GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

ROCKEFELLER COLLEGE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND POLICY

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Director of Graduate Studies
Cheng Chen (Fall 2019)
Milne 214A
(518) 591-8724
cchen@albany.edu

Timothy Weaver (Spring 2020)
Milne 201
518-442-5283
tweaver@albany.edu

2019-2020
GENERAL

The Department of Political Science at the University at Albany, SUNY offers the graduate degrees of Master of Arts in Political Science and Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science. These programs are designed to meet the needs of students interested in careers in research, teaching, the business world, and public service. Specializations within political science are offered in the following areas: American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Political Theory, Public Law, and Public Policy.
SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment of employees and students is contrary to University policy and is a violation of federal and state laws and regulations. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when: 1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic advancement; 2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individual; or 3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

No University employee shall impose a requirement of sexual cooperation as a condition of employment or academic advancement, or in any way contribute to or support unwelcome physical or verbal sexual behavior.

Any member of the University community who requires additional information, or wishes to make a complaint or receive a copy of the University procedures to be followed for complaints arising from matters related to the policies outlined above should contact the University’s Title IX Coordinator, Building 25, Suite 117, 518-442-3800.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

No persons in any relationship with the University at Albany, SUNY shall be subject to discrimination on the basis of age, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, gender identity, disability, Vietnam-era veteran status, marital status, or sexual orientation.

ADMISSION OF PERSONS WITH PRIOR FELONY CONVICTIONS

State University of New York (SUNY) policy prohibits University at Albany, SUNY admission applications from inquiring into an applicant’s prior criminal history. After acceptance, the College shall inquire if the student previously has been convicted of a felony if such individual seeks campus housing or participation in clinical or field experiences, internships, or study abroad programs. The information required to be disclosed under SUNY policy regarding such felony convictions shall be reviewed by a standing campus committee consistent with the legal standards articulated in New York State Corrections Law.

Students who have previously been convicted of a felony are advised that their prior criminal history may impede their ability to complete the requirements of certain academic programs and/or to meet licensure requirements for certain professions. Students who have concerns about such matters are advised to contact the dean's office of their intended academic program.
MA PROGRAM

The MA program in political science requires a minimum of 31 credits. All MA students must complete three requirements: RPOS 516 (Introduction to Political Inquiry), either RPOS 517 (Quantitative Methods) or RPOS 618 (Qualitative Methods), and RPOS 698 (Masters Capstone). To accumulate the remaining credits, students must enroll in additional graduate courses in political science, public administration and policy or other relevant fields; courses must be selected in consultation with a faculty advisor. No more than 12 credit hours toward the MA may be taken on an S/U basis without permission of the Graduate Program Director or department chair.

In order to structure the MA experience, the political science faculty have designed six optional tracks. The tracks constitute recommendations by our faculty for how students may get the most out of their degrees. Completing a track is not required in order to receive a degree, but students who opt to finish a track will have a better and more integrated experience in our program and will gain more focused and concentrated sets of skills that will facilitate career planning during and after completion of the degree. The department has constructed tracks in several different areas. The portfolio and essay options for RPOS 698 apply to all tracks, but the specific format of the portfolio may differ.

TRACKS

American Politics
This track is designed to provide students with a practical education on the functioning of American governmental systems. It is recommended for students interested in careers in any facet of public employment or with non-governmental organizations that interface with government. It is also good preparation for students who anticipate seeking doctoral training in the American politics field.

Track Courses
- Twelve credits (three courses) in Institutions, Political Processes and Lobbying, and State and Local Politics
  - Institutions courses
    - Legislative Process (RPOS 531)
    - Chief Executive (RPOS 532)
    - Political Parties (RPOS 534)
    - American Political Development (RPOS 544)
  - Political Processes and Lobbying
    - Women and Politics (RPOS 533)
    - Political Parties (RPOS 534)
    - Campaigns and Elections (RPOS 539)
    - Government, Politics, and the Mass Media (RPOS 718)
State and Local Politics
- Federalism (RPOS 520)
- State Government (RPOS 522)
- Community Politics (RPOS 524)

Two additional courses from Political Science or cross-listed through Public Administration and Policy (PADP)
- Either RPOS 517 or 618 (the one not taken to fulfill general requirements)
- American Political Theory (RPOS 515)
- Constitutional Law I and II (RPOS 526, RPOS 527)
- Latino/as and Inequality in America (RPOS 547)
- Participation (RPOS 509)
- Field Seminar in Public Policy (RPOS 513)
- Field Seminar in the American Political System (RPOS 521)
- Urban Community Development (RPOS 523)
- US Housing Policy (RPOS 528)
- Urban Policy (RPOS 540)
- Inequality and Public Policy (RPOS 604)
- The Politics of Environmental Regulation (RPOS 667)

If desired and with an advisor’s approval, one academically supervised internship may fulfill one of the courses in this track

Applied American Politics (Elections, Lobbying, and Advocacy)
This track also focuses on US politics and government, but is particularly designed to serve students interested in pursuing careers in elections, lobbying, and/or other forms of government advocacy.

Track Courses
Same as American Politics but at least three courses should be chosen from among the following: RPOS 531, RPOS 534, RPOS 539, RPOS 631 (Legislative Internship), or RPOS 734 (Campaign Internship)

Government Analytics
This track provides students with focused and advanced training in research methods. This track is recommended for 1) current practitioners, especially in the public sector seeking research skills to improve their professional credentials for promotion or specialization, 2) recent undergraduates motivated to apply to doctoral programs who want to improve their resumes prior to applying to graduate school, 3) individuals considering graduate education but unsure about methodological requirements or what substantive areas may interest them, or 4) current undergraduates at UAlbany interested in the combined BA/MA or testing curiosity about graduate school.
Track Courses

- Both RPOS 517 and RPOS 618
- Two advanced methods courses
  - Spatial Analysis (RPOS 619)
  - Social Network Analysis (RPAD 637)
  - Evaluation of Public Sector Programs (RPAD 626)
  - Cultural Analysis of Organizations (RPAD 636)
  - Applied Quantitative Methods (RPAD 725)
- Two substantive courses in any area

Justice, Democracy, and Law
This track serves students with an interest in questions of justice, equality, inclusion, citizenship and basic rights as well as the role of the state in affecting these fundamental principles. It will best serve students with aspirations to attend theoretically oriented law schools like Yale, Stanford, Berkeley, NYU, or Duke; students aspiring to legal careers with an activist or political orientation; or students who are interested in the legal aspects of political theory or the political theory questions raised by public law and who hope to do crossover work at the doctoral level.

Track Courses

- Field Seminar in Political Theory (RPOS 501)
- Field Seminar in Public Law (RPOS 541)
- One or two courses in political theory
  - Political Philosophy (RPOS 500)
  - Contemporary Political Theory (RPOS 603)
  - American Political Theory (RPOS 515)
  - Alternative course recommended by advisor
- One or two courses in public law
  - Constitutional Law (RPOS 526)
  - Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (RPOS 527)
  - Law and Policy (RPOS 529)
  - Law and Society (RPOS 537)
  - Alternative course recommended by advisor

Law and Politics
This track provides students with advanced coursework and training in the study of law from multiple perspectives. It serves three different groups of students. First, students who aspire to attend a highly competitive law school have the opportunity to engage in advanced study of law before applying, and to encounter a broader set of perspectives than might typically be included in a JD degree. Second, students hoping to pursue PhDs can gain relevant coursework and skills development to ease that transition. Finally, the track provides other students interested in an MA degree with strong writing and analytical skill development.
**Track Courses**
- Field Seminar in Public Law (RPOS 541)
- Law & Society (RPOS 537)
- Two additional courses selected from public law offerings
  - Constitutional Law (RPOS 526)
  - Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (RPOS 527)
  - Law and Policy (RPOS 529)

**Public Policy**
The public policy track is designed to give students interested in politics and public policy the skills and substantive knowledge to understand and analyze the *politics* of public policy. Unlike a traditional MPP degree, which focuses on policy analysis, or an MPA degree, which focuses on administration and management, the MA in political science with a concentration in public policy is designed for individuals who want to take a broader approach to policy in their work in government, non-profits, or for companies on policy-related issues.

**Track Courses**

1. **Research Design, Methods, and Portfolio (12 credits)**
   - Research Design (RPOS 516)
   - Quantitative Methods (RPOS 517)
   - Qualitative (and Mixed) Methods (RPOS 618)
   - MA Portfolio

2. **Policy Courses (24 credits)**
   - Public Policy Core (12 credits)
     - Field Seminar in Public Policy (RPOS 513)
     - Comparative Public Policy (RPOS 546)
     - Urban Policy (RPOS 540)
   - Policy Specialization (12 credits): An additional 12 credits drawn from courses in a particular aspect or area of public policy, e.g. Inequality and Public Policy (RPOS 604), Migration (RPOS 605), Foreign Policy (RPOS 584), or Health Policy and Politics (RPAD 516).

**MA CAPSTONE**
The MA capstone experience may be fulfilled in one of two ways, either through the development and completion of an MA essay, or through the submission of a portfolio. Note that the portfolio option assumes immersion in a concentrated set of courses and thus will work best if combined with one of the recommended tracks.

**Essay Option**
The master’s essay is a substantial research paper of a length and quality appropriate for formal presentation at a New York State or regional political science annual meeting. The Master’s essay must be written under the direction of the student’s advisor or another appropriate faculty member in the political science department. It must incorporate original investigation of a significant research question and must go beyond a summary or evaluation of extant literature.
Portfolio Option
The portfolio consists of no fewer than three discrete writing projects that, taken together, demonstrate mastery of a specific area within political science (i.e., one of the recommended tracks). Writing projects completed in classes form the basis for the portfolio, but these projects should go through at least one round of revisions prior to acceptance as part of the portfolio and will not be considered final until each element of the portfolio meets the expectations of a regional conference paper, and/or is substantially equivalent to an “A” paper. Students submitting a project from a course are encouraged to solicit faculty feedback from the instructor at the end of the semester. However, it is up to the student’s portfolio advisor to determine how many revisions are needed to meet the portfolio standards. The portfolio is to be compiled under the supervision of the student’s advisor or another appropriate faculty member in the political science department.

Students Enrolling in the Doctoral Program
Students pursuing a master’s degree who have been admitted to the PhD program at the University at Albany may substitute successful completion of the PhD comprehensive examination (in both a major and minor field) and dissertation prospectus defense for the master’s capstone requirement.
DOCTORAL PROGRAM

The Political Science Department’s doctoral program requires a minimum of three years of full-time study beyond the baccalaureate (or the equivalent over a longer period of part-time study). The doctoral program has been designed so that it can be completed in five to six years of intense work, even for those students who are supported on graduate assistantships. In order to ensure completion of the degree in an acceptable time period, doctoral students—including those students working on assistantships—are recommended to take 12 credit hours each semester. The department will consider registration for 9 credit hours per semester as the minimum for students on graduate assistantships, including first-year graduate students who are serving as teaching assistants. In addition to required course work, set out below, a doctoral candidate must demonstrate competence in a major field and a minor field, and in one of the two research tool options. A dissertation accepted by the student’s committee and conforming to University guidelines is required to complete the program. In general, the dissertation must demonstrate that the candidate is capable of doing independent scholarly work and can formulate conclusions, which in some respects modify or enlarge what has previously been known in the discipline of political science.

ASSISTANTSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

The department is allocated a limited number of graduate assistantships to support doctoral students. While a primary purpose of the assistantship is to support students in the doctoral program, assignment of assistantship duties is also based on departmental needs. Over the course of a graduate student’s career, they can expect to have a mix of teaching and research assignments. While every effort is made to accommodate student preferences, departmental needs are the most important criterion.

To remain eligible for departmental funding, students must maintain a satisfactory academic record, be enrolled as a full-time student, and satisfactorily complete their assistantship duties. Satisfactory academic performance for funding purposes is defined in the following terms:

- A grade point average of at least 3.5
- No incomplete grades carried beyond the end of the following semester
- Progress toward degree completion (including successful completion of comprehensive examinations) consistent with departmental guidelines set out below.

Students whose performance falls below these standards may have their funding revoked.

NOTE: All funded students, with the exception of international students, must apply for New York State residency at the earliest opportunity: http://www.albany.edu/studentaccounts/residency.php. Funded students who fail to apply for New York State residency as soon as they are eligible will be required by the University to pay the difference between in-state and out-of-state tuition.

For more information on assistantship expectations and guidelines, please refer to the guidelines for funded doctoral students on page 36.
**Outside Employment and Non-departmental Assistantships:**
Graduate students who hold fellowships or assistantships may not ordinarily be employed in other capacities in or outside the University while holding an assistantship. They may not hold any kind of fellowship, traineeship, or second assistantship concurrently. Under limited circumstances, extra service hours may be approved through the filing of an extra service request with the department, but in no circumstances may any extra work exceed five hours per week at any time.

Some non-funded Political Science students may qualify for funding outside of the department through such organizations as the Rockefeller Institute of Government, the Center for Policy Research, the Center for International Development, or the Center for Women in Government and Civil Society. In addition, assistantship opportunities are available in administrative offices of the University. The Rockefeller College Office of Career Development also assists graduate students in securing part-time internships and summer employment. Consult with the Director of Internships and Career Services for further information at rockefeller.careers@albany.edu.

**Adjunct Faculty Appointments for Students:**
Advanced graduate students who have been admitted to candidacy may be invited to teach as adjunct instructors, both in the summer session and during the regular school year. All appointments are contingent on availability of departmental funds, and are at the final discretion of the Department Chair. For more information on preparing to teach a course, please see the appendix.

**Grants, Scholarships, Fellowships, etc.**
Listed below are a series of internal and external funding sources. This list is not comprehensive. Students interested in exploring funding options within the University and external to it for dissertation research funds should use the Grant Resource Room in the basement of Dewey Library and/or contact the Center for Policy Research at 581-442-3510. Students may also pursue opportunities listed through the American Political Science Association and H-Net.

**Graduate Student Association Grants Program:**
The University at Albany Graduate Student Association (GSA) offers grants of up to $300.00 for funding academic research and travel. GSA Research Grants may be used for travel to research facilities, purchase of equipment and supplies, remuneration for human subjects, costs associated with specialized training, and other research-related expenses. GSA Travel Grants may be used to cover travel expenses and room and board for conference participation. Travel grants are only available to those individuals (1) presenting papers, posters, literary work, or artwork, or (2) serving as panelists, etc. for symposia. GSA funds a limited number of graduate students per funding period. For more information contact the Graduate Student Association at gsa@albany.edu, or 442-4178, or Campus Center, Room 165B.
Initiatives for Women Awards:
UAlbany’s Initiatives for Women awards enables women, students, staff, and faculty to realize their academic and career potential. The program builds on the University at Albany’s 150-year-old tradition of providing equal educational opportunity to women by supporting the following categories of awards:

- Scholarships, fellowships, and financial support: for women in financial need or women returning to school at a non-traditional age.
- Awards to women of promise: for students who demonstrate outstanding academic accomplishments.
- Internships and training programs that will enable women to advance in their careers
- Visiting Scholars Program: for visiting lectureships
- Research on women and women's issues
- Enhancement of educational and career opportunities for women of color
- Educational and career opportunities for women with disabilities

The awards generally range from $250 to $1000 depending on need. The Initiatives for Women Committee reviews all requests and may interview finalists. Consult the Initiatives for Women website for more information, deadlines, and application at http://www.albany.edu/ifw.

Benevolent Association Grants:
The University at Albany Benevolent Association offers grants of up to $500 to assist advanced degree candidates pursuing research projects integral to their dissertations or master’s theses, or projects related to preliminary stages of advanced graduate research.

The Benevolent Association Research Grant can be used for all phases of research, including travel to libraries, archives, laboratories, and other research facilities and resources; costs of information access; remuneration for human subjects; purchase of supplies or rental equipment; costs associated with specialized training; and other research related expenses.

Application deadline: The Benevolent Association grant program has two cycles. The fall competition is intended to support research activities during the following spring semester. The spring competition is intended to support research activity during the following summer or fall semester. Deadline dates are subject to change each year.

For application materials and more information contact: The Office for the Vice President of Research, University Hall, Room 307, 518-956-8170.
DEPARTMENTAL SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDING OF STUDENT TRAVEL
TO PRESENT PAPERS AT SCHOLARLY MEETINGS

The department has limited funds available for graduate students who are presenting papers at scholarly meetings. **These funds are designed to supplement other sources of funding, such as the GSA grants program and funding available from APSA and other sources.** Departmental funds will not be available to students who have not applied for funding elsewhere.

The following guidelines when making travel funding decisions:

- Funding will not be provided unless a student’s paper or poster has been accepted at the meeting. In no event will funds be allocated for a student simply to attend a meeting, or participate as a discussant or panel chair, without presenting a paper.
- The amount of funding allocated depends on the location and nature of the meeting: Students presenting at Northeast regional meetings (NY Political Science Association or Northeast Political Science Association) will be eligible for up to $250; those attending conferences outside the Northeast will be eligible for up to $500. While there may be exceptions, travel funds will generally be restricted to attendance at “main line” conferences – the regional political science conferences and the APSA annual meeting, meetings of the International Studies Organization, the Association of Public Policy Analysis and Management, the Law and Society Association, etc.
- ABD and advanced students will receive priority in allocation of travel funds.
- Generally, students will be eligible for a maximum of $500 support in an academic year.

**Student Travel Procedures**

- **The Director of Graduate Student Services, Dyana Warnock, must receive a “Department Supplemental Funding of Student Travel Form” at least four weeks prior to travel.**
- **Air travel cannot be reimbursed under current travel rules.**
- **Train travel:** Use of the University designated travel agency is not necessary for train travel. To be reimbursed for this expense, the traveler must provide an original receipt or email confirmation indicating that payment has been made.
- **Mileage – Mileage is reimbursable at a per mile rate. Please submit a MapQuest or googlemap printout showing beginning and end of travel and total number of miles.**
- **Meals:** Receipts are not required for reimbursement for meals. Meals are paid on a per diem basis according to location.
- **Hotel, taxis, shuttles, conference registration and other miscellaneous expenses require original receipts for reimbursement.**
- **Travel reimbursement paperwork:** Students will need to complete a State Travel Voucher upon their return. Students will also need a copy of the conference program or agenda, receipts for all travel expenses (showing proof of payment), and a copy of the signed travel approval form. Completed reimbursement paperwork should be submitted directly to Stephanie White in Milne 102 within two weeks of returning from the conference.
DEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT FOR GRADUATE STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT ICPSR AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Departmental support may be available for a limited number of PhD students to attend methodology courses offered by Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), Institute for Qualitative and Multi-Method Research (IQMR), or similar courses. Limited funds are also available for language courses that support students’ dissertation research and are not offered by the University. If funds are available, the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair will use the following guidelines to allocate them:

- Priority will be given to PhD students with strong academic records, strong faculty support for attendance at the program, and advanced standing.
- Support will be restricted to programs that offer instruction in methodologies or languages that are not available at the University at Albany, and which are of direct relevance to a student’s dissertation research.
- To apply for departmental support, a student should submit an application to the graduate director that includes
  1. a letter of application, setting out a justification for why the program is essential to the student’s dissertation research, what preparatory work has been taken at the University at Albany, and why existing Albany courses will not be acceptable substitutes,
  2. two letters from faculty members supporting the application,
  3. a transcript, and
  4. a proposed budget, indicating any other sources of funds for which the student has applied.

Note: For those interested in applying to the ICPSR program, hard copies of the application materials must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Student Services, Dyana Warnock, by April 15th. The Department will only be able to provide partial funding, and the amount will depend on the number of students applying for the program. Students interested in the IQMR should submit materials by October 1st.
PROGRAM PLANNING AND ADVISEMENT

The Director of Graduate Studies has administrative responsibility for the graduate programs; however, advisement is chiefly the function of individual faculty members. Students are expected to choose a faculty member to serve as their advisor in the first semester of graduate study, prior to pre-registration for classes for the following semester. Through attendance at orientation, faculty-student functions, field seminars and other seminar courses, students will be able to select a faculty member appropriate to their interests. A change of advisor is quite normal as students become more acquainted with faculty and discover who is most suitable in relation to interests and specializations. Graduate students are responsible for informing the department of their advisor via email at rockgradservices@albany.edu.

Graduate students should meet with their advisor at least twice each semester to discuss their progress. Only a student’s advisor may authorize the release of an AVN, allowing a student to register for classes. The student and advisor should also discuss and record annual progress reports and future plans in preparation for the annual departmental review of graduate students which takes place at the end of each spring semester. Please review the guidelines for faculty advising on page 37 for more details about faculty/student advising expectations.

Note: The availability of advice does not relieve the student of sole responsibility for completing necessary forms, initiating the formation of committees, honoring deadline dates at various points in one’s studies, and meeting all departmental and graduate school regulations. Students should therefore read carefully the Graduate Student Handbook, the University Graduate Student Bulletin, and the Fall/Spring Course Description Lists.

Academic Requirements:
A minimum of 60 credit hours is required beyond the bachelor’s degree to be taken in courses and seminars and through independent study. To receive the PhD, a student must satisfactorily complete all degree requirements detailed below. University policy requires that graduate students who are candidates for a graduate degree must earn an average of B (3.0) in all resident graduate courses and credits applicable to their degree completed with grades other than S (satisfactory) or U (unsatisfactory) and receive grades of S in all resident graduate courses applicable to their degree which may be graded S/U. In addition to the University’s minimum cumulative GPA, departmental policy requires students to repeat any mandatory course (RPOS 516, RPOS 517, RPOS 618 and any required field courses) in which they earn a grade below B. Students are expected to earn a B- or better in all other courses and will be required to repeat any course in which they did not meet that expectation.

1. Scope and Methods of Political Science:
The Department of Political Science requires that all PhD students earn a B or better in the following courses:
- RPOS 516 Introducion to Political Inquiry
- RPOS 517 Quantitative Research Methods
- RPOS 695 Research and Writing Seminar Part I
- RPOS 696 Research and Writing Seminar Part II
RPOS 695 and RPOS 696 are two-credit classes. Most PhD students will take RPOS 516 in the fall of their first year, RPOS 517 in the spring of their first year, RPOS 695 in the fall of their third year, and RPOS 696 in the spring of their third year. This course work is designed to provide our graduate students with a broad foundation for research writing, and publishing in the field of political science.

2. Field Seminars:
Field seminars provide a broad introduction to the literature of the following subfields of the discipline: American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Political Theory, Public Policy, and Public Law. Doctoral students are required to take two field seminars, one offered in their major field and one in their minor field. Normally, the field seminars should be taken before registration for an advanced seminar in the same field. However, because not all field seminars are offered every year or in the fall semester, first-year students may have to enroll in an advanced course before taking a field seminar. A petition for a waiver of any part of these requirements based upon a claim of equivalency in graduate work done elsewhere should be directed to the Director of Graduate Studies and the appropriate field chair for consideration. A syllabus must be presented to the Director of Graduate Studies to facilitate a comparison with the department’s version of the course.

3. Advanced Research Tool or Foreign Language Requirement:
Prior to the admission to candidacy (ABD status) for the PhD degree, a student must have completed advanced research tool requirements in both qualitative methodology and quantitative methodology, or in a foreign language. Students whose field of study or research does not include a need for competence in a foreign language must satisfy the tools requirement in quantitative and qualitative research techniques. With approval of their advisor, only theory concentrators who do not require a language other than English may be exempted from the advanced research tool requirement.

Quantitative and Qualitative Research Techniques. Students satisfying the quantitative or qualitative research tool requirement must be competent in research design, data analysis, and elementary statistics. The requirement may be satisfied either by successful completion of RPOS 517 (Empirical Data Analysis) or equivalent graduate course work in another department or at another university. Students must also be competent in qualitative research design and analysis. The requirement may be satisfied either by successful completion of RPOS 618 (Qualitative Research Methods) or equivalent graduate course work in another department or at another university. NOTE: Depending on a student’s field of study, the department may recommend that a student take additional research methods courses beyond RPOS 517 and 618.

Foreign Language Option. Upon consultation with their advisor, students whose research requires use of a foreign language may choose the foreign language option instead of an advanced quantitative or qualitative methods course. (Some students’ research will require both advanced quantitative or qualitative methods and a foreign language.) It may be met by passing a foreign language exam that is either given by the appropriate foreign language department at the University at Albany or by an established language testing service, as approved by the department. English may not be used to satisfy a foreign language requirement.
**Degree Progress:**

*Full-time course load.* In order to ensure completion of the degree in an acceptable time period, doctoral students—including those students working on assistantships—are recommended to take 12 credit hours each semester. *The department will consider registration for 9 credit hours per semester as the minimum for students on graduate assistantships, including first-year graduate students who are serving as teaching assistants.*

*Normal progress toward the degree.* The doctoral program has been designed so that it can be completed in five to six years of intense work, even for those students who are supported on graduate assistantships. Students who do not make normal progress toward their degree will not be eligible for departmental funding and will be referred to the department for possible dismissal from the program. While exceptions are possible for good cause, the following situations will be considered indicators that a student is not making normal progress:

1. One or more incomplete grades that have not been completed by the midpoint of the following semester;
2. Any grade below B;
3. A cumulative grade-point average below 3.0;
4. Failure of a full-time student to maintain a course load of 12 credits (9 for those on graduate assistantships) per semester, except during final preparation for the comprehensive examinations or during writing of the dissertation; or
5. Failure of a student, in the view of their faculty advisor, to move expeditiously toward completion of the degree.

All requirements for a doctoral degree in political science must be completed within eight calendar years from the date of initial registration in the program. Extensions may be granted on a case-by-case basis.  
*Note: These rules apply equally to students who enter with or without advanced standing and to students who formally change their areas of specialization after admission.*
GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Two-Credit Course Registration Option:
Most departmental graduate courses are offered for four credits or as a readings version for two-credits (field seminars and the required four-credit methods classes can only be taken for four credits). While faculty members set the course requirements for courses they teach, students enrolled in a course for two credits generally will be expected to complete the reading and class participation requirements for the course and possibly take a final examination. They may not be required to fulfill all of the writing requirements of the four-credit course. Both four- and two-credit courses are graded A-E. Students may audit most graduate classes, as well, with the permission of the instructor, with the instructor to determine reading, attendance, and other requirements.

Note: Political Science courses will be changing from four to three credits effective fall 2020.

GRADUATE COURSES

The titles and descriptions of courses offered by the Department of Political Science are available in the university graduate bulletin, http://www.albany.edu/graduatebulletin/. Students interested in interdisciplinary programs should review course listings of other schools and departments. Not all courses listed in the bulletin are offered in any given year or at consistent intervals.

Courses Offered at the 400/500 Level:
Graduate students may not take undergraduate courses (400 level) for graduate credit. However, in some 500-level graduate courses students may be required to attend lectures in the corresponding undergraduate course, meeting separately with the instructor and doing additional reading and writing to earn graduate credit for the course. In addition, graduate students may find it desirable to audit selected undergraduate courses if their background in that area is weak.

Non-departmental Courses:
A student may receive department credit for completing non-departmental courses as part of their regular program. Approval of the Director of Graduate Studies or Faculty Advisor is required prior to registering for these courses.

Courses Taught By Instructors without a Doctoral Degree:
Courses taught by an instructor without a PhD will not count toward PhD students’ requirements. Students should consult with their faculty advisor before enrolling in courses that will not count towards their academic requirements.

Transfer Credits:
A student who wishes to receive graduate credit for courses taken elsewhere should consult with their Faculty Advisor(s) and/or the Director of Graduate Studies. The decision whether to transfer credit will be made by the Faculty Advisor/Director of Graduate Studies in consultation with the Department Chair. In accordance with University requirements, a maximum of 30 hours of transfer credit can be granted toward the PhD (including transfer credits previously applied to the MA). The Director of Graduate Studies will submit transfer credit requests to the University’s Graduate School for approval.
Continuous Registration and Leave of Absence:
A doctoral student must register each semester (excluding summer) until they have completed all requirements (including defense of dissertation) for the degree, or must request and receive a leave of absence approved by the Director of Graduate Studies, the Department Chair, and the University’s Office of Graduate Education. Normally, a leave of absence will be granted for a period up to one year; with a compelling justification the leave may be extended another year. The period of authorized leave is not counted as part of the statute of limitations for completion of degree requirements. **Note: once a student has achieved candidacy, they are no longer eligible for a leave of absence.**

GRADUATES AND EVALUATIONS OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

**Grade Requirements:**
The grade of “B” is considered the minimal satisfactory grade in individual graduate courses; students must repeat any mandatory course in which they receive a grade below B and any other course in which they receive a grade below B-. A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher is needed for a degree to be awarded, and failure to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 will be considered evidence of inadequate progress toward the degree.

**Incompletes:**
Students are expected to complete course work on time. A grade of incomplete may be given only in those instances in which the student has not been able to complete all of the assigned projects and/or examinations in a course due to illness or other unforeseeable compelling circumstances. A date for completion of the work should be arranged by the instructor; however, University policy requires that incompletes received during a given semester be completed one month before the close of the following semester. The grade of I is automatically changed to E or U unless work is completed as agreed between the student and instructor.

*The department may elect to revoke financial support for students receiving departmental funding if course work is not completed on time and incompletes are accrued.*

**Academic Integrity:**
Academic integrity is taken seriously. Violations of academic integrity in any form can result in course failure or even dismissal from the program. Violations include but are not limited to plagiarism, cheating on examinations, multiple submissions, and unauthorized collaboration. Details on the University’s academic honesty policies are located in the Graduate Bulletin: [http://www.albany.edu/graduatebulletin/requirements_degree.htm#standards_integrity](http://www.albany.edu/graduatebulletin/requirements_degree.htm#standards_integrity). Students are also required to comply with course-specific guidelines and requirements, as outlined in course syllabi.

**Academic Grievance Procedures:**
Students who elect to challenge an academic evaluation of their work in a course or seminar, in research or another educational activity, or an unfavorable academic standing or status assigned to them because of inadequate grades or other evaluations of their performance, may request a review
of the evaluation or the academic status, or both. Students should attempt to resolve any problems with the faculty member(s) responsible for issuing a particular grade or evaluation. If an adequate resolution is not found, students may petition the Political Science Department’s Grievance Committee to review cases by contacting the Director of Graduate Studies, or, if the contested evaluation has been conducted by the Director of Graduate Studies, by contacting the Department Chair.

FIELD REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PhD

General Rules for Comprehensive Examinations
1. Examinations for all subfields will be offered on the same dates, once in the fall and once in the spring, for both major and minor examinations. The actual dates of examinations will be determined administratively each semester. All subfields will have the same examination procedures.
2. For full-time students who entered the graduate program with a bachelor’s degree, the major and minor field examinations and prospectus defense should take place by the end of the fourth year of full-time study. For students who entered the graduate program with a master’s degree, these examinations and the prospectus defense should normally be taken by the end of the third year of full-time study.
3. Each faculty member contributing to a subfield examination will provide feedback of not less than one paragraph to graduate students within a maximum period of three weeks from the date of the written examination’s completion (though ideally earlier). Subfield chairs may opt to aggregate that feedback.
4. Graduate students may retake a failed examination in a major or minor field once. Selecting a different major or minor field is permissible at any time, but regardless of whether a student changes fields, only two attempts may be made to pass a major or minor field examination. If a student fails a second attempt at a major or minor field examination, the student will be deemed to have made unsatisfactory progress in the program, and the department will recommend dismissal to the Office of Graduate Education.

Major Field:
Each student takes the major field comprehensive examination when, in consultation with their advisor, they think that they are satisfactorily prepared to teach at the graduate level in the field, which is what a passing grade indicates.
1. The major field examination includes a written component and, assuming satisfactory performance on the written portion, an oral component.
2. The written examination will be a twelve-hour, open-book examination distributed to the students taking the exam by email and returned through the same medium to the examining committee.
3. Oral examinations will be scheduled within two weeks of the delivery of a successful written examination.
4. Both the written and oral components must be evaluated as passing in order for the student to pass the major comprehensive examination.
Ordinarily, the examining committee for the major field examination is composed of faculty members from the major field. With prior notification to the field members and consensus in the field, a faculty member from another field with substantial expertise in the major field may serve on the committee. The choice of committee members from within the major field is at the discretion of the subfield chair.

**Second Field:**
The second field examination is a written comprehensive examination conducted in the same manner as the major field examination, but taking six hours. Passing the exam signals that the minor field committee has concluded that the student is satisfactorily prepared to teach at the undergraduate level in the field. Exam committees are to be composed in the same fashion as for the major field.

**Comprehensive Exam and Dissertation Committees**
Early in the fall semester of the year in which a student is required to take comprehensive examinations and/or prepare a dissertation prospectus, they should begin the process of forming their dissertation committee. Students should meet with their dissertation committee chair and the subfield chair to discuss their plans for examination preparation, including courses under consideration and reading lists for the field.

**SUBFIELD GUIDELINES**
Throughout these guidelines, the word “committee” refers to the student’s major or second field committee as defined by the Department of Political Science.

**AMERICAN POLITICS**

**Major Field Examination:**
Students preparing for comprehensive exams with a major in American Government and Politics, in addition to departmental requirements, will be expected (1) to demonstrate knowledge of four subfields of American Government and Politics, and (2) to demonstrate an ability to formulate and grapple with some overarching questions that range across the scope of the field.

**Subfield Identification:**
The student’s selection of subfields will be reviewed by the student’s faculty committee to assure that they adequately cover the broad scope of American Government and Politics. At least three of the four subfields should be chosen from the following list:

- Executives and Executive Politics
- Legislatures and Legislative Politics
- Political Parties and Elections
- Political Behavior and Public Opinion
- Interest Groups and Mass Movements
- Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations
- State and Local Government and Politics
- Urban and Community Government and Politics.
The fourth subfield may be chosen: (a) from the above list, (b) from another field within political science, or (c) may be an individually tailored subfield designed jointly by the student and examining committee. If the student chooses a subfield that normally falls within another field of political science (option b), the student may not use the same subfield to serve the other field’s PhD requirements. Examples of acceptable “crossover” fields might include American Political Thought or subfields with Public Administration, Public Law or Public Policy.

**Subfield Certification:**
PhD students majoring in American Government and Politics will be expected to demonstrate competence in at least four subfields. For any three of the four, a member of the examining committee must specifically certify that the student is broadly prepared in the subfield before the student may proceed to the oral examination. Precise subfield expectations or requirements will be arranged individually by students and faculty members. For the fourth subfield, satisfactory completion of one graduate level seminar or the equivalent will be sufficient.

**Oral Exam: Broad Scope of the Field:**
The first part of the oral examination will be devoted to at least one major theme that spans the scope of the field. Students will begin this part of the examination with an opening statement on a theme that will be agreed upon in advance with the committee. Students will be given sample questions or themes for guidance, but they may also construct an alternative theme or question with the approval of their committee chairs. After the opening statement, however, the committee will feel free to let the ensuing discussion draw upon any works listed in the general bibliography the faculty has prepared for the American Government and Politics field.
COMPARATIVE POLITICS

In addition to meeting department requirements, doctoral students with a major or minor field of comparative politics will be expected to be knowledgeable about key theoretical, methodological, and normative issues in the comparative analysis of polities and state-society relations, and about a wide variety of geographical areas and theoretical domains, with special expertise in particular geographical areas and theoretical domains, as detailed in the course outline below. A broad knowledge of cognate disciplines (e.g., economics, history, and sociology) and of subfields (e.g., international relations, public administration, public policy) is strongly encouraged.

The primary focus of both major and minor field exams in comparative politics will be metatheory (e.g., patterns of inference and explanation), theory-building area studies (e.g., post-communist and post-authoritarian transitions), and diverse theoretical approaches (e.g., rational choice analysis, political culture, political structures and processes). The written component of the major exam will include a choice of three questions; the oral exam, with three comparative field professors and lasting up to two hours, ordinarily begins by expanding upon one or more of the student’s responses on the written exam. The minor exam likewise requires responses to a choice of three questions. Students contemplating taking the major or minor exam should review the core reading list provided by the subfield; the list is available from the subfield coordinator. Students are expected to demonstrate expertise in a minimum of one primary and one secondary geographic region or country, so they must also be familiar with “off-list” readings on those areas. Exam responses will be evaluated based on whether they:

1) demonstrate that the student has mastered the key concepts with the field;
2) fully and sufficiently answer the questions that are asked;
3) demonstrate that the student can link key authors or works to the material being discussed;
4) demonstrate that the student is capable of novel and/or critical analysis of the subfield’s literature.

Coursework requirements for the major field:
I. Coursework: 6 required courses (minimum)
A. Field seminar (1 required)
   ➢ RPOS 550 Field Seminar in Comparative Politics (required)
   ➢ (RPOS 570 Field Seminar in International Relations is strongly recommended)
B. Theory-focused seminars (3 required)
   ➢ One course in Contentious Politics/Mobilization
     o RPOS 554 Political Violence
     o RPOS 567 Contentious Politics
     o Another course approved by advisor
   ➢ One course in Political Economy
     o RPOS 571 International Political Economy
     o RPOS 546 Comparative Public Policy
     o RPOS 549 The Welfare State
     o Another course approved by advisor
   ➢ One course in Political Systems & Development
     o RPOS 551 Democracy and Democratization
     o RPOS 552 Communist and Post-Communist Systems
C. Region-focused seminars (2 required; cannot also satisfy a theory-focused requirement)
   - RPOS 557 Politics of Southeast Asia
   - RPOS 563 Government and Politics in the People’s Republic of China
   - RPOS 591 Russian Foreign Policy
   - Another course approved by advisor

Coursework requirements for the minor field:
Coursework: 4 required courses (minimum)
A. Field seminar (1 required)
   - RPOS 550 Field Seminar in Comparative Politics (required)
   - (RPOS 570 Field Seminar in International Relations is recommended)
B. Theory-focused seminars (Students are advised to select courses and/or topics within courses to develop expertise in at least one region.)
   - One course in Contentious Politics/Mobilization
     - RPOS 554 Political Violence
     - RPOS 567 Contentious Politics
     - Another course approved by advisor
   - One course in Political Economy
     - RPOS 571 International Political Economy
     - RPOS 546 Comparative Public Policy
     - RPOS 549 The Welfare State
     - Another course approved by advisor
   - One course in Political Systems & Development
     - RPOS 551 Democracy and Democratization
     - RPOS 552 Communist and Post-Communist Politics
     - RPOS 561 Nationalism & Nation Building
     - Another course approved by advisor
POLITICAL THEORY

The subfield of political theory covers a wide variety of the areas including the History of Political Thought, Critical Theory, Poststructuralism and Postmodernism, Democratic Theory, American Political Thought, Feminist Political Theory, Theories of Justice, and the Philosophy of Social Science.

To ensure that students have a background in the canonical thinkers in the history of political theory, students are strongly encouraged to audit or take for credit RPOS 301 and RPOS 302 (History of Political Thought I and II), a year-long undergraduate course sequence, and RPOS 701. When graduate students take or audit the yearlong sequence in the History of Political Thought, the instructor will provide a special graduate tutorial side by side with the course. In this tutorial we will discuss the more complex aspects of as well as read commentary on the theories under discussion.

Depending on whether they intend to focus their work on canonical or contemporary political theory, or some combination of the two, students will select their courses from the following offerings:

- RPOS 500 Political Philosophy
- RPOS 501 Field Seminar in Political Theory (required of all political theory graduates)
- RPOS 515 American Political Theory
- RPOS 565 Feminist Political Theory
- RPOS 603 Contemporary Political Theory
- RPOS 701 Tutorial in Political Theory
- RPOS 798 Readings in Political Science

Courses in other departments such as philosophy or sociology, where relevant, are permitted.

Since the topics in RPOS 500 and RPOS 603 change from semester to semester, students may take these courses twice. For example, RPOS 500 has dealt with political thinkers such as Thucydides, Machiavelli, Locke, Rousseau, Hobbes, Marx, Nietzsche, and Weber and topics such as democratic theory, theories of citizenship, theories of justice, theories of equality, problems of interpreting political theory, and theories of truth. Similarly, RPOS 603 has dealt with such topics as critical theory, postmodern theory, political theory and political ideology, literary theory and political theory, and contemporary democratic theory. Since the topics of the seminars change year by year, students are encouraged to take every political theory seminar that they can.

Major in Political Theory:

In preparation for meeting the comprehensive examination requirements, students will work together with faculty to plan a curriculum of seminars and tutorials. The chair of a student’s dissertation committee must be a member of the political theory subfield, but may be chosen by the graduate student.

Major Exam in Political Theory

The written major exam in Political Theory will typically have two sections. The first section will test the student’s general knowledge of the field of political theory. The second section will focus on the student’s areas of interest and ask more specific questions related to that area. “General
knowledge” refers to the canonical works in the history of political theory (the Greeks through modernity), the most significant contemporary works in the field, the fundamental conceptual questions of political theory, and the major debates within the field. As part of acquiring this knowledge, the student will be responsible for knowing a list of required and recommended readings in Political Theory. This list is comprised of major political theory texts as well as secondary commentary. It also consists of readings on a number of the major issues in the field, both substantive and interpretive. This list is constructed by the political theory faculty (and regularly revised in light of changes in the field). While the readings are determined by the faculty in political theory, the student in conjunction with their advisor(s) will add readings to the list related to their areas of interest. This part of the list will serve as basis for the second section of the exam. Once the exam committee has evaluated the written exam, it will decide whether the student may move on to the oral exam. The oral exam will consist of questions raised by the written exam as well as test the student’s general comprehension of the field of political theory.

**Minor Field in Political Theory:**
With the assistance of a graduate advisor in political theory and the exam committee, graduate students choosing Political Theory as a second field will be responsible for the reading list in political theory, especially sections on canonical and contemporary political theory. However, additions to the list will be made according to the student’s interests in political theory and its relation to the student’s other fields of interest including those outside of political theory. To gain a background across the field, all students choosing Political Theory as a second field should take RPOS 500 – Political Philosophy, RPOS 501 – Field Seminar in Political Theory, and RPOS 603 – Contemporary Political Theory. Students who want to reinforce their knowledge of the canonical works of political theory are strongly encouraged to audit or take as a tutorial the yearlong undergraduate course, RPOS 301 and RPOS 302 (History of Political Thought I and II). The written PhD exam in Political Theory will typically have two sections. The first section will test the student’s general knowledge of the field of political theory. The second section will focus on the student’s areas of interest and ask more specific questions related to that area.
PUBLIC LAW

Major in Public Law:
Doctoral students with a major field in public law will be expected to be broadly prepared to address four core theoretical questions: (1) why empower legal institutions (judicial empowerment)? (2) why activate these institutions (judicial activation)? (3) why are legal issues decided the way they are (judicial decision making)? And (4) why comply/enforce (judicial impact)? These questions span the substantive courses offered in the department and students should not expect to focus exclusively on the United States. All students at the major examination should have a grasp of prior research and be able to read and place in context new public law research in all areas of the subfield.

A necessary (but not sufficient) preparation for the comprehensive examinations includes mastery of the materials covered in RPOS 526 - Constitutional Law, RPOS 527 - Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, RPOS 541 - Field Seminar in Public Law, and at least one specialized graduate course in some comparative aspect of law, law and society, and/or law and American Political Development, with any exceptions to be agreed upon by the candidate and their advisor. While candidates need not necessarily enroll in each of these courses, at least formal auditing of these courses is a minimal expectation even for those with backgrounds in law and politics, and all students will be expected to be fully familiar with the subject matter covered therein. In addition, students will be expected to extend their readings beyond the assigned course readings in most areas covered in the courses, on a basis to be agreed upon by the student and advisor.

The student is responsible for submitting a written compendium of the specific material they expect to be examined upon for approval of their examining committee. The starting point for this list should be the material covered in the required public law courses indicated above. It should be supplemented by additional materials at the direction of the examination committee. Students should start formulation of this compendium at the earliest possible date in consultation with the examination committee. The final version of the compendium should be submitted to each member of the examination committee at least eight weeks prior to the scheduled examination.

The written portion of the major examination has four sections, which correspond with the core theoretical questions listed above. Multiple questions will be provided, but students must complete one question in each section. Once the committee has reviewed the written responses, they will determine whether the student may proceed to an oral defense. The oral examination will address the written responses as well as testing for overall comprehension of the field.

Minor in Public Law:
Students with the second field in public law will be expected to be broadly prepared in constitutional law and judicial processes. A necessary (but not necessarily sufficient) preparation for the comprehensive examinations includes mastery of the materials covered in RPOS 526 - Constitutional Law, RPOS 527 - Civil Rights and Civil Liberties, RPOS 541 - Field Seminar in Public Law, and at least one specialized graduate course in some comparative aspect of law, law and society, and/or law and American Political Development. While students need not necessarily enroll in each of these classes, at least formal auditing of these courses is a minimal expectation even for those with backgrounds in law and politics, and all students will be expected to be fully
familiar with the subject matter covered therein. In addition, students will be expected to extend their readings beyond the assigned course readings, on a basis to be agreed upon by the student and members of the committee.

The student is responsible for submitting a written compendium of the specific material they expect to be examined upon for approval of their examining committee. The starting point for this listing should be the material covered in the required public law courses indicated above. It should be supplemented by additional materials at the direction of the examination committee. Students should start formulation of this compendium at the earliest possible date in consultation with the examination committee. The final version of the compendium should be submitted eight weeks prior to the scheduled examination.
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Major in International Relations
Students preparing to take comprehensive exams with a major in International Relations (IR) will be expected to comply with departmental examination requirements, and (a) to demonstrate knowledge of contemporary debates in the field; (b) to demonstrate competence in the three major concentrations listed below; and (c) to demonstrate an ability to formulate and grapple with some overarching questions that range across the scope of the field. The field seminar (RPOS 570) fulfills requirement (a) and is mandatory for all IR students. Requirement (b) will usually entail taking the following three courses in the subfield’s primary concentrations, plus two or more electives.
1. RPOS 582 – Global Security
2. RPOS 571 – International Political Economy
3. RPOS 583 – Global Governance

Electives are offered on a rotating basis and may include independent study. As a general rule, students are advised to get to know—through course work—the entire IR faculty. Even though some students may be entering with graduate course work from other institutions, students are strongly encouraged to take all core courses at the University at Albany.

Minor in International Relations
To be eligible for the minor exams, students must have successfully completed RPOS 570 – International Relations Field Seminar, RPOS 571 - International Political Economy, RPOS 582 – Global Security, and RPOS 583 – Global Governance.
PUBLIC POLICY

Major in Public Policy
Doctoral students with a major in public policy will be expected to be broadly trained in the important theoretical and methodological issues in the field. Thus, students will be expected to understand the key questions, approaches, and research designs appropriate to studying public policy. In addition to broad overarching capabilities, students are also expected to be “experts” in at least one substantive area of public policy (such as the environment or immigration).

The public policy faculty recommends that in addition to departmental requirements, students who wish to work in public policy as a major field take no fewer than five classes distributed as follows. (See the list below for specific courses in each category.)

(A) Field Seminar in Public Policy – 1 course
(B) Process, Theory, and Methods – 2-3 courses
(C) Substantive area of your choice – 2-3 courses

These courses are the recommended minimum for comprehensive exams. Students are expected to prepare extensively beyond the books and articles in these courses. The student is responsible for submitting a written compilation of the specific material they expect to be examined on for approval by their examining committee. The written material should start with coursework and expand beyond that to relevant books, articles, and chapters. Students are responsible for knowing the field of public policy, not only what is covered in any particular course. Students should begin collecting materials as early as possible and communicate with their committee members. The final list should be submitted to each member of the examining committee no less than three weeks prior to the scheduled examination.

Minor in Public Policy
Students planning to take comprehensive exams with a minor in public policy will be expected to be broadly trained in the important theoretical and methodological issues in the field as well as have expertise in at least one substantive area of public policy (such as the environment or immigration).

Students who plan on sitting for the minor exam should take no fewer than four classes from the following areas (see the list below for specific courses in each category):

(A) Field Seminar in Public Policy – 1 course
(B) Process, Theory, and Methods – 2 courses
(C) Substantive area of your choice – 1 course

Students are expected to prepare extensively beyond the books and articles in these courses.

The student is responsible for submitting a written compilation of the specific material they expect to be examined on for approval of their examining committee. The written material should start with coursework and expand beyond that to relevant books, articles, and chapters. Students are responsible for knowing the field of public policy not only what is covered in any particular course. Students should begin collecting materials as early as possible and communicate with the committee. The final list should be submitted to each member of the examining committee no less than three weeks prior to the scheduled examination.
A. Required Course for all Public Policy Minors:
RPOS 513: Field Seminar in Public Policy

B. Policymaking and Implementation Subfield: (2-3 courses)
RPAD 522: Politics and Policy
RPAD 529: Law and Policy
RPOS 509: Citizen Participation and Public Policy
RPAD 604: Inequality and Public Policy
RPAD 605: Politics of Migration and Membership
RPOS 549: The Welfare State
RPOS 525Q (AWSS 525/EEPL 525): Feminist Thought & Public Policy
RPAD 505: Statistics for Public Managers and Policy Analysts

C. Public Policy Substantive Area of Interest (2-3 courses)

Welfare
- RPOS 529: The Welfare State
- SSW 600: Social Welfare Policy and Services
- SSW 732R: Poverty, Health, and Policy
- SSW 782: International Social Welfare Policy

Education
- EEPL 500: U.S. Educational Governance, Policy, and Administration
- EEPL 604: Macrosociology of Education and Administration
- EEPL 608: Politics of Education
- EEPL 658: Politics of Higher Education
- EEPL 666: Comparative Education Policy
- EEPL 670: Analysis for Educational Policy and Leadership
- EEPL 750: Higher Education Finance
- EEPL 751: Higher Education and the Law

Environment
- PAD 635: Health, Safety, and Environmental Regulation
- PAD 665 Biodiversity, Conservation, and Public Policy
- BIO 601 (3) Topics in Ecology: Issues in Landscape Conservation and Land Use Policy

Health
- HPM 500: Health Care Organization, Delivery and Financing
- HPM 501: Health Policy, Analysis, and Management
- HPM 627: Public Health Educations: Targeting Social, Organizational, and Behavioral Factors to Promote Health
- HPM 641: Organization and Management in Health Institutions
- HPM 669: Topics in Health Policy and Management
- PHI 505: Philosophical and Ethical Issues in Public Policy
- HPM 612: Applications in Health Policy Analysis and Evaluations
- SSW 781: Poverty Health and Health Policy

Urban Policy
- POS 540/PAD 566: Urban Policy in the US
- POS 528: US Housing Policy
- PAD 561: Urban Community Development

**Information Policy**
- IST 560: Information and Public Policy

**Gender and Public Policy**
- POS 525Q: Feminist Thought and Public Policy
- AWSS 540: Black Women in US History
- AWSS 640: Gender Inequality
- PAD 604 (AWSS 604): Inequality and Public Policy

**Other Policy Areas Not Included in the Above List**
- Students may also propose their own specialty area and submit a set of courses for approval. The required criteria are a definition of the policy area and a justification for a series of courses from appropriate disciplines that would be comparable with those in other areas.
- Other courses not on this list, but relevant to public policy, may be presented to the student’s advisor for consideration.
DISSERTATION COMMITTEE AND PROCESS

Producing a successful dissertation is the most difficult element of the PhD program for most students. Students are therefore strongly encouraged to select and develop their respective dissertation topics carefully and in close consultation with appropriate advisors and thoughtfully composed committees. Frequent communication with the dissertation advisor from the initial development of the prospectus to the preparation of the final dissertation draft will greatly facilitate a student’s timely and successful completion of the dissertation. It is ultimately the student’s responsibility to ensure regular communication and consultation with their advisor(s) and other committee members. Students who encounter difficulty in communicating with or getting feedback from their advisor(s), and who can demonstrate that they have already tried themselves to rectify the situation, should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies.

The Composition of the Dissertation Committee:
A student may write a dissertation in any subfield or combination of subfields that the department offers. Most students will write a dissertation primarily focused within one subfield, but the dissertation committee should be composed of those faculty members best suited to supervise the student’s research in substantive, methodological, and epistemological terms, regardless of the subfields with which these faculty members are formally aligned. Students are encouraged to work with relevant faculty in other departments or at other universities; however, a dissertation committee must have a member of the political science department as chair and at least half of its members must be faculty with tenure lines primarily in political science. From the time the dissertation committee is formed through the committee’s approval of the student’s prospectus, the student must inform their advisor and the Director of Graduate Studies immediately about any proposed changes in committee membership. Students can contact rockgradservices@albany.edu for a copy of the dissertation committee signature.

The Dissertation Prospectus:
While the precise format and content of a dissertation prospectus will vary according to the student’s field and advisor’s and committee’s recommendations (in particular, see the guidelines for book-format and three-paper-format dissertations on page 33), the prospectus should, in broad terms, be equivalent in scope and specificity to a grant proposal that might be sent to a funding agency such as the National Science Foundation or the National Endowment for the Humanities. It should be written in full scholarly format with footnotes and bibliography and must include the following elements:

A) Problem statement: a discussion of the specific problem to be examined and why it is important to the subfield(s) in which the dissertation will be situated, to political science, and to political life and/or public policy.

B) Literature review of existing research: a critical, integrative evaluation of previous research in the broad area of the dissertation. This discussion should include analysis of how the proposed research will advance understanding of the field, and how it will fit within existing theoretical frameworks and approaches.

C) Research methods: a detailed description of how the dissertation research will be carried out, including a discussion of the specific research questions and sub-questions to be asked, the theoretical framework or model within which those questions fit, and the specific methods to be used in gathering data to answer these questions. The main kinds of data and primary
source materials should be identified. If appropriate, the specific empirical tools and linguistic skills to be used should be described and their use justified.

D) Time schedule: a month-by-month time chart that sets out when specific tasks will be carried out and when the overall dissertation will be completed. As with all sections of the prospectus, the schedule is subject to revision. Nevertheless, it is crucial for the student to think seriously in these terms to ensure the proposed topic can be completed within a reasonable time period, and that the student subdivides the topic into manageable chapters or segments that allow for regular self-checking.

E) Tentative chapter and/or paper outline: the outline should include a brief statement describing the proposed contents of each chapter, or, for a three-paper dissertation, of each essay.

F) Budget: if relevant, the prospectus should list anticipated expenses for travel, equipment, etc., and plans for financing these expenses.

G) Plan for seeking approval from the University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB): if relevant, the prospectus should discuss the timeline for submitting a proposal to the University’s Institutional Review Board to secure permission for any research involving human subjects. **The faculty shall not approve a dissertation prospectus that proposes research on human subjects unless the prospectus includes a concrete plan for securing IRB approval for this research.**

The oral examination on the prospectus will not be scheduled until the committee agrees that the student is ready, based on the written prospectus and subfield preparation. A student should normally expect a response to a prospectus draft within three weeks of its submission to members of the committee. Completing several revisions of the prospectus is normal and may be required before and/or after the oral examination. A prospectus is usually about twenty-five pages (12 point font, double-spaced) or 6,000 to 7,000 words. The final prospectus should be submitted to the committee members at least three weeks prior to the defense, and the committee may request further modifications to the prospectus after the defense.

Note: The oral defense of the prospectus should normally be completed within six months after the completion of comprehensive exams. In some cases – for instance, if the student must complete overseas pre-dissertation field research prior to finalizing the prospectus – the student’s committee and the Director of Graduate Studies may grant an extension.

**Application for Admission to Candidacy:**
To advance to candidacy, a student must complete the following requirements: 1) a successful pass on a comprehensive examination in a major field, 2) a successful prospectus defense, 3) a successful pass on the comprehensive examination in the minor field, 4) completion of the scope and methods sequence, and 5) completion of the foreign language or advanced research tool requirement. The Admission to Candidacy forms are available online at: [http://www.albany.edu/graduate/graduate-forms-publications.php](http://www.albany.edu/graduate/graduate-forms-publications.php).
Guidelines for Writing a PhD Dissertation in the Department of Political Science

Students in the PhD program have the choice of either (1) writing a conventional book-format dissertation; or (2) writing a dissertation that takes the form of three article-format papers along with separate introduction and conclusion chapters. Although they differ in style, both approaches are likely to involve a similar amount of work and will require the student to make a substantial theoretical and empirical contribution to the political science literature. Before beginning work on the PhD prospectus, we recommend that students have a discussion with their advisors about which of these models makes a better fit with the nature of the proposed project and with their plans for turning the dissertation into publishable material.

Regardless of format, all dissertations must represent original work written solely by the PhD candidate. Although we would in general encourage our students to engage in co-authored projects with faculty or students in order to build up their publication records, these co-authored papers cannot form a part of the dissertation.

**Option 1: The book-length dissertation**

Book-length dissertations should seek to answer a significant research question or solve a compelling puzzle via an extended analysis that advances knowledge in the political science field in a substantial way. The author should develop a novel theory or argument or test theories from ongoing, unresolved political science debates. A book-length dissertation should evaluate theories via a rigorous, extended analysis that employs appropriate methods and evidence in order to draw meaningful inferences about the topic being explored. Book-length dissertations should be at least 6 chapters in length, inclusive of an introductory chapter, a theoretical chapter, at least three empirical or analytical chapters, and a conclusion.

**Option 2: The 3-paper dissertation**

The option of writing a 3-paper dissertation is relatively new to the field of political science. Political science programs at different universities vary significantly in terms of their expectations for this type of dissertation. Following a discussion of the various models, the political science faculty decided that students who choose to take this route will be expected to produce a dissertation that adheres to the following principles:

First, the 3-paper dissertation needs to include both an introduction and a conclusion as separate chapters. The introduction ought to develop a common theme, or intellectual framework, that unites the three substantive papers into a single larger contribution. It should also situate the project within broader debates in the subfield. In doing so, it provides an opportunity for the student to more fully develop some of the background material that cannot be addressed in as much detail at the beginning of each of the article-length papers.

The conclusion ought to reflect on the main findings of the papers and identify implications for theory and policy. The student might want to consider writing the concluding chapter in a way...
that can (at a later stage) easily be converted into an article that conveys the main findings of the dissertation to a more general audience.

Second, the three papers need to have a sufficient degree of thematic similarity for the student’s advisors to view them as constituting separate parts of a coherent intellectual project. It would not be acceptable for a student to piece together three papers on unrelated topics.

Third, each of the three papers needs to make a substantial theoretical and empirical contribution.

Fourth, all the three substantive papers need to be of a high enough quality to be submitted for review by a journal (though they need not actually have been submitted). The dissertation will be considered incomplete if, in the judgement of the PhD committee, the three papers have not yet reached that stage.

**Final Acceptance of the Dissertation:**
A student must be admitted to candidacy at least one regular semester in advance of submission of the dissertation.

Prior to final acceptance of the dissertation, the candidate must defend the dissertation before the entire dissertation committee. If necessary, members of the committee may participate in this meeting by speaker phone or other electronic means, but a formal defense open to the public must take place and the degree candidate themself must be present at the defense. To ensure that the candidate has time to make requested changes to the dissertation prior to University deadlines, the defense must take place at least three weeks prior to the deadline for formal submission of the dissertation to The Graduate School – by April 10 for prospective May graduates, by July 10 for prospective August graduates, and by November 10 for prospective December graduates. Students must provide their dissertation committee with a complete copy of the dissertation at least three weeks prior to the defense. Failure to provide the final draft to the committee by this deadline may be grounds for postponement of the defense. Dissertations approved by the committee must be transmitted to The Graduate School, by the student, by May 1 for degrees to be conferred in May, by August 1 for degrees to be conferred in August, and by December 1 for degrees to be conferred in December.

Note: the University will not permit students to participate in graduation ceremonies unless all degree requirements, including deposition of the dissertation, have been completed by the deadline. Details may be found on The Graduate School website under Graduate Student Resources.
Tips and Guidelines for PhD Students in Political Science
Guidelines for Funded Doctoral Students (RAs/TAs) in Political Science

For all funded doctoral students (TAs/RAs):

- No more than an average of 20 hours/week without permission from the University’s Dean of Graduate Studies and the relevant graduate program director. You are encouraged to keep track of the hours you work, to help you manage your time effectively.
- International students will not be granted permission to exceed the 20 hours/week policy under any circumstances.
- Duties should coincide with the start/end dates of the semester, apart from (possibly) very limited work immediately before/after the semester (e.g., coordinating among TAs, planning for the first week, final revisions to a literature review).
- In order to maintain your assistantship, you must maintain a satisfactory academic record, be enrolled as a full-time student, and satisfactorily complete your assistantship duties.
- Students should contact the department chair or the College’s director of student affairs with any questions or concerns about their assistantship responsibilities. If a student wishes to raise concerns anonymously, they should speak with the director of student affairs.

For TAs specifically:

- All violations of academic integrity must be reported to the university: TAs must complete and submit a Violation of Academic Integrity Report. The penalty exacted will be at the discretion of the instructor of record, though instructors and TAs are encouraged to discuss those penalties in advance of the first assignment.
- While TAs may have grading responsibilities after the last day of classes, responsibilities should end on the date final grades are due (as published by the University Registrar each year).
- Lecture attendance counts towards the 20 hours/week work commitment for TAs.
- When a grade of Incomplete is given, the instructor of record is responsible for grading all future work and resolving the INC grade, though they may consult with a former TA.
- While a nominal amount of time in the weeks leading up to the start of a new term may be spent communicating with the supervising faculty member in order to prepare for start of the semester, as well as in preparing independently for the course, students are not otherwise expected to fulfill TA responsibilities over the intersession/summer.
- During the term, TAs are not expected independently to create course assessments, such as quizzes, exams, tests, or writing assignments. Faculty are encouraged to seek feedback from TAs and graders about the design of assessments over the course of the semester, but the instructor of record is the only person empowered to finalize and authorize the assessment.
Faculty Advising Guidelines

These guidelines express minimum expectations for faculty when advising graduate students. The guidelines cover four separate topics: (1) frequency of meetings, (2) email communication, (3) letters of recommendation, and (4) dissertation writing process, including coordination among committee members.

**Frequency of Meetings**
- Faculty should hold a minimum of two meetings per semester with advisees, with flexibility depending on travel schedules and availability of both faculty and student. It is the student’s responsibility to contact their advisor to arrange these meetings.
- Examples:
  - One meeting at start of semester to set goals and one meeting at end of semester to evaluate progress
  - One meeting at start of semester and one phone or Skype conversation later in semester
- No AVN should be released without a substantive discussion about course plans, goals for semester, etc.
- If faculty hold fixed office hours only for undergraduate students, they must set aside additional time, by appointment, for graduate students.

**Email communication**
- Faculty should respond to email in a timely manner, but always at least within 72 hours.
- Students are encouraged to follow up after 72 hours if they have not received a response.

**Letters of recommendation**
- Students are expected to give faculty at least 3 weeks’ notice for letters of recommendation, especially if it is the first time faculty is writing a letter for that student.
- Faculty should notify students when they have submitted letters.
- Students are encouraged to follow up if they do not receive this notification.

**Dissertation writing process**
1. Feedback:
   - Students are expected to give faculty at least 3 weeks to read a prospectus or individual chapters or pieces of the dissertation.
   - Faculty should provide feedback within 3 weeks; however, if the material submitted represents multiple chapters, being read for the first time, that deadline may require negotiation.
   - There should be some narrative, written documentation of the feedback. This written feedback can take many forms, including hardcopy or electronic comments, or a memo by student summarizing in-person discussion.
2. Coordination among committee members:
   - All committee members normally should read and comment on at least one draft version of prospectus and all dissertation chapters, prior to the final version and defense. Chair should read and comment on prospectus and each draft chapter before student sends them to full committee.
• Student must provide all committee members with a draft of full dissertation at least 3 weeks ahead of time that decision needs to be made whether to schedule defense.
• At that feedback point, chair should consult with committee members about whether additional drafts are needed or whether it is possible to move forward with defense.
• Student should actively seek feedback from chair and other committee members, including meeting with individual committee members, throughout dissertation research and writing process.
• Committee chair is expected to coordinate with other committee members regarding scheduling of prospectus and dissertation defenses (keeping in mind the university’s timeline for submission in order to graduate in a given semester and the amount of time needed for revisions between defense and submission), although it is student’s responsibility to initiate those discussions.

Reconstituting a dissertation committee
• Students add or remove committee members throughout the dissertation process, for a range of reasons. Should a student choose to do so, they must first discuss with their chair their reasons for wanting to remove a committee member and who they propose to have replace them. Once the student and committee chair have reached an agreement, the student must notify the Director of Graduate Studies and Director of Student Affairs.
• Should a student wish to change their committee chair, they should discuss with the Director of Graduate Studies and Director of Student Affairs their reasons for wanting to change committee chairs and who they propose to have replace their current chair.
Co-authoring as a Graduate Student

In graduate school, opportunities to collaborate on research projects may arise out of conversations that you have with faculty or with other graduate students, or as a result of opportunities to work as a research assistant (RA) for one of your professors. Most of the time when graduate students serve as RAs, they are not co-authors on the faculty member’s work. But under some circumstances, co-authorship is appropriate. Co-authorship should be discussed explicitly when working with faculty, especially when:

- You make any substantive intellectual contribution;
- You make any non-substantive, time-intensive, unpaid contributions.

Co-authorship is not expected when you make non-substantive contributions as an RA. Non-substantive contributions include:

- You create background material from which the primary author writes a paper (e.g. an annotated bibliography);
- You talk through ideas with the primary author;
- You aid in data collection and/or analysis (e.g. coding, implementing models the author specifies).

Co-authorship is expected when you make substantive intellectual contribution to a piece of scholarship. Substantive intellectual contributions include:

- Your original writing is incorporated into the paper;
- Your original conceptual orientation is used to frame the paper;
- Your original synthesis of the literature (through a literature review) is incorporated into the paper;
- Your original analytical contribution is a part of the paper (e.g. you design the models for data analysis).

Author order matters in academic publishing. The person who makes the greatest substantive intellectual contribution (see note above) is the first author. When all authors make approximately the same contribution, authors should be listed in alphabetical order. It should be agreed upon upfront, ideally in writing, what each will contribute and the sequence in which authors will be listed. This applies to collaborations with faculty and with other graduate students.

Academic publishing can take a long time, and there’s no guarantee that a paper idea will pan out. If you go down the publishing road, you should feel free having a conversation with faculty about co-authorship, and it’s a good idea to put agreements in writing (e.g. an email that says “as we discussed…”). If there is any disagreement, please feel free to contact the director of student affairs or your department chair.

Be advised that co-authoring with your advisor may not always be to your advantage, if the topic is too close to your dissertation topic or to their work. Doing so might raise doubts about your independent contribution to the work and/or to your own dissertation. Discuss these issues with your advisor or other faculty members, bearing in mind the pros and cons involved.
PREPARING TO TEACH YOUR FIRST CLASS

1. Tuition waiver
The union, United University Professionals (UUP), offers a tuition waiver for instructors teaching one class per semester. The form can be accessed here: http://www.albany.edu/registrar/21884.php. You should complete the form and take it to the Registrar/Student Accounts located in the Campus Center room B52.

2. Getting books from publishers
Most publishers will send instructors of record books they are adopting for their classes free of charge. (Some also provide inspection copies, but these may need to be returned if not adopted.) Visit the publisher’s website to submit a desk-copy request form. You will need to fill in information about your course, i.e. when it is being offered and anticipated enrollment. The books are usually sent to the university address.

3. How to order books?
There are two possible sources for books for undergraduates: the campus bookstore and online avenues (e.g. Amazon). To order books from the Campus bookstore go to http://www.facultyenlight.com/. Books need to be ordered early. Fall book orders are due during the spring semester and spring semester orders, during the fall semester. Summer book orders are submitted early in the spring semester. When ordering books and listing books on your syllabus, include the edition of a book, whether older editions are acceptable, and the ISBN number(s).

4. Making book chapters/articles available
If you want to assign your students book chapters/articles, you should post materials on Blackboard or note which materials students should download themselves from the university library. All courses have a Blackboard component (see below). Note this in your syllabus.

5. Essential ingredients for your syllabus
The University provides guidelines on the information required on any undergraduate course syllabus. These guidelines can be found at http://www.albany.edu/geralizeducation/syllabi-requirements.php. The Political Science department also has a checklist for information to include in a syllabus; please contact the Director of Graduate Student Services for a copy of the departmental checklist. You should actively seek out faculty members for input and advice on your syllabus.

6. In class activities
The Institution for Teaching, Learning and Academic Leadership (ITLAL) offers resources for in-class activities and mid-semester surveys. ITLAL also offers one-on-one consultation for instructors and competitive fellowships for graduate students especially interested in pedagogy.

7. Blackboard
All undergraduate courses offered by the University have a Blackboard component. If you are an instructor of record, you automatically have access via www.albany.edu/its. ITS has online tutorials available at: www.albany.edu/its/svc_blackboard.php

8. MyUAlbany
Use MyUAlbany for access to your course rosters: www.albany.edu/myualbany. Log in as an employee and click on “Academic Services and Advising” and “my class rosters.”