



## Department of Political Science

# Guide to Graduate Study

This guide describes the requirements of the doctoral program and answers common questions students may have in planning their program of study. It is intended as a guide. It is not a rulebook. Students and faculty should consult the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and The Graduate School's (TGS) website, [www.tgs.northwestern.edu](http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu) for the latest policies and procedures.

In addition to the requirements of the Department, students are responsible for meeting the standards and requirements of TGS with respect to such matters as credits, academic standing, deadlines, residence, etc. Reference should be made to the TGS website for additional information about these issues.

These pages present an outline of the numerous steps involved in a student's career from matriculation in the first year to graduation as a full-fledged Doctor of Philosophy. While this handbook is meant to provide a guide to these procedures and requirements, most students recognize that one often "learns the ropes" from more advanced graduate students, from faculty advisors, from the DGS, and from the GPA (about whom more information appears on the next page). The student bears ultimate responsibility for meeting standards and requirements, but the overall process involves participation in a community of scholars. The Department takes great pride in this community spirit, and students are urged to avail themselves of its benefits.

## I. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF PROGRAM

### 1.1 The Graduate School (TGS)

TGS is responsible for the administration of graduate programs. Admissions, financial aid, awarding of degrees, etc. are administered by TGS, which usually, but not always, respects the recommendations of the academic departments. TGS has numerous rules and deadlines with which you should become familiar. TGS also coordinates professional development and facilitates many associations for graduate students. For more information on TGS policies and programs, please consult their website: [www.tgs.northwestern.edu](http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu)

### 1.2 The Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences (WCAS)

WCAS coordinates the academic activities of 25 departments in the Arts and Sciences, including Political Science. WCAS, acting on recommendations of each department, is ultimately responsible for the allocation of teaching assistantships and fellowships. WCAS has information about internal and external fellowships available on its website: [www.wcas.northwestern.edu](http://www.wcas.northwestern.edu)

### 1.3 Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)

The DGS is a tenured member of the faculty who directs the graduate program. The DGS chairs the Graduate Committee and acts as an intermediary between graduate students and TGS.

### 1.4 The Graduate Committee

The Graduate Committee is appointed prior to each academic year by the Department Chair. It is comprised of the DGS, acting as the Committee's Chair, and representatives from each of the four major sub-fields. The Committee's main role is to conduct admissions to the graduate program, select nominees for internal fellowships and prizes, and where necessary, decide upon specific policies related to TGS.

### **1.5 Graduate Program Assistant (GPA)**

The GPA is a staff-member employed by the University to aid students and faculty with the administration of the program. In particular, s/he handles applications for fellowships, admissions, degrees, qualifying exams (sometimes referred to as “prelims”) and dissertation committees, and is responsible for placement materials. The GPA is a good first point of contact on matters of Departmental and University policy.

### **1.6 Faculty Advisors**

The Department encourages extensive student-faculty interaction. Every incoming graduate student will be assigned a first-year faculty advisor in his or her major field of interest. The faculty advisor serves as the liaison between his or her advisee and the faculty and is the primary source of advice and interpretation of rules. The advisor will be available to meet with the student to offer advice and develop a proposed plan of study. Students should meet with their advisor at least once every quarter to discuss course selection and should meet as needed for other issues as they arise.

Students will be assigned an advisor in their first year. After that, students will be required to submit confirmation of their advisor to the GPA each fall, starting in their second year. One should select an advisor who is an expert in the area of research that one wants to pursue. Consider the potential advisor’s reputation in the area of mutual research interest, accessibility, and responsiveness to students, and the placement record of the potential advisor’s students. It is worthwhile to talk with other graduate students about their experiences with various faculty members. At the end of each year, students must inform the GPA of their current advisor.

### **1.7 Commune**

The Graduate Student Commune is the organization of Political Science graduate students. It provides advice to the Department on teaching, recruitment and organizes resources and activities for graduate students. It is composed of all students currently enrolled in the graduate program. The Commune elects representatives to represent the graduate students in matters affecting the graduate community.

### **1.8 Head Teaching Assistant**

Every year one of the teaching assistants in the Department is invited to serve as the Head Teaching Assistant. The Head TA is selected on the basis of both teaching experience and academic achievements. The role of the Head TA is to assist other TAs, especially new TAs, with questions related to teaching, and to help organize the Department TAs’ workshop. An honorarium is awarded to the Head TA.

## **II. SUMMARY OF ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PH.D. DEGREE**

There are several steps and requirements that must be fulfilled in the course of studies toward a Ph.D. in Political Science. Some of these are established by TGS, and students should consult TGS’ website to familiarize themselves with those requirements. The Department also specifies additional requirements for a Ph.D. in Political Science. The most important TGS and Department requirements are explained in detail in the pages that follow. They can be summarized as follows:

#### **TGS Requirements**

- Eight quarters of fulltime residency to be completed consecutively over two years, including summers. More information about this requirement can be found at: <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/doctoral/residency/>.
- Maintenance of a B (3.0) average is required to remain in good standing. More information on TGS policies concerning coursework and grades can be found at: <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/doctoral/courseworkgrades/>

#### **Department Requirements**

- A minimum of two years of full-time coursework (18 courses).
- Two courses in Methods (PS403 and PS405 – offered in Fall and Winter quarters respectively each year). Theory majors are exempt from this requirement.

- Successful completion of a Second Year Paper (due during the 2<sup>nd</sup> year Spring quarter).
- Successful completion of two Departmental qualifying examinations.
- Acceptance of a dissertation proposal.
- Successful defense of dissertation.

A summary of TGS's Ph.D. requirements and a time line can be found at:  
<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/doctoral/>.

### III. THE FIRST YEAR OF THE PH.D. PROGRAM

The first year program generally incorporates core subfield courses and required courses.

#### A. COURSE WORK

Over the course of the Ph.D. program, eighteen courses must be completed to fulfill the Department's requirements for coursework. Typically this means taking 3 courses per quarter for each of the first two years (summers are excluded). Under University regulations, all students are required to be enrolled full-time each quarter. Full-time is defined as being enrolled in 3 or 4 units of study. Typically, students will select the bulk of their courses from among the graduate 400-level offerings of the Department. Generally, students take core courses in the fields in which they intend to major and minor. Students may benefit from taking a fourth course, particularly in languages or methods. Such a fourth course may often be taken P/N; all other courses must be taken for a grade.

In consultation with their advisor, students may take courses in other departments and schools. Interdisciplinary study receives broad support in the Department and in the wider University. In addition, the CIC (Committee on Institutional Cooperation - a consortium of Midwestern research universities) Traveling Scholar Program offers students the opportunity to take classes at other Big Ten universities, the University of Chicago, and the University of Illinois, Chicago. Information about this program can be found at: <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/doctoral/residency/travelingscholar/>. General practice is that students may take three courses outside of the Department without special dispensation. If students wish to take more courses outside of the Department, they should discuss this with their advisor and inform the DGS. The requirement for consultation is to ensure that extra-departmental courses complement the fulfillment of Departmental requirements.

Undergraduate (300-level) courses in other departments may be taken to satisfy Departmental requirements if no graduate course covering the same material is available. Students must consult with their advisor before enrolling in a 300-level course. Students should also consult with the course instructor to arrange extra work since graduate students taking 300-level courses will be required to meet higher performance standards than undergraduates. Students need to have written permission from his or her faculty advisor and the DGS to take more than two 300-level courses in any year.

First year students are not encouraged to take independent study (499) courses. Enrollment in 499 during the first year should be negotiated with the student's advisor.

#### B. REQUIRED METHODS COURSES

All students, except Political Theory majors, must take POLISCI 403 (Probability and Statistics) and POLISCI 405 (Linear Models). These required courses are usually completed in the first year. Students may elect to take one or both during their second year. Students should consult with their advisor about the best options for completion of this requirement given their overall program of studies. Students who wish to be exempted from these classes on the basis of equivalent training prior to coming to Northwestern must have written permission from the Department's instructor of the methods course in question.

#### C. CONTINUING STUDENT EVALUATION

The faculty meets late in the Spring Quarter to evaluate continuing graduate students. It is on the basis of this evaluation that assessments are made regarding their satisfaction of the criteria for continuing in good standing. There is no automatic formula for assessment. The individual situation of each student is taken into consideration. In cases in which a student is

not making acceptable progress toward the completion of the degree, the Department uses this meeting to examine the difficulty and to suggest a course of action. This may include counseling the student to reassess his or her commitment to the program. The Department reserves the right to remove a student from the program if the difficulties seem to be insurmountable.

#### D. FIRST YEAR REVIEW

Toward late Spring Quarter, first year students will meet with their advisor and a second faculty member to discuss the student's academic progress during his or her first year, as well as the student's plans for study and research in the coming years. This meeting also provides students with an opportunity to recruit faculty members as possible second readers for their second year papers. This meeting must be held before classes end in the third quarter.

### **IV. THE SECOND YEAR AND BEYOND: PAPERS AND PRELIMS**

During the second year, students:

- A. Prepare their Second Year Papers;
- B. Complete course requirements;
- C. Prepare to take qualifying examinations in the third year.

#### A. SECOND YEAR PAPER, GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS AND FACULTY

The Second Year Paper is expected to be an original scholarly paper demonstrating the student's ability to analyze a significant problem in the format of a journal article. This paper is generally 30 to 60 pages long. Frequently though not always, such papers will be an elaboration or deepening of an idea or analysis that a student has developed in the context of a seminar. The Second Year Paper assignment gives students the first major opportunity to devise and pursue a significant writing project on their own initiative and in consultation with their advisor. In this regard, the process of writing this paper bears more than passing resemblance to the main elements of producing a dissertation.

Students choose a topic in consultation with two faculty members who will then serve as advisors for the paper. Under most circumstances, the primary advisor will be a member of the Political Science faculty. The student may petition the Chair to have a primary advisor from outside the Department. In all cases, at least one of the two advisors must be from the Political Science Department.

During the Fall or Winter quarter of the second year, students have the option of enrolling in PS404, which provides a forum to discuss the paper and its research techniques in a seminar context. Students should discuss with their advisor to determine if the student's second year progress will benefit from enrolling in this course.

The process of completing the second year paper requirement proceeds as follows:

1. The student will meet with the advisors with whom s/he wishes to work on the second year paper. Ideally, this happens at the end of the student's first year (i.e., before the summer break). The first year evaluation meeting in the spring term of the first year provides a good vehicle for recruiting a possible second reader. In any event, the student should have met with the advisors by the end of the fall quarter of the second year to discuss a paper topic and to secure the agreement of the faculty members.
2. The student's faculty advisor attests to this agreement in a form that the GPA provides. Subsequent changes in the committee roster follow the same process. Many students use the recruitment of second year paper advisors as a preliminary basis for forming a dissertation committee.
3. Second year papers are due on the first day of spring quarter. Within six weeks of receiving the paper, the faculty readers evaluate and assign one of four grades: (a) Pass with Distinction, (b) Pass, (c) Revise and Resubmit, or (d) Fail.
4. Failure of the second year paper requirement is grounds for expulsion from the program.
5. For all revise and resubmits, the advisors set a deadline by which the revision must be submitted and discuss with the student the requirements for satisfactory completion. The latest deadline for revision is July 1. Students failing to meet this deadline will be considered to have failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress in the program and will be removed from the Ph.D. program.

6. For those who resubmit second year papers, faculty advisors will assign one of four grades: (a) Pass with Distinction, (b) Pass, or (c) Fail. Only students receiving a Pass or Pass with Distinction will have permission to continue in the program. In cases where the two readers' evaluations diverge, the DGS will appoint a third reader from the relevant disciplinary field to break the tie. Papers will be graded no later than August 1 (one month after the submission deadline for the revised version).

## B. PREPARATION FOR QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS

Students bear responsibility for choosing their courses in such a way that they be prepared to meet the substantive requirements of their major and minor fields. Students are advised to focus on core courses in particular fields. Questions on qualifying exams are often tailored to courses taught over the past two years. One often finds that readings from these course syllabi are especially relevant to the questions that appear on these exams.

The Department encourages students to take relevant courses in other departments to advance their specialized knowledge and skills. Northwestern students may also enroll in graduate courses at the University of Chicago and other Big Ten campuses through the C.I.C. Traveling Scholars program. Note that this option requires that one complete some administrative procedures. Thus it is unwise to pursue this option at the last minute.

## C. QUALIFYING EXAMS (Sometimes known as "Prelims" or "Comprehensive Exams")

The qualifying examinations are offered during the Fall term. All major field exams will be administered on a Monday in the second half of October. The minor field exams will be administered on a Monday, two weeks following the major exam. If necessary, an exam session will be scheduled for late February or early March for those who fail either their major or minor exams. This schedule will come into operation during the 2011-12 academic year. During that year only, students admitted in 2009 or earlier will have the option of using the late February or early March exam as a regular sitting as the new system is phased in. The GPA will inform students of the exact dates, and other dates will not be scheduled. Students may petition the DGS and relevant field chair to take the exam earlier than their third year.

Students must have completed their coursework (18 courses), cleared all incompletes, and fulfilled the second year paper requirement before taking their qualifying examinations. This requirement can only be altered with the consent of the student's advisor and the DGS.

Students take written examinations in their major field and in one minor field. They must qualify in a second minor field by taking a minimum of two courses in that field. The individual subfields, under the direction of the Field Chairs, will be responsible for writing the exams and for establishing the rules governing their administration. If students have not passed their exams for the major and minor by the end of the third year they will be considered as having failed to maintain satisfactory academic progress by the Department and risk expulsion from the program.

The major exam is offered in the following fields:

- American Politics
- Comparative Politics
- Methodology
- International Relations
- Political Theory

Field Chairs are responsible for soliciting other faculty members for questions and then composing the prelim exam. Students are advised to consult with faculty in the particular field in which the exam is to be taken. This helps to ensure that those faculty members respond to the Field Chair's request for questions. Consultation also alerts the faculty member that students from a particular seminar are interested in taking a prelim exam. Students are encouraged to consult previous exams. These exams can be obtained from the GPA. Students may want to form study groups to prepare for exams. It is advisable to consult syllabi and notes from relevant courses offered over the previous two years and to consult with faculty members who will be expected to write questions for the exam.

The first minor is selected from among the fields listed above. The second (2-course) minor may be from among these fields or in one of the Department's areas of concentration, such as Race and Politics, Politics and Communications or Politics of Gender. In special circumstances the student may construct custom-designed minors with written approval from the DGS following the student's consultation with his or her academic advisor.

Students may elect to take two majors instead of a major and a minor.

Committees composed of two or three faculty members drawn from the field of the particular exam are responsible for evaluating the written exams. These committees assign one of three grades: Pass with Distinction, Pass, Oral Exam or Fail. Committees reserve the right to require that students who write marginal exams be required to sit for the oral exam. The oral examination may include questions on any aspect of the discipline, on the area of the student's concentration, or on other appropriate subjects beyond the scope of the written exam questions. Failure to perform adequately on the written exams and / or oral exams constitutes grounds upon which a student may be grounds for termination.

#### D. Taking Courses in the Third Year and Beyond

Students who need to acquire additional skills relevant to their field of research may take up to four credits in a single academic year beyond the 18 credits Departmental and TGS course requirement. Such students normally register for "500" status (Sect IX (H))

Students wishing to take undergraduate language classes, see Sect IX (B), for procedures. These classes must be taken for a grade. Those wishing to register for additional graduate courses must (1) obtain a permission number from the course instructor, and (2) write to their Student Services Coordinator in TGS (<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/abouttgs/tgsstaff/>) to request that TGS provide financial aid to cover the tuition for such courses. Additional graduate courses must be taken for a Pass / No-Pass mark.

### **V. THE MASTER'S DEGREE**

Our Department does not have a separate MA program and does not admit students solely for the purpose of obtaining an MA. This degree is awarded to students who are in the process of obtaining their Ph.D.s.

#### A. REQUIREMENTS

The Master's degree is awarded upon satisfactory completion of the following requirements:

1. Nine credits of graduate work, subject to the requirements outlined above. According to TGS: "The minimum residency requirement for the master of arts and master of science degrees is the equivalent of three quarters of full-time registration in courses authorized by the Graduate Faculty for graduate credit. Credit earned at an undergraduate institution or at another graduate school or a professional school may, with Department approval, be applied toward the Department's coursework requirements, but not toward the residency requirements, for a master's degree at Northwestern University." That is, students must have completed one full year in order to be eligible; however, the Department requires a paper, outlined in section IV, completed only in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Therefore, students must have completed 3 quarters (at least 9 courses, taken at Northwestern or transferred in), passed the 2<sup>nd</sup> year paper, and have cleared all incomplete grades before they are eligible to apply for the MA.

The Master's paper will be read by the student's faculty advisor and one other faculty member recommended by the student and selected by the DGS. Upon the recommendation of these readers that it be accepted as a Master's Paper, the student will qualify for the Master's degree, assuming that all other requirements are met.

Continuing Doctoral students may choose to submit the Second Year Paper as their MA paper. Its acceptance as a Second Year Paper will qualify the student for the MA degree, assuming all other requirements are also satisfied.

#### B. APPLICATION FOR THE MA

Responsibility for filing for the MA degree with TGS at the appropriate time lies with the student. At present, the MA is granted in June and December and the deadline for the application is no later than the 2nd week of the Spring or Fall quarter. No "Y" (incomplete) grades will be accepted on applications for the MA. Applications are submitted through CAESAR and email notification of an application must be sent to the GPA. The DGS, through the GPA, provides Departmental endorsement of successful applications. Students are responsible for meeting deadlines set by TGS for the award of Master's degrees.

## VI. ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY

### A. CANDIDACY FOR THE PH.D.

Admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. means that a student has passed the required qualifying exams, has completed eight quarters of residency, and is contingent upon the recommendation of the student's advisor and the Department. While most students complete qualifying exams before the end of the third year, they cannot be admitted to candidacy until the summer of their third year at the earliest. Students must complete prelims by the end of the fourth year and must defend a dissertation proposal by the end of the fourth year.

Candidacy certifies that the student is proficient in her or his major and minor fields, and is prepared to move on to the dissertation stage of the graduate career. More information can be found in TGS' statement on candidacy: <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/doctoral/admissiontocandidacy/>.

### B. DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

It is typical for students to submit a dissertation proposal (the "prospectus") to a faculty committee during the quarter following successful completion of qualifying examinations. TGS stipulates that the proposal must be approved by a three person faculty committee that includes the student's principal advisor. The dissertation proposal must be defended no later than the end of the student's fourth year of study if the student is to remain in good standing. Details concerning this TGS policy (including acceptable conditions and procedures for petitions for extensions) can be found at <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/doctoral/prospectus/>. Upon the approval of the dissertation proposal, the student becomes an "ABD" (all-but-dissertation) and the student's principal advisor generally becomes Chair of the student's dissertation committee.

The format of the proposal varies across fields and is adaptable to specific research projects and contexts. As a general rule, a proposal includes a concise statement of the question or problem that the student intends to research. It justifies the project on theoretical grounds (that is to say, it demonstrates why political scientists should be interested in the project), which often incorporates a review of relevant scholarly literature. It shows how the scholar intends to go about collecting and analyzing evidence that is relevant to the question or problem. In sum, the proposal should be a map of the work required to complete the dissertation.

A minimum of three faculty members serve on the prospectus committee. At least three members of this committee, including the Chair, must be Northwestern University Graduate Faculty. Almost all faculty members who hold tenured or tenure-line appointments will be considered Graduate Faculty. A list of Weinberg College of Arts & Sciences faculty (which includes the Department of Political Science) is at: <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/facultyandstaffinfo/gradfacultymembership/graduatefacultylist/weinbergcollegeofartsandsociences/>.

## VII. THE DISSERTATION

Students normally require one to three years to complete the dissertation. The time necessary varies with the amount of research or fieldwork required, the conditions of financial aid and other contingencies. Important information can be found here: <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/doctoral/degreecompletion/>

### A. COMPOSITION OF THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

At the point of a successful defense of the prospectus, the prospectus committee often becomes the dissertation committee, although students are free to change the composition of this committee. This committee will include at least three faculty members who are formally appointed by TGS to hear the defense, i.e., "Graduate Faculty." (A list of eligible Graduate Faculty can be found here:

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/facultyandstaffinfo/gradfacultymembership/graduatefacultylist/>. This list contains nearly all tenured and tenure-line political science professors.) The members of the committee will be nominated by the student's dissertation Committee Chair (usually the student's advisor) in consultation with the student. These committee members should be selected on the basis of their expertise in the field of the dissertation and their willingness to serve. The Chair of

the committee and at least one other faculty member must be members of the Department of Political Science. If a former member of the faculty, i.e. one who has retired or moved to a different university, is to be a member of the committee, his or her written consent must be obtained beforehand. Approval also must be obtained from TGS. (The DGS and GPA can facilitate these requests.)

## **B. DEFENSE OF THE DISSERTATION**

Arrangements for the dissertation defense must be made with the GPA at least four weeks prior to the defense. The finished dissertation must in all cases be in the hands of the committee at least four weeks before the scheduled date of the examination. TGS requires a minimum of ten working days between the receipt of a petition for the defense and the actual date of the defense. The committee may require whatever revisions it sees fit or refuse to certify the dissertation. With the agreement of the dissertation advisor and the candidate, the defense may be opened to other graduate students and faculty members. Defenses are assumed to be public events, with an open oral defense followed by a closed discussion with only the committee and the student.

The final format and conditions of acceptance of the dissertation are specified in detail by TGS. Students should consult TGS' web site for a comprehensive list of rules and procedures. It is the responsibility of the student to see that the final document meets these specifications. The Department has no authority to waive or alter these requirements and the final product must pass the muster of TGS.

Prior to the defense, students must review the following checklist:

[http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/docs/checklist\\_for\\_doctoral\\_degree\\_completion.pdf](http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/docs/checklist_for_doctoral_degree_completion.pdf). The GPA can advise students for successful completion of the necessary steps.

## **C. TIME LIMITS**

A student must be admitted to candidacy by the end of the 12th quarter (fourth year) after initial registration in TGS. A student who follows a part-time program or who receives an official leave of absence must meet the same deadlines as a full-time student.

Each doctoral student must complete all requirements for the Ph.D. by an established deadline. Graduate Faculty legislation states that all requirements for the doctoral degree must be met within nine years of initial registration in a doctoral program. Specific information concerning those who advance to a ninth year and beyond can be found near the end of this document.

Extensions of the completion time period are possible only by petitioning TGS. Such extension requests are reviewed on an individual basis. As a condition of the extension, the student, whether in residence or not, must register for TGS 513, Advanced Continuous Registration, for each quarter, with the exception of the Summer Session, until all requirements for the degree are completed. Students are considered less than part-time, and lose access to Northwestern health insurance as well as many graduate student privileges. Tuition for TGS 513 is currently \$1000 per quarter. No second extension will be granted.

## **VIII. UNSATISFACTORY PROGRESS**

Failure to make satisfactory progress, as determined by the Department, may result from (but is not limited to) unsatisfactory performance in classes, unsatisfactory performance on comprehensive exams ("prelims"), unsatisfactory research progress, or failure to meet other Departmental requirements. A student's failure to make satisfactory progress must be reported by the Department to the student and to TGS in the Department's annual academic progress report.

Unsatisfactory progress may lead to exclusion. Exclusion is defined by the University in the Student Handbook (<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/handbook/>). Prior to exclusion a student should have reasonable opportunity to remediate deficiencies. TGS will move to exclude a student if the student is shown not to be in good academic standing in two consecutive annual academic progress reports. Exclusion always requires approval from both the Department Chair and the DGS.

A decision of exclusion must be provided in writing to the student and TGS. The notification must include the effective date of the exclusion, a clear statement of reasons for exclusion and any relevant documentation.

Students who wish to appeal the Department's decision to exclude must first appeal directly to the Department through the DGS. The Department must inform the student and TGS of the outcome of the appeal in writing. A student may then appeal the Department's decision to TGS. TGS will only consider appeals on the basis of procedural errors or failure to comply with established Department or TGS policies. TGS will not consider appeals on the basis of substantive academic decisions.

Appeals to TGS must be made in writing within ten days of the Department's final written notification of exclusion and include supporting material at that time. The Dean of TGS will determine if an appeal will be administered within TGS or the University Hearing and Appeals System or other sanctioning body within the University. The Dean's decision will be made in a timely manner, and will be communicated in writing to the student and Department. This decision is final and cannot be further appealed.

## **IX. OTHER MATTERS**

### **A. TRANSFER CREDITS**

The Department may consider the transfer of credits. Doctoral students are allowed to transfer up to two quarters (six credits) of coursework. Such coursework must be from graduate level courses at approved, accredited institutions. A minimum of nine graded courses must be taken at Northwestern University to fulfill doctoral degree requirements and a B (3.0) average must be maintained. A student who receives a master's degree from TGS automatically waives all residency credit for graduate work completed at another institution or another School or College of Northwestern University.

Students who petition for transfer credits need to submit syllabi and other evidence of course content and requirements to their advisor. The advisor will evaluate the quality of this previous coursework and other information related to the merits of the request to the DGS. In instances where the transfer of credits for methodology courses is requested, the instructors for the corresponding courses at Northwestern University will be called upon to provide their professional judgment concerning the merits of the request. These processes are designed to ensure that the student consults with his or her advisor regarding the wisdom and the implications of the transfer of credits.

Transferring credits can reduce the length of residency and allow a student to advance more quickly toward the completion of a degree. Indeed, the Department requires that students who are awarded transfer credits will advance the pace of their course of study. For example, the award of six credits (two terms of coursework) will bring with it the expectation that the student will take qualifying exams ("prelims") at least half a year earlier than otherwise. The award of substantial numbers of credits can mean that the student will be expected to complete a second year paper in the first year of study.

Transferred credits cannot be used to effectively become a part-time student. All students must continue full-time study in order to remain in good standing. Remaining in good standing is a condition for continued access to funding. This is why students who complete their 18 credits of coursework (either at Northwestern exclusively or with the transfer of credits) need to progress directly to the next stage of their studies. Students who register for fewer than three seminars during a term may register for 590 Research to maintain full-time registration. Students may audit courses with faculty consent, but should not officially enroll if they do not plan to receive a letter grade.

Students with a Master's degree in a field other than political science can elect to take a second Master's in political science from Northwestern, but by doing so they will lose any transfer residency credit that was obtained upon admission to the Ph.D. program. The student should therefore carefully examine his or her situation before petitioning for the MA degree.

### **B. PART-TIME STUDY**

Students are permitted to enroll as part-time students in the program only under unusual circumstances. Part-time students must fulfill the same requirements as full-time students in order to qualify for the MA degree. Part-time students are strongly encouraged to enroll in two courses per quarter. All programs of part-time study must be approved by the Department Chair and DGS. Part-time students are urged to consult TGS Policy Guide about their special requirements. Additional information can be found at

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/generaldegreereq/residency/parttimestudy/>

Except in unusual circumstances and with the prior written approval of the student's advisor, students enrolled in the Ph.D.

program must pursue their studies full time. Part time study is extremely unusual.

### C. ADMISSION IN WINTER OR SPRING QUARTERS

Students are expected to begin course work in the Fall quarter. Exceptions to this rule will be made only if there are circumstances beyond the control of the student requiring admission in the winter or spring.

### D. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

When special circumstances interrupt a student's studies, the student may make a request for a leave of absence in writing to the DGS. The leave of absence is a pause in pursuit of the Ph.D., usually for one academic year. Common reasons for requesting leaves of absences include family emergencies, illness and the desire to reflect on one's commitment to pursuing the Ph.D. Upon receiving a response, the student should then submit a request in writing to the TGS Dean to explain why a leave is necessary. No leave is given for more than twelve consecutive months. A request for renewal beyond a year must also be addressed to the DGS and TGS Dean. Receiving an official leave of absence enables a student to register without going through the re-admission process, but such a leave does not alter TGS deadlines, i.e., the student's Admission to Candidacy deadline, the degree deadline, or the deadline for the removal of any incomplete grades. To prepare for registration, the student must file an Application for Re-admission form with TGS at least three weeks prior to the beginning of the quarter in which the student plans to re-enter. More information can be found here: <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/generaldegreereq/leavesofabsence/>

### E. GRADE REQUIREMENTS

Grades given in courses are A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D and F. Students do not receive credit for a grade of D or below. A grade of Y indicates incomplete coursework and is given, with prior agreement of the instructor, when a student does not submit all assigned work in a course, and a grade of X is given when a student fails to take the final examination in a course. A grade of W indicates withdrawal. All X and Y grades must be made up within one calendar year of the date the grade is incurred. A grade of D, F, N, X or Y entered for a course reduces the effective credit toward residency of that quarter by one-third for each such entry regardless of the number of courses in the registration for that quarter. Residency is restored if the X or Y is removed within one calendar year. To restore residency the work in the course must be completed and a Change of Grade form forwarded to the Office of the Registrar before the deadline.

Grades can only be changed when the instructor makes an error. A request to raise or lower a letter grade after course completion and grade submission must be forwarded to the Dean of TGS by the course instructor with a full explanation of the reason(s) for such a request. The Dean submits the request to a subcommittee of the Administrative Board for its recommendation. The Registrar will not accept a grade change request for the permanent record without the Dean's approval.

TGS requires at least a 3.0 (B) average (on a 4.0 scale), with no accumulation of X and Y grades, for good standing. Carrying a Y grade for more than one academic year endangers one's good standing status. Students not in good academic standing are notified in writing and are subject to academic probation. The Department Chair is notified when a student is warned of a marginal academic record, warned of an excessive number of X and Y grades, and/or placed on academic probation. A student who fails to maintain good standing is in jeopardy of being excluded from TGS. TGS requires that students receiving financial aid from the University maintain a 3.0 average and keep an academic record free of incomplete grades.

### F. DEPARTMENTAL STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS

It is very important to note that TGS' grade requirements do not fully reflect the criteria the Department uses to assess the progress of its students. It is rare that students have GPAs below 3.5, much less the 3.0 GPA minimum that TGS requires. Students should be concerned about GPAs below 3.5, as this may indicate sub-standard performance. In addition to grades, the faculty members look for a variety of signs of scholarly excellence in the student's exams, research, and seminar presentations. The situation can arise in which the faculty will recommend that a student consider leaving the Ph.D. program, in spite of a GPA that exceeds TGS requirements, because he/she has not given strong evidence of the capacity or the willingness to write a first-rate, publishable dissertation, which is all but obligatory if the student hopes to succeed as an academic. Similarly, grades enter only partially in the decision to extend financial aid to a student. It is recommended that students ask their professors to explain and interpret their grades so that they have as complete an idea as possible of how the faculty judge their progress.

## G. LANGUAGE AND RESEARCH SKILLS PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS

The Department has no formal language requirement, but students should learn those languages that are necessary for their dissertation research and scholarly career. Students must identify their language needs in their dissertation proposals, and an evaluation of the student's competence will be made at the time of the dissertation proposal defense by the student's committee. Dissertation committees may also require demonstration of competence in computer techniques, statistics, research methodology or mathematics if those skills are necessary for the proposed dissertation research.

Several language acquisition opportunities are available to students. These include:

Summer Language Grant Program:

(<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/financialaid/fellowshipsandscholarships/fellowshipsandgrants/summerlanguagegrant/>).

This program provides some financial support for successful applicants who need support to travel to a foreign country or to attend a domestic language immersion program to acquire or improve their command of a foreign language. This language must be relevant to the student's research. Successful applicants must have some exposure to the target language prior to application for this grant.

School of Continuing Studies (SCS) summer language classes:

(<http://www.scs.northwestern.edu/summernu/>). An arrangement between SCS and TGS enables Ph.D. students to register for summer intensive language courses on campus without additional tuition charges. Students can register for these courses in CAESAR instead of or in addition to (depending on how many language courses are taken) registering for TGS 500, the typical summer quarter registration. These classes do not count towards the graduate residency requirement.

Courses via CIC (detailed above in III (A)):

Students may take classes, including language classes, at any Big Ten school, the University of Chicago, or the University of Illinois, Chicago.

Language Courses during the Academic Year:

Students may take 100, 200, and 300 level language classes through WCAS during the academic year. Students must take these classes for credit and a grade. Students who are registered for full-time coursework must take these classes as their fourth class in a given term. Students beyond coursework would take these courses in addition to 590, 500, or 512 registrations. Visit the Non-TGS registration page for information on how to register for these language courses:

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/generaldegreereq/registration/nontgsenrollment/>.

## H. ADVANCED YEAR REGISTRATION

PhD students who have reached their ninth quarter of study are considered to have reached "advanced year registration status". In practical terms, this means that Third Year students (those who have completed their 18 credits of coursework) are considered to have reached advanced year registration status. More information about advanced year registration can be found at: <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/doctoral/courseworkgrades/advancedyearregistration/>.

Funded students who have completed all course requirements must register for TGS 500. Students may register for non-required coursework in addition to TGS 500. These courses should be related to the student's area of study, and should not be taken to fulfill Departmental degree requirements. Additional information about policies for continuous registration can be found at <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/generaldegreereq/registration/continuousregistration/>.

## I. TEACHING REQUIREMENT

Every graduate student is expected to have some practical experience in teaching within the Department. In most cases this requirement is met by participating as a teaching assistant in an undergraduate course.

Students who are supported by funds that do not require teaching should consult with the Associate Chair prior to their third year to make arrangements to obtain teaching experience. Some students will have the option of teaching their own seminars in the School of Continuing Studies. Those who have exhausted their guaranteed funding often utilize this opportunity.

TGS requires that non-native English speakers take an English language test before serving as TAs. Students may be exempt from this test if they have a four year degree from an institution where the primary language of instruction is English, and have passed the speaking portion of the TOEFL.

## J. FINANCIAL AID

All students who are admitted to the Department of Political Science Ph.D program are provided with a guarantee of four years and nine months of funding, provided they remain in good standing. Beginning in 2010-11, this guarantee includes fellowship funding over the course of two years (i.e., a stipend without a requirement to serve as a TA or equivalent position) and TA funding over the course of three years. Students are required to take fellowship funding during their first year. The Department leaves it to the student's discretion as to when he or she will take the second year of fellowship funding. It is typical for students to take this during their fifth year to aid in dissertation research and writing. Students who require additional funding in their sixth year often are able to compete for University funding, take positions as a Research Assistant with faculty members who have the interest and resources to hire them, or find employment in another unit of the University. It behooves such students to make themselves aware of these opportunities. Advisors, other students and the DGS are valuable sources of information regarding these possible opportunities.

## K. EXTERNAL FUNDING

Advanced graduate students should note that the Department expects them to apply for outside funding. Updated Information about external funding appears on TGS website:

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/financialaid/fellowshipsandscholarships/externalfunding/Students> also may wish to consult with the Office of Fellowships, <http://www.northwestern.edu/fellowships/info/grad/graduate.html>. This office is one of the most successful offices of its kind, and plays a large role in the outstanding performance of Northwestern students in major fellowship competitions.

Some opportunities available to first and second year students:

- National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, <http://www.nsfgrfp.org/>, provides up to three years of funding. As of 2008, the Graduate Research Fellowship stipend is \$30,000 for a 12-month tenure period, prorated monthly at \$2,500 for shorter periods as approved by NSF. To be eligible, applicants must be US citizens. Applicants must not have completed more than one year of graduate school or its equivalent by the August 31 prior to the application submission deadline.
- Social Science and Humanities Council of Canada, <http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/home-accueil-eng.aspx> Applicants must be Canadian citizens. Awards to the sum of C\$20,000 per annum are made in durations ranging from one to four years.
- Jacob Javits Fellowship, <http://ed.gov/programs/jacobjavits/index.html>, provides up to four years of funding. In 2010, the maximum annual stipend was \$30,000 per annum. Eligibility is limited to US citizens who apply before the completion of their first year of graduate study (i.e., apply in your first year by the mid-October deadline!)

A selection of opportunities available to students working on their dissertations:

- United States Institute of Peace, Peace Scholar Dissertation Program, <http://www.usip.org/fellows/scholars.html>. (Department members won two awards between 2006 / 07). Students of International Relations and Comparative Politics students tend to be most suited to this award.
- Social Science Research Council, <http://fellowships.ssrc.org/overview/>, provides a range of funding for dissertation research. Students of International Relations and Comparative Politics students have been most successful among applicants in our Department.
- National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grants, [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org), focuses on studies of perception, social psychology, risk and decision-making, statistics and methodology. Award amounts vary. Applicants must be US citizens. Our Americanist students have the best track record with this program.
- Charlotte W. Newcombe Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships, [http://www.newcombefoundation.org/scholarship\\_ddf.html](http://www.newcombefoundation.org/scholarship_ddf.html), provide funding for dissertation research and writing. Theory students have been most represented in awards to our Department.
- Many, many more: Discuss options with your advisor, senior graduate students and contact the Office of Fellowships, [www.northwestern.edu/fellowships](http://www.northwestern.edu/fellowships).

It is within the discretion of the Department to allow students who win external funding for their fifth year (and who have not yet taken their second fellowship funding year) to defer their fellowship funding to the sixth year. This provides an incentive for students to apply for external funding.

Students who enter the University with substantial external funding or who win such funding while enrolled in the Department may be entitled to defer a year of funding, typically the second fellowship year. This entitlement most often applies for students who arrive with or acquire the Social Science and Research Council of Canada three year fellowship (for Canadian citizens) or the National Science Foundation three year fellowship. Students who wish to consider these options are urged to contact their advisor.

Students who receive external funding awards that fall short of the University's base stipend level are urged to accept the award. It has been the practice of TGS to top up fellowships to match the University's prior commitment of financial support. Those who have further questions about this policy are urged to consult with the DGS and TGS.

Students who receive nationally or internationally competitive awards with a minimum duration of nine months and that provide funding in excess of the University's base stipend level may be eligible for an External Research Award Allowance Grant. Students are eligible to receive an External Award Research Allowance Grant for each year that they are supported on the eligible external award. Students must provide the GPA with a copy of the external grant award. The GPA will then forward a grant request to TGS. Research allowances will be transferred on the student's behalf to Departmental accounts for distribution to the student.

#### L. CONFERENCE AND TRAVEL POLICIES

Graduate students are strongly encouraged to try to present the results of their research at scholarly conferences while they are still doing graduate work. Chicago is frequently the site of professional meetings, particularly the Midwest Political Science Association Meetings, and this provides an opportunity to present papers without incurring travel expenses. Students are encouraged to consult with their adviser and dissertation committees on possibilities for publication and conference presentations.

TGS provides some funds for students traveling to conferences and/or seminars to make presentations on behalf of the University. The award is not intended to support attending courses at other schools, research or general educational travel. Students should apply at least two months before travel, if possible. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis through the year or until funds are depleted. TGS will not accept applications to support travel that has already begun or has been completed. The link to this application can be found here:

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/financialaid/fellowshipsandscholarships/fellowshipsandgrants/conferencetravelgrant/>.

The Department also provides up to \$500 in matching funds to support travel to conferences and seminars. This application is available at the Department's web site or from the Department's Accounting Assistant. Applications for these funds must be in conjunction with an application to TGS for travel support.

#### M. ACADEMIC HONESTY

The Department actively defends customary standards of academic honesty and cases of proven academic dishonesty almost always result in expulsion from the program without the awarding of the degree. Students should acquaint themselves with University requirements in this area, particularly with regard to plagiarism. The Office of the Provost has a publication entitled "Plagiarism and How to Avoid it" which deals with the topic in detail, and can be found here: <http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/students/integrity/plagiarism.html>

#### N. TIME LIMITS

Graduate Faculty legislation states: *All requirements for the doctoral degree must be met within nine years of initial registration in a doctoral program.* Beginning in the Fall term of 2008, doctoral students who were nine years beyond their first term of enrollment and master's students five years beyond their first term of enrollment have been required to maintain their affiliation with Northwestern by registering for TGS 513, Advanced Continuous Registration. Students must maintain this registration until completion of all degree requirements. Students are required to register for fall, winter, and spring quarters; the summer quarter is excluded. Any lapse in registration must be paid in full, including appropriate retroactive registrations fees, or no degree will be awarded nor will a transcript be released. Students in this advanced continuous registration status are not eligible to receive federal loans or to qualify for the University health insurance subsidy, nor will they be eligible for fellowships, traineeships, teaching or research assistantships, and scholarships. This status is considered less than half-time and therefore does not provide students with the ability to defer loans or extend visas. Tuition for TGS 513 in 2010 was \$1000 per quarter. For more information on PhD deadlines, see <http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/studentsvcs/doctoral/degreecompletion/limitationoftime>. In cases of extreme hardship, special dispensation might be granted. Students, not the programs, should email a petition to Kate Veraldi at [k-veraldi@northwestern.edu](mailto:k-veraldi@northwestern.edu) with their rationale for the request.

## O. PLACEMENT

Students who have defended or are close to defending their dissertation may be interested in pursuing permanent job opportunities. Northwestern has a number of resources available to students, starting with University Career Services: <http://www.northwestern.edu/careers/graduate/graduateservices.html>. The Commune holds programs throughout the academic year designed to inform and assist students with understanding the job seeking process. The GPA is available to help students compile application materials and send confidential letters of recommendation. The Department website is a place where many students post biographies. Faculty advisors should be consulted on cover letters, portfolio assembly, and networking. It behooves students to begin the job seeking process early; make appointments to see UCS, the GPA, and their faculty advisor well before they are ready to graduate.