



Northern Illinois University

Department of Political Science
Graduate Studies Handbook

2022-2023 Academic Year

Welcome from the Political Science Department Chair – J. Mitchell Pickerill, Jr.

The faculty and staff of the Department of Political Science welcome you to Northern Illinois University. The department has a distinguished faculty that is available to assist you in your graduate studies. We are proud of our research-intensive academically rigorous, student-focused graduate programs.

In recent years, the department has graduated a large number of excellent M.A. and Ph.D. students who have pursued challenging and successful careers in a variety of academic positions and other professions. We hope that you will soon join them.

The department's faculty looks forward to providing you with an intellectually stimulating and professional environment in which to pursue your degree and mature as a scholar. Welcome!



Welcome from the Political Science Department Graduate Director – Professor Michael Clark

We hope you have a richly rewarding experience at NIU during your graduate studies in political science. With the assistance of office staff, I am happy to help you navigate the rules and regulations of the university, as well as encourage you to take intellectual risks in your classes and research. The department faculty members are eager to work with you in classes and with independent research initiatives, so get to know them as soon as possible.

This handbook is intended to assist and guide masters and doctoral students in the Department of Political Science toward the completion of their degrees. It should be read carefully by all students and consulted first when questions arise about degree requirements. If these pages do not provide you complete information to answer your question, then please consult the office manager and/or director for clarification. Our contact information is provided below.



CONTACT INFORMATION:

Michael Clark, Director of Graduate Studies, Zulauf Hall 401, 815-753-7054, mclark12@niu.edu

Shirley Portegys, Office Support Specialist/Graduate Secretary, Zulauf Hall 415, 815-753-1011, sportegys@niu.edu

TABLE OF CONTENTS	
VISION/MISSION STATEMENT	5
CHAPTER 1. GENERAL INFORMATION	6
ARRIVAL AT NIU	6
Interim Advising	6
Student Information Form	6
Off-campus and Non-Traditional Student Housing	6
Student Mailboxes	6
Department Website	6
GENERAL COURSE AND CREDIT POLICIES	7
Course Load	7
POLS 690 – Political Science Research	7
POLS 692 – Teaching of Political Science	7
POLS 696 (M.A.)/POLS 796 (Ph.D.) – Independent Study	7
Transfer and Student-At-Large Credit	8
Auditing Classes	8
GRADING POLICIES	9
Grades	9
Grade Appeals	10
Special Course Repeat Option	11
Probation and Dismissal	11
Variances and Exceptions	11
POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY	11
RESEARCH EXPERIENCES	12
CONFERENCE TRAVEL	12
Eligibility Criteria	12
Instructions	13
Due Dates	13
Reimbursement	13
FACULTY GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE	14
POLITICAL SCIENCE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION	14
CHAPTER 2. M.A. PROGRAM	15
M.A. THESIS	15
M.A. COURSEWORK	15
Time Limitations	16
SUBFIELD POLICIES	16
American Government	16
Comparative Politics	17
International Relations	17
Political Theory	17
Public Administration	17
M.A. THESIS DEFENSE	18
CHAPTER 3. PH.D. PROGRAM	18
PURPOSE OF THE PH.D.	18
ADMISSION TO THE PH.D. PROGRAM	18
PH.D. COURSEWORK	19

Required Courses	20
Languages and Research Tools	21
<u>Foreign Language Option</u>	22
<u>Research Tools Option</u>	23
Additional Subfield or Graduate Concentration Option	23
Time Limitations	24
SUBFIELD POLICIES	24
American Government	24
<u>Public Law Concentration</u>	25
Comparative Politics	25
International Relations	26
Political Theory	26
Public Administration	27
TEACHING SKILLS REQUIREMENT	27
PH.D. QUALIFYING PROCESS	27
PH.D CANDIDACY EXAMINATIONS (“COMPS”)	28
Administrative Procedures	28
Additional Consideration	29
DISSERTATION WORK	30
Dissertation Committee	30
Dissertation Document	31
Dissertation Defense	31
CHAPTER 4. GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS	32
GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS	33
Summer Sessions	33
GRADUATE STUDENT TEACHING FACULTY MENTORS	33
Future Professoriate Program	34
TUITION WAIVERS	34
FUNDING LIMITATIONS	34
English Language Requirements	34
DISSERTATION COMPLETION FELLOWSHIPS	35
RESOURCES FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANTS	35
CHAPTER 5. GRADUATION	36
APPLYING FOR GRADUATION	36
CAREER PLANNING AND PLACEMENT CENTER	36
CHAPTER 6. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS	37
COURSE LOAD REQUIREMENTS	37
I-9 AND INFORMATIONAL FORMS	37
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES	37

VISION/MISSION STATEMENT

The Graduate Studies Program in Political Science at Northern Illinois University

Vision Statement

Students and faculty constitute a community of scholars that produces and disseminates knowledge to the academy and the broader public.

Mission

The mission of the NIU graduate program in political science is to:

- Provide rigorous academic training in the discipline of political science.
 - Provide M.A. degree students with advanced education for careers in government, business, teaching, community agencies, and related endeavors involving public affairs.
 - Train Ph.D. students in the theories and methodologies to expand the knowledge of political science and public administration.
- Mentor graduate students in their own process of discovery and production of knowledge:
 - In their research for conference papers.
 - In their research for theses and dissertations.
- Provide opportunities for graduate students to collaborate with faculty in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge.
- Provide faculty modeling for scholarship and teaching:
 - In brownbag research presentations.
 - In brownbag teaching presentations.
 - In collaborative scholarship with students.
- Provide teaching experience and training for each doctoral student.
- Enhance the programs of distinction:
 - In Political Theory.
 - In Public Administration.
 - In Southeast Asian Studies.
- Strengthen the reputable, fundamental graduate programs:
 - In American Government.
 - In Comparative Politics.
 - In International Relations.

CHAPTER 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

ARRIVAL AT NIU

Interim Advising

The department graduate director, in consultation with other faculty, will provide basic guidelines and information including advice on the selection of first semester courses. Please see the director upon your arrival. You should discuss with the director who will be the most appropriate permanent advisor for you. Students are encouraged to talk to any and all faculty members while they are contemplating their choice of advisor(s).

Student Information Form

Each new student is required to complete the department's information form. This form lists pertinent contact information regarding the student for department files. It is equally important that returning students keep their contact information current with the office manager.

Moreover, the office manager keeps a master list of graduate students' NIU email so that faculty and staff can send you notices about program events, alert you to upcoming filing deadlines, etc. Since all departmental correspondence is sent via ZID email accounts, we expect students to check their university-based email on a regular (if not daily) basis so students do not miss vital information.

It is also helpful for the department to have the permanent telephone number of an immediate family member who can be contacted in case of emergency. Note: Students are solely responsible for keeping contact information in MyNIU current.

Off-Campus and Non-Traditional Student Housing

The Office of Commuter and Off Campus Programs is located in the Campus Life Building, Room 170. This office has information on off-campus housing. For students wishing to live on campus, there are residence hall floors for students aged 21 and over.

Student Mailboxes

Each graduate student has a mailbox space. The boxes are located outside the political science office on the 4th floor of Zulauf Hall. Students should check their mailbox regularly for information relating to upcoming department sponsored events and other information. Most of the department graduate student notifications are done through online announcements but not all. In addition, you can use the mailbox to receive specific forms and notes from faculty, for returned papers, etc.

Department Website

The Political Science website contains information about the graduate program, including a searchable PDF version of this handbook. In addition, the website has information about course offerings, links to course syllabi, and space for graduate students to post an academic profile for the purposes of networking and job placement.

GENERAL COURSE AND CREDIT POLICIES

Course Load

The normal full load for a graduate student is nine credit hours per semester during the academic year and six credit hours during the summer session. Political Science graduate students with a graduate assistantship can receive academic credit for serving the department as a teaching assistant (TA). In this case, the student would take 12 credit hours, three of which are related to the assistantship. In other words, if a student wishes to receive academic credit for their work as a TA, they must take 12 credit hours. Either POLS 690 or POLS 691 can be used by students wishing to receive academic credit for their work as a TA.

Students may obtain a copy of the schedule of classes and learn registration procedures from MyNIU. Before registering each semester, students are strongly recommended to consult with a faculty advisor to make sure they are taking classes beneficial to their specific program of study.

Many courses in the department's curriculum are counted toward fulfilling the requirements in a student's subfield, but no graduate course is necessarily assigned to any subfield. Many courses deal with materials that are relevant to two or more subfields, and the course consequently may be taken by the student in fulfillment of requirements in any of several different subfields. For example, PSPA 672 (Administrative Problems of Less Developed Countries) is frequently used to satisfy requirements in the subfields of Comparative Politics or Public Administration. However, the same course can never be used to fulfill the minimum credit hour requirements in more than one subfield, nor can the course be double counted toward the 36- or 90-credit hour minimum course requirement for the M.A. or Ph.D. degree.

POLS 690 - Political Science Research

POLS 690 is a versatile course used by graduate students to earn credit for an assortment of supervised research activities, such as preparing conference papers, writing a master's thesis, or developing a doctoral dissertation proposal. POLS 690 can also be used when a student wishes to audit a course related to a student's research interest (earning credit hours that could not be earned if the student registers to audit the course directly). Arrangements for a POLS 690 class must be negotiated individually between the student and the faculty member who will supervise the course. All POLS 690 credit hours are graded as satisfactory/unsatisfactory.

Master's students must take POLS 690 for a minimum of three credit hours. Doctoral students must take POLS 690 for a minimum of six credit hours and can repeat POLS 690 up to 39 credit hours.

POLS 692 – Teaching of Political Science

POLS 692 is required of all doctoral students for one credit hour. This course is an orientation to teaching in political science and is offered under a number of formats. The expectation is that students will complete this course before being assigned to teach an independent undergraduate course. Typically, the course will be offered each spring semester, and Ph.D. students should take the course in their second year in the program.

POLS 696 (M.A.)/POLS 796 (Ph.D.) - Independent Study

Independent study is both permitted and encouraged. Sometimes these courses are used when

relevant courses and materials are not offered which a student needs. Routinely, independent study courses provide a vehicle by which a student may pursue reading and research topics not covered in the regular curriculum or to pursue reading and research on a topic more intensively than the topic is normally treated in the curriculum. Arrangements for independent study courses must be negotiated individually between the student and the faculty member who will supervise the course. Enrollment in POLS 696/796 is not permitted unless the student and supervising faculty member first file a POLS 696/796 contract form with the department office which describes:

- The work to be undertaken.
- The requirements which must be met by the student.
- The time period within which the course is expected to be completed.

Independent study credit hours may not be included in the minimum course requirements which the student must take in each subfield or graduate concentration. There is a nine credit hour limit on the total number of independent study credit hours which may be accumulated.

Transfer and Student-at-Large Credit

With the approval of the department and the dean of the Graduate School, a maximum of 15 credit hours of graduate credit may be accepted from other accredited colleges and universities to meet the credit hour requirements for the M.A. degree. Alternatively, up to 15 credit hours of graduate credit earned as a Student-at-Large (SAL) may be credited toward the M.A. degree. However, total credits transferred from other universities plus SAL credit hours may not exceed a total of 15 credit hours. Note: SAL refers to students who take graduate courses before officially being accepted into one of the department's graduate programs.

Thirty credit hours of transfer credit from a master's degree program completed at other accredited universities can be applied toward the requirements of the doctoral degree if the program is related to political science. In addition, up to 15 SAL credit hours of graduate coursework, taken subsequent to the master's degree and completed with a grade of B or higher, may be applied as credit toward the doctoral degree. All M.A. transfer/SAL credit must be approved by the graduate director, and all Ph.D. transfer/SAL credit must be approved by the Department Graduate Committee.

Auditing Classes

There are several things to consider as you determine whether and how to audit a graduate course. One can audit a class either by signing up as an auditor in the course under the course number or by using POLS 690 to audit the class. If you want to have your presence in a class listed on your transcript then you must sign up as an auditor in that course under the course number. This is done by contacting the graduate school office manager prior to enrollment. You will receive the assistance required to be properly registered for the class.

You cannot sign up as a class auditor if you have already taken the class for credit. You may audit such a class using POLS 690. If you wish to audit a class that you have not taken for credit, we ask that you first seek to audit the class formally instead of using POLS 690 in case the class is under-enrolled. Auditors will be considered formal members of the class to reach enrollment status.

All POLS 690 credit hours are graded as satisfactory/unsatisfactory. The audit “grade” of O does not apply even if you are using POLS 690 for auditing purposes.

If you formally audit a class, the hours will count toward your enrollment hours for the semester but will not count toward your total credit hours (i.e., 36 for M.A. students and 90 for Ph.D. students).

The table that follows should help to clarify credit hour issues surrounding audits.

Course	Credit toward requirements for graduation	Credit toward course (hours) load	Can take for audit credit	Can use to audit different course	Audited course will appear on transcript	S/U grading (only)	O/OW grading available	Regular letter grading available
POLS 690	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO
POLS 691	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO
Substantive Course (graded)	YES	YES	N/A	NO	N/A	N/A	NO	YES
Substantive Course (audit)	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES (only)	NO
Under-graduate Course	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	N/A	YES	YES

N/A = not available, not applicable

GRADING POLICIES

Grades

Grades, as given by the department in accordance with university and Graduate School guidelines, are as follows:

A = 4.0 grade points	A- = 3.67 grade points	B+ = 3.33 grade points
B = 3.0 grade points	B- = 2.67 grade points	C+ = 2.33 grade points
C = 2.0 grade points	D = 1.0 grade points	F = 0.0 grade points

WP = Withdrawal from a course while passing at the time of withdrawal.

WF = Withdrawal from a course, while failing work at the time of withdrawal.

SU = S = Satisfactory, and U = Unsatisfactory. Applicable only to certain courses, and, where used, applies to all students in the class. An S is not included in the calculated grade point average though a U would be calculated as the equivalent of an F.

IP = In Progress. Applicable to thesis or dissertation credit hours.

O = Audit; in order to have the audit recorded on the transcript, the student must satisfy requirements as determined in advance between the student and the course instructor.

OW = Audit withdrawal.

I = Temporary incomplete. Grade will automatically turn into an F if a grade change form is not submitted within 120 days from the end of the semester. Please see the graduate catalog for regulations regarding incompletes.

Grade Appeals

On occasion, there may be a major conflict between an instructor and a student concerning an assigned grade. Only when a student has grounds to believe that their work has been graded capriciously, as that is defined by the university, is there a right to appeal the assigned grade. The student should understand that the university will accept grade appeals only on the following grounds:

- The assigning of a grade on the basis of some other factor(s) or condition(s) than performance in the course.
- The application of unequal standards to the students enrolled in any course.
- The assigning of a grade on the basis of standards other than those indicated during the first fourth of the term.

The department will NOT review any instructor's judgments of a particular student's work. Students are advised to bear in mind two things:

- Charges against faculty members for capricious grading are very serious charges and should not be undertaken lightly.
- The burden of proof lies with the student filing such charges.

Conflicts over grades should and will be resolved as follows. The student should first consult with the instructor. If this does not result in agreement, an appeal is made to the chair of the department; the chair will confer with both the student and the faculty member in an attempt to resolve the conflict. If, after these steps are taken, a student remains unsatisfied with the outcome, the student may petition for a review by the Department's Graduate Committee and/or the Graduate School-Grade Review Board.

Petitions for review of a grade by the Grade Review Board must be initiated within four weeks of the beginning of the semester (fall or spring) following the semester in which the disputed grade was assigned. Thus, student inquiries regarding disputed grades should be initiated at the beginning of the semester following the one in which the disputed grade was assigned, if not earlier. Further information on the procedural steps involved in grade appeals may be obtained

from the department office, the Graduate School, or the university's Office of the Ombudsperson.

Special Course Repeat Option

The special repeat option is available only for graduate courses in which the student received a grade of C or lower. In order to repeat a course using this option, a student in a graduate program other than a doctoral program must have written approval of the student's major department; SALs and others not in degree programs must have written approval from the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School. When a course is repeated on this basis, only the second of the two grades earned for the course is computed in the grade point average. Enrollments resulting in recorded grades of WF or WP, which are not instructor-assigned, and enrollments for audit (no credit), cannot be counted as "repeats" under this policy. No student may repeat more than six credit hours of coursework on this basis; no course may be repeated more than once under this option.

The special repeat option is not available to a student admitted to a doctoral degree program. However, if a course is required to complete program requirements, it may be repeated once. When the course is repeated, both instances will count in a student's grade point average. The student should submit a Schedule Change form to the Graduate School and, in the white space beside the signatures, write a statement such as, "Request student be allowed to repeat this course in order to meet degree requirements."

Probation and Dismissal

Graduate students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher to be considered in good academic standing and show acceptable progress toward the degree. Under Graduate School rules, students whose cumulative grade point average in all graduate courses taken falls below 3.0 are placed on academic probation. Students on probation must raise their cumulative grade point average to a minimum of 3.0 during the next nine credit hours of graduate work (excluding satisfactory/unsatisfactory courses), in order to be removed from probation. Failure to do so results in dismissal from the Graduate School. Students who receive six credit hours of D, F, or U grades will also be dismissed by the Graduate School. Students who are placed on academic probation may not be appointed graduate assistants. More details on these rules are available in the graduate catalog.

Variations and Exceptions

The Graduate School requires approval of any variances from the rules listed in the NIU graduate catalog, including rules listed in the department's section of the catalog. A student should not presume that approval has been obtained for any exception to catalog requirements unless the necessary approval has been secured in writing. Any variance from catalog rules requires the endorsement of the director of graduate studies and approval of the dean of the Graduate School.

POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The NIU graduate catalog states: "The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work that which he or she has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious

offense. Students guilty of, or assisting others in, either cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, quiz, or examination may receive a grade of F for the course involved and may be suspended or dismissed from the university.” Faculty members are required to file a record of each suspected incident with the NIU Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct office.

Many students are unfamiliar with what constitutes plagiarism. In research for a course paper or scholarly product, you can use concepts and models that others have written. Such use is part of the literature review that forms the basis of your work. Use of these ideas is perfectly acceptable — but you must give proper credit to the source. This credit can be provided in a footnote or other clear acknowledgment, such as an ASA-style citation immediately after the passage that incorporates the source’s ideas. Anything you use that does not represent your own ideas, thoughts, or opinions must be cited unless it is common knowledge. Err on the side of being too careful. Examples of plagiarism or violations of academic integrity include:

- Copying word-for-word from the work of an author or any other person without proper citation.
- Heavily paraphrasing the work of another without proper citation.
- Using another’s concepts, ideas, or frameworks without acknowledging their contribution to your work.
- Falsification of methodology or results.

If you are in doubt about whether a specific citation or procedure is in order, consult your course professor or advisor.

RESEARCH EXPERIENCES

The department encourages collaborative research between graduate students and faculty. Although the department does not award them, research assistantships are available from other units on campus. Research assistantships are a good source of graduate student funding and they also enhance a student’s career development. Research assistantships have been made available through NIU’s Regional Development Institute, the Center for Governmental Studies, and the Public Opinion Lab, all located at the William Monat building on 3rd Street in downtown DeKalb. There also may be research assistantship opportunities with the Center for Southeast Asian Studies.

CONFERENCE TRAVEL

To help facilitate travel to professional meetings and conferences, at which graduate students present the results of their academic and creative endeavors, the Graduate School normally invites degree-seeking graduate students to submit travel grant proposals. Graduate students invited to present results of their original research or creative activity in the form of a paper, performance/exhibition, or poster session at a professional meeting may submit a proposal through their academic department (Political Science) to the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School. Recipients of travel grants may be awarded matching funds to cover the cost of registration, lodging, and transportation.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must have completed at least one academic year of study at NIU. They must be in good academic standing and have a 3.50 GPA. At the time of application, the student must not have an unresolved grade of “Incomplete.”

Applicants must present results of their own original research or artistic endeavors conducted while enrolled at NIU.

Applicants must be the primary author of the presentation.

Applicants, whether single authors or co-authors, must secure from their academic department and/or college a minimum of \$200 in support.

Preference will be given to doctoral students or students pursuing the terminal degree in their discipline. A request from a master’s student will be considered only if the department does not offer a doctoral degree in the student’s field of study.

The meeting or conference must be of national or international significance.

At the time of application, the applicant must be registered on a full-time basis (minimum nine credit hours during the fall and spring, six credit hours during the summer). If traveling between semesters, the applicant must be registered for the current semester and the semester or term following travel.

Only one travel request per student may be funded in a fiscal year.

Applicants must not be employed at NIU as an instructor, adjunct, or regular member of the faculty.

Instructions

1. Complete and print the coversheet.
2. Attach the proposal, which must include the following components:
 - a. Title of the presentation and applicant’s name.
 - b. Synopsis of the presentation (500 words maximum). In the synopsis, explain the significance of the research or artistic endeavor and its relationship to the applicant’s ongoing academic program.
 - c. Justification: Explain how the opportunity to present will enhance the applicant’s academic or professional experience. Explain why the particular forum is the most appropriate one.
3. Attach supporting materials, including confirmation of participation, the names, positions, and institutional affiliations of other panelists, moderators, commentators, or jury members (if known).
4. Secure support from one’s department chair or school director and, as needed, one’s college dean.

Due Dates

For travel between July 1 and Aug. 31 (Deadline: June 19 at 4:30 p.m.)

For travel between Sept. 1 and Oct. 31 (Deadline: Aug.14 at 4:30 p.m.)

For travel between Nov. 1 and Jan. 31 (Deadline: Oct. 16 at 4:30 p.m.)

For travel between Feb. 1 and March 31 (Deadline: Jan. 16 at 4:30 p.m.)

For travel between April 1 and June 30 (Deadline: March 19 at 4:30 p.m.)

If traveling over two periods, the request must be submitted based on the start date of the travel.

Submit applications **three days prior to deadline** to Jennifer Gregory, office administrator for processing to the college and graduate school.

Reimbursement

Upon return, applicants awarded a travel grant must file a signed travel voucher with receipts. Successful applicants must file a brief assessment of the results of the presentation with the travel voucher. An estimate of the audience size, formal and informal comments about the presentation, and an assessment of the academic and professional benefits of the experience should be included. Vouchers will not be approved until a final report is received. Submit vouchers and final reports to the dean, Graduate School, 223 Adams Hall.

FACULTY GRADUATE STUDIES COMMITTEE

The director of graduate studies is responsible for the daily administration of the graduate program. The director is supported by the graduate studies office manager. The director works closely with the department's Faculty Graduate Studies Committee on all policy matters. Most policy decisions of the committee must be ratified by the political science faculty as a whole.

The Faculty Graduate Studies Committee of the Political Science Department consists of five voting faculty members, representing each of the subfields to the greatest extent possible. A graduate student representative also serves on the committee and has voting rights on policy and procedural matters but does not participate in admissions or assistantship decisions or matters involving individual graduate students. The graduate student representative usually is the president of the Political Science Graduate Student Association (see below) but another individual could be selected if the president is unable to attend meetings. The director of graduate studies and the department chair serve as *ex-officio* (nonvoting) members of the committee. The director of graduate studies chairs the committee meetings. The director of graduate studies may serve as a voting member of the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee if also representing a subfield.

Some of the roles of the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee are:

- Review the policies and procedures of the M.A. and Ph.D. programs of the department and recommend changes in those policies and procedures to the department.
- Affirm or reject applicants for the Ph.D. program.
- Allocate graduate assistantships to the department's graduate students.
- Conduct qualifying exam for all 1st year Ph.D. students.
- Review catalog and curriculum changes regarding graduate courses and submit them to the department for consideration.
- Receive appeals regarding graduate program policies and procedures.
- Develop, review, and implement the graduate program assessment in collaboration with others in the department.

Students are encouraged to raise policy issues with the student representative on the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee, or directly with the director of graduate studies, if desired.

POLITICAL SCIENCE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The Political Science Graduate Student Association (PSGSA) is an organization whose goals include representing the interests of political science graduate students to the department's faculty and staff, the university's student association, and the university. The PSGSA can be a useful resource for graduate students in such areas as:

- Navigation of degree programs.
- Sponsor research showcase events.
- Socialization in the spheres of professional development and research presentation.
- Advocacy within the department and the university.

Furthermore, the PSGSA seeks to strengthen the communal bonds between graduate students and faculty through formal and informal meetings and events. The development of a sense of community will help graduate students to feel more comfortable in their surroundings, to nurture support systems with one another, and to exchange ideas with one another. All political science graduate students are members of the PSGSA. Thus, all are encouraged to attend its meetings, formal events, and informal get-togethers. Meetings, event times and locations will be announced via email at least one week prior to each scheduled meeting or event.

Current PSGSA officers work to fulfill the mission of the PSGSA. These officers are also available to assist graduate students with any questions or concerns related to student life, coursework, and professional development opportunities (academic conferences, university training seminars, etc.) to the best of their respective abilities. No question or concern is too trivial. In fact, many of the lessons that senior graduate students take for granted came through trial and error and other forms of experience. Thus, PSGSA officers may aid graduate students in shortening this learning process. This, in turn, may lead to an enriched experience for the department's more recently enrolled graduate students. The PSGSA looks forward to serving the department's graduate students and cultivating some memorable experiences!

CHAPTER 2. M.A. PROGRAM

M.A. THESIS

All M.A. students must write a master's thesis to meet the department's research requirement. This involves following Guidelines for Preparing and Submitting Electronic Theses and Dissertations at NIU. Occasionally, a well-focused student may write a master's thesis that will become a chapter in a Ph.D. dissertation, and a good thesis may contain publishable findings. A student writing a thesis must identify a prospective committee chair for the thesis, who must approve the topic, be willing to serve as thesis director, and meet Graduate School qualifications. Students should carefully review the requirements in advance of beginning the thesis to fully appreciate the undertaking. The required length of the thesis, and other internal aspects of it, is determined by the student's committee chair. Faculty members vary in their thesis approaches and requirements.

M.A. COURSEWORK

M.A. students must complete 36 credit hours at the graduate level, including at least nine credit

hours in one of the department's five subfields and at least six credits in a second subfield. Each subfield may have its own course requirements or recommendations, described in the "Subfield Policies" below. Students must take a minimum of 21 credit hours of face-to-face graduate level seminars. No more than three credit hours may normally be applied to courses from outside the department.

POLS 602 and POLS 603 are required for all M.A. students. These courses are designed to introduce the philosophical underpinnings, scope, methods, and research design of political science.

All M.A. students must take POLS 690 for a total of at least three credit hours. This requirement may be fulfilled in one, two or three semesters or summer terms. Credit hours of POLS 690 may not count toward the minimum of nine credit hours in one subfield or six credits in a second subfield. No more than nine credit hours of POLS 690 may count toward the 36 credit hours required for the M.A. degree.

All M.A. students must take POLS 699 ("Thesis") for a minimum of three credit hours. According to the graduate catalog, "A student who has formally begun the thesis or its equivalent must register in course number 699 in each subsequent term until the thesis or equivalent is submitted to and formally approved by the Graduate School." The thesis course (POLS 699) can be taken for one to six credits per semester. Because students need to be registered the semester they graduate, if the requisite three credits of POLS 699 has already been met, students may sign up for only one credit hour of POLS 699 in their graduating semester.

Time Limitations

The Graduate School requires that M.A. students must fulfill all requirements for a degree within the six consecutive years immediately preceding the date of the student's graduation from that degree program. This time limit applies to enrollment in all graduate course work in the student's program including work for which transfer credit is allowed.

If an NIU course taken to complete the requirements for the master's degree does not fall within the six-year period allowed for the degree program, the student's major department may require the student to retake the course for credit or may allow the student to demonstrate current knowledge of the subject matter. In the latter case, currency must be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the department offering the course through successful completion of an appropriate examination or other assessment if available from the department. Transfer courses falling outside the limitation of time cannot be used in a graduate program (see graduate catalog).

SUBFIELD POLICIES

The political science faculty members are affiliated with one or more research subfields. The research subfields represent shared interests of faculty and students. The political science curriculum is organized by subfield, and faculty in each subfield set the course requirements for that subfield. Students are required to choose subfields of study as the basis of their program of courses, which must meet the requirements of each chosen subfield of study. The course requirements of each subfield are presented below.

American Government

Coursework in the American Government subfield is designed to expose students to prominent theoretical, institutional, and behavioral approaches to the study of American government and politics. All students are expected to demonstrate a general competence in the subfield of American Government. Some may also choose to develop special expertise in the further subset field of Public Law. All students should plan their course of studies in consultation with American Government faculty.

Although there are no required courses, M.A. students with an interest in American Government are encouraged to take POLS 600 (Seminar in American Politics).

Comparative Politics

Comparative Politics offers courses that provide a rigorous survey of theoretical approaches and methodological issues. Some courses focus on specific topics and/or regions, drawing on pertinent theories. Students who select Comparative Politics as their M.A. subfield must complete at least nine credit hours of Comparative Politics courses. M.A. students are not required to take POLS 660 (Seminar in Comparative Political Analysis).

International Relations

There are no required courses for M.A. students although POLS 680 (Theories of International Relations) is recommended for master's students. Before enrolling in POLS 680, students should consult with the instructor to ensure they have an adequate background to be successful in the course. M.A. students are required to take nine credit hours of graduate International Relations courses.

Political Theory

POLS 650 (Basic Problems in Ancient Political Philosophy) and POLS 651 (Topics in Modern Political Philosophy) are the core courses for students doing their master's work in Political Theory. The topics covered in the POLS 650 and POLS 651 change from semester to semester and therefore the courses may be repeated up to 12 credit hours for POLS 650 and 15 credit hours for POLS 651.

All master's students interested in Political Theory must take a minimum of nine credit hours of Political Theory courses, subject to exceptions in special cases with the approval of the subfield.

COURSES	Required of Political Theory-MA	COMMENTS
POLS 650	X	Max 12 credit hours
POLS 651	X	Max 15 credit hours

Public Administration

An M.A. in Political Science with a Public Administration focus should not be confused with the Master's in Public Administration (M.P.A.) degree which is administered by the Department of Public Administration and not the department of Political Science. Students wishing to pursue a M.A. in Political Science with a primary focus on Public Administration must take a minimum

of nine credit hours of PSPA courses.

M.A. THESIS DEFENSE

The M.A. thesis defense will be conducted by a faculty committee consisting of at least three members. The committee shall be appointed by the director of graduate studies or the department chair, in consultation with the thesis committee chair.

The thesis defense will be assigned one of three grades:

- Pass with a recommendation that the student is eligible for the department's doctoral program.
- Terminal pass, with a recommendation that the student is not eligible for the department's doctoral program.
- Fail.

The recommendation is then transmitted to the department's graduate committee if the student subsequently applies for admission to the department's doctoral program. Students who fail will be granted one opportunity to retake the examination.

The M.A. examinations must be held in a timely fashion to meet Graduate School deadlines. Students must work with their committee to make sure that the examination is held before the deadlines of each term. Failure to convene the exam in a timely fashion will postpone the graduation date of the student and may affect admission to Ph.D. programs, either at NIU or other institutions.

CHAPTER 3. PH.D. PROGRAM

PURPOSE OF THE PH.D.

The purpose of the Ph.D. degree traditionally has been to gain training in research skills so that one may make new discoveries that advance our human understanding of the world. Discovery (or research) generally must follow accepted rules of research practice in order to be credible to the existing scholars in a particular subfield. Scholars share new discoveries by teaching students in classrooms and by publishing the results of research in scholarly journals so that other scholars can use the new knowledge in their classrooms and their research efforts. Hence, a principal purpose of a Ph.D. is to learn the principal theoretical approaches to an area of study and to learn the research methodologies appropriate to particular lines of inquiry. All doctoral students must complete the requirements in two of the five subfields of graduate study the department offers.

ADMISSION TO THE PH.D. PROGRAM

The department usually does not begin consideration of an application until the file is complete. All application materials must be submitted electronically to the Graduate School. Admission to the Ph.D. program requires the following materials:

- Completed application form, together with a statement of academic goals and interests.
- At least three letters of recommendation from individuals who are able to speak authoritatively concerning the applicant's background and ability to pursue graduate studies. Letters from faculty members are preferred.
- Official transcripts of undergraduate and graduate work at all colleges and universities previously attended.
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores. Scores from the GRE General Test — which consists of verbal, quantitative, and analytical sections — are no longer required, but applicants can still submit scores if they wish. The subject test in Political Science is not required.
- Doctoral applicants should have completed a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, or Master of Arts degree from an accredited university and maintained at least a 3.2 cumulative GPA. In addition, the expectation is that applicants will score well on the GRE. Applicants scoring above the 50th percentile on both the Verbal and Quantitative parts of the test will be given the most serious consideration. Students with scores below the 50th percentile on either the Verbal and Quantitative parts of the test will be accepted into the Doctoral program only under extraordinary circumstances.
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is required for international students whose native language is not English, unless the student has a baccalaureate degree or higher from a university in the U.S., U.K., Canada, Ireland, Australia or New Zealand at which English was the language of instruction.

Admissions decisions are made by the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee. Decisions of the committee are final and will be communicated in writing to the applicant.

Applicants who have only completed a baccalaureate degree may be considered for direct admission to the Ph.D. program with a 3.75 or higher undergraduate GPA, exceptional scores on all relevant sections of the GRE examination, and strong letters of recommendation. Higher standards are required for less competitive colleges and universities. These are minimum standards for consideration and do not guarantee direct admission to the doctoral program.

Students who are admitted directly to the Ph.D. program must write and successfully defend an M.A. thesis prior to the end of their fourth semester in the program. Second, they must receive the M.A. degree prior to taking their Ph.D. candidacy examinations. In applying to receive the M.A. degree, they need not repeat the application fee but must submit application materials to the Graduate School as if they were applying separately for the M.A. They will be assessed the graduation fee.

PH.D. COURSEWORK

A student seeking the Ph.D. degree in Political Science at NIU is expected to complete a program of at least 90 credit hours beyond the B.A./B.S. degree. Appropriate coursework credit from an M.A. degree is usually included in this total.

These 90 credit hours are commonly allocated as follows: 30 credit hours of work from a master's degree, either at NIU or accepted in transfer from another university, at least 42 credit

hours of post master-level coursework and 18 credit hours in POLS 690, POLS 799A and POLS 799B for research towards the dissertation.

Research tools courses, or graduate level language courses in the elective category, are counted toward the 72 credit hours of non-dissertation required coursework for the Ph.D. degree.

Graduate students in the doctoral program are required to take written and oral candidacy examinations in at least two subfields of the discipline and may, if they choose, take an exam in a third subfield.

Required Courses

Students are required to develop expertise in two subfields of Political Science. One subfield should be designated as the student's first subfield, and the student is required to complete 15 credit hours in that subfield. The student is required to have a second subfield and to complete 12 credit hours in that subfield. In addition, the following five courses are required of all doctoral students:

- Students must complete POLS 602 (Research Design in Political Science).
- Students must complete POLS 603 (Scope and History of Political Science).
- Students must complete a minimum of six credit hours of POLS 690 (Political Science Research).
- Students must complete a minimum of one credit hour of POLS 692 (Teaching of Political Science).
- Students must complete a minimum total of twelve credit hours of course number 799 (Doctoral Research and Dissertation).

All doctoral students must take POLS 602 and POLS 603 as part of their 90-credit-hour Ph.D. program. The expectation is that students will take these two courses during their first two semesters at NIU. However, an exception may be granted with the consent of the director of graduate studies. These courses are designed to introduce the philosophical underpinnings, scope, methods, and research design of political science. Students with a further subset field in Public Administration may substitute PSPA 604 (Public Program Evaluation Methods) for POLS 602 with the approval of the graduate director.

All doctoral students must take POLS 690 for a minimum of six credit hours. This course provides indispensable socialization into the department and the profession, opportunities for peer assistance and review, and bridges between theories and applications. POLS 690 may be repeated for a maximum of 39 credit hours and counted toward the 90 credit hours required for the Ph.D. degree, but is not accepted toward the minimum course requirement in either of the student's two subfields.

All doctoral students are also required to take one credit hour of POLS 692 which is a general orientation for teaching political science. Credit is not accepted toward subfield requirements for the doctoral degree, but it may be counted toward the 90 credit hours required for the Ph.D. degree.

Doctoral students who have an approved dissertation proposal may register for POLS 799A. Students must complete a minimum of twelve credit hours of course number 799 (A or B) for the doctoral degree. Students who register for POLS 799A are required to maintain continuous

registration in POLS 799A every term, including summer terms, until the dissertation is completed and approved by the Graduate School, unless a leave of absence is granted. Students who fail to register continuously may be withdrawn from the program. Furthermore, there is a fixed three credit hour registration requirement for POLS 799A.

Students must stay continually enrolled under the “continuous enrollment policy” established by the Graduate School. They must also pay tuition and fees for all these credit hours. It is thus advantageous for many students to register for POLS 690 to the maximum credits allowed (39) before enrolling in POLS 799A. There is no requirement for continuous enrollment in POLS 690, and the student can choose to register for one to three credits.

Students who have successfully completed the oral defense of the dissertation and received departmental approval of the final revisions to the dissertation may substitute registration in POLS 799A (three credit hours) with registration in POLS 799B (one credit hour).

Languages and Research Tools

The goals of the Languages and Research Tools Curriculum are to provide the student with:

- A foundation to competently read broadly in Political Science and Public Administration literature.
- Competency in reading special literature of a student’s subfield within Political Science.
- Competency in conducting dissertation research.
- Freedom to obtain training outside of Political Science courses to gain competence for dissertation research and to read specific literature in a subfield.

Students working toward a Ph.D. in political science must demonstrate a proficiency to use a language(s) or research tool(s). All students should begin their research tool coursework during their first year, so they will have taken prerequisite courses if it is advisable to take POLS 643 (Advanced Analysis of Political Data) or POLS 645 (Qualitative Research Methods) during their second year.

The choice of specific language/research tools will relate to the student’s subfield of study and will be made with the approval of faculty in the student’s first field of study. Proficiency in any foreign language can be demonstrated in accordance with the procedures described in the graduate catalog section on “Ph.D. Language and/or Research Tool Requirement” under “Requirements for Graduate Degrees.” This includes the possibility of demonstrating average proficiency in French, German, or Spanish through the reading courses indicated. In addition, with the approval of the appropriate faculty member of the department of Foreign Languages and Literatures, average proficiency in other languages can be demonstrated by passing a translation exam administered as part of the final exam in the fourth or later semester of study. High proficiency in any language can be demonstrated only through a translation examination. Proficiency in a research tool is demonstrated by successfully completing designated courses with a grade of B or higher. Any one of the following options will satisfy the languages and/or research tools requirement:

- Two languages, average reading proficiency.
- One foreign language, high level of reading proficiency.
- One foreign language, average reading proficiency, and one research tool, average

- proficiency.
- One research tool, high level of proficiency.
- Two research tools, average proficiency.

The language or research tool requirements must be completed before the student sits for doctoral candidacy examinations. Students must select the language(s) or research tools which they will offer in fulfillment of Ph.D. language and/or research tool requirements in consultation with faculty in their first field of study. Faculty in a student's first field of study have the authority to require a student to select a particular language or research tool option. The faculty also have the authority to refuse a student permission to offer a particular research tool or language in fulfillment of degree requirements. Indeed, the faculty in some subfields may require that all students working in that subfield offer a particular research tool or language.

Certain additional characteristics of these requirements are of considerable importance to the student:

- Tool courses, as well as POLS 602 (PSPA 604) and POLS 603, count toward the required number of credit hours in the Ph.D. program.
- Tool courses must be passed with at least a B and in no case will a lesser grade satisfy the requirement.
- When non-Political Science tool courses are used, the Graduate School must approve the specific courses that will be used to satisfy tool requirements. Advance approval is desirable.

Language and research tools requirements are a constantly changing portion of the graduate curriculum in every institution of higher education. It is incumbent upon the student to remain up to date on additional requirements that the department may institute or whatever relevant modifications in current proficiency schedules may be made.

Foreign Language Option

Students wishing to demonstrate proficiency in a language through translation examination must file their request with the office of Testing Services, and four weeks should be allowed for test preparation. The student should bear in mind the following additional conditions and criteria: (1) Average competence is deemed to be comparable to two years of undergraduate instruction; (2) High competence may be roughly comparable to four years of undergraduate and graduate instruction. Students should consult with NIU's Testing Services office regarding the length of the examinations, types of material translated, and other exam rules. The relevant literature used in translation exams is defined to incorporate literature from the field of political science and usually in the student's chosen area of interest/concentration. High proficiency examinations make use of professional journals in the candidate's subfield of concentration. These exams are graded on a pass/fail basis.

The language courses at NIU are undergraduate courses and cannot be counted toward the 90 credit hours of graduate work required to complete a Ph.D. They do count toward fulfillment of the language tools option.

Research Tools Option

Students electing the research tools option normally demonstrate competence through the successful completion of coursework offered in the Political Science department. The following table outlines the Political Science Research Tools Requirements to obtain average and high proficiency in quantitative and qualitative methods.

POLS Research Tools Requirements				
	Quantitative		Qualitative	
Proficiency	Average	High	Average	High
POLS 602 or PSPA 604	X	X	X	X
POLS 603	X	X	X	X
POLS 641 or PSPA 601	X	X	X	X
POLS 642	X	X		
POLS 643 or an approved non-POLS course.		X		
POLS 645			X	X
POLS 661 or an approved non-POLS course.				X

Variable credit may be granted for special summer advanced methods training (e.g., at the Inter-University Consortium of Political Science Research at the University of Michigan).

The Faculty Graduate Studies Committee shall maintain a registry of courses deemed acceptable as additional courses to fulfill the research tools high proficiency requirements or as substitutes for the indicated Political Science research tools courses.

Faculty in a student's first field may petition the Department Graduate Committee to permit a student to enroll in a course not on this list in fulfillment of the student's research tool requirement. The Department Graduate Committee shall recommend courses in other departments to fill research tool requirements if, and only if, the course is determined to be (a) as rigorous as or more rigorous than the standard Political Science proficiency requirements and (b) offered regularly by highly qualified members of the graduate faculty. Further, requests for exceptions from normal requirements must be secured in advance of undertaking the desired pattern of work in fulfillment of research tool requirements.

Additional Subfield or Graduate Concentration Option

A student may choose to complete an additional (third) subfield or graduate concentration. This minor subfield requires 12 credit hours in the department. The credit hours required for a graduate concentration vary. Please see the graduate catalog for further information. Neither this subfield nor a graduate concentration requires a written comprehensive exam. However, a student may choose to take a comprehensive exam. In that case, the subfield is designated as their third major subfield.

Time Limitations

Students have 9 years to complete a doctoral program.

SUBFIELD POLICIES

The political science faculty members are affiliated with one or more research subfields. The research subfields represent shared interests of faculty and students. The political science curriculum is organized by subfield, and faculty in each subfield set the course requirements for that subfield. Students are required to choose subfields of study as the basis of their program of courses, which must meet the requirements of each chosen subfield of study. Each subfield has its own course requirements or recommendations; these are described below.

The 12 or 15 credit hour minimum in each subfield may include course credit transferred from another university or a prior master's degree program. All transfer credit must be approved by the Department's Graduate Committee.

Students who take only 12 credit hours in any subfield may not count any independent study courses toward the 12 credit hours. No more than one course outside of political science may be counted toward the credit hours required in any one subfield. There is also a limit of 15 credit hours taken outside of political science that can count toward the 90 credits hours required to graduate. Petitions for exceptions to any of these rules must be submitted in writing to the Department's Graduate Committee, through the graduate director chair, and must also be approved by the Graduate School.

The Graduate School maintains an electronic account of each student's progress toward their degree which includes meeting goals such as having taken the required POLS 602 and POLS 603 courses for Ph.D. students. This electronic accounting mechanism is available through MyNIU starting with students who begin their graduate work in academic year 2008-09 or subsequently.

American Government

Coursework in the American Government subfield is designed to expose students to prominent theoretical, institutional, and behavioral approaches to the study of American government and politics. Students are expected to demonstrate general competence across the entire subfield of American Government. Some students may also choose to develop special expertise in the further subset field of Public Law. All students should plan their course of studies in consultation with subfield faculty.

All Ph.D. students who have selected American Government as a subfield of study (first, second, or third subfield) must complete POLS 600 (Seminar in American Politics). Ph.D. students must take at least four other 600-level courses from the American government listings; two of these four courses must come from the core institutions' set of courses. The core institutions' set of courses are POLS 605 (Seminar in Political Parties), POLS 607 (Seminar on the Presidency), POLS 608 (Legislative Behavior), and POLS 610 (Seminar in the Judicial Process). Since most of the department's graduate seminars are offered only every other year, students are urged to take advantage of core course offerings as soon as they become available on the class schedule. The topics covered in POLS 601 (Topics in American Politics) and POLS 609 (The Roots of Political Behavior) change from semester to semester, and therefore the courses may be repeated

for up to six credit hours.

In addition to all other requirements, all American Government Ph.D. students must take POLS 602 (Research Design in Political Science) and POLS 641 (Introductory Analysis of Political Data) in the first fall semester of their graduate program.

COURSES	Required of American Government			COURSE TYPE/COMMENTS
	1 st Subfield	2 nd Subfield	3 rd Subfield	
POLS 600	X	X	X	Core
POLS 605				Core
POLS 607				Core
POLS 608				Core
POLS 610				Core and Public Law
POLS 601				Elective/Max 6 credit hours
POLS 606				Elective
POLS 609				Elective/Max 6 credit hours
POLS 619				Elective
POLS 701				Elective

Public Law Concentration

In addition to satisfying all course requirements for the subfield of American Government, it is recommended for students who wish to develop an area of concentration in Public Law to complete POLS 610 (Seminar in the Judicial Process) and additional relevant courses decided in consultation with the Public Law faculty.

Comparative Politics

Comparative Politics offerings include courses that provide a rigorous survey of theoretical approaches and methodological issues as well as courses with a focus on specific topics across countries and regions, using pertinent theories. POLS 660 (Seminar in Comparative Political Analysis) is required of all Ph.D. students and provides a rigorous survey of theoretical approaches and methodological issues. No single course can be used to meet the requirements of both Comparative Politics and another subfield. The topics covered in POLS 672 (Topics in Comparative Politics) and POLS 673 (Foreign Area Politics) change from semester to semester and therefore the courses may be repeated for up to nine credit hours.

COURSES	Required of Comparative Politics		COMMENTS
	1 st Subfield	2 nd Subfield	
POLS 660	X	X	Core
POLS 621			
POLS 662			
POLS 664			
POLS 667			
POLS 668			
POLS 669			
POLS 671			

POLS 672			Max 9 credit hours
POLS 675			
POLS 663			
POLS 666			
POLS 670			
POLS 673			Max 9 credit hours
POLS 702			

International Relations

All Ph.D. students who have selected International Relations as a subfield of study (first, second, or third subfield) must complete POLS 680 (Theories of International Relations). The topics covered in POLS 686 (Seminar in International Relations) change from semester to semester and therefore the course may be repeated for up to 15 credit hours.

COURSES	Required of International Relations			COURSE TYPE/COMMENTS
	1 st Subfield	2 nd Subfield	3 rd Subfield	
POLS 680	X	X	X	Core
POLS 681				General
POLS 682				General
POLS 683				General
POLS 684				General
POLS 685				General
POLS 686				Thematic/Max of 15 credit hours
POLS 687				Regional
POLS 688				Regional
POLS 689				General
POLS 702				Elective

Political Theory

POLS 650 (Basic Problems in Ancient Political Philosophy) and POLS 651 (Topics in Modern Political Philosophy) are the core courses for students doing their doctoral work with Political Theory as a primary subfield. The topics covered in the core courses and the seminar change from semester to semester and therefore the courses may be repeated for up to 12 credit hours for POLS 650, 15 credit hours for POLS 651 and up to nine credit hours for POLS 750.

COURSES	Required of Political Theory			COURSE TYPE/COMMENTS
	1 st Subfield	2 nd Subfield	3 rd Subfield	
POLS 650	X			Max 12 credit hours
POLS 651	X			Max 15 credit hours
POLS 652				American Political Thought
POLS 653				American Political Thought
POLS 654				Max of 6 credit hours

Public Administration

All Ph.D. students who have selected Public Administration as a subfield of study are required to take PSPA 661 (Theory and Analysis in Public Administration). All other courses appropriate to the individual student's preparation are selected in consultation with subfield faculty. Students should also recognize that both POLS courses and PSPA courses may be appropriate for a student's program.

COURSES	Required of Public Administration			COURSE TYPE/COMMENTS
	1 st Subfield	2 nd Subfield	3 rd Subfield	
PSPA 661	X	X	X	Core
PSPA 655				Encouraged
PSPA 664				Encouraged

Doctoral students are encouraged to take at least one of the more advanced PSPA courses, such as PSPA 655 (Organization Development in the Public Sector) or PSPA 664 (Politics of Public Budgeting). Ph.D. students choosing Public Administration as a second or third subfield must also take PSPA 661 and three additional appropriate courses.

TEACHING SKILLS REQUIREMENT

All Ph.D. students are required to demonstrate teaching competence by successfully completing POLS 692 (Teaching and Professional Development) and by gaining some hands-on teaching experience. Experience can be gained by:

- Teaching discussion sections of a professor's introductory course.
- Taking responsibility for several class meetings of a graduate or undergraduate course under the supervision of the course professor.
- Teaching their own undergraduate course.

Exceptions to the teaching experience requirement may be recommended by faculty in a student's first field of study and approved by the Department Graduate Studies Committee.

The department holds a teaching orientation each August before the start of classes. All graduate students with independent teaching assignments (classes or discussion sections) are required to attend. The university also conducts a teaching orientation session. All funded teaching assistants are expected to complete the university program at least once and are encouraged to return in subsequent years for a refresher and/or to participate in different break-out sessions.

PH.D. QUALIFYING PROCESS

A qualifying process is required of all new doctoral students after accumulating nine credit hours of graduate coursework (preferably in their second semester after enrolling in the Ph.D. program).

The qualifying process serves two purposes. First, it is to confirm that the student is adequately prepared for doctoral level work in political science, especially in the subfields of intended doctoral study. The Department's Graduate Committee, in consultation with other faculty members, may require that deficiencies be corrected before the student is permitted to engage in

further work toward the degree. In other instances, the committee may decide it is in the student's best interest that they be terminated from the program.

Second, for students who enter the Ph.D. program with graduate credits from another accredited university, a determination is made regarding which, if any, of the credit from a previous institution can count toward the completion of the Ph.D. degree at NIU.

PH.D. CANDIDACY EXAMINATIONS (“COMPS”)

Ph.D. candidacy examinations are given once each semester. They are offered during the last two weeks of September and during the first two weeks of February. If the university is closed due to weather or for any other reason on the date an exam is scheduled, the exam will take place on the next date the university is open.

Doctoral students preparing for comprehensive exams must be registered during the semester in which they take the exam. Students who wish to sit for their candidacy exams must file a specific “Request to Sit for Comprehensive Exams” form, which should be submitted to the department's graduate studies office manager by Aug. 1 for an examination in September and by Dec. 15 for an examination in February. The form requires the approval of subfield faculty from each of the relevant exam subfields.

Students will be tested in two subfields. A student may take both examinations in one semester, or over two consecutive semesters. If the student decides to test in three subfields the same policy remains in place. They may take all three exams in the same semester or over two semesters. If a student fails one or both examinations, faculty in the subfield(s) involved may authorize a second attempt. The timing of the retake will be determined by the faculty in the relevant subfield but is generally rescheduled for the next semester's exam period.

Doctoral students should note that there is no set grading policy for the examinations at the department level. That is to say, the faculty in each subfield regulates the construction and grading of the examination in their subfields. Consequently, the construction and grading policies may vary by subfield. Students intending to sit for a comprehensive exam are well-advised to consult with the subfield convener and all other faculty in the students' two exam subfields.

Administrative Procedures

The following procedures shall govern administration of the graduate comprehensive examinations:

1. The department office will verify that all requirements have been met and that all incomplete grades have been made up. Students who have not completed all requirements, including the removal of all incomplete grades, will not be allowed to take their comprehensive examinations.
2. If there is a significant change in the format of the exams, updated information will be made available to students no later than one month prior to the examination date.
3. A student who fails two written examinations in the same subfield, or more than three in different subfields, will not be permitted to continue doctoral work in the Department of

Political Science. A student who fails one exam may designate a different subfield as one of their two primary subfields if they have completed all coursework in this third subfield, and have the permission of the Department's Graduate Committee. In such a case, the student must take the exam of the new subfield at the next offering.

4. Any student wishing to withdraw from the examination must do so at least 72 hours before the scheduled date of their first examination. Withdrawals after that time, or failure to take any examination on schedule, will result in the missed examination(s) being recorded as a failure. Examinations missed because of demonstrated ill health will be made up as soon as possible and normally within one week of the scheduled examination date.
5. All exams are take-home exams. The department graduate studies office manager will coordinate with students taking the exam to present the questions to them at 8:00 a.m. on the scheduled date of the exam either in person in the department office or through email distribution. The student will have until 4:00 p.m. on the following day to complete the examination at a location of the student's choosing. The student may access any materials to answer the questions, but their responses must comply with all university policies regarding plagiarism. The exam answers must be emailed to the graduate studies office manager by 4:00 p.m. on the scheduled date. In addition, the student must provide a hard copy of their exam to the department office within 24 hours after the allotted time for the exam is complete.
6. Students are not permitted to consult with anyone during the course of an examination and exams will be submitted to plagiarism-checking software. Evidence of violation of these rules shall be considered *prima facie* grounds for the assignment of a failing grade on the examination and can result in termination from the graduate program in Political Science.
7. After receiving and coordinating the scoring of each exam, the subfield will notify the student. The department will, upon request, provide students with copies of their individual evaluations.
8. All examinations shall be scored on the basis of:
 - High pass
 - Pass
 - FailA marginal examination in any subfield shall be considered a failure.

Additional Considerations

Examinations test scholarly achievement in the pertinent subfield and the content is not necessarily limited to courses taken by the candidates. Students are thus advised to devote a considerable period of time to intensive preparation and to consult all faculty members in each of the student's two subfields.

1. Questions that have been administered to students during previous examination periods are on file in the department office, and students are allowed to view these as part of their preparation for current exams. The department, however, does not guarantee any continuity in the form, subject matter, or type of questions which are asked from year to year.
2. Oral examinations are a likely part of the comprehensive examination process. Subfields have

the discretion to waive an oral examination if they deem it is unnecessary based on an exemplary written examination. The oral examination policy may be implemented in different ways but will always occur within two weeks of when the written exam is returned to the students:

- A student may have no oral examinations if both subfields decide to waive such examinations.
- Students may have only one oral examination meeting combining questions from both comprehensive examination subfields if the two subfields agree to a combined oral examination.
- A student may have an oral examination covering only one comprehensive examination subfield if the other subfield waives an oral examination.
- A student may have two separate meetings, each one covering a single subfield set of questions.

Thus, students will have anywhere from zero to two oral examinations. During an oral examination, faculty members may query the student concerning any aspect of their substantive and theoretical preparations for further progress in the Ph.D. program.

DISSERTATION WORK

Once students have passed both candidacy examinations in the Ph.D. program, they are admitted to Ph.D. candidacy and shall prepare to defend a doctoral dissertation. This dissertation is expected to be an original and significant contribution to the subfield of the discipline in which the student has chosen to concentrate.

Dissertation Committee

A student who has reached this stage is expected to consult with the department chair regarding the appointment of a dissertation committee which will advise the student on the selection of a dissertation topic, direct the student's efforts in preparation of the dissertation, and conduct the dissertation defense. Faculty members nominated to serve on this committee are selected on the basis of their interest in, and ability to contribute to, the development of the student's dissertation topic. Selection of the dissertation chair should be made as soon as possible after the student has passed the candidacy examinations.

The chair of the student's dissertation committee will be the dissertation director, the faculty member under whom the student will work most directly and intensively in the development of the dissertation topic and who assumes primary responsibility for supervising the student's dissertation preparation. The dissertation director shall hold "senior graduate faculty status"; a faculty member with "full graduate faculty status" may only co-direct a dissertation as provided by Graduate School regulations.

The composition of the dissertation committee is otherwise governed by Graduate School rules:

Committees to conduct the candidacy examination and the oral defense of the dissertation will be nominated by the Chair of the student's major department and appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School. Membership of candidacy and dissertation examining committees will include representatives of major and minor subfields. The number of voting members on such committees normally will be three to five, and at least three are required. The majority of the voting

members of the committee must be regular faculty members at Northern Illinois University; a majority of the voting members must be members of the graduate faculty; ordinarily at least one-half of the voting members, including the committee chair, must be graduate faculty members in the student's major; and at least one-half of the voting members, including the committee chair, must be senior members of the graduate faculty. A person who is not a member of the Northern Illinois University faculty may be a member, but no more than one voting member may be without NIU graduate faculty status. In addition, the Dean of the Graduate School will serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member of all committees to conduct the oral defense of the dissertation. The Dean or a Dean's Designee is to participate in both parts of the defense. (2019-2020 Graduate Catalog).

In conjunction with the dissertation director, the student is expected to submit to all committee members a suitable "prospectus." This prospectus should include the following elements:

- A researchable proposition, hypothesis, theory, or situation, the analysis of which will contribute to political science knowledge.
- A preliminary review of the relevant literature currently available in the area chosen for further concentration.
- A preliminary analysis of whatever additional materials, data, or information will be needed to complete the project successfully.
- A preliminary timetable and projection of the work to be done.

The American Government, International Relations, Comparative Politics, and Public Administration subfields require an oral defense of the prospectus with a student's dissertation committee before formal approval of the prospectus.

Once the dissertation proposal has been approved by the student's committee, work may begin on the dissertation. However, students are now required to submit an IRB Inquiry Approval Form through the department's graduate office manager. This form must be completed whether your research involves human subjects or not. If their research involves human subjects, students should consult with their dissertation director about Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements.

Dissertation Document

The actual dissertation must be presented in accordance with certain guidelines. First and foremost, the student is urged to obtain a copy of the Graduate School *Manual for Theses and Dissertations*. Second, students should consult with their committee to determine their preferences for certain procedures that may affect data presentation, citation, notes, etc. The student is urged to obtain the most recent edition of Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers* for general advice.

Dissertation Defense

The defense is normally conducted by the dissertation defense committee, but other faculty members of the university are welcome to sit in and participate in the examination. Dissertation defenses are open to the public; it should not be assumed that they are *pro forma*. In addition, the Dean of the Graduate School serves *ex officio* as a nonvoting member on all committees to conduct the oral defense of the dissertation. The Dean or the Dean's Designee may be present at examinations and may question the candidate. Student's nearing a dissertation defense should work closely with the Department's graduate studies office manager to ensure that forms required by the Graduate School are submitted properly. Much of this paperwork must be completed at least three weeks before the examination or defense.

CHAPTER 4. GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS

The department offers a number of assistantships to graduate students in order to enable them to pursue their studies. Assistantships are normally awarded to begin the fall semester of the academic year. The assignment of an assistant to work with a specific faculty member is made by the department chair and the assistant chair after accepting requests for such assistance from the faculty. When specific relationships between faculty and graduate students develop as a result of joint projects, such mutual interests are a consideration in assignments.

Funded doctoral students in their last semester, as verified by the chair of their dissertation committee, may be permitted an underload of six credit hours. If they do not finish all of the requirements, they should return to a full load of nine credit hours the following semester.

Graduate assistantships in the department are awarded by the graduate committee for the coming academic year during the latter half of the spring term. All of the department's assistantships must be awarded by May 15. Midyear assistantships are not generally available in the department.

Students must file a Graduate Assistant application with the graduate studies office manager in order to renew the award each year. The application deadline for returning students is Feb. 1. To be funded, students must be able to document satisfactory progress in the chosen program, be in good academic standing (min. 3.0 cumulative GPA) and have received good reviews on past performance as a graduate teaching assistant. Individuals who meet these criteria compete for the following year's awards along with other students — new and returning. Thus, no student should assume that renewal of an assistantship is automatic.

Graduate assistants are required to arrive on campus by Aug. 16, or the first working day thereafter, and should meet with the faculty member they are working with or their faculty mentor upon their arrival. Students with assistantships who will arrive at NIU after Aug. 16 must obtain permission from the assistant to the chair in advance, and in writing, to report late to the department.

Students who have questions about their graduate teaching assistantship assignment should see the director of graduate studies or the assistant chair.

Both master's and doctoral students funded by the department are required to register for a

minimum of nine credit hours each semester, which may include POLS690 and/or POLS691. Students funded wholly or in part through any other unit of NIU or students with tuition waivers should carry a minimum of nine credit hours each semester and six credit hours during the summer session if they are paid a stipend during the summer.

Students who hold an assistantship must be in good academic standing (an NIU cumulative graduate GPA of 3.0 or greater) at the beginning of an assistantship appointment. The Graduate School will rescind the assistantship of any student who fails to retain good academic standing after one semester of academic probation.

GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS

All departmental assistantships are called graduate teaching assistantships. Most are assigned to assist professors in their teaching related duties or other special assignments. Some experienced, senior Ph.D. students are assigned to teach their own section of an undergraduate course.

Assistantships come in the following categories:

- Full-time (20 hours per week).
- Three-quarter-time (15 hours per week).
- Half-time (10 hours per week).

Summer Sessions

When funds are available, a few graduate teaching assistantships are awarded during the summer session. Graduate teaching assistantships in the department are based on summer teaching program needs (e.g., teaching undergraduate introductory courses). Research assistantships are normally not available through the department, but research or other assistantships may be available on faculty projects or in other university offices for qualified graduate students. Graduate students receiving summer funding are required to register for six credit hours of coursework (or receive approval for an underload).

GRADUATE STUDENT TEACHING FACULTY MENTORS

Every graduate student who is either teaching a discussion section or teaching an independent section must have a faculty teaching mentor. This mentor will be responsible for evaluating the graduate student's teaching by visiting their class and meeting with the student afterward to discuss the student's strengths and weaknesses in the classroom. The mentor must complete an evaluation form and return it to the graduate studies office manager.

The teaching mentor will be selected from within the student's primary subfield. The subfield convener (the subfield's representative on the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee), in consultation with the student, will select a mentor. The convener will seek to distribute the load evenly among faculty in the subfield. The teaching mentor is encouraged to consult with course instructors regarding issues relating to course content and pedagogy. At a minimum, graduate students who teach a discussion section must be evaluated at least once as a discussion leader,

and graduate students who teach independent sections must be evaluated at least twice regardless of course number.

Future Professoriate Program

The Graduate School initiated a Future Professoriate Program in academic year 2010-11. The Future Professoriate Program was designed for two purposes: to recognize the efforts of doctoral students who are preparing to enter the professoriate; and to supplement ongoing training and mentoring efforts.

Once accepted into the program, students who complete requirements will receive a Certificate in College Teaching, which will include a notation on their official transcript. Students will also develop a teaching portfolio: an approved collection of documents that can be used to help distinguish them in an applicant pool.

The program requires that students complete a number of workshops offered through the program or the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center; it requires successful completion of a teaching strategies seminar, a two-semester mentored teaching experience, and preparation of a teaching portfolio. More information about this program can be found at grad.niu.edu/grad/professional-development/future-professoriate.shtml. Our Ph.D. students are encouraged to apply for this program.

TUITION WAIVERS

Students who hold assistantships receive a full waiver of NIU tuition. Graduate assistantships include a summer tuition waiver; if the assistantship covers a full academic year, the summer tuition waiver may be taken in either the summer before or after the assistantship (but not both). If the assistantship is for one semester, the summer waiver may be taken only in the adjacent summer session. Graduate assistants, however, must pay NIU's fees (as distinct from tuition).

FUNDING LIMITATIONS

Department policy is that a student will not receive a departmental graduate assistantship for more than two years of M.A. work. Students entering NIU's Ph.D. program with an M.A. from another university are eligible for three years of departmental support, and students directly entering into the Ph.D. program from a bachelor's degree are eligible for four years of graduate assistant funding. The department will assist students in finding additional funding sources if the student is on track to graduate in a timely manner. There is no guarantee of success.

English Language Requirements

Illinois universities are under obligation of state law to ensure that persons who teach course sections are competent in spoken English. The Graduate School thus requires that any person whose native language is not English take the Test of Spoken English (TSE) or the Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit (SPEAK) and earn a score of at least 50 or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and earn a score of at least seven in order to hold a teaching assistantship involving oral instruction.

DISSERTATION COMPLETION FELLOWSHIPS

The Graduate School maintains a program of one year Dissertation Completion Fellowships for outstanding Ph.D. students who plan to finish their dissertations within the term of the grant. These awards are given in two categories. Full-time awards consist of a nine-month stipend and a tuition waiver scholarship. Part-time awards consist of a tuition waiver scholarship. Applicants must submit a proposal in the Dissertation Completion Fellowships Form specified by the Graduate School to the department of Political Science. The department of Political Science will then rank the nominations and forward them to the Graduate School. The deadline for submission of the proposal to the department is in early January for funding during the coming academic year, with completion of the dissertation expected during the coming academic year. (For example, a successful proposal submitted in January 2022 would receive funding from August 2022 through May 2023, with completion of the dissertation due during academic year 2022-2023.) Applicants should meet with their dissertation chair and consult with the coordinator of their primary subfield (who serves on the Department's Graduate Committee) so that a competitive proposal can be ready by early January for submission to the graduate studies office manager for graduate committee review. This fellowship is highly competitive and students planning on applying should start their proposal very early and seek assistance not only from their dissertation chair but from other faculty members. Representatives from all of the Ph.D. granting departments evaluate and rank the proposals. Your proposal must be understandable to faculty in a variety of disciplines.

RESOURCES FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

Graduate assistants are eligible to receive a ten percent discount on books purchased at the Holmes Student Center Bookstore. A copy of the graduate assistant contract letter must be presented at the time of purchase in order to receive the discount.

DuSable Hall 476 is reserved as a work area for Political Science graduate students and for graduate teaching assistants to hold office hours. Graduate students may obtain a key for this graduate student room in DuSable Hall 476, which must be locked at all times if no student is in the room. The Political Science graduate student room has several desks and desktop computers as well as some furniture. Because it is designated as a room for TAs to meet with undergraduate students, it is essential that the room is kept clean and neat as a professional teaching space. Graduate students will need to share desk space, as there are not enough desks for each graduate teaching assistant to have their own desk. NIU has strict rules about key use, and students are responsible for safekeeping of the assigned keys. There is a replacement cost for the key if it is lost, and it cannot be duplicated off campus.

CHAPTER 5. GRADUATION

Once a student has begun graduate work in either POLS 699 (Thesis) or POLS 799 (Doctoral Research and Dissertation), it is expected that the students maintain steady progress and continuous enrollment in POLS 699 or POLS 799 each academic term until they receive a final grade, and the Graduate School approves formal documentation of the activity. The only exception would be a leave of absence, as described in the section “Requirements for Graduate Degrees” in the graduate catalog. If continuous enrollment in POLS 699 or POLS 799 is not maintained and a leave of absence is not granted, then the student’s admission to the program will be canceled. See “Readmission/Reentry” in the graduate catalog.

APPLYING FOR GRADUATION

Graduation is not an automatic procedure. When students have completed the coursework, comprehensive examinations, and research requirements for the degree they seek, an “Application for Graduation” must be filed. The deadline for filing is given in the Graduate School calendar and in the class schedule information for each term. Since the student must file early in the term in which the degree will be granted very little additional work should remain uncompleted.

Actual graduation is contingent upon completion of all the necessary prerequisites and requirements of the Graduate School and the Department of Political Science. Students uncertain of their status with respect to satisfying specific technical graduation requirements should consult the Director of Graduate Studies to review their file and degree-progress checklist and consult with records officers in the Graduate School.

CAREER PLANNING AND PLACEMENT CENTER

Students are strongly advised to establish, utilize, and maintain a credentials file with the Career Planning and Placement Center. The credentials service available from the center can be of great assistance to students in search of employment. Students are eligible to establish credentials if they are in a degree program and will have earned a total of at least 15 credit hours at NIU in the semester in which they register for services. Preparation and collection of materials for a credentials file is easier during residency, so students are strongly urged not to postpone it until after graduation and departure from campus.

CHAPTER 6. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

COURSE LOAD REQUIREMENTS

International students will be required, under federal visa rules and university policy, to register for a minimum of nine credit hours each semester of the regular academic year.

Students whose native language is not English may be required to register for 400-level (ENGL 451, 452, 453) rhetoric and composition coursework, depending on the results of a diagnostic test administered during the international students' orientation program. These courses count toward international students' required nine credit hour per semester course load. Students' committees may also require them to take other programs to develop their oral and written English skills.

I-9 AND INFORMATIONAL FORMS

All students with graduate assistantships (including international students) must complete an I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification form and return it to the Graduate Studies Secretary upon your arrival at NIU. If this form is not completed, you will face the probability of being paid late for your first month of service as a graduate assistant.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

Whether you are transferring to NIU from another university within the U.S. or coming to the U.S. for the first time, international students are making a transition. The staff members of the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) are working to assist you in a smooth transition.

The primary responsibility of the staff of the ISSS is to advise international students on ways to succeed at NIU. They work to keep international students informed regarding the federal regulations pertaining to visa status as nonimmigrants in the U.S., they are available to answer questions about federal regulations and to assist you in understanding your options. Staff also provide guidance regarding adjusting to a new culture and managing a new academic environment. The office supports various educational, social, and cultural programming for international students. They are there to listen to questions, help find answers, and refer students to the best sources of information.