evaluation of the written examinations followed by a final evaluation of the entire comprehensive examination (written and oral).

All exam committee members will vote to determine if the written exam is satisfactory, and they will vote again to either pass or fail the student following the oral exam. The student may proceed to the oral exams following a recommendation from the committee regarding the written exam. A student shall proceed to oral exams so long as *no more than one committee member* determines that the written exam is unsatisfactory. If two or more members of the student's committee determine that the written exam is not satisfactory, the exam committee may request a re-write of part or all of the exam. The re-write will be evaluated by the entire exam committee. If two or more committee members are not satisfied with the re-write, then the student is judged to have failed the comprehensive exam in its entirety and may not proceed to the oral exam. At this point, the Ph.D. Program Director will recommend to the Graduate College that the student be disqualified from the program. If all (or all but one of the) committee members are satisfied with the re-write, the student may progress to the oral comprehensive exams.

In the case of a failed oral examination (two or more committee members recommend failure), the exam committee will recommend one of the two following options:

- If the student is clearly so unqualified that the prospect of passing a second oral examination is remote, then the student may be advised not to undertake a second attempt. However, a student may repeat a failed oral examination one time if they choose to do so.
- If the student has a reasonable chance at succeeding in a later examination, then a reexamination will be recommended.

Any retake of the oral exam must be completed prior to the annual meeting in which the faculty discuss Ph.D. student funding eligibility for the following year. This occurs at the end of April. In the case of a failed second attempt at the oral examination, the faculty will proceed with a recommendation to the Graduate College that the student be disqualified from the program. Students wishing to appeal the faculty's evaluation of the comprehensive exams must follow the appeal procedures outlined above in section 3.3.

4.4. The Candidacy Phase

4.4.1. Formation of the Dissertation Committee

Upon successful completion of the comprehensive examination, students will form a dissertation committee in consultation with their advisor. The Ph.D. dissertation committee consists of three (or more) members. At least three members must be members of the "graduate faculty" at the University of Arizona; at least two must be faculty of the School, and a third can be faculty in another unit on campus. Faculty members from other universities may be appointed. They are considered "special members" and must first be approved by the PhD Director and by the Graduate College. These special members are in addition to the three other committee members that must be UA faculty members.

The Dissertation Committee, chaired by the dissertation advisor, is responsible for advising the candidate on all aspects of the dissertation research and for conducting the dissertation prospectus defense and the final defense of the dissertation.

4.4.2. The Dissertation Prospectus (and Defense)

Students must formally submit a written copy of their dissertation prospectus to their Dissertation Committee and to the Ph.D. Program Director. An oral presentation of the prospectus will be conducted by the entire Dissertation Committee. This will ideally be scheduled for the Spring of the third year, the Summer between third and fourth year, or, at the latest, the beginning of the Fall semester of the fourth year.

The dissertation may follow one of two general structures. First, students may propose to complete a "traditional" dissertation, which follows the book model, with sections framing the puzzle, reviewing the literature, and theoretically deriving hypotheses that precede any research design and testing. Second, students may propose to complete a "three papers" dissertation, which includes introduction and conclusion chapters that book-end three, stand alone—though thematically connected—papers. Note that if this second approach is pursued, all members of the student's committee must be in agreement that all

three papers are of publishable quality. In many respects, this alternative approach may be deemed to have a higher bar with respect to the quality of the work required.

In the second half of the spring semester of the student's third year on the program, they will take a professionalization course (POL 697E) focused on strategies for developing key components of the dissertation prospectus.

4.4.3. The Dissertation Project

The dissertation is a research product affording students an opportunity to thoroughly investigate a problem and to demonstrate their ability to conduct, organize, and communicate original research. Originality is defined broadly to allow the student considerable latitude in the nature of their contribution to scholarship. Students write a dissertation under the supervision of a Dissertation Advisor and at least two additional readers (committee members).

On a case-by-case basis, students may request that no more than one chapter of their dissertation project be comprised of research resulting from collaborative research with a co-author. It is crucial that students make their committee aware of their desire to include collaborative research in their project at the earliest possible date. It is also necessary, if this path is followed, that the student include a written statement to accompany their dissertation that characterizes the nature of the collaboration and the relative contributions of each author. In order to satisfy requirements, any collaborative research included in a dissertation must be led by the student.

Completed dissertations are defended before the Dissertation Committee as the final step in the fulfillment of the requirements for the doctoral degree. The student is expected to defend all elements of the dissertation and to answer any general questions related to the field(s) of study encompassed by the dissertation. The defense should take place in the Spring or Summer at the end of the fifth year. Typically, the final deadline for defending in the Summer is in early August.

4.4.4. The Job Market(s)

All students are expected to be on the academic and/or non-academic job market from the Fall of their fifth—and final—year of funding. Two

professionalization courses in the fourth year on the program (POL 697C and 697F) are intended to help students prepare materials for the academic job market and to engage with a variety of opportunities beyond academia.

5. GradPath “Paperwork”

The GradPath online system makes available nine forms to be completed by students and/or their advisors at key moments in the PhD program.¹⁵ Each form is typically completed by the student, approved by their major and minor advisors, approved by the Director of the Ph.D. Program, and then approved by the Graduate College.

¹⁵ See here for more details:
<https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/gradpath>

5.1. Responsible Conduct of Research Statement

This first form requires students to confirm their program data and certify that they are aware of Responsible Conduct of Research Compliance regulations and Academic integrity requirements and that they will adhere to them in their research. This form should be completed during the student’s first semester on the program.

5.2. Plan of Study

The Plan of Study is an agreement among the student, their department (the Ph.D. Program Director), and the Graduate College specifying which courses they will count toward the requirements of the degree. The Plan of Study will be routed for approval to the major advisor and the Ph.D. Program Director. A doctoral student declaring a minor will also have the Plan of Study routed to the minor advisor and department for approval. Students are strongly encouraged to complete a first version of this form in the third semester of the program. An updated version will then be submitted ahead of the comprehensive exams.

5.3. Comprehensive Exam Committee Appointment Form

This form is used to identify the faculty who will serve on the student’s oral comprehensive exam committee. Students should complete this form in consultation with their major and minor advisors in the Fall semester ahead of their comprehensive exams (Fall of their third year).

5.4. Announcement of Doctoral Comprehensive Exam

This form is used to schedule a doctoral oral comprehensive exam. The student should enter date and time information on the form. This form should be completed and submitted after the written exam and prior to the oral exam.

5.5. Results of Comprehensive Exam

The chair of the oral comprehensive exam committee (usually the major advisor) uses this form to report the results of the comprehensive exams. The form will include a summary of the formal vote taken by the oral comprehensive exam committee.

5.6. Doctoral Dissertation Committee Appointment

This form is used to report the committee for the final oral defense. When the committee membership has been determined, the student should submit this form for departmental and Graduate College approval. This form must be approved before the student holds their prospectus defense.

5.7. Prospectus/Proposal Confirmation

This form is submitted by the Director of the PhD Program and is used to report that the student has a prospectus or proposal for the dissertation that has been approved by the student's committee and has been filed with the department.

5.8. Announcement of Final Oral Defense

This form is used to formally schedule a final oral defense of the dissertation. Once the committee has agreed on a time and place for the oral defense, the student should enter this information on the form and submit this form to schedule the exam.

5.9. Results of Final Oral Defense

The Chair of the dissertation committee uses this form to report the results of the oral defense. The form will include a summary of the formal vote taken by the committee.

6. Graduate Student Resources

6.1. Graduate Assistantship Funding

SGPP makes a financial offer of funding to accepted applicants. Financial assistance includes a salary (in the form of a stipend), health insurance, and a waiver of tuition fees. Students making satisfactory academic progress remain eligible for funding for a minimum of four years but not more than five years. This financial assistance is always contingent on final budgetary approval and does not cover approximately \$500 of fees per semester that University guidelines dictate the student must pay.

6.2. Resources for Teaching Assistants

Teaching assistants (TAs) have numerous resources at their disposal. The College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS) offers a mandatory half-day training workshop at the beginning of the academic year to introduce first-time TAs to the essentials of teaching. Other resources include the University Center for Assessment, Teaching and Technology (UCATT),¹⁶ which has dedicated resources for teaching assistants. First time and returning TAs are expected to make themselves familiar with the manifold resources available through UCATT and other groups on campus. In addition, UCATT offers a Certificate in College Teaching¹⁷, which provides training practical matters such as effective teaching styles and use of classroom technology, inclusive course design, and more.

¹⁶ <http://ucatt.arizona.edu>

¹⁷ <https://ucatt.arizona.edu/teaching/college-teaching-program>

6.3. Travel Funding

The School endeavors to be able to provide some funding each academic year to every student in the Ph.D. program to support eligible research- and conference-related travel. The overall availability and precise amount of any such funding depends upon SGPP budgetary approval each year. For the 2024-25 academic year, students are

eligible for 500 USD in reimbursements related to conference travel. To be eligible for reimbursement, students must complete the travel authorization process at least 30 days PRIOR to conference travel. It is good practice to do this as soon as you know you'll be going to a conference.

Effective May 31, 2024, the university officially switched to a new process for submitting travel authorizations. The new booking tool provides better clarity on travel expenses, allows for travelers to submit their own requests, and aims to streamline the process. Under this new system, you will be submitting your own travel authorizations directly through the new portal. You will need to complete a brief two part training in Edge Learning, called "Travel System Training." Total training time is approximately 30 minutes. The trainings are available here: <https://shorturl.at/hzLgC>

6.4. Office Space

The School makes every effort to provide office space for all currently enrolled and locally based Ph.D. students. Office space is available in rooms 120 and 134 of the Social Sciences Building. Students can initiate a request for keys to access the office by visiting the main SGPP office (room 315). These are shared spaces with no assigned desks. Lockable cabinets are available for storage of smaller personal items. Office space is scarce across the School, so these communal offices should not be used to store large quantities of personal items. Access to these offices is not guaranteed, and may be revoked if a student regularly causes problems and impedes their colleagues' ability to work, including by being disruptive or by using the space in inappropriate ways (including storing large quantities of personal items).

6.5. Library

All students are encouraged to investigate the availability of personal storage and desk space in the main library on campus.¹⁸ Students currently studying for comprehensive exams are eligible for individual study rooms.¹⁹ Students that have advanced to the candidacy phase are eligible for long-term study rooms.²⁰

6.6. Computer Lab

The Data and Software Laboratory²¹ is located in room 115A in the Social Sciences Building. Students can request access by completing

¹⁸ More details here:
<http://www.library.arizona.edu/services/study-spaces>

¹⁹ More details available here:
<http://www.library.arizona.edu/services/study-spaces/exam-rooms>

²⁰ More details available here:
<http://www.library.arizona.edu/services/study-spaces/long-term>

²¹ <http://web.sbs.arizona.edu/college/sbs-computer-labs>

a TicketDog.²² This is a dedicated lab for the use of any graduate student in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, with access for undergraduates strictly limited. The Department staff and faculty do not tend to use the lab, so any problems with the lab's machines or software should be reported to SBS Tech.²³

²² <https://sbs.arizona.edu/project/ticket/>

²³ <https://sbs.arizona.edu/project/ticket/>

6.7. Graduate Student Mailboxes

Student mailboxes are located in Social Sciences Building 315.

6.8. Support on the Job Market

The student's advisor and dissertation committee, as well as the Ph.D. Program Director, are all well placed to provide advice and guidance for students as they enter the (academic) job market. In addition, students are encouraged to monitor academic job listings via common online services, including APSA's ejobs.²⁴ For students considering jobs beyond academia, the Graduate Center's career support team offers fantastic assistance and training opportunities for graduate students interested in pursuing employment in the public and/or private sector.

²⁴ http://www.apsanet.org/jobs_search.asp.

7. Graduate Assistant Responsibilities & Service to SGPP

Since teaching is an important component of the political science profession, it is a program requirement that Ph.D. students serve as teaching assistants in undergraduate courses at some stage in the course of the Ph.D program. Students may also serve in research positions when specific faculty research budgets allow for this. Advanced students can also be assigned to teach their own courses, as School needs and student experience/expertise allows.

7.1. Appointment of Graduate Assistants

To be appointed as graduate assistants, students must make satisfactory academic progress, as defined in section 1.4. All assignments are arranged to the mutual satisfaction of students and faculty to the extent possible. All funded assistantships require that students be on campus to begin duties one full week prior to the first day of classes each semester and remain on campus until one full week after examinations are completed.

7.2. Responsibilities of Graduate Assistants

Under the supervision of a faculty member, research assistants (RAs) are typically responsible for completing a number of common research tasks. This includes (but is by no means limited to) accumulation of research materials, proof-reading of written materials, data coding and collection, and data analysis. TAs are responsible for fulfilling all assigned teaching duties, including middle- and end-of-term grading, in a professional and timely manner. TA duties include (but may not be limited to):

- Attending course lectures, TA and professor meetings, or any course-related activities;
- Assisting professors with section enrollment and assignment;
- Participating in the design of exams and other curricular compo-

nents;

- Grading examinations and papers with appropriate comments / feedback;
- Holding regular office hours and additional meeting times with students unable to attend regular office hours; holding extra hours if needed before exams, term papers, etc.;
- Responding to student emails in a professional and timely fashion;
- Meeting regularly with the professor and other TAs for the class.

The normal workload is twenty hours per week. Graduate assistants must contact faculty prior to the start of the semester to discuss responsibilities and preparation for the course, and to identify any times during the coming semester during which they may have time constraints or research trips that take them out of town.

Failure to professionally and ethically discharge one's obligations as a graduate assistant is considered an extremely serious matter. Serving as a graduate assistant is a core element of the program. Accordingly, inadequate performance as a TA/RA is equivalent to failing to satisfy a program requirement, and risks dismissal from the Ph.D. program.

7.3. Other Service to the School

The Department greatly values the input of students on many matters. Examples include participation in:

- Faculty hiring committees;
- SGPP Graduate Student Association;
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee;
- Recruiting prospective graduate students;
- Department planning (e.g., curriculum development, computer equipment, online resources).

8. *Some Final Thoughts on the Program*

8.1. *Professional Interactions with Faculty*

Faculty are dedicated to the training of Ph.D. students. For us, this is one of the most rewarding aspects of our academic positions. Students can anticipate being able to meet on a fairly regular basis with their advisors—perhaps two to four times a month. Naturally, though, faculty have very busy schedules. In order to maximize the benefit that students receive from faculty, therefore, it is important that they prepare thoroughly ahead of scheduled advisory meetings. Students should plan on emailing drafts of papers or outlines of ideas to faculty ahead of their meetings in order to ensure that the meeting time itself is spent focusing upon making progress rather than simply catching faculty up. Students should take the initiative to arrange regular and/or *ad hoc* meetings with faculty members.

8.2. *Professional Interactions with Staff*

SGPP staff are an invaluable part of the School and we expect that you will treat staff members with respect. Beyond professional interactions in-person and via email, this also includes responding to their emails and submitting documents like travel authorizations and reimbursement requests in a timely manner. Please note and adhere to the deadlines for submitting these forms, as those deadlines are established by the University.

8.3. *Expectations for Publishing*

Doctoral study in political science, public policy, and public administration entails more than fulfilling course requirements and passing examinations. The doctoral student is broadly engaged in a period of formal training to become a professional scholar. It should be understood by both students and faculty that some elements of professional training, such as conference paper presentation and journal

publication, lie outside the scope of specified degree requirements. Such activities are regarded as a critical element of the doctoral training program.

Students are strongly encouraged to develop their research and writing projects in such a way that it is appropriate to seek a professional outlet for them, both through conference presentations and journal publication. The second year research paper required of all students is an excellent vehicle for pursuing this goal, though seminar papers and other work should also be considered. It is also possible to engage in collaborative efforts with other students and faculty members using seminar papers or other projects as a point of departure.

8.4. Departmental Colloquia

Several times each semester, SGPP holds a speaker series at which faculty, Ph.D. students, and outside scholars present their current research. This is typically held at 12pm on Wednesdays.²⁵ Graduate students are strongly encouraged to attend all colloquia, as attendance will be considered during evaluation and funding decisions.

²⁵ Details of the series are available online: <http://sgpp.arizona.edu/speaker-series>

8.5. Conferencing and Networking

Students are encouraged to apply to present working research projects at professional meetings, conferences, and workshops both on campus and beyond. These activities provide students not only with the possibility of receiving meaningful feedback on their projects but also an opportunity to develop and maintain a professional network of scholars in relevant subfields.