

Political Science Graduate Student Handbook



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WELCOME

Welcome the Political Science Department's graduate program. The Department prepares graduate students for successful careers by training them to become research scholars who discover, create, and disseminate knowledge. This handbook supplements the University Catalog and provides practical advice to help students navigate the PhD program.

The political science program consists of three stages: coursework, qualifying exams, and independent research. The first two years are devoted to completing coursework, which exposes students to research in their areas of interest, and provides the basic methodological training needed to consume and produce academic research. Qualifying exams, which are taken in the Fall of the third year, are the second component, and require students demonstrate expertise in two fields. Independent research is the third component, and consists of the prospectus defense and completion of a dissertation. The prospectus defense should occur by the Fall of the fourth year (i.e., the 10th quarter). Ideally, the dissertation is completed by the Spring of the 5th year.

The Ph.D. program is also designed to socialize students to the professional (informal) requirements of the discipline. Students are required to participate in the Colloquium (POSC 230), a weekly meeting that exposes students to the norms of the discipline of political science through a series of seminars on topics pertaining to professionalization as well as a series of student and guest speakers presenting cutting edge political science research. UCR is also the founding home to several quarterly mini-conferences ranging from PRIEC, which focuses on the study of race, ethnicity, and immigration, and SC2PI, which brings together scholars interested in comparative institutions, to the West Coast Experiments Conference, among others. Finally, the department also encourages students to conduct research, either on their own, or with faculty, outside of formal course offerings.

The graduate program at UCR is designed to grant the Ph.D. degree, with the Master's degree awarded along the way (unless students already hold an *MA in Political Science* from another university, in which case a second MA will not be granted). Requirements for the Masters degree can be found in the University Catalog.

This handbook describes both the requirements and policies of the graduate program, and is intended to serve as a guide for students and faculty. Students should read this manual periodically to be familiar with expectations at various stages of the program. If you have further questions, do not hesitate to contact the Graduate Assistant or Graduate Adviser. Course Descriptions corresponding with the Course Numbers included in this document can be found in the UCR Course Catalogue at <http://www.catalog.ucr.edu/>.

Ph.D. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The Ph.D. program consists of four sets of requirements: Coursework, Qualifying Examinations, Defending the Prospectus (i.e., Oral Exam), and the Dissertation.

Course Work

The first two years of the program are devoted to coursework and preparation for the Ph.D. examination. Students will ordinarily complete major field course requirements, which reflect the fields in which they intend to take comprehensive exams, during years One and Two. During this period, students obtain substantive knowledge in the discipline through completion of three graduate courses per quarter. Coursework, which usually continues beyond the second year, includes the following required components:

1. The Major Field Requirement: Selecting two major fields of concentration from the five fields listed below, and satisfying course requirements for them, which requires a total of eight graduate courses (four courses each; see details below).
2. The Distribution Requirement: Taking one course in each of the three fields of study not selected by the student as a major field.
4. The Depth Requirement: Taking three additional graduate courses in any field of study in consultation with the faculty advisors.
With permission of the Graduate Advisor, one or more of these courses may be graduate-level courses outside of Political Science.
5. The Methods Requirement: Completing four required methods courses: POSC 201, POSC 202A, POSC 202B, and POSC 203.
6. Research Colloquium Requirement: Students enroll in POSC 230 every quarter while in residence, until 15 units are completed. Exceptions are allowed only by permission of Graduate Advisor.

The major fields may be chosen from among American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Mass Political Behavior, and Political Theory.

1. Comparative Politics Students must complete the core course, POSC 217, and at least three additional courses in the field.
2. International Relations Students must complete the core course, POSC 216, and at least three additional courses in the field.
3. American Politics Students must complete the core course, POSC 249, and at least three additional courses in the field.
4. Mass Political Behavior Students must complete a core course, either POSC 255

or POSC 256, and at least three additional courses in the field.

5. Political Theory Students must complete the core course, POSC 212, and at least three additional courses in the field.

The following courses **DO NOT** count toward Major Field, Distribution, and Breadth requirements: POSC 285, POSC 290, POSC 291, POSC 293, POSC 297, POSC 299. These courses can, however, be used to help maintain full-time enrollment.

In extraordinary cases, one POSC 290 may be accepted in lieu of one seminar (with permission of Graduate Advisor) if course staffing or scheduling problems require it. A POSC 290 course should only be taken if the material to be covered is not available in a scheduled course. Typically the Graduate Advisor only approves enrollments in POSC 290 if the student is otherwise unable to complete major field course requirements prior to taking the Qualifying Exams.

Written Qualifying Examination

In the Fall Quarter of Year Three, the student continues to enroll in POSC 230, while also enrolling in POSC 291 (Individual Coordinated Study), which is designed to aid preparation for the comprehensive examination. Written examinations in the two major fields are normally taken during the fall quarter of the third year. Postponements to this schedule are allowed in exceptional circumstances; all delays in taking comprehensive examinations must be approved by the Graduate Committee. The procedures for each field are described in Appendix B.

Oral Defense of Prospectus

The winter and spring quarters of Year Three are typically devoted to Directed Research (POSC 297) to prepare a dissertation prospectus under the direction of the principal advisor; to additional substantive seminars; and to continued participation in POSC 230. The choice of substantive seminars during this time should be made in conjunction with faculty advisors and should usually be applicable either to the distribution or depth requirements, although students may also take courses in excess of these requirements. In the spring quarter, students are advanced to candidacy upon successful oral defense of their dissertation prospectus.

The Dissertation

Once advanced to candidacy, students begin work on the dissertation. While the length, expectations, and requirements may vary across fields and advisers, a dissertation typically consists of about six book-length chapters. Often, three of these present the results of original research or discovery, in addition to an introduction, a conclusion, and a theoretical chapter. Dissertations typically take between one and a half and two and a half years to complete. The PhD is awarded upon completion of the dissertation. Normative time to completion of the program is six years.

Political Science Norms

The mission of the Ph.D. program is to produce productive research scholars. The faculty strive to help students succeed on the academic job market and to have productive and fulfilling professional careers. While the preceding sections articulate the formal program requirements, it is often difficult for students to appreciate that there are many unwritten norms that foster success both within and beyond the program. So, while the formal requirements emphasize completing course work, exams, and the dissertation, it is equally important to get hands-on experience doing research, to build professional relationships with faculty and classmates, and to learn to write publishable journal articles. These norms help ensure that students have sufficient expertise in their fields of interest, as well as the research tools and academic record necessary to succeed upon graduating.

Graduate school in an academic field in political science is somewhat different than in a professional field because the tools and skills one obtains are not designed to get you a specific job, but instead to broadly teach students to create and disseminate knowledge through research and teaching. The investment students make is an investment in themselves and their ability to contribute to the accumulation of knowledge on a wide range of political science topics. Consequently, many of the most valuable opportunities presented in graduate school come not from the formal requirements, but from the extra-curricular activities that occur in an intellectually vibrant department and university. In large part, what one learns in a PhD program comes from the guest speakers, the conversations with faculty and fellow students, the relationships developed, and the research ideas and collaborations that result. While it may be possible to get a degree by completing the bare minimum requirements articulated above, it is impossible to take full advantage of these interactions and to fully prepare oneself for life as a scholar without regularly being present in and around the department. In short, training to become a scholar requires working extraordinarily hard during your time here. All told, the successful graduate student typically spends 60-80 hours a week on their studies.

A Timeline to Success: synthesizing formal and informal expectations

The first year of the PhD program is designed to familiarize students with the discipline of political science and begin to provide the tools needed to both consume and eventually produce academic research. Students also begin taking coursework, with special emphasis on taking courses in fields in which they are likely to take their Qualifying Exams.

Informally, students' primary goal during the first year should be to identify their major fields, and to take as many courses as possible in those fields. Students should focus on identifying their areas of emphasis (i.e., their major fields) and taking substantive courses that help prepare them for taking comprehensive exams. This is the first opportunity students have to begin to build relationships with faculty. Students might use the summer between their first and second years to continue to build relationships by seeking out faculty in their areas of interest to work with them on their research. Finally, students can plan their course schedules for the following year when the preliminary course schedule

is released, which usually occurs by mid-July.

During the second year, students should identify their major fields, complete their major field course requirements, and make progress toward their breadth and depth requirements. Students typically begin to TA during their second year and often reduce their course load slightly to accommodate this the first time they do so. TAing should take no more than 20 hours a week. If students find that their responsibilities routinely exceed this threshold they should speak to the professor to address the situation. If the issue continues, students should meet with the Department Chair. Graduate student workload is governed by the union contract.

Less formally, students should also begin to identify and develop a research focus in one of their major fields. Once this is accomplished, students can begin thinking about working on research projects with an eye toward publication. Because Qualifying Exams are administered in the fall of the third year, it is important that students begin preparing for them by learning what is expected. Appendix B describes the procedures for taking exams (the requirements and expectations vary across fields). The summer between the second and third years should be used to work on independent research projects and to prepare for comprehensive exams. Students often use this time to begin to write their first academic paper for presentation at conferences the following year.

During the third year, students take qualifying exams and finish remaining coursework. This is typically when students take any additional methods courses they think might help them with their research interests. Once exams have been passed, students should quickly turn to developing a dissertation prospectus which should be defended by the fall of their fourth year (i.e., 10th quarter). Students seek out faculty to work with on a topic during Winter and Spring quarters with the idea that they can write a draft of the prospectus during the summer. In consultation with their Dissertation Chair, students typically begin to assemble their Prospectus Committee at this time too. The Prospectus Committee consists of at least three faculty members in addition to the Chair, at least one of whom must be from a department other than Political Science. The Prospectus Committee is comprised of five members, a majority of whom are affiliated with the Political Science.

The third year is a transition year in which students gradually transition from being consumers to producers of political science research. In practice, this occurs as students begin to write the prospectus and continue to conduct independent research as these activities often overlap. Independent research papers often become students' dissertation topics. Research skills are also obtained by writing and presenting work in one's area of interest at academic conferences. The summer between the third and fourth year is usually focused on writing the prospectus and working on research that may relate to the dissertation.

The prospectus should be defended during the fall quarter of the fourth year. Once a student is advanced to candidacy, their focus turns toward working on the dissertation and preparing their independent research for presentation at conferences and for

publication. One step in this process is identifying a Dissertation Committee, which must consist of at least three members, all of whom typically come from the Political Science Department.

In the fifth year, students focus on writing their dissertation. While the time it takes to complete the dissertation varies by field and subfield, students should be in regular contact with their advisers informing them of their progress and seeking advice and feedback on their work. Students should also be thinking about how to best prepare themselves for the job market. Typically this means submitting and revising papers for publication. Students should also present their work at conferences and make sure their academic profile enhances their marketability. In addition to publishing, they should think about their teaching profile, and seek to gain experience teaching or TAing for courses that might help broaden their appeal as teachers.

Guidelines for Enrolling in Courses

Students should review program and course rules, both of which are in the General Catalog before selecting courses each quarter. Beyond the need to decide how to meet various substantive course requirements, there are not many difficulties in enrolling in a full-time schedule during your first two years, when you take most of your substantive courses.

The two broadest guidelines are these:

1. You need to maintain full-time status at all times.
2. You may take up to 4 units per quarter of Teaching Practicum, POSC 302 when you are TAing (or, during your first quarter as a TA, a combined total of 4 units of POSC 302 plus POSC 301).

Things become procedurally more tricky in Year 3 and after. Rules 1 and 2 still apply. Here are some of the things for more advanced students to keep in mind:

3. Comprehensive Exams and POSC 291. When you are preparing for your comprehensive (qualifying) exams, you should enroll in units of POSC 291 as needed. (See also #6 below). For this course, students must choose a particular faculty member with whom to enroll. The course number for each faculty member is available from the Graduate Assistant (Sara Palmer). Be sure to inform the professor that you are enrolling with him or her, and then be sure to be clear about requirements and expectations.
4. Prospectus Preparation and POSC 297. When preparing the prospectus, students should enroll in units of POSC 297. (See also #6 below.) For this course, students must choose a particular faculty member with whom to enroll. The course number for each faculty member is available from the Graduate Assistant (Sara Palmer).

Students must inform the professor that they are enrolling with him or her, and inquire about requirements and expectations.

5. Dissertation Work and POSC 299. After defending the prospectus -- that is, when researching and writing the dissertation -- students should enroll in units of POSC 299 as needed. (See also #6 below). For this course, students must choose a particular faculty member with whom to enroll. The course number for each faculty member is available from the Graduate Assistant (Sara Palmer). Students must inform the professor that they are enrolling with him or her, and inquire about requirements and expectations.
6. Summary and Elaboration: Maintaining a Full-Time Schedule and Choosing the Right Courses in Year 3 and After
 - a. POSC 291 and POSC 297, while repeatable, have maximum numbers of units -- per quarter and overall. Students need to figure out how many of these course units to take each quarter in light of these maximums and in light of plans for meeting various program requirements, especially defending the prospectus.
 - b. Because of the aforementioned repeatable-unit limits -- especially the limits for POSC 297 -- it is students who are between their comprehensive exams and their prospectus defenses who often need to think and plan most carefully. This planning should be done in consultation with faculty advisors and the catalog.
 - c. Within the unit limits, students may (with consent of their adviser) be able to supplement POSC 297 units with units of:
 - i. POSC 291 (even though you have already completed your comprehensive exams), or
 - ii. POSC 299 (even though you have not yet defended your prospectus).

Of course, you may also take a seminar or (in some cases) some other course in order to maintain full time status. **In fact, current program requirements essentially make this necessary.**

Department Resources

In addition to fellowships and TAs, the department provides support for students' research activities through the following programs.

Conference Travel Awards

The department provides funding for students to participate in academic conferences. Students are typically funded up to \$350 toward their expenses at

their first conference and \$200 for their second conference (department finances permitting). Funding is in the form of reimbursements for itemized expenses (receipts are required).

In general, funding is awarded to those who present papers or serve as discussants at academic conferences, although in extraordinary circumstances other forms of participation may be approved upon consultation with the Graduate Adviser. All requests for graduate student travel funding must be approved by the Graduate Adviser prior to travel. Students must also apply for funding from the Graduate Student Association (GSA), but departmental funding is not contingent on approval of the request. Please see the Graduate Assistant for details and forms.

Department Graduate Student Research Award

The Department accepts proposals for research support awards in amounts that vary but are typically capped at \$1500. Students should prepare a 1-2 page proposal describing their project, how the funds would be beneficial to their research, and how the funds would be spent. The funds must be used to facilitate aspects of research that may include: travel to field sites or archives, purchasing data or other materials, hiring research assistance, copying, mailing, or other reasonable research expenses. Students should submit their proposal along with an attached budget sheet as well as a timeline for the expenditure of the funds. Funds must be expended and reported per university guidelines.

Only students who have passed comprehensive exams are eligible for these funds. The Department is particularly interested in supporting dissertation research. The Graduate Studies Committee will select award winners. Applications are typically due in late April.

Students are required to submit a one-page summary describing the results of their funding within thirty days of the completion date listed on their timeline. Failure to do so will make them ineligible for discretionary department funding (e.g., conference travel).

Grants to attend ICPSR and IQRM for Supplementary Methods Training

The Department invites requests for support to attend ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Research at the University of Michigan, and the Institute for Qualitative Research Methods (IQRM) at Syracuse University during the Summer. The department typically provides support for one student to attend each of these programs by funding tuition and travel.

Applicants should write a one-page application explaining why they want support, how attendance supplements previous coursework, supports their research agenda, and facilitates completion of the Ph.D. Students should also include a curriculum

vitae. Applicants who have passed their qualifying exams are preferred. Applications are due by email to the Graduate Assistant in early January.

University Resources

As students are enrolled through the Graduate Division, they are required to familiarize themselves with Graduate Division policies. These can be found at http://graduate.ucr.edu/current_students.html. The Graduate Student Association and Graduate Division have a variety of forms of support for travel and research. In addition, students may also find the resources helpful:

GradSuccess

GradSuccess provides a variety of services to meet the needs of UCR's diverse graduate student population. Housed in Graduate Division, GradSuccess offers programs, workshops, seminars, and consultations by appointment and drop-in. GradSuccess supports graduate students at every stage of their study and is concerned with helping students become successful professionals. They can be found on the web at: <http://graduate.ucr.edu/success.html>

The Writing Center

The Graduate Writing Center offers writing support and instruction to all UCR post-doctoral scholars and graduate students through programming and free writing consultations. We provide the UCR graduate community writing assistance in any academic genre, during any stage of the writing process.

Trained consultants meet with students to develop confidence and skills as a writer. We are not a proofreading or editing service. Rather, we work with graduate students and post-docs to help them both identify areas for improvement in their writing and navigate specific expectations for specific writing endeavors.

Graduate Quantitative Methods Program (GradQuant)

GradQuant is dedicated to improving UCR graduate students' training in quantitative methods. GradQuant offers training in probability and statistical inference, statistical software and computing, math for statistics, data management, and professional ethics in the management and analysis of data. The educational support ranges from remedial and introductory methods to advanced, specialized training. Information about GradQuant can be found on the Web at: <http://gradquant.ucr.edu/>

Mentorship Program

The Graduate Student Mentorship Program facilitates first-year graduate students transition to UCR, Riverside, and graduate student life. All incoming PhD students are invited to participate.

Each mentee is assigned to a mentoring "family" which includes 1-3 other first-year students and a peer mentor from a related field. Two to three families are then put

into a “team” with a faculty mentor. Finally, two to three teams in related disciplines interact in “groups.” The purpose of this structure is to allow the largest possible network of mentoring for each first-year mentee.

For mentees, the program begins with a comprehensive three-day orientation introducing them to graduate study at UCR and the various campus resources available to them. Throughout the year, mentees will meet with their peer mentors individually, in families, or in teams weekly. They will also have the opportunity to meet with the other mentees, their faculty mentors, and their larger mentoring group once per quarter.

The Counseling Center

The UCR Counseling Center provides a range of programs to promote mental health, emotional resilience and wellness throughout the campus community. Clinical services include individual counseling, couples counseling, and group therapy, as well as psychiatric services. All of the services are free, confidential and provided by a diverse professional staff.

Stress management programs include a six-session Biofeedback training program, weekly drop-in meditation and relaxation groups, Stress Busters Peer Educators programming, and a library of meditation and relaxation exercises for streaming and downloading. Programs are aimed at assisting students in managing various stressors associated with university life, relationship struggles, reducing anxiety and time management.

The professional clinicians offer outreach and consultation to faculty, staff and students across campus. They also provide training and education on a variety of mental health and wellness topics, specifically focusing our efforts on working with distressed, suicidal, and disruptive students on campus.

To make an appointment call 951-827-5531 and ask to make an “intake appointment” or visit the Counseling Center in person. Counseling services can be found on the web at <http://counseling.ucr.edu>

Grade Appeal Procedures

While the appeal of grades is rare, occasionally students wish to contest grades. The procedures for doing so is found on the web at:
http://senate.ucr.edu/bylaws/?action=read_bylaws&code=r§ion=05.

Teaching Assistantships: An Overview

Each quarter, the Department issues a call for Teaching Assistants (TAs) which is distributed by the Graduate Assistant about six to eight weeks before the beginning of the quarter. Students are asked to list in order of preference the courses they would like to teach. Faculty are simultaneously polled about which students they would like to have as their TAs.

Assistantships are assigned in two stages. A list of TAs is determined by identifying those students who are guaranteed TAships and then by ranking those students who have not been guaranteed employment for that quarter according to the Department's criteria. This produces the initial TA offer list.

Once the initial list of TAs is determined, the Graduate Adviser matches students to classes based on their own and the faculty's preference rankings. The Graduate Secretary then prepares offer letters detailing the assignments that are placed in students' boxes. Most quarters, a few positions become available after the initial assignments are made as students on the initial list are offered support outside the department (e.g., in other departments, the Writing Program, or as a Research Assistant).

Each new TA must attend the Teaching Assistant Development Program's (TADP) Orientation in the Fall Quarter before they teach. Any student whose native language is not English must pass an oral English language competency exam before performing duties as a TA.

In the Political Science Department, Teaching Assistants typically oversee three sections of between 22-30 students in each class. Students are limited in their work to an average of 20 hours per week. While exact duties are negotiated with the faculty, Teaching Assistants are typically required to:

- Attend all class meetings, section discussions, or grading of papers or exams.
- Consult with the professor as to grading policies, course content, and procedures.
- Attend all meetings of classes, sections, and laboratories for which s/he is responsible.
- Make proper and thorough preparation for each class, lab, or section for which s/he is responsible.
- Assign appropriate work, and to read and grade the work thoroughly and as rapidly as possible.
- Post at least one office hour per week per section and to hold those office hours without fail.
- Report grades accurately and on time to the instructor in charge of the course.
- Give grade books to the instructor in charge at the end of his/her term of appointment.
- Maintain a professional attitude toward all students in his/her classes at all times.

Minimum Qualifications For Teaching Assistants

In order to maintain eligibility to TA, students are required to maintain a 3.00 GPA; Have fewer than 8 units of Incomplete grades; Be advanced to candidacy within 12 quarters after entry and; Make acceptable progress toward the degree (acceptable progress for a PhD student is represented by the normative time to degree for the particular program plus one year).

Teaching assistants must also meet minimum standards of teaching effectiveness based on student evaluations. Any TA scoring a 4.00 or lower on evaluations of teaching

effectiveness must attend workshops to improve their teaching. If a TA scores 4.00 or lower for three quarters they are no longer eligible to TA.

Length of Service

The length of service for a Teaching Assistant or “Associate In” is limited to 12 quarters. However, exceptions can be made by the Graduate Dean upon written request by the academic program. No one may serve in a teaching title code for more than 18 quarters of service.

Additional details about academic employment can be found on the web at:
<http://graduate.ucr.edu/teaching.html>

Appendix A. Political Science Courses by Field.

Required Methods Courses	American Politics (POSC 249 and at least one other)	Comparative Politics (POSC 217 and at least one other)	International Relations (POSC 216 and at least one other)	Mass Political Behavior (Must complete POSC 255 or 256 and at least one other)	Political Theory (POSC 212 and at least one other)
POSC 201	POSC 208*	POSC 217	POSC 206*	POSC 220*	POSC 212
POSC 202A	POSC 249	POSC 263	POSC 215	POSC 255	POSC 213
POSC 202B	POSC 250*	POSC 266	POSC 216	POSC 256	POSC 268*
POSC 203	POSC 251	POSC 271	POSC 231	POSC 257*	POSC 280
	POSC 252	POSC 272*	POSC 262	POSC 258	POSC 281
Optional Methods Courses	POSC 253	POSC 273*	POSC 264	POSC 259*	POSC 283
	POSC 254	POSC 274	POSC 267	POSC 260	
	POSC 259*	POSC 276	POSC 268*		
POSC 204	POSC 261	POSC 278			
POSC 205		POSC 279			
POSC 207		POSC 282*			
Colloquium					
POSC 230					

** Course may count toward an additional field depending on the instructor and content. Course categories subject to change. Students should always check with the faculty offering the course before enrolling.*

Appendix B. Qualifying Exam Procedures

Comprehensive Exam Procedures for Political Science

Students take comprehensive exams in each of their two major fields in the Fall of their third year. Precise exam dates are typically determined by the Graduate Adviser in late Summer. These take-home style exams are typically administered over approximately a ten-day period that overlaps Thanksgiving break to minimize conflict with teaching responsibilities. Results are typically reported by the Graduate Assistant or Adviser on a field-by field basis beginning in Mid-December. These results are reported to Graduate Division. Should a student not pass an exam, the student will have one opportunity to re-take an exam but only in one of their two fields. Re-testing typically occurs in the Winter or Spring quarters. The specific requirements and processes vary across subfields of political science:

Procedures for Taking Exam in American Politics

Students taking exams in American politics answer one general question about American Politics that requires knowledge of research in all areas of the field. In addition, students answer one question from each of two subfields (of their choice) from the below list. Responses are limited to 14 pages for the general question and 8 pages for each of the subfield questions.

Subfields:

National institutions
Public policy
Subnational politics
Parties and interest groups
Race, ethnicity and identity politics

Students may take exams in other subfields upon unanimous consent of the American Politics faculty.

All faculty in American politics both write questions and serve as graders for each exam. In consultation with the faculty, the student will identify a main reader. The Graduate Assistant typically circulates the exam. The main reader will solicit faculty comments about the exam, make a grade proposal based on preliminary comments, and write the grade evaluation. In a meeting or by e-mail, the American faculty will approve or modify this proposal.

Procedures for Taking Exam in Comparative Politics

We ask students to prepare in three subfields within comparative. These usually align with three separate courses they are taking. They are usually asked to know the syllabus, but will have to inquire with individual faculty to see if additional readings are also part of their responsibility. The full reading list then is a function of the courses each student will be tested in, and the preferences of those faculty members.

Obviously then, each student's required list will not be the same, though there is always overlap. To accommodate these differences, we organize the exam into a kind of menu with alternatives. There are several sections each of which pertains to a theme that derives from the coursework. Each section has a choice of two questions. Students shall pick one question from each of three sections, and are not permitted to choose two questions from one section.

As far as grading goes, we usually assign one faculty member to be a coordinator. He/she then determines which other faculty need to be involved in the grading. We tend to lean on the faculty with expertise in a given subfield to do the most careful reading of that exam, but whoever is assembled as part of the team for the exam is expected to read all the answers to the questions. The team will never be less than 3 faculty members, but may involve more. We then compare notes and decide collectively on a final grade for the exam.

Procedures for Taking Exam in International Relations

In International Relations, the comprehensive exam consists of three sections and students must answer one question from each section. The first section tests students in their general knowledge of international relations theory. The second section focuses on international political economy. The third section is an elective section, which is tailored around additional IR coursework that the student has completed prior to taking the exam. In recent years, students have chosen questions related to elective courses in human rights and humanitarianism, ethics and international politics, or conflict and conflict resolution. Thus, students are expected to demonstrate breadth of knowledge within the field, as well as depth of knowledge in relation to emerging areas of interest and areas covered more intensively in coursework. Students are typically allowed to choose from a list of 3-4 questions within each section. Each of the three essays is expected to be approximately 8-9 pages double spaced. The exams are reviewed by a committee of three professors and each essay is read by at least two professors.

Procedures for Taking Exam in Mass Behavior

Students taking exams in Mass Behavior answer three questions that require knowledge of research in all subfields of mass behavior. Typically, these consist of one broad question and two more narrow questions. Students select two readers (an exam

coordinator and a reader) who grade the exam. The exam coordinator writes the evaluation after consultation with the reader.

Procedures for Taking Exam in Political Theory

In Political Theory, the comprehensive exam is based on the graduate coursework taken by the students being tested in a given year. Each student answers three questions, in essay form, each essay about 7-8 pages. The faculty write a set of questions that (a) encourages the students to cover a wide range of material, both in preparation and in actual writing, and (b) gives them some choice, especially so that no one has to answer a question pertaining to course material they haven't covered. Students should make sure that each essay has an argument or thesis; that it addresses the question directly; and that it does not simply summarize literature. The time period and related formalities are, of course, the same as for all Political Science comprehensives. After completion of exams, each essay is read by two professors. The individual essay grades are combined to produce an overall grade for the exam.