Graduate Student Handbook

Revised Fall 2026

MA and PhD Programs in Political Science & International Affairs

Graduate School
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

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I. INTRODUCTION

This version of the Graduate Student Handbook was revised in Summer 2024 and is effective beginning Fall Semester 2024.

II. Academic Unit Overview

The School of Public and International Affairs (SPIA) at The University of Georgia (UGA) comprises three departments: International Affairs, Political Science, and Public Administration and Policy. Together, the Departments of Political Science and International Affairs maintain a joint graduate program offering master's (MA) and doctoral (PhD) degrees in Political Science & International Affairs.

This manual sets forth the policies and procedures for the MA and PhD degrees in Political Science & International Affairs, which are adopted pursuant to regulations of the University of Georgia and its Graduate School. It does not attempt to cover all University regulations relevant to graduate studies, which are available on the Graduate School website. **The University of Georgia's Graduate School Bulletin takes precedence over this Handbook should discrepancies exist between them**. It does, however, provide specific information as to the rules and requirements of the degree programs offered by Political Science and International Affairs.

If you have any additional questions that are not answered by the contents of this manual, please email the Graduate Program Administrator (GPA) at polgrad@uga.edu.

1. Faculty and Staff

A full listing of SPIA faculty may be found at https://spia.uga.edu/directory/faculty/. SPIA staff may be found at https://spia.uga.edu/directory/staff/.

2. Program Goals

The faculty expects that each graduate student will have arrived at the decision to pursue graduate work after seriously considering what such work entails. This decision should not be made lightly. A full commitment of talents and energies is required to become a professional in one's field of study. Among the qualities that contribute to professionalism in political science and international affairs are the following:

- a dedication to the comprehensive understanding of one's discipline, including its development, its aims, its current direction, and problems it seeks to address;
- the ability to identify significant questions, analyze major alternative positions, and apply relevant methodologies and standards of judgment;
- the understanding that scientific inquiry is an ongoing, collective enterprise in which any work must be seen in relation to past and present efforts of others;
- a devotion to the highest standards of scholarly integrity; and
- the utmost respect for colleagues and their work, even as that work is submitted to critical scrutiny.

In addition to the skills that are necessary to pursue research and the presentation of such research, the above are considered critically important in development as a social science researcher. We devote much of our effort toward developing these qualities in our students.

3. Program Administration

Although the MA and the PhD in Political Science & International Affairs are joint degrees, each department has its own Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), who is responsible, with the Graduate Program Administrator (GPA), for advising and supporting the students within that department.

4. Global Expectations of All Students

5. Professional Standards of Behavior

Students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior while enrolled in the graduate program and to act in a manner that demonstrates integrity and respect for others and the campus environment.

It is expected that students who enter our graduate program will understand that much more is expected of them than was during their undergraduate careers. Undergraduate study is most often directed to the satisfaction of requirements in particular courses, where students are given quite specific directions in reading and research assignments. Graduate study, by contrast, is directed to the *mastery of broad fields of study with specialization in particular areas of inquiry*. Although graduate students work under faculty supervision, they must take the initiative to read beyond specific course assignments in order to discover the boundaries of their chosen fields and to identify the questions that are essential to mastering them. Moreover, graduate students must frame and carry out independent research projects that explore some field in considerable depth and detail.

It is also expected that students admitted to our program will have the maturity, initiative, and intelligence to complete a graduate degree. Mature and highly motivated students will meet program requirements, make plans well in advance of deadlines, budget their time wisely, and complete assignments in a timely fashion. Those who do not do these things often find themselves struggling to complete the requirements.

From what has been said about faculty expectations, it should be clear that graduate students in our programs will be treated as adults. Our graduate courses are taught largely as seminars, where students enter fully and actively into discussion. You can expect to have your ideas challenged, just as you, in turn, will be expected to challenge the ideas of your peers and professors. You will participate in an intellectual setting that is engaging, lively, and open.

Please review the codes of conduct for the American Political Science Association (APSA) and/or International Studies Association (ISA) to familiarize yourself with the professional values and ethics of your field(s).

6. Adherence to University Policies

6.1. Academic Honesty

SPIA expects that its graduate students will observe the highest standards of honesty and integrity. Each student is responsible for complying with the University of Georgia's **regulations governing student academic conduct**.

There are specific unethical practices that each graduate student must be careful to avoid. One of the most important is plagiarism. When students fail to distinguish carefully between their own work and that of others, plagiarism, whether intentional or not, is often the result. Plagiarism must be guarded against, particularly in writing outside examinations, research papers, theses, and dissertations. Generally speaking, documentation need not be given when reference is made to events or occurrences which are common knowledge, but documentation is necessary when one draws on another person's interpretations of these events. A good rule of thumb, if doubts exist, is to be generous in giving credit to other sources.

Students are also expected to do their own work in each course for which they register. That includes adhering to an instructor's guidelines when collaboration is allowed or required. It also means not submitting written work for more than one course without the approval of the instructors involved.

Another unethical practice is the falsification of research data or the misreporting of the actual results of one's research. Since this practice threatens the very integrity of scientific inquiry, persons who have been found to engage in it have not only been censured severely by their peers but have often seen their professional careers ruined.

In a related matter, students should be scrupulously honest in preparing a curriculum vitae or resume. They should never claim a degree that has not been earned, even if requirements have been unofficially completed. The same is true of awards and honors. Such invention or falsification of academic credentials is a practice that cannot be tolerated in an academic community.

The Graduate School prohibits the use of generative AI in theses and dissertations, which is considered a breach of academic honesty unless specifically authorized by members of the advisory committee for use within the approved scope. If approved by the advisory committee, the extent of generative AI usage should be disclosed in a statement within the thesis or dissertation.

Finally, any student found to have engaged in academic dishonesty on their written comprehensive examination(s) will receive a failing grade and will not be permitted a retake. Regardless of whether it is the first or second attempt to pass the written exams, evidence of academic dishonesty will result in the student being dismissed from the graduate program.

Students who have committed acts of academic dishonesty may be dismissed from the program.

6.2. Non-Discrimination & Anti-Harassment (NDAH) and Workplace Violence (WPV)

Every member of the University Community is expected to uphold the NDAH and WPV policies as a matter of mutual respect and fundamental fairness in human relations. Every student of this institution has a responsibility to conduct themselves in accordance with this Policy as a condition of enrollment, and every University employee has an obligation to observe University policies as a term of employment.

6.3. Student Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct has been developed by Student Conduct to provide students with expectations for behavior that upholds the principles outlined in the Pillars of the Arch. In addition to describing regulations for behavior, the Code of Conduct provides useful information to students and student organizations regarding alleged violations of conduct regulations. All procedures for responding to possible violations of conduct regulations, including specifics of the conduct process, a listing of possible sanctions, the interim suspension policy, and the appeals procedures are included in the Code of Conduct. These procedures have been established to ensure due process and fundamental fairness to all involved in the University's judicial processes.

6.4. Academic Standards

To be eligible for admission to candidacy and graduation, students must maintain a minimum average of "B" (3.0 on a 4.0 scale) on all graduate courses taken and on all courses on the program of study. Courses with a grade below a "C" (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) may not be counted on the program of study.

6.5. Student Rights and Responsibilities

Graduate students are permitted an advisory, nonvoting role in governance. Insofar as practicable, they will be informed when a matter of policy affecting graduate students is pending before the faculty or a committee. This will permit students or their representatives to attend meetings where such policies are decided and to contribute their views. Students may not be present, however, where the discussion concerns the following:

- Faculty personnel matters;
- Decisions regarding the admission of students to the graduate programs or the awarding of financial aid to individual students;
- Matters involving individual student records.

Student views are particularly welcome on such matters as curriculum revision, the recruitment of new faculty members, and decisions on faculty promotion and tenure. When candidates for faculty positions visit the campus for an interview, it is policy to make time available for the job candidate to meet with graduate students. Students are also expected to attend the candidate's research presentation and to share their impressions with the faculty prior to a vote on the job offer.

When regular faculty members are under consideration for promotion and tenure, students may

submit their views, individually or through their representatives, on a faculty member's performance as a teacher and student advisor.

7. Description of Program Components

Three degrees are offered by the joint program in Political Science and International Affairs: a **Master of Arts–Thesis** (MA-T), a **Master of Arts–Nonthesis** (MA-NT), a **Master of Arts–Political Analytic** (MA-PA) and the **Doctor of Philosophy** (PhD). The requirements for each degree are specified in detail in Section II (MA) and Section III (PhD) of this handbook.

7.1. Master's Degree Components

7.1.1. MA-Thesis (MA-T)

The MA-T consists of a minimum of 30 hours of coursework (27 graduate course hours and 3 hours of POLS 7300, Master's Thesis) and the completion of a master's thesis under the direction of a major professor and advisory committee.

7.1.2. MA-Nonthesis (MA-NT)

The MA-NT consists of a minimum of 33 hours of coursework and the completion of an article under the direction of a major professor.

7.1.3. MA-Political Analytics (MA-PA)

The MA-NT consists of a minimum of 30 hours of coursework and the completion of a practicum and research capstone article under the direction of a major professor.

7.2. Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) Components

The PhD consists of a minimum of 30 hours of coursework (27 graduate course hours and 3 hours of POLS 9300, Doctoral Dissertation). Comprehensive exams, a dissertation prospectus, and the successful defense of a dissertation are also required.

7.2.1. Available Areas of Emphasis

For the purpose of graduate instruction in Political Science and International Affairs, the curriculum is divided into fields. Four major fields and nine minor fields are currently available within our program.

MA students do not have to select a major or minor field, although most do identify with a field of study or department. At the doctoral level, the distinction among fields applies. PhD students must choose and prepare for both written and oral examinations in one major field and one minor field.

Some courses can be classified in several fields, depending on a given PhD student's combination of major and minor. Such decisions must be approved by the DGS.

7.2.2. Fields Offering a Major and a Minor

American Politics. A large proportion of research in political science draws its data from the American context.

Comprehensive examinations in this field will be constructed so that questions will require knowledge of two American Politics subfields: Government Institutions and Political Behavior. Students will be held accountable for fundamental works, as well as journal articles and major books published during the previous 5 years.

Students majoring or minoring in American Politics are required to take a core seminar: POLS 6100, Pre-Seminar in American Politics. Additional courses should be selected in consultation with the student's major professor and advisory committee.

Comparative Politics. Students working in this field examine such phenomena as political behavior, governmental institutions and structures, policy processes and outcomes, and political goals and strategies. These phenomena are considered both within and across national systems. Nation-states are taken as the primary, but not exclusive, units of analysis.

Students majoring or minoring in Comparative Politics are required to take the core seminar: INTL 6300, Pre-Seminar in Comparative Politics. Additional courses should be selected in consultation with the student's major professor and advisory committee.

International Relations. The field of International Relations focuses on the important agents and structures of international politics. These include nation-states, intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations. Studies in this field examine the preferences and strategies of these actors, as well as the nature of the economic, military, political, and social interactions among them.

Students majoring or minoring in International Relations are required to take the core seminar: INTL 6200, Pre-Seminar in International Relations. In addition, at least one course is recommended from each of the following subfields: International Cooperation, International Conflict, International Political Economy, and Foreign Policy. Additional courses should be selected in consultation with the student's major professor and advisory committee.

Political Theory. This field encompasses both normative political philosophy and empirically oriented theory. Its leading questions concern the ends or purposes of political action, the nature of a good or just political order, the proper relationship of individuals to their political communities, and the appropriate criteria for evaluating and designing voting systems. Empirically oriented theory seeks to explain regularities in politics such as how and when political actors come into conflict or behave cooperatively.

There is no pre-seminar in this field, but rather a series of distinct courses. A major in Political

Theory involves a combination of the three subfields below. A minor in Political Theory is built around the first two subfields. There is no major in Formal Theory, but a distinct minor is available.

History of Political Philosophy. In this subfield, students become familiar with the most influential works of major political philosophers from Plato to Rawls and understand the importance of these works in the development of political thought. Attention is given to the distinctive ways that problems are resolved and concepts defined during the history of political philosophy.

Normative Theory. In this subfield, students address fundamental issues of justice, fairness, political legitimacy, and individual rights. Study in this subfield develops the student's ability to assess the standard approaches and positions associated with leading political philosophers.

Formal Political Theory. In this subfield, students learn to understand formal political theory, particularly rational choice theory, and applications that contemporary political scientists have developed to explain political behavior and to account for individual decisions and collective outcomes.

7.2.3. Fields Offering a Minor

All fields offering a major may also be taken as a minor field. In addition, the following minor fields are available:

Political Methodology. This minor is largely designed by individual students, subject to the approval of the DGS. In addition to the doctoral methods core (POLS 7010, 7012, 7014, and 8501), students must complete PADP 8120 (Introduction to Data Analysis) and two additional advanced methods courses (8000-level or above). INTL8500 (Qualitative Methods), PADP 8140 (Advanced Topics in Statistical Modeling) and one formal theory class (POLS 8000, 8020 or 8030 and INTL 8502) can count toward the elective requirement. Additional methodology courses taken outside of SPIA may be applied to the minor on a case-by-case basis and with the approval of the DGS.

Law and Courts. This minor reflects a methodologically diverse subfield that includes constitutional theory, philosophy of law, judicial politics, American constitutional development, comparative constitutional politics, international law, and law and society. Students can explore a wide range of issues pertaining to law, courts, and constitutional institutions. A total of three classes must be taken from: POLS 6440, 8410, 8430, 8450, or 8460; INTL 8220; or PADP 6490. These classes may not count for both major and minor areas and should be taken in addition to major requirement courses.

Formal Theory. Students will be expected to understand formal political theory, particularly rational choice theory, and applications that contemporary political scientists have developed to explain political behavior and to account for individual decisions and collective outcomes. Rational choice theory in general, social choice theory, game theory, and political economy are among the approaches that are relevant to this subfield. A total of three classes in Theory must be

completed, one of which may be from the Normative Theory offerings OR a total of two classes in Formal Theory and either POLS 8505 (Scaling) or POLS 8510 (Bayes). In addition to SPIA courses, students minoring in Formal Theory may take approved courses in other UGA departments.

Public Administration. This minor is offered in conjunction with SPIA's Department of Public Administration and Policy (PADP). The required courses for this minor for PhD students in Political Science & International Affairs are PADP 6910 Public Administration and Democracy, PADP 6960 Public Management (formerly called Organization Theory), and PADP 8710 Ideas and Issues in Public Administration. There are two written components to this minor field exam: (1) a take-home written assignment, typically administered in the first 3 weeks in September; and (2) a solo-authored, publishable conference paper on a Public Administration topic. Both written components may be discussed in the oral exam. If the student's major field has an embargo for the paper they are required to write for their comprehensive exam (e.g., International Relations and Comparative Politics), the Public Administration minor field paper is subject to the same embargo.

Public Policy. This minor is offered in conjunction with SPIA's Department of Public Administration and Policy (PADP). The required courses for this minor for PhD students in Political Science & International Affairs are PADP 8620 Policy Process, PADP 8670 Policy Analysis 1, and PADP 8630 Policy Implementation. If PADP 8630 is not available, students may take PADP 8640 Program Evaluation instead. There are two written components to this minor field exam: (1) a take-home written assignment, typically administered in the first 3 weeks in September; and (2) a solo-authored, publishable conference paper on a Public Policy topic. Both written components may be discussed in the oral exam. If the student's major field has an embargo for the paper they are required to write for their comprehensive exam (e.g., International Relations and Comparative Politics), the Public Policy minor field paper is subject to the same embargo.

7.3. Dual Degree Programs

There are currently no formal dual *graduate* degree programs involving the MA or the PhD (i.e., it is not currently possible to pursue, e.g., a JD and the PhD simultaneously). However, highly qualified UGA undergraduate students may apply to participate in the Double Dawgs program, through which they earn a bachelor's and master's degree within five (5) years. More information is available in Section II of this handbook.

Some exceptionally well-qualified PhD students may choose to pursue a secondary master's degree after having completed their doctoral coursework. Students interested in this option should consult with the DGS and their major professor about the potential impact on their doctoral studies.

8. Admissions Requirements

8.1. Minimum Admissions Standards

Admission to our graduate programs is highly competitive and is based on holistic review of each applicant's materials. The Graduate School requires that all applicants to a graduate degree program hold at least a bachelor's degree accredited by the appropriate regional accrediting association or its international equivalent prior to the expected semester of enrollment. In addition, the Graduate School requires the following:
A minimum GPA of 3.0 (B) on a 4.0 scale
Proof of English language proficiency for international applicants (minimum TOEFL score: 80, at least 20 on speaking and writing; minimum IELTS score: overall band of 6.5, with no single band below 6.0)

The Departments of Political Science and International Affairs do not set GPA or GRE minimums. However, given the rigorous nature of our programs, most successful applicants have a GPA of at least 3.5/4.0 and a combined GRE score above 300.

The MA and PhD admit traditional applicants for **fall** only, and there are no exceptions. Double Dawgs Pathway applicants to the MA may matriculate in spring if necessary.

8.2. Submitting an Application

Applicants must submit their application materials online through the Graduate School. Applicants should not submit materials directly to a faculty member, as they will not be reviewed. The application fee is $75 for domestic students and international students.

All applicants must submit the following materials with their application for it to be considered complete:

- **Online Graduate School Application and fee.** *Please note that the Graduate School does not issue fee waivers based on financial need. Some applicants, such as veterans of the armed forces and McNair Scholars, may qualify for a fee waiver; consult the full list of eligible programs.*
- **One unofficial transcript** from each institution of higher education attended, except the University of Georgia. You may upload transcripts through the application portal, request that they be sent electronically from your institution, or mail them directly to the Graduate School.
- **Official GRE General Exam test report.** The UGA institutional code for ETS reporting is 5813. *The GRE is required for all applicants other than Double Dawg Pathway students. We do not accept LSAT, GMAT, or other test scores in lieu of the GRE. No waiver is possible.*
- **Statement of purpose**
- **CV/resume**
- **Three academic letters of recommendation**
- **Personal objective form**

Applicants to the PhD must also submit a **writing sample** representing high-quality, original research.

If funding is sought, applicants must also submit the **graduate assistantship application**.

International applicants to the MA and PhD may need to submit proof of English language proficiency (i.e., **IELTS** or **TOEFL** scores). Country-specific information on waivers of this policy is available at the Graduate School website. International applicants may have additional requirements; please see the Graduate School website for details.

8.3. Special Deadlines

Priority consideration is given to complete applications submitted by **December 1.** Most assistantship offers are made following the first round of review. The final deadline to submit a complete application is **February 15.** Applications submitted after February 15 will not be reviewed.

8.4. Admission

Admission to the PhD program is not guaranteed for any applicant. Funding and program spots are limited, and the process for selection is competitive. Applicants who are refused admission may appeal but should be advised that candidates are assessed relative to a large pool of candidates, and only those candidates that are ranked at or near the very top are offered admission.

8.5. Admission Decision Appeal

University of Georgia applicants have the right to appeal admissions decisions. Applicants must first appeal with the admissions committee responsible for the admissions decision. The Committee will reconsider the application and inform applicants of their decision on the request for reconsideration. An unfavorable ruling at the department level may be appealed to the Graduate School within 30 days of the date on the correspondence that the applicant received from the admission committee's decision on the initial appeal.

III. ACADEMIC / CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER'S DEGREE (MA-T OR MA-NT)

Many of the curricular requirements and Graduate School policies for the Master of Arts–Thesis (MA-T) and Master of Arts–Nonthesis (MA-NT) are identical. Graduate School policies that apply to both programs are described in Section 4. However, there are some important distinctions between these programs, which are described in Sections 1 and 2 below.

1. Master of Arts–Thesis (MA-T)

1.1. Duration of the MA-T Program

The MA-T program is designed so that a student taking three courses per semester can complete the MA-T degree in approximately 2 years. The first-year MA student takes the bulk of the methodology core and begins an area of concentration. The second year is devoted to remaining MA-T course requirements and to the completion and defense of a master's thesis.

1.2. Relationship to the PhD Degree

We encourage students who enter at the master's level to think of themselves as prospective PhD students. Our MA-T requirements are designed to prepare students for doctoral studies and/or professional research and teaching positions that do not require the PhD but do require rigorous academic training. We seek to impart the methodological skills, substantive competencies, and research experience that a rigorous doctoral program will demand.

1.3. DegreeWorks (Program of Study)

MA-T students are required to complete a minimum of 30 hours of graduate credit (27 hours of substantive course work and at least 3 hours of thesis credit, POLS 7300) with a minimum grade point average of 3.0. *All coursework must be completed within six (6) years of a student's matriculation to the MA-T program or the first enrollment in a graduate course (for Double Dawg Pathway students).*

Hours on the program of study must include at least 21 hours of coursework exclusive of POLS 7000 (Master's Research) and POLS 7300 (Master's Thesis). Twelve of these 21 hours must be courses restricted to graduate students (i.e., not 4000/6000 split-level courses). GRSC 7001 (GradFIRST seminar), POLS 7000 (Graduate Student Seminar), and POLS 7770 (Graduate Teaching Seminar) may not be used to fulfill required coursework hours.

Each semester students will create a partial plan in DegreeWorks and submit it for approval to build a full program of study. A full-plan must be finalized and submitted for approval in the semester the student will graduate.

1.3.1. GradFIRST Requirement

All incoming graduate students must enroll in GRSC 7001 (GradFIRST seminar) in their first semester of graduate school.

1.3.2. Core Requirements

MA-T students must complete a research methodology core (POLS 7010, 7012, and 7014) and at least one pre-seminar (POLS 6100, INTL 6200, INTL 6300).

1.3.3. Major Fields

MA-T students do not need to declare a major field. The master's degree has considerable flexibility, but courses should be selected to provide competency in some area of concentration as well as familiarity with other fields. MA-T students may also request permission to take graduate courses outside of SPIA subject to the approval of the DGS.

A sample degree program timetable is available in Appendix 1.

1.4. Selection of the Thesis Major Professor and Advisory Committee

MA-T students must also write and defend a master's thesis under the supervision of an advisory committee, including the major professor and at least two additional members of the Graduate Faculty.

Entering students will be assigned a faculty advisor, generally the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) in their major department. The DGS provides specific advisement on courses and rules and regulations regarding the degree. This does not preclude the development of a faculty mentor within the student's field early in the student's academic life.

At the start of the second year, each MA-T student should designate a three-person advisory committee. The student's major professor and at least one other advisory committee member must be on the University's Graduate Faculty. These individuals will provide support primarily for the planning and development of the master's thesis and its defense. Because the Graduate School counts co-chairs as one person, a total of four committee members are necessary if a student chooses co-chairs to head their advisory committee.

Once the committee has been established, the students must complete the Advisory Committee (G130) form.

1.5. Preparing the Thesis

The thesis, which is written under the direction of the student's major professor, must show independent judgment in examining a problem from primary sources. The thesis should be the student's original research work; co-authored MA theses are not permitted.

If an MA-T student is to complete degree requirements by the end of the second year of residence, it is important that timely progress be made on the master's thesis. Approximately

one-half of the student's time during the second year should be devoted to planning and writing the thesis.

1.5.1. Thesis Prospectus

A thesis prospectus is not required but is allowed. The format and content of a prospectus is determined by a student's major professor and thesis committee.

1.5.2. Completing the Thesis

Once faculty members have consented to assist a student with the thesis, the student has the right to expect that they will be available for consultation, will read and return materials in a timely fashion, and will judge the final product fairly. At the same time, faculty may reasonably expect certain behavior from the student, including patience and perseverance.

1.5.3. Meeting Deadlines

Both the Graduate School and the graduate program post various deadlines that govern the awarding of degrees. Students must keep in mind that if their thesis is to receive final approval by the Graduate School's deadline, it will be necessary for them to work with their major professor to finish a final draft well before the official deadline. The GPA will make students aware of various deadlines that must be met each semester.

1.5.4. Policy Regarding the Use of Generative AI

Per the Graduate Bulletin, the master's thesis demonstrates independent judgment in developing a problem from primary sources. It is the responsibility of the advisory committee to review and evaluate the thesis as a representation of a student's individual effort. As such, the use of generative AI in theses is considered unauthorized assistance per the Academic Code of Honesty and is prohibited unless specifically authorized by members of the advisory committee for use within the approved scope. If approved by the advisory committee, the extent of generative AI usage should be disclosed in a statement within the thesis.

Guidance from Academic Honesty: honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/Prohibited_Conduct/

1.6. Thesis Submission, Approval, and Defense

1.6.1. Format Check

Master's theses must meet the Graduate School's formatting specifications. Information on required formatting can be found on the Graduate School website. Students are required to electronically submit their thesis for a format check shortly after the midpoint of the semester in which they graduate.

If a student does not submit a manuscript for format check by the stated deadline, the Graduate School will cancel their application for graduation and move it to the next semester. It is thus *crucial* to adhere to all stated deadlines.

1.6.2. Required Forms for Thesis Submission and Approval

Prior to the defense, MA-T students must submit two forms related to the thesis: the Approval Form for Master's Thesis and Final Oral Examination (for MS and MA) (G140) and the ETD Submission Approval (G129) form.

1.6.3. Stages of Thesis Approval

Once the complete draft of the thesis is submitted to the major professor, several stages of review and possible revision are necessary before it can be sent to the Graduate School.

(1) *Final Approval by the Major Professor.* Before a thesis can be submitted formally to the advisory committee, the major professor must approve the student's entire completed draft, even if individual chapters have been read previously.
(2) *Formal Submission of the Thesis to the Committee and Scheduling of the Defense.* The student should then distribute copies of the thesis to the advisory committee and notify the GPA that distribution has been completed. This may be done electronically. At this point, the GPA will schedule a time for the oral defense. Any date scheduled at this time must be regarded as tentative and subject to cancellation, pending approval of the thesis by the advisory committee.
(3) *Evaluation of the Thesis by the Advisory Committee.* A thesis must be read and approved by the advisory committee before an oral defense can take place. After reading the thesis, the members of the advisory committee may approve the thesis to proceed to the defense or disapprove the thesis until further revisions are made.

If changes are suggested by the advisory committee, they will be communicated to the student in a clear and timely fashion. The major professor will assume primary responsibility for determining the committee's consensus on what changes are needed and communicate this to the student.

When the thesis has been approved by the advisory committee, the student may proceed to the oral defense.

1.6.4. Master's Thesis Defense (Final Oral Examination)

The GPA will assist in scheduling thesis defenses. These may be conducted in person, or virtually with the approval of the DGS and relevant department head.

The thesis defense is administered by the advisory committee and chaired by the major professor. The student must receive at least two positive votes from the three-member advisory committee to pass the thesis defense.

1.6.5. Submission of Theses to the Graduate School

Once a thesis has been successfully defended and final changes (if any) have been approved by the major professor, the student must submit a final electronic copy to the Graduate School. The committee must also submit electronic approval. All paperwork related to the defense is managed by the GPA.

1.7. Graduation

1.7.1. Required Forms

In addition to the thesis forms described in 1.6.2., students seeking to graduate must submit the following forms to the Graduate School:

(a) an Advisory Committee (G130) form with the names and roles of their thesis committee members
(b) Submit of a Full-Plan in (DegreeWorks) containing a minimum of 30 hours of graduate coursework, 3 hours of which must be thesis hours (POLS 7300).
    a. You can learn more about DegreeWorks here.

Because the GPA must obtain approvals for these forms, students must submit them no later than **1 week before the deadline** stipulated by the Graduate School in the semester in which they plan to graduate.

1.7.2. Submitting the Application for Graduation

Applications for graduation must be submitted on Athena by the deadline stipulated by the Graduate School, typically the second or third week of each semester. Applications that are submitted after this deadline are subject to a $50 fee, payable by check or money order to the Graduate School.

- Applications that are submitted more than **45 days** after the initial deadline will not be accepted. In these cases, the Graduate School will move the student's graduation application to the following semester.

1.7.3. Commencement

The Graduate School holds commencement ceremonies in the spring and fall semesters only. There is no summer commencement ceremony. Students graduating in the summer who wish to participate in commencement may return for the fall ceremony.

Students who have not completed degree requirements as determined by the Graduate School and by published deadlines will not be allowed to walk in the ceremony but may return to walk in a subsequent commencement event. There are NO exceptions to this policy.

2. Master of Arts–Nonthesis (MA-NT)

2.1. Duration of the MA-T Program

The MA-NT program is designed so that a student taking three courses per semester can complete the MA degree in approximately 2 years. The first-year MA-NT student takes the bulk of the methodology core and begins an area of concentration. The second year is devoted to remaining MA-NT course requirements and to the completion of a research article under the guidance of a major professor.

2.2. Relationship to the PhD Degree

We encourage students who enter at the master's level to think of themselves as prospective PhD students. Our MA-NT requirements are designed to prepare students for doctoral studies and/or professional research and teaching positions that do not require a PhD but do require rigorous academic training. We seek to impart the methodological skills, substantive competencies, and research experience that a rigorous doctoral program will demand.

2.3. DegreeWorks (Program of Study)

MA-NT students are required to complete a minimum of 33 hours of graduate credit (entirely comprising substantive coursework) with a minimum grade point average of 3.0. *All coursework must be completed within six (6) years of a student's matriculation to the MA-T program or the first enrollment in a graduate course (for Double Dawg Pathway students).*

Twelve of the 33 hours must be courses restricted to graduate students (i.e., not 4000/6000 split-level courses). GRSC 7001 (GradFIRST seminar), POLS 7000 (MA research hours), and POLS 7770 (Graduate Teaching Seminar) may not be used to fulfill required coursework hours. Although the bulk of coursework should be taken within SPIA, appropriate classes within other departments may be selected after consultation with the GPA and/or faculty advisor.

Each academic year students will create a partial plan in DegreeWorks and submit it for approval to build a full program of study. A full-plan must be finalized and submitted for approval in the semester the student will graduate.

2.3.1. GradFIRST Requirement

All incoming graduate students must enroll in GRSC 7001 (GradFIRST seminar) in their first semester of graduate school.

2.3.2. Core Requirements

MA-NT students must complete a research methodology core (POLS 7010, 7012, and 7014) and at least one pre-seminar (POLS 6100, INTL 6200, INTL 6300).

2.3.3. Major Fields

MA-NT students do not need to declare a major field. The master's degree has considerable flexibility, but courses should be selected to provide competency in some area of concentration as well as familiarity with other fields. MA-NT students may also request permission to take graduate courses outside of SPIA subject to the approval of the DGS.

A sample degree program timetable is available in Appendix 1.

2.4. Completing a Research Paper

Entering students will be assigned a faculty advisor, generally the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) in their major department. The DGS provides specific advisement on courses and rules and regulations regarding the degree. This does not preclude the development of a faculty mentor within the student's field early in the student's academic life.

MA-NT students complete a research paper instead of a thesis in their final semester. The paper is written and revised over the course of the semester under the guidance of the student's major professor. The aim of this process should be to produce a paper that could be presented at a reputable academic conference.

The major professor has discretion regarding whether the paper is suitable for approval. An oral defense is not required, but approval of the research paper must occur no later than the last day of regular classes in the semester.

2.5. Graduation

2.5.1. Required Forms

MA-NT students seeking to graduate must submit a Full-Plan in (DegreeWorks) form containing a minimum of 33 hours of graduate coursework to the Graduate School.

You can learn more about DegreeWorks here.

Because the GPA must obtain approvals for this form, students must submit it no later than **1 week before the deadline** stipulated by the Graduate School in the semester in which they plan to graduate.

2.5.2. Submitting the Application for Graduation

Applications for graduation must be submitted on Athena by the deadline stipulated by the Graduate School, typically the second or third week of each semester. Applications that are submitted after this deadline are subject to a $50 fee, payable by check or money order to the Graduate School.

- Applications that are submitted more than **45 days** after the initial deadline will not be accepted. In these cases, the Graduate School will move the student's graduation application to the following semester.

2.5.3. Commencement

The Graduate School holds commencement ceremonies in the spring and fall semesters only. There is no summer commencement ceremony. Students graduating in the summer who wish to participate in commencement may return for the fall ceremony.

Students who have not completed degree requirements as determined by the Graduate School and by published deadlines will not be allowed to walk in the ceremony but may return to walk in a subsequent commencement event. There are NO exceptions to this policy.

3. Master of Arts –Political Analytics Track

3.1 Duration of the MA-Political Analytics Program

The MA-Political Analytics track is designed so students can take three courses per semester and complete the track in approximately two years or students that are more motivated students can complete the track in 1 year by taking four courses a semester and two in the summer.

Students will learn research methods, data analytics, and foundational graduate knowledge before applying their skills in a professional practicum. Students will also create a policy-relevant data-based capstone project, which will serve as a polished sample of applied political work.

3.2. Relationship to the PhD Degree

Unlike the MA-Thesis (MA-T) and MA-Non-Thesis (MA-NT) tracks, the MA-Political Analytics track is not designed for students who want to continue in a Ph.D. program. Instead, the MA-Political Analytics track is designed to provide the rigorous skills and substantive knowledge one would expect of any SPIA MA student while also instilling the professional experience and problem-solving applied competencies of a public affairs expert. While some coursework may be applicable to broader doctoral requirements, students selecting this path are generally preparing for non-academic careers and will develop graduate-level competencies in political science and/or international affairs in a practitioner-based setting.

3.3. Program of Study

MA-Political Analytics students are required to complete a minimum of 30 hours of graduate credit (entirely comprising substantive coursework) with a minimum grade point average of 3.0. *All coursework must be completed within six (6) years of a student's matriculation to the MA-PA track or the first enrollment in a graduate course (for Double Dawg Pathway students).*

Twelve of the 30 hours must be courses restricted to graduate students (i.e., not 4000/6000 split-level courses). GRSC 7001 (GradFIRST seminar), POLS 7000 (MA research hours), and POLS 7770 (Graduate Teaching Seminar) may not be used to fulfill required coursework hours. Although the bulk of coursework should be taken within SPIA, appropriate classes within other departments may be selected after consultation with the GPA and/or faculty advisor.

3.3.1. GradFIRST Requirement

All incoming graduate students must enroll in GRSC 7001 (GradFIRST seminar) in their first semester of graduate school.

3.3.2. Core Requirements

MA-Political Analytics students must complete the research methodology core (POLS 7010, 7012, and 7014) and at least one pre-seminar (POLS 6100, INTL 6200, INTL 6300, POLS 8000).

3.3.3. Major Fields

MA-Political Analytics students do not need to declare a major field. Students must complete two courses from the list below to develop their skills as an analyst according to their interests and professional goals. Students should work closely with the GPA when selecting these courses.

- INTL 7008: Advanced Data Analysis for Human Security Practitioners
- INTL 8200: Experiments in International Relations Research
- POLS 8501 Advanced Quantitative Methods: MLE and Advanced Regression Applications.
- POLS 8515: Survey Research Methods
- POLS 8520: Experimental Methods in Political Science
- POLS 8530: Computational Data Analysis
- POLS 8500: Special Topics in Research Methods: Text as Data
- Another course identified through consultation with the graduate coordinator

Students will complete a major practicum under the guidance of a faculty member (INTL/POLS 9101) and a capstone project (INTL/POLS 9200). A remaining elective course on a substantive topic related to the student's career plans or academic interests will be determined in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and GPA. Students may also request permission to take graduate courses outside of SPIA subject to the approval of the DGS.

A sample degree program timetable is available in Appendix 1.

3.4. Completing the Political Analytics Practicum

MA-Political Analytics students complete a data analysis-based practicum (INTL/POLS 9101) with a political or policy-oriented organization after the completion of at least two of the following methods courses: POLS 7010, INTL/POLS 7012, INTL/POLS 7014, or advanced INTL/POLS methodology courses from the list above.

Practicum education is a foundational component of the MA-Political Analytics track and will require 160 clocked hours of work for the professional organization for the semester or the equivalent professional experience. Students will work with the GPA and SPIA's Internship and Recruitment Coordinator to identify opportunities for practicum experiences. A faculty advisor will be chosen in consultation with the DGS and the GPA.

For many students, the Political Analytics Practicum advisor will be the faculty member who oversees academic work conducted by undergraduate interns in the Department of International Affairs or the Department of Political Science. Faculty practicum advisors will evaluate three analytical essays where the student connects their practicum to a body of academic literature.

3.5 Completing the Political Analytics Capstone

The MA-Political Analytics includes a capstone project (INTL/POLS 9200) that showcases the student's applied data analytical skills and their graduate-level academic knowledge. The capstone may be written as a formal research paper or a white paper that is connected to their practicum experience. Students must include data analysis, data visualizations, and data-informed recommendations in their capstone report. A faculty advisor will determine whether the student's project meets this threshold. The capstone shall be formatted in accordance with UGA's theses and dissertation template guidelines.

Students must select an advisor from SPIA's graduate faculty to oversee their capstone project prior to the beginning of their final semester. (For traditional students, the identification of an advisor should occur at the end of their third semester.) Once a faculty member has agreed to serve as the capstone advisor, the student has the right to expect that the faculty member will be available for consultation, will read and return materials in a timely fashion, and will judge the final product fairly. At the same time, faculty may reasonably expect certain behavior from the student, including adherence to deadlines, patience, and perseverance.

The capstone is complete once it is approved by the faculty advisor and the advisor notifies SPIA's graduate program advisor in writing. It is a common error to assume that the capstone is complete when a final draft is submitted to the faculty advisor. This is not usually the case.

Even if students have worked closely with their faculty advisor, the advisor must have at least two weeks to review the final project. At that time, final revisions may be required before the capstone is formally approved. The faculty advisor has discretion regarding whether the capstone is suitable for approval. An oral defense is not required, but approval of the research paper must occur no later than the last day of regular classes in the semester.

3.6. *Graduation*

2.5.1. Required Forms

MA-NT students seeking to graduate must submit a Full-Plan in (DegreeWorks) containing a minimum of 33 hours of graduate coursework to the Graduate School.

MA-PA students seeking to graduate must submit a Full-Plan in (DegreeWorks) containing a minimum of 30 hours of graduate coursework to the Graduate School.

Because the GPA must obtain approvals for this form, students must submit it no later than **1 week before the deadline** stipulated by the Graduate School in the semester in which they plan to graduate.

Students can learn more about DegreeWorks here.

3.6.1. Submitting the Application for Graduation

Applications for graduation must be submitted in Athena by the deadline stipulated by the Graduate School, typically the second or third week of each semester. Applications that are submitted after this deadline are subject to a $50 fee, payable by check or money order to the Graduate School.

- Applications that are submitted more than **45 days** after the initial deadline will not be accepted. In these cases, the Graduate School will move the student's graduation application to the following semester.

3.6.2. Commencement

The Graduate School holds commencement ceremonies in the spring and fall semesters only. There is no summer commencement ceremony. Students graduating in the summer who wish to participate in commencement may return for the fall ceremony.

4. Double Dawg Pathway to the MA

Most of the policies for the traditional master's degree programs also apply to those students pursuing an MA-T or MA-NT in Political Science & International Affairs through the Double Dawgs program. Interested students should consult the MA-T or MA-NT sections above and Section 4 for full information. However, there are some important distinctions, which are discussed below.

4.1. Applying for the Double Dawg Pathway

Students who wish to apply for the Double Dawg MA (either MA-T or MA-NT) must first discuss their plans with their undergraduate academic advisor and create a full program of study plan for their undergraduate degree. Once that has been created, students should email the GPA to schedule a meeting to discuss timelines and application procedures. Typically, this stage occurs in students' second year of undergraduate study.

Double Dawg students may vary slightly in their overall timelines, but typically, in Year 3, students should apply to the Double Dawg pathway in their desired area. This is **not** the same as application to the graduate program; rather, it allows the student to take graduate-level coursework while continuing their undergraduate degree. Students are admitted into the pathway in fall and spring semesters. The deadlines are December 1 for spring semester and May 1 for fall semester.

4.2. Taking Coursework in the Double Dawg Pathway

Students should plan to take the following courses while in the Double Dawg Pathway:

- POLS 7012 Introduction to Political Methodology (fall)
- POLS 7014 Intermediate Political Methodology (spring)
- Preseminar: POLS 6100 Preseminar in American Politics OR INTL 6200 Preseminar in International Relations OR INTL 6300 Pre-Seminar in Comparative Politics, depending on the student's preferred course of study (fall or spring, depending on the course)
- One 8000-level seminar (fall or spring)

POLS 7010 Research Design is not required for Double Dawg MA students. In some cases, alternative graduate courses to those specified above may be necessary to accommodate undergraduate degree requirements. In such cases, courses should be chosen in consultation with the undergraduate advisor and the GPA.

Please note that students can count up to **12** hours of graduate-level courses towards the undergraduate degree as well as the MA. *There are no exceptions to this policy.*

4.3. Applying for/Pursuing the Double Dawg MA

In Year 4, students should begin working with the GPA to discuss formal application to the graduate program. This should include whether the student wishes to apply to the MA-T or the MA-NT. Students are not automatically granted entry to the MA program and must formally apply through the Graduate School. The DGS and Admissions Committee will review each application holistically on its individual merit.

Double Dawgs Pathway students are not required to submit GRE scores with their Graduate School applications.

In almost all cases, students should graduate with their undergraduate degree **before** matriculating into the MA as a full-time graduate student.

In Year 5, eligible students who are admitted to the MA complete their graduate studies as a full-time graduate student (at least two courses per semester).

Double Dawg Pathway students must take GRSC 7001 (GradFIRST Seminar) in the semester in which they matriculate to the MA. MA students take sections of GRSC 7001 offered by the Graduate School, which can be found on the GradFIRST website.

4.4. Funding a Double Dawg MA

Double Dawg Pathway students are not eligible for graduate assistantships. However, matriculating Double Dawg MA students are encouraged to visit ugajobsearch.com and search for job postings under Graduate/Research/Students. Many departments and colleges offer campus-wide assistantship opportunities, including the Honors College, Graduate School, and Athletic Affairs.

For additional questions, please visit doubledawgs.uga.edu or email doubledawgs@uga.edu.

5. Enrollment Requirements and Time Limits

5.1. Minimum Enrollment

A full-time course load for SPIA MA students is typically considered **9 graduate credit hours** (three courses) per semester.

All enrolled students pursuing graduate degrees at the University of Georgia must register for a minimum of **3 graduate credit hours** during any semester in which they use University facilities and/or faculty/staff time.

MA students who are funded through a graduate assistantship should register for a minimum of **12 graduate credit hours** during any fall or spring semester in which they receive assistantship funding. If the student is assigned assistantship work during the summer, the student must register for a minimum of **9 graduate credit hours.** Students may enroll in traditional courses or register for POLS 7000 and/or POLS 7005 to meet these minimums.

Undergraduate-level courses and audited courses do not count toward required enrollment minimums.

5.2. Continuous Enrollment Policy

All enrolled graduate students must maintain continuous enrollment from matriculation until completion of all degree requirements. Continuous enrollment is defined as registering for a minimum of three (3) graduate credit hours in at least two semesters per academic year (Fall, Spring, Summer) until the degree is attained or status as a degree-seeking graduate student is terminated.

MA students must be enrolled in at least **3 graduate credit hours** in the semester in which degree requirements are completed.

If the student does not meet the continuous enrollment requirements, they will be required to (a) reapply to the MA program and (b) pay any applicable tuition and fees in order to continue graduate study.

5.2.1. Exceptions

Students who are only working towards finishing incomplete coursework are exempt from this policy if (a) they have completed all other requirements for degree completion *and* (b) the work required to convert the incomplete grade does not require the use of University facilities, resources, and faculty time aside from grading the work. Students who receive incompletes in directed study, capstone courses, thesis credits, or other courses involving significant continuing faculty time and University resources should register for GRSC 9270 in order to convert their incomplete grade.

5.3. Leave of Absence

A leave of absence provides a mechanism for students experiencing unusual circumstances to be exempt temporarily from the continuous enrollment policy. A leave of absence requires approval of the DGS and the Dean of Graduate School. A leave of absence will be granted only for good cause such as serious medical and health-related issues, major financial and employment issues; pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy and recovery therefrom, adoption or fostering of a child, child care, elder care, and other significant family issues; and other major personal circumstances that interfere with the ability to undertake graduate study. An approved leave of absence stands in lieu of registering for the minimum of 3 credits for each semester for which the leave of absence is granted. During a leave of absence, students may not use UGA facilities, resources, or services designed or intended only for enrolled students; receive a graduate assistantship, fellowship, or financial aid from the University; or take any UGA courses related to their program of study. The amount of time approved for leave of absence will **not count** toward time limits governing a graduate degree.

A student may apply for a leave of absence before or during any semester in which they are not registered for courses. Application for a Leave of absence must be received by the Graduate School Office of Enrolled Student Services on or before the last day of classes for the semester for which it is requested. A leave of absence will not be granted retroactively after the end of a semester.
A student may request a leave of absence for one semester, two consecutive semesters, or three consecutive semesters (Summer semester included). There is a 12-month limit for any one request of leave of absence. A student may submit multiple requests for a leave of absence subject to a 3 semester limit.

5.4. Time Limit

Master's degree students must complete all degree requirements, including all coursework on their approved program of study and defend their thesis (if applicable), within **six (6) calendar years** of enrollment in their first graduate course (this includes courses taken in an approved Double Dawg Pathway).

5.5. Extension of Time

An extension of time may be granted only for conditions beyond the control of the individual. A student may petition for an exception to this policy by writing a letter to the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School. This request for an extension of time must include the specific reasons that the student did not complete the requirements in the time allotted. The student must include a specific timeline for the completion of degree requirements. The student's major professor (or, for MA-NT students, the DGS), must review the student's request and write a letter to the Vice Provost and Dean stating approval or disapproval of the petition. The graduate coordinator and department head must review the major professor's recommendation and indicate their concurrence by writing an additional letter. If they do not concur with the recommendation, further information should be provided by them in the letter. An extension of time may be granted only on conditions beyond the control of the student.

IV. ACADEMIC / CURRICULAR REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD)

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is generally designed to build on work done at the master's level, although applications are accepted from highly qualified applicants directly from their undergraduate degree.

1. Duration of the PhD Program

The general expectation is that the PhD will take 5 years, including coursework, comprehensive exams, and the dissertation. In certain circumstances, such as with military-supported students, the PhD can be completed in 3–4 years.

1.1. Extension of Funding

Graduate assistantship offers at the PhD level are typically made for a 5-year period. In exceptional circumstances, extensions of funding for a sixth year may be requested but are not guaranteed.

1.2. Time Limit

Effective Fall 2024, doctoral students must complete all requirements for the doctoral degree and the degree must be awarded within **eight (8) calendar years** after initial enrollment/registration in the program.

Doctoral students who fail to complete their degrees within 8 years after initial enrollment will be considered as not making satisfactory progress to degree completion and will be dismissed from the Graduate School. The Graduate School will notify all doctoral students when they have reached the 7-year mark to warn them about the impending 8-year degree time limit.

2. Program of Study

2.1. Coursework Requirements

2.1.1. Overview

PhD students are required to complete a minimum of 30 hours of graduate credit (27 hours of substantive coursework and at least 3 hours of dissertation credit, POLS 9300) with a minimum grade point average of 3.0. These hours must also include 16 hours of coursework at the 8000/9000 level, exclusive of POLS 9000 (Doctoral Research) and POLS 9300 (Doctoral Dissertation).

2.1.2. The Methodology Core

All PhD students are required to complete the following courses in quantitative research methodology:

- POLS 7010 Research Design

- POLS 7012 Introduction to Political Methodology
- POLS 7014 Intermediate Political Methodology
- POLS 8501 Advanced Quantitative Methods I

Although students with interests in qualitative research methods are encouraged to pursue these interests, they will still be required to complete the above sequence.

Although required of all students, the methodology core courses are not applicable to the Political Methodology minor. Three (3) courses *beyond* the four core courses are required for this minor.

2.1.3. Major, Minor, and Third-Field Requirements

In addition to the methodology core, PhD students are required to complete five (5) courses in their major field (which may include the associated preseminar), three (3) courses in their minor field, and a "third-field" course in a field other than the major and minor, to be chosen in consultation with the DGS.

2.1.4. GradFIRST and Prospectus Workshop Requirements

The Graduate School requires that all newly matriculating graduate students fulfill the GradFIRST requirement in their first semester of their graduate degree program. To do so, PhD students are required to enroll in GRSC/INTL 7001 (Being a Political Scientist) in their first semester.

PhD students must enroll in INTL 7002 (Dissertation Prospectus Workshop) in the spring semester after they pass comprehensive exams. Exceptions to the INTL 7002 requirement may be made for students on a 3-year timeline (generally, active-duty military students), as well as other students on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the DGS.

A sample degree program timetable is available in Appendix 1.

2.2. Waiver of Required Coursework

Graduate coursework completed prior to matriculating to the PhD may be considered on a case-by-case basis for fulfilment of certain doctoral course requirements. To request consideration for a potential waiver, the student must provide the DGS with the course syllabus and state which SPIA course they believe it applies to. The DGS will evaluate the syllabus (in conjunction with other faculty, as appropriate) and will issue a determination. This determination is final.

Coursework from another degree program that is approved to fulfill a doctoral course requirement *is not* applied as formal transfer credit. Thus, it will not appear on the student's UGA transcript, nor will it apply to the 30-hour minimum required for the program of study.

2.3. Additional Requirements

In addition to completing doctoral coursework, PhD students are required to:

- Report factual Advisory Committee in DegreeWorks by the end of Year 1. The Advisory Committee will be a resource for students in the beginning of their doctoral journey;
- Update Advisory Committee to reflect graders for major and minor comprehensive exams in Year 3; pass written and oral comprehensive examinations
- Select a dissertation committee and update Advisory Committee to reflect dissertation committee members (at which point students may be admitted to doctoral candidacy);
- Write and defend a dissertation prospectus;
- Write and defend a dissertation.

These requirements are described in more detail in the following sections.

3. Final Program of Study Approval - DegreeWorks

For the Doctor of Philosophy degree, an approved program of study must carry a minimum of 30 hours of graduate course work, three hours of which must be dissertation writing (POLS 9300).

PhD students will start building their program of study in DegreeWorks by entering a partial plan in their first semester with guidance from the GPA. Each student can update their plan as needed each academic year and must submit a Full-Plan in (DegreeWorks) no less than **1 week prior to** the deadline stipulated by the Graduate School in the semester in which they plan to take comprehensive exams (typically, around the second or third week of the semester).

PhD students who subsequently take additional courses for credit, such as for another graduate degree or a graduate certificate, should consult with the GPA and the Graduate School to determine whether updates to the doctoral program of study form are needed.

You can learn more about DegreeWorks here.

4. Advisory Committee

An Advisory Committee must be selected and reported to the Graduate School no later than the end of the spring/summer semester of their 1st academic year. Committee members will be designated by the DGS no later than the start of your **first** fall semester. This committee will consist of the two DGS for the PhD in Political Science and International Affairs programs. The committee will be foundational support for the beginning of each doctoral student's academic journey.

5. Doctoral Comprehensive Exams and Candidacy

As a requirement for admission to candidacy, all PhD students must pass written and oral comprehensive examinations covering both a major and minor field of study. Before the comprehensive examinations are taken, all Incompletes must be removed, and all coursework must be completed with a minimum 3.0 GPA.

5.1. Expected Timeline

PhD students who intend to make good progress toward degree completion should aim to take their comprehensive exams in the fall of their third year in the program. In exceptional circumstances, students may elect to take exams in the spring of their third year.

5.2. Dates Administered

Written comprehensive examinations for PhD students are administered twice each year. They are scheduled for the second and fourth weeks of each semester, counting from the first full week of classes. The oral comprehensive examination is administered after all parts of the written examination have been successfully completed.

Doctoral students should consult with their DGS regarding comprehensive examinations. Students are required to sign up no later than the midpoint of the semester prior to the one in which the examinations will be taken. Students who have signed up may not defer their comprehensive examinations more than once. Written appeals to have this rule waived, based on extraordinary circumstances, must be granted by the DGS *prior to the examination.*

5.3. Comprehensive Exam Committee

A comprehensive exam committee is designated by the DGS no later than the start of each semester. This committee consists of two readers for the major field and two readers for the minor field. All students who take comprehensive exams will have the same committee in a semester. If one committee member votes to pass and the other votes to fail, a third faculty member will be chosen to break the tie. The third reader does not participate in oral exams.

5.4. Student Responsibilities

Comprehensive examination questions are designed to test the student's capacity for critical analysis and synthetic integration of knowledge. It is the student's responsibility to master the fields of study and not merely to review the coursework from each field. Students should also seek to strike the proper balance between learning factual information or empirical data and comprehending theories, conceptual frameworks, and methodologies that are used to organize and interpret data. It is best not to enroll in regular seminars during the semester when one is taking comprehensive examinations.

It is the responsibility of the faculty members in each field to decide what constitutes the knowledge of that field and what level of mastery is required to pass the examinations. The design of examination questions is a field responsibility. Common questions are developed for all students writing in a field at a given time, but allowances are made for differences in the students' subfields. Previous examination questions are available for students to consult as they prepare for the exams.

5.5. Format of the Written Examination

5.5.1. Major Field Exams

The **American Politics** and **Political Theory** major field exams are timed sat exams that typically take place on the second Friday after the first full week of classes in the fall and spring

semesters. The morning portion of the exam covers the general nature of the field, including major research approaches and findings, classic works, and current trends and controversies. The afternoon session covers more specialized areas within the field.

For the **International Relations** and **Comparative Politics** major field exams, students must prepare three documents in advance and submit them to the GPA by 5pm on the major exam date.

(1) Prepare a syllabus for an introductory graduate seminar in their major subfield, along with
(2) A written justification (15–20 pages, single-spaced, work cited not included, 12- point font) of the syllabus and the decisions they made while preparing it.
    a. The syllabus itself should include a description of the assignments students would complete while taking the course, as well as a structured topic and reading list that covers 15 weeks.
    b. The document submitted with the syllabus should offer detailed justifications for the topics and works included/excluded. It should discuss topics that are included in the syllabus and explain why it is essential that all CP/IR students be exposed to these topics. If there are any commonly covered topics the student chooses to omit, detailed justifications should be offered for these omissions.
    c. Additionally, students should identify particular readings they believe are essential to the course and explain why these are essential readings for all CP/IR graduate students. If any canonical readings are omitted, these omissions should also be justified.
    d. Students should make their own determination about which topics and readings are common/canonical by examining syllabi from current/previous introductory seminars at UGA and many (more than 10) syllabi from comparable Ph.D. programs. The written justification should also include a discussion of how the syllabus would be adjusted if the course were to be taught to undergraduates.
(3) Complete a research paper that addresses a relevant topic/research question in their major subfield.
    a. To ensure the paper's relevance students must get prior approval from the Director of Graduate Studies for their topic/question between 60–90 days prior to the exam.
    b. The paper cannot be coauthored and must not be used for multiple comprehensive exams. Students are strongly encouraged to submit papers they have written for past graduate seminars, though their past seminar papers will almost certainly require further development and revisions to meet the standards of the comprehensive exam.
    c. As a guideline, research papers are expected to be of the quality typical of papers presented at professional conferences. Papers must include empirical analysis but may use qualitative or quantitative data and methodology. The paper will be evaluated primarily on the quality of its literature review, theory, research design, and analysis. (Technical or minute details of the methodology are less important but are also subject to evaluation by the committee.)

5.5.2. Minor Field Exams

For the **American Politics** and **Political Theory** minor fields, students will complete only the morning (general) portion of the exam. These are timed sat exams that typically take place on the fourth Friday after the first full week of classes in the fall and spring semesters.

For the **Comparative Politics** and **International Relations** minor fields, students will prepare a syllabus and justification (item #1 in 3.5.1. above) and submit it to the GPA by 5pm on the minor field exam date.

For the **Political Methodology** minor field, each student will prepare and defend a paper featuring quantitative analysis and submit it to the GPA by 5pm on the minor field exam date. The paper should include quantitative analysis that utilizes either (1) maximum likelihood estimation techniques or (2) linear regression analysis that includes the use of interactive variables. Other estimation techniques (e.g., Bayesian estimation) must be approved by the Methods Committee prior to the submission of the paper. The paper should evaluate the statistical significance of models presented and should report and visually display the magnitude of effect size for key independent variables. Students may not submit a co-authored paper.

The **Public Administration** and **Public Policy** minors are administered in keeping with the Department of Public Administration and Policy (PADP)'s policies. Students should consult with the GPA, their DGS, and the PhD Enrolled Student Services Coordinator within PADP to determine what is necessary to complete this minor.

5.6. Administration of the Written Examination

Comprehensive exams may be timed sat exams or take-home exams to be completed independently, depending on the exam.

In all cases, the appointed Comprehensive Exam Committee will evaluate written answers in each field. To guard against bias, the GPA will assign anonymous identifiers to timed sat exams before they are submitted to the committee. Due to the individualized nature of the take-home exams and the potential for faculty consultation prior to submission, these exams are not anonymized.

Once all written examinations have been evaluated, the GPA will inform the student in writing of the results in each field. The student may proceed to the oral examination after passing both written examinations.

5.6.1. Timed Sat Exams

Within the Departments of Political Science and International Affairs, the **American Politics** and **Political Theory** major field exams and the **American Politics, Political Theory, Formal Theory,** and **Law and Courts** minor field exams are timed sat exams. Major field exams are typically held on the second Friday and minor field exams on the fourth Friday after the first full week of classes in the fall and spring semesters.

The written examination will be administered in a controlled environment. Writing paper, pens, and computers will be provided. The morning session lasts from 8:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

Following a lunch break of one hour, there is an afternoon session from 12:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. The exam is generally proctored by the GPA. If a student begins a field examination but does not complete it by returning the answers at the designated time, he or she will be given a grade of "fail" in that field. Any student failing to follow the instructions on a comprehensive examination will be deemed as having automatically failed the examination, and the exam will not be graded.

5.6.2. Take-Home Exams

Within the Departments of Political Science and International Affairs, the **International Relations** and **Comparative Politics** major and minor field exams and the **Political Methodology** minor field exam are take-home exams that are prepared independently by the student. Students should submit their paper, code, related materials, and (if feasible) the data set or where the data set can be found to the GPA by 5pm on the respective exam date.

The Comprehensive Exam Committee will provide students with feedback on passing papers and other documents prior to the oral comprehensive exam.

5.7. Format and Administration of the Oral Examination

All oral comprehensive examinations are digitally recorded. If a student fails the oral exam, the recording will be held as part of that student's confidential record until the oral examination is retaken and passed.

The oral comprehensive examination will be approximately 90 minutes in length. The comprehensive exam committee chair will preside over the examination and ensure that all examiners have an opportunity to question the student. The oral exam can cover the written exam, the student's knowledge of the major and minor fields, and the student's research (particularly dissertation plans).

Copies of the written exam questions and the student's answers, exam essays, and other exam documents (e.g., syllabus, written justification) may be brought to the oral exam for reference. Brief notes on a single page intended to aid the student's memory may also be brought to the oral exam. It is expected that the student will be able to answer questions promptly and coherently without overuse of such notes.

Oral examinations may be scheduled in person or virtually via Zoom, depending on the needs of the Comprehensive Exam Committee and/or the student.

5.7.1. Political Methodology Minor Oral Examination Procedure

During the oral comprehensive exam, students will orally defend their methods paper. In addition to answering questions related to the analyses included in the paper, students should be prepared to answer broader questions related to research design, causality, model assumptions, robustness, and issues of measurement.

5.7.2. International Relations and Comparative Politics Oral Examination Procedure

During the oral comprehensive exam, students **majoring** in IR or CP will give a 10–15-minute presentation of their research paper that includes the following:

(1) The research question and its importance/relevance to ongoing inquiry/debate in the subfield
(2) A summary of the argument
(3) A summary of the analysis and findings
(4) The implications of the findings for the larger body of research to which the student is contributing

Students minoring in IR or CP should be prepared to discuss their rationale for the choices in their proposed graduate syllabus.

5.8. Requirements for Passing Comprehensive Exams

Doctoral students must pass both a written and an oral comprehensive examination before they are eligible for admission to candidacy. The written and oral examinations are judged separately by the student's faculty examiners. A "pass" on the written examination cannot be reversed due to poor performance on the oral examination. To reiterate:

- Students must successfully complete the written examination and the oral examination in both the major and minor fields to pass their comprehensive examinations.
- The written examination in each field will be graded separately and given one of the following grades: Pass with Distinction, Pass, Fail.
- If the student receives the examination questions in a field but does not complete the examination, this will be counted as a failure in that field, unless the student can provide a medical excuse for the day of the exam or there are other extenuating circumstances. The Graduate Committee will decide on the validity of the medical excuse and the extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis.
- If the student does not submit written exam materials for the take-home exams by 5PM on the due date, this will be counted as a failure in that field, unless the student can provide a medical excuse for the day of the exam or there are other extenuating circumstances. The Graduate Committee will decide on the validity of the medical excuse and the extenuating circumstances on a case-by-case basis.
- No student will be passed or failed in a written field without the concurrence of at *least two faculty members.*
- To pass the oral examination, the student must obtain at least three positive votes from an examining committee of four. It is thus possible to pass one field in the oral examination and still fail the overall oral examination.

5.8.1. Academic Honesty

Any student found to have engaged in academic dishonesty on their written or oral comprehensive examination(s) will fail that exam and will not be permitted a retake. Regardless of whether it is their first or second attempt to pass the written or oral exam(s), evidence of academic dishonesty will result in the student being dismissed from the PhD program.

General Policy

- All materials will be submitted through plagiarism software. Students found to have plagiarized will fail the exam.

- SPIA faculty are not available to discuss individual comprehensive exam plans, syllabi, or papers for the 30 days prior to the comps or in the period between written and oral exams; this time period is for individual study and effort only.

- Faculty members who graded the written component are available to meet, at their discretion, in between the written and oral exams.

5.9. Retaking an Exam

Upon the first failure of a major field written exam OR a minor field written exam, the student has two options:

(1) They may elect to retake the written exam they did not pass in that same field in the following semester.
(2) They may elect to change the major field or minor field they did not pass and complete any requisite coursework for that field. They would take the written exam in the new field following completion of that coursework.

If the student fails both the major AND minor written exams in the same semester, the student may:

(1) Elect to retain both their major and minor fields and retake both written exams in those same fields in the following semester.
(2) Elect to change either the major OR minor field and retain the other. This will necessitate completing any requisite coursework for the changed field. The student would then take both written exams (i.e., in the new field and in the retained field) following completion of the additional coursework.

No student may change both their major and minor fields after failing a written comprehensive exam.

Failure of the major field OR minor field written exams a second time constitutes unsatisfactory progress and results in dismissal from the PhD program. This includes students who change either their major or minor fields after failing a first exam.

Thus, the following scenarios result in dismissal from the PhD program:

- Failing a major written exam twice in the same field
- Failing a minor written exam twice in the same field
- Failing a major written exam in one field and again in another field
- Failing a minor written exam in one field and again in another field

Oral examinations are only scheduled after both the major and minor written exams have been passed. Oral exams are inclusive of both fields.

Once a student proceeds to the oral exam stage, they must be examined in the major and minor fields for which they have passed written exams. The student may not change their major or minor fields at any point once they have proceeded to the oral exam stage.

If the oral examination is failed on the first attempt, it may be retaken a second time. Because the oral exam is inclusive of both fields, failure of the oral exam includes:

- Failure of the major field portion of the oral exam
- Failure of the minor field portion of the oral exam
- Failure of both fields

If any failure occurs, the second oral exam will be scheduled in the same semester as the original exam unless the DGS approves an alternative. If just one field was failed, the second (retake) oral exam may focus primarily on the field that was failed in the first exam, but all examiners may ask questions and will vote on whether to pass/fail the second oral exam.

Failure of two oral exams constitutes unsatisfactory progress and results in dismissal from the PhD program.

5.9.1. Terminating With an MA Following an Exam Failure

Students who will be dismissed from the PhD program due to repeated failures of the written or oral comprehensive examination(s) *may* be eligible, upon consultation with and approval by the DGS and completion of any additional requirement(s), to terminate with an MA in lieu of the PhD.

Students who have been dismissed from the PhD program on grounds of academic dishonesty *are not* eligible to terminate with the MA in lieu of the PhD.

6. Selection of Major Professor and Advisory Committee

Entering students will be assigned a first-year faculty advisor, generally the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) in their major department. The DGS provides specific advisement on courses and rules and regulations regarding the degree. This does not preclude the development of a faculty mentor within the student's field early in the student's academic life.

After passing comprehensive exams, students should choose professors to serve as their major professor and advisors to the dissertation. PhD advisory committees must consist of a minimum of three members, at least two of whom must be members of the University Graduate Faculty. In choosing a major professor and committee members at this level, students should select members of the faculty whose areas of interest overlap with their own and with whom they can work constructively.

Because the Graduate School counts co-chairs as one person, a total of four committee members are necessary if a student chooses co-chairs to head their advisory committee.

6.1 Advancing to Candidacy

Before receiving a graduate degree, a student must be admitted to candidacy for that degree. Admission to candidacy is a formal process that the student initiates by submitting the Application for Admission to Candidacy for Doctoral Degrees (G162) after successfully completing comprehensive examinations. SPIA PhD students are required to select a major professor and submit their information to the Graduate Student through their Enrolled Student Portal. Students are not required to defend their prospectus before advancing to candidacy.

5.1. External Dissertation Committee Members

Students who wish to have an outside reader (i.e., non-UGA faculty) on their dissertation committee must submit the intended member's CV and a letter of support from the DGS. Outside members must be approved by the Graduate School.

Students wishing to have a non-UGA faculty member serve on their committee must have at least three UGA faculty members on their committee with at least two of whom must be members of the University Graduate Faculty .

5.2. Failure to Identify a Major Professor/Advisory Committee

In rare circumstances, graduate students who cannot identify a major professor or who cannot form a committee shall be placed on a status called "No clear path to degree completion." This status is distinct from "Not in good standing," which refers to academic status. Students will be given one semester after being placed on this status by their unit/program to identify a major professor or form a committee. Directors of graduate studies should work closely with the student to try to rectify the problem. If the situation is not resolved during this semester, the student can be dismissed from the program.

7. Preparing the Dissertation

A dissertation is the capstone of a doctoral degree. It must demonstrate the student's ability to plan, conduct, and complete a substantial research project. It should also represent an important contribution to knowledge in the student's field of study and be written in a clear and literate manner.

Just as a student is not compelled to work under the direction of any particular faculty member, so too are faculty not compelled to serve on a particular student's advisory committee. Faculty members choose freely to do this from a sense that the student has the ability as well as the motivation to contribute to the advancement of learning.

7.1. The Dissertation Prospectus

The process of writing a dissertation begins with the preparation of a prospectus. Students should regard the prospectus as presenting a research design for the dissertation. The prospectus identifies a problem to be explored, draws on relevant literature to show the significance of the problem for political science, sets forth a line of argumentation to be pursued or hypotheses to be

tested, and describes the approach or methods and the data that will be employed in conducting the research. The prospectus is written in close consultation with the student's major professor.

Once the major professor certifies that the dissertation prospectus is satisfactory, it must be considered formally by the advisory committee in a meeting with the student. Approval of the prospectus requires the agreement of at least two of the three members of the advisory committee.
A prospectus defense may be conducted in person, or virtually with the approval of the DGS and relevant department head.

6.2. Completing the Dissertation

Once faculty members have consented to assist a student with the dissertation, the student has the right to expect that they will be available for consultation, will read and return materials in a timely fashion, and will judge the final product fairly. At the same time, faculty may reasonably expect certain behavior from the student, including patience and perseverance.

6.2.1. Meeting Deadlines

Both the Graduate School and the graduate program post various deadlines that govern the awarding of degrees. Students must keep in mind that if the dissertation is to receive final approval by the Graduate School's deadline, it will be necessary for them to work with their major professor to finish a final draft well before the official deadline. The GPA will make students aware of various deadlines that must be met each semester.

6.2.2. Policy Regarding the Use of Generative AI

Per the Graduate Bulletin, the dissertation represents originality in research, independent thinking, scholarly ability, and technical mastery of a field of study. It is the responsibility of the advisory committee to review and evaluate the dissertation as a representation of a student's individual effort. As such, the use of generative AI in dissertations is considered unauthorized assistance per the Academic Code of Honesty and is prohibited unless specifically authorized by members of the advisory committee for use within the approved scope. If approved by the advisory committee, the extent of generative AI usage should be disclosed in a statement within the dissertation.

- All exams will be put through AI-detection software.

- Students must disclose the use of any artificial intelligence tools in the preparation of the major or minor exams or in any research conducted to produce their written work. This disclosure must be included in the text or footnotes of the exams.

- Students may not use artificial intelligence to draft the exams or substantial elements of the exams,
- including the literature review, theoretical framework, research design, or interpretation of results. Doing so will result in failure.

- Students must describe the specific tasks for which AI tools were employed. Common uses include data collection and management, copyediting, code generation, data processing, literature search, and statistical analysis. Students should distinguish between uses that directly shaped content (e.g., collecting data, generating analysis code) and those that supported the writing process (e.g., proofreading, formatting, citation verification, drafting or revising individual passages).

- Students must identify each AI tool used by name, provider, and version (e.g., "Claude Opus 4, Anthropic" or "GPT-4o-mini-2024-12-17, OpenAI"). Generic labels such as "ChatGPT" or "an AI assistant" are insufficient. If the exact version is unavailable, students should report the most specific identification possible. If multiple tools were used for different purposes, indicate which tool was used for which task.

- Students found to have used AI beyond what they disclosed will fail the exam.

Guidance from Academic Honesty: honesty.uga.edu/Academic-Honesty-Policy/Prohibited_Conduct/

8. Dissertation Submission and Final Oral Examination

8.1. Format Check

Dissertations must meet the Graduate School's formatting specifications. Information on required formatting can be found on the Graduate School website. Students are required to electronically submit their dissertation for a format check shortly after the midpoint of the semester in which they graduate.

If a student does not submit a manuscript for format check by the stated deadline, the Graduate School will cancel their application for graduation and move it to the next semester. It is thus *crucial* to adhere to all stated deadlines.

8.2. Required Forms for Dissertation Submission and Approval

Prior to the defense, PhD students must submit two forms related to the dissertation: the Approval Form for Doctoral Dissertation and Final Oral Examination (G164) and the ETD Submission Approval (G129) form.

8.3. Stages in the Approval of Dissertations

(a) *Final Approval by the Major Professor.* Before a dissertation can be submitted to the advisory committee, the major professor must approve the student's entire completed draft, even if individual chapters have been read previously.
(b) *Formal Submission of the Dissertation to the Committee and Scheduling of the Defense.* The student should distribute the draft to the committee and notify the GPA of the distribution, which may be done electronically. The GPA will schedule a time for the oral defense. Any date scheduled at this time must be regarded as tentative and subject to

cancellation, pending approval of the dissertation by the advisory committee.

(c) *Evaluation of the Dissertation by the Advisory Committee.* A dissertation must be read and approved by the advisory committee before an oral defense can take place. After reading the dissertation, the members of the advisory committee will notify the major professor that they (a) agree that the dissertation may proceed to the final defense, (b) agree that the dissertation may proceed to the final defense with minor changes, or (c) require additional revisions before a final defense may be held.
    - If, in the advisory committee's judgment, the dissertation requires extensive revisions, these changes will be communicated to the student in a clear and timely fashion. The major professor will assume primary responsibility for determining the committee's consensus on what changes are needed and communicate this to the student.

If the dissertation has been approved by the advisory committee, the student may proceed to the oral defense. If the dissertation has been approved with suggested changes, these changes should be made prior to the oral defense. The major professor must certify, prior to the oral defense, that the suggested changes have been completed satisfactorily.

8.4. Dissertation Defense (Final Oral Examination)

The dissertation defense may be conducted in person, or virtually with the approval of the DGS and relevant department head.

The dissertation defense is administered by the advisory committee and chaired by the major professor. The student must receive at least two positive votes from the three-member advisory committee to pass the dissertation defense.

7.5. Submission of Dissertations to the Graduate School

Once a dissertation has been successfully defended and final changes (if any) have been approved by the major professor, the student must electronically submit a final electronic copy to the Graduate School. The student must also obtain the committee's electronic approval. All paperwork related to the defense is managed by the GPA.

9. Graduation

8.1 Submitting the Application for Graduation

Applications for graduation must be submitted on Athena by the deadline stipulated by the Graduate School, typically the second or third week of each semester. Applications that are submitted after this deadline are subject to a $50 fee, payable by check or money order to the Graduate School.
Applications that are submitted more than **45 days** after the initial deadline will not be accepted. Students who fail to submit an application for graduation before this final cutoff date will be required to move their graduation to the following semester.

9.1. Commencement

The Graduate School holds commencement ceremonies in the spring and fall semesters only. There is no summer commencement ceremony. Students graduating in the summer who wish to participate in commencement may return for the fall ceremony.

Students who have not completed degree requirements as determined by the Graduate School and by published deadlines will not be allowed to walk in the ceremony but may return to walk in a subsequent commencement event. There are NO exceptions to this policy.

8.2.1. Submitting Commencement Program Information

Doctoral students may have their name, major professor, and dissertation title printed in the official program for their commencement ceremony if they wish. This information must be submitted to the Graduate School via the Doctoral Commencement Information form by the deadline stipulated by the Graduate School, typically around the midpoint of the semester.

- In order to appear in the program, students must lift any FERPA restrictions when applying for graduation.

8.2.2. Regalia and Hooding

It is traditional for PhD students to be hooded by their major professor or another chosen faculty representative at commencement. Hoods and other academic attire can be purchased at the UGA Bookstore or online. It is advisable to consult with the major professor or other faculty member well in advance to ensure that they will be available for the ceremony.

Occasionally, SPIA may make funds available to assist in the purchase of doctoral regalia. Interested students should contact the GPA or DGS to inquire about this possibility.

10. Enrollment Requirements and Time Limits

10.1. Minimum Enrollment

A full-time course load for SPIA graduate students is typically considered **9 graduate credit hours** (three courses) per semester.

All enrolled students pursuing graduate degrees at the University of Georgia must register for a minimum of **3 graduate credit hours** during any semester in which they use University facilities and/or faculty/staff time. This includes semesters in which they are completing comprehensive examinations and defending their thesis or dissertation.

PhD students who are funded through a graduate assistantship should register for a minimum of **18 credit hours**, at least **12** of which must be graduate credit hours, during any fall or spring semester in which they receive assistantship funding. If the student is assigned assistantship work during the summer, the student must register for a minimum of **9 graduate credit hours.** Students may register for POLS 9000 (Doctoral Research Hours) to meet these minimums.

Doctoral students who have completed coursework and comprehensive exams may register for a combination of dissertation hours (POLS 9300) and doctoral research hours (POLS 9000) to reach the required 18 credit hours each semester.

Undergraduate-level courses and audited courses do not count toward required enrollment minimums.

10.2. Residency Credit Requirement

The residency requirement for the Doctor of Philosophy degree is interpreted as 30 hours of consecutive graduate course work that is included on the approved program of study.

10.3. Continuous Enrollment Policy

All enrolled graduate students must maintain continuous enrollment from matriculation until completion of all degree requirements. Continuous enrollment is defined as registering for a minimum of three (3) credits in at least two semesters per academic year (Fall, Spring, Summer, in that order) until the degree is attained or status as a degree-seeking graduate student is terminated.

Doctoral students must maintain enrollment during fall and spring semesters (breaking only for summer semesters) until the residency requirement has been met (see Section 9.2.).

All students must be enrolled for at least **3 graduate credits** in the semester in which degree requirements are completed.

9.3.1. Exceptions to Continuous Enrollment Policy

The continuous enrollment policy states that students must register for at least 3 credit hours in the semester they graduate. Students who are only working towards finishing incomplete coursework are exempt from the continuous enrollment policy IF: 1) they have completed all other requirements for degree completion, and 2) the work required to convert the incomplete grade does not require the use of University facilities, resources, and faculty time aside from grading the work.
This policy exception is meant to reduce tuition burden for completion of a course for which the student has already paid tuition. This exception would typically not be granted for students who receive incompletes in directed study, capstone courses, thesis/dissertation credits or other courses involving significant continuing faculty time and University resources. Students in this latter situation should register for GRSC 9270 in order to convert their incomplete grade.

10.4. Leave of Absence

A leave of absence provides a mechanism for students experiencing unusual circumstances to be exempt temporarily from the continuous enrollment policy. A leave of absence requires approval of the DGS and the Dean of Graduate School. A leave of absence will be granted only for good

cause such as serious medical and health-related issues, major financial and employment issues; pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy and recovery therefrom, adoption or fostering of a child, child care, elder care, and other significant family issues; and other major personal circumstances that interfere with the ability to undertake graduate study. An approved leave of absence stands in lieu of registering for the minimum of 3 credits for each semester for which the leave of absence is granted. During a leave of absence, students may not use UGA facilities, resources, or services designed or intended only for enrolled students; receive a graduate assistantship, fellowship, or financial aid from the University; or take any UGA courses related to their program of study. The amount of time approved for leave of absence will **not count** toward time limits governing a graduate degree.

A student may apply for a leave of absence before or during any semester in which they are not registered for courses. Application for a Leave of absence must be received by the Graduate School Office of Enrolled Student Services on or before the last day of classes for the semester for which it is requested. A leave of absence will not be granted retroactively after the end of a semester.

A student may request a leave of absence for one semester, two consecutive semesters, or three consecutive semesters (Summer semester included). There is a 12-month limit for any one request of leave of absence. A student may submit multiple requests for a leave of absence subject to a 3 semester limit.

10.5. Time Limits

Effective Fall 2024, doctoral students must complete all requirements for the doctoral degree *and* the degree must be awarded within **eight (8) calendar years** after initial enrollment/registration in the program. The student's time-to-degree clock starts with the first course approved for inclusion in their doctoral Program of Study, or the date of matriculation into the program, whichever occurred earlier.

Doctoral students who fail to complete their degrees within 8 years after initial enrollment will be considered as not making satisfactory progress to degree completion and will be dismissed from Graduate School. The Graduate School will notify all doctoral students when they have reached the 7-year mark to warn them about the impending 8-year degree time limit.

10.6. Extension of Time

In extenuating circumstances, a special request for an extension of time on the 8-year time limit for the PhD may be made to the Vice Provost/Dean of the Graduate School. This request must include specific reasons why the student did not complete requirements in the time allotted by Graduate School policy. A petition of this type must include 1) a specific timeline for the completion of requirements, 2) a letter of support from the student's major professor, and 3) a letter of support from the DGS and department head. The maximum extension of the degree time limit that may be granted is 24 months, and the total time to degree shall not exceed 10 years.

V. INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH AND CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

1. Compliance Training

1.1. University System of Georgia (USG) Cybersecurity Awareness Training

All USG employees, including student workers and graduate assistants, must complete mandatory cybersecurity awareness training twice annually, in April and October. The GPA will send a reminder to the listserv regarding this training. Failure to complete this training may result in termination of employment. Questions about this training may be addressed to helpdesk@uga.edu.

1.2. Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Human Subjects Office

Students whose research involves human subjects are responsible for acquiring the necessary permission and following all applicable rules and regulations when conducting their research. Full information on procedures can be found on the IRB website. Questions may be directed to IRB@uga.edu.

1.3. Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)

Responsible conduct of research is critically important for all students conducting systematic analyses, not just those in the sciences. It involves the awareness and application of established professional norms and ethical principles in the performance of all activities related to scholarship.

Newly matriculating graduate students who receive financial support through an assistantship/fellowship that is supported partially or fully with funds from the Graduate School must complete training in the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR). This training must be completed within the first year of enrollment. Continuation of funding beyond the first year is contingent upon demonstrated completion of this requirement. SPIA students will likely find the following course(s) most helpful to them in fulfilling this requirement:

- GRSC 8550, Responsible Conduct of Research (1 credit hour, offered Fall and Spring)
- QUAL 8595/E, Research Ethics in the Professional and Social Sciences (3 credit hours, offered every other Summer)

Please note that the RCR training required for grants from federal agencies may be different from that required by the Graduate School. Additional information regarding RCR requirements for grants can be found on the Office of Research's website.

2. Required Teaching Assistant (TA) Training

2.1. TA Orientation

All first-time TAs are required to enroll in the TA Orientation hosted by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). In incoming students on a graduate assistantship are required to enroll in

this during their first semester, even if they have not been assigned TA responsibilities in their first year, to ensure that they are prepared to assume TA duties when assigned.

TA Orientation is hosted twice a year, in the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. The schedule can be found on their website.

2.2. GRSC/POLS 7770

All first-time TAs are required to enroll in the Graduate Teaching Seminar (GRSC 7770). This is taught each fall semester in the Political Science Department as POLS 7770. All incoming students on a graduate assistantship are required to enroll in POLS 7770/GRSC 7770 during their first semester to ensure that they are prepared to assume TA duties when assigned.

2.3. English Language Proficiency for TAs

Per University policy, TAs for non-English speaking countries (as determined by the Graduate School) must demonstrate English language proficiency.

International students who have completed a four-year undergraduate degree at an accredited institution in a country where English is the primary language (as recognized by the Graduate School) no more than 4 years prior to beginning their degree at UGA are exempt from this requirement.

Students should consult the placement level guide provided by CTL to determine whether they will need to enroll in supplementary courses (i.e., LLED 7768 and/or LLED 7769) and/or take an English placement examination through UGA.

2.4. Failure to Comply With TA Training Requirements

Students who fail to complete the above TA training requirements will be ineligible for future teaching assistantship assignments until the requirements are completed satisfactorily.

VI. EXPECTATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL ACADEMIC / RESEARCH PROGRESS

1. Acceptable Academic Standing

1.1. Limits on Incompletes

Students may sometimes find it necessary to request a grade of "I" (Incomplete) in courses where they are doing satisfactory work but are unable to meet the full requirements of the course for non-academic reasons beyond their control. Nevertheless, accumulating incompletes is strongly discouraged. Several policies govern such matters.

- If an Incomplete is not removed after two semesters have passed, the "I" automatically will become an "F." If this change occurs, it is final, and there is no possibility of appeal.
- If a student receiving financial assistance acquires more than two grades of Incomplete at any time, that financial assistance will be terminated at the end of the semester.
- PhD students may not proceed to comprehensive exams with an outstanding grade of Incomplete. All Incompletes must be resolved before comprehensive exams may be taken.
- Students will not be awarded an assistantship (or have their existing assistantship renewed) until all Incompletes received in their graduate-level work at UGA have been removed.
- No student will be permitted to accumulate more than three Incompletes at any time during his or her coursework. If more than three Incompletes are carried, the student will not be permitted to register for courses until the number is reduced to three or fewer.
- A student may not graduate with an Incomplete grade on his or her transcript if the conversion of the Incomplete to another letter grade will result in a GPA below 3.0.

1.2. Academic Probation

A student who fails to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 will receive a warning letter from the Graduate School. If the GPA remains below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters, the student will be placed on academic probation. The student must then submit an advisement plan (created in conjunction with the Graduate Program Administrator) and earn a 3.0 semester average or better in each succeeding semester that his or her overall cumulative GPA remains below 3.0. The student is no longer on probation when the cumulative GPA reaches 3.0 or above.

1.3. Dismissal

1.3.1. Dismissal by the Graduate School

Students may be dismissed by the Graduate School for several reasons, including but not limited to the following:

- Students who make below a 3.0 semester graduate average while on academic probation. An appeal may be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate School within 10 working days following receipt of notice of dismissal.
- Failure to adhere to the honor code and Student Code of Conduct

- Title IX/Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment violation
- Research misconduct
- Exhaustion of degree program time limits

1.3.2. Dismissal by the Department

Students may be dismissed by the department at the end of any semester if they have not made sufficient academic progress to warrant continuance of study. Failure to follow the Program of Study or other departmental and Graduate School guidelines, low grades, failure to pass comprehensive exams, and lack of progress on a dissertation or thesis are among the reasons dismissal might occur.

Evidence of academic dishonesty may result in the student being dismissed from the graduate program.

Evidence of academic dishonesty on the written comprehensive exam will result in immediate dismissal from the graduate program.

Violation of ethical and/or professional standards may result in dismissal.

1.3.3. Dismissal Process and Notification

If the student is dismissed by the Graduate School, the Graduate School will send written notification to the department and the student.

If the student is dismissed by the department, the student will receive written notification. Program dismissal triggers dismissal from the UGA Graduate School, unless the student remains in good standing in another program at UGA.

1.3.4. Appealing a Dismissal

Students who have been dismissed by the department may submit an appeal to the appropriate DGS and the Graduate Committee as their first recourse. If unsuccessful, the student may then submit an appeal to the dean of the Graduate School. This should be completed within 30 calendar days of the decision at the previous level.

Students who have been dismissed by the Graduate School for academic reasons may appeal to the dean of the Graduate School. The appeal must be submitted to the dean within 30 calendar days following receipt of notice of dismissal. Students subject to Graduate School dismissal may, with the support of their department / program, take advantage of an expedited review of their dismissal. Within two business days of the release of grades, the Graduate School will contact the program of each student subject to dismissal, giving the program two days to request an expedited review. (Any later review requests would go through the normal appeals process.) Full information is available on the Graduate School website. Please contact gradassociatedean@uga.edu for more information.

Students who were dismissed by a program may reapply to the Graduate School for admission to the same graduate program or a different degree-granting unit, *unless* the dismissal was triggered by:

- Failure to adhere to the honor code
- Title IX/Non-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment violation
- Research misconduct
- Violation of ethical (professional) standards in program's handbook (or professional society)

2. Student Recourse

2.1. Grade Appeals

Students who wish to appeal a final course grade should first speak with the faculty member who assigned it. If the faculty member will not change the grade, an appeal should be made to the chair of the department in which the course was taken. If the department provides an unfavorable decision, the student may appeal to the Graduate School. The student has 30 days to initiate their appeal to the Graduate School.

If the appeal involves a hardship withdrawal or a grade of Incomplete converting to an F, students must appeal to the Educational Affairs Committee. To contact the Educational Affairs Committee, please email ovpiappeals@uga.edu. For questions regarding appeals heard by the Educational Affairs Committee, please visit their website."

Full information on appeals is available on the Graduate School website.

2.2. Grievance Process

In cases where a graduate student feels aggrieved by the actions of a faculty member, the following procedure should be observed in resolving the grievance:

(1) The student should confer with the faculty member in question.

(2) If the initial discussion does not lead to a resolution, the student should discuss it with the DGS, who may choose to serve as a mediator.

(3) If the problem remains unresolved after discussions with the faculty member and with the DGS, the student may present it to the appropriate department head.

(4) If the problem cannot be resolved to the student's satisfaction by the department head, the student may choose to follow one of the courses of action established by the University and Graduate School to address academic complaints related to a faculty member or academic department.

To report a nonacademic complaint, such as harassment, discrimination, or a poor experience with a campus office, students may submit a report to the UGA Student Complaints Portal to be addressed by Student Affairs.

VII. FUNDING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS

Graduate assistantships and waivers are based on academic competitiveness. The Graduate Committee in Political Science and International Affairs makes all assistantship funding decisions.

1. Assistantships

1.1. SPIA Assistantships

Assistantships carry stipends as well as tuition waivers that reduce tuition to $25 per semester plus student fees. Students are required to pay a registration fee each semester as well as mandated student fees, which include transportation, activity/recreation, athletic, health, student facilities, technology, and green fees. International students may be subject to additional fees. Details on these specific fees are available from the Bursar's Office. Note that these may change from year to year.

Students on assistantship are required to register for at least 18 credit hours each semester, at least 12 of which must be graduate credit hours. Generally, a student on an assistantship will register for at least 9 hours of substantive course work and then have the option of registering for 3 hours of Master's Research (POLS 7000) or Doctoral Research (POLS 9000) to meet the required minimum. Doctoral students who have completed the required coursework may use POLS 9000 and Doctoral Dissertation Hours (POLS 9300) to meet the required enrollment minimum. No additional service is required for these hours.

1.1.1. Teaching Assistantships

Teaching assistants are generally assigned to SPIA's introductory undergraduate courses. All new teaching assistants *must enroll* in GRSC or POLS 7770, which is offered every fall semester and deals with a wide range of pedagogical and professional issues. Teaching assistants work under the direction of experienced faculty members and are usually part of an instructional team that includes several other teaching assistants.

Per University policy, TAs for non-English speaking countries (as determined by the Graduate School) must demonstrate English language proficiency. International students who have completed a four-year undergraduate degree at an accredited institution in a country where English is the primary language (as recognized by the Graduate School) no more than 4 years prior to beginning their degree at UGA are exempt from this requirement. Students should consult the placement level guide provided by CTL to determine whether they will need to enroll in supplementary courses (i.e., LLED 7768 and/or LLED 7769) and/or take an English placement examination through UGA.

TAs are evaluated at the end of each semester by their faculty supervisor. These evaluations are shared with the respective DGS and may affect eligibility for future funding.

1.1.2. Research Assistantships

Research assistants work closely with one or more faculty members to conduct research. Duties are assigned by the faculty supervisor. Per University policy, research assistants may not assume instructional duties such as grading. RAs are expected to communicate closely with their faculty supervisor(s) and perform their duties in a timely fashion.

RAs are evaluated at the end of each semester by their faculty supervisor. These evaluations are shared with the respective DGS and may affect eligibility for future funding.

1.1.3. Renewal of Assistantships

The renewal of a SPIA assistantship is not automatic. Each student's record is reviewed annually by the Graduate Committee. The decision to renew an assistantship depends on:

(1) the quality of the student's academic work;
(2) timely progress toward the degree;
(3) satisfactory performance of assigned duties as a teaching or research assistant.

Students on assistantship will be expected to maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.25. For new students, the calculation will be made after the first semester.

1.1.4 Termination of a Graduate Assistantship

A student whose GPA falls below 3.25 will be given one additional semester to come up to this level. If the student fails to do so, the assistantship will be terminated. Students may not carry more than two incomplete grades ("I") at any one time while holding an assistantship or else it will be terminated. Unsatisfactory performance as TA or RA will result in a termination. These requirements help ensure that financial assistance goes only to those students who are making solid academic progress.

1.1.5. Limits on Eligibility

Limits are set on the period of time for which students are eligible for assistantships. At the MA level, the limit on eligibility is 2 years (four semesters). At the doctoral level, the limit is 5 years (10 semesters) for PhD students. Students who exceed these limits are placed on a standby list. Financial assistance may be awarded to students on the standby list as it becomes available. Note that the semesters discussed are the Fall and Spring semesters**.**

Graduate School Assistantships count against the years of assistantship committed by SPIA. Thus, one year of master's or doctoral aid commitment will be subtracted for each year of Graduate School aid. Other forms of aid will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with a general presumption that external grants will not offset SPIA's aid commitment.

1.2. Graduate School Assistantships

The graduate program nominates a limited number of incoming students for Graduate School assistantships and fellowships. Since these awards are very competitive, only students with outstanding records are nominated. Students must be registered for a total of 18 graduate credit

hours each semester.

1.3. Tuition Waivers

The Graduate School awards a select number of out-of-state tuition waivers to degree-seeking domestic students who are classified as non-residents of the State of Georgia. These awards are based upon applicants' academic records and the recommendations of their DGS.

1.3.1. Research Out-of-State Tuition (ROOST) Waivers

The ROOST waiver lasts for one academic year and is renewed each term of that academic year, contingent upon recipients earning at least a 3.00 graduate grade point average based on 12 hours of graduate course work in the fall and spring semesters and 9 hours of graduate-level coursework during the summer (if summer courses are taken). These awards waive only the non-resident portion of the student's tuition. Being nominated does not guarantee receipt of a waiver.

1.3.2. Office of Global Engagement (OGE) Out-of-State Tuition Waivers for Outstanding International Students

Nominations for this waiver are submitted by the DGS based on academic merit. To be eligible for nomination, students must:

- Be non-US citizens or non-US permanent residents, enrolled in or enrolling in a full-time degree-seeking course of study at UGA
- Have a 3.0 GPA to be nominated when applying to the program
- Maintain a 3.5 GPA to be renominated in subsequent semesters
- Have no grades of Incomplete or Unsatisfactory

1.3.3. Student Veterans' Out-of-State Tuition Waiver

The Registrar's Office and the Admissions Office process out-of-state fee waivers for student veterans, their spouses, and their dependent children who meet the Board of Regents requirements.

2. Scholarships and Travel Funding

2.1. Graduate School Scholarships

The Graduate School offers a variety of scholarships each year. Some are limited only to students at a certain level (master's, doctoral) or to U.S. citizens/permanent residents. The GPA will send out announcements and solicitations of applications and/or nominations based on the Graduate School deadlines for these scholarships.

2.2. SPIA Scholarships

SPIA offers several scholarships that are open to graduate students. Typically, these scholarships may be used to support conference travel, professional development activities (e.g., ICPSR), and research activities (e.g., data collection, fieldwork travel). The GPA will circulate an application reminder based on the SPIA deadlines for these scholarships.

2.3. Travel Funding

2.3.1. Departmental Travel Funding

At times, the departments or SPIA may have funds available to help students with conference and research travel. Such funding depends on budget availability and is not guaranteed unless stipulated in an assistantship offer letter. Interested students should contact the GPA or DGS with inquiries.

2.3.2. Graduate School Travel Funding

The Graduate School provides competitive travel funding for students presenting their research at conferences and professional meetings. Funds are awarded on a rolling basis, and only a limited amount of funding is available each semester. Preference is given to doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy. Doctoral students are limited to a total of two grants per lifetime (i.e., the entirety of their graduate studies at UGA). Students should consult the Graduate School website for full details and deadlines.

VIII. APPENDICES

1. Degree Program Timetables

1.1. Timetable for the Traditional MA Degree–Thesis (MA-T)

The MA-T program of study must contain a minimum of 30 hours of graduate coursework, 3 of which must be POLS 7300 (Master's Thesis).

These 30 hours must also include at least 21 hours of coursework exclusive of POLS 7000 (Master's Research) and POLS 7300 (Master's Thesis). Twelve of these 21 hours must be courses restricted to graduate students (i.e., not 4000/6000 split-level courses).

The MA methods requirement is 9 hours: POLS 7010, 7012, 7014. MA students who entered through the Double Dawgs Pathway are not required to take POLS 7010.

A typical MA-T program of study is outlined below. Individual student programs may vary.

	Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**
Year 1	One preseminar POLS 7010 POLS 7012 GRSC 7770 for new TAs GRSC 7001 (GradFIRST seminar)	POLS 7014 Two seminars
Year 2	Three seminars Major professor and advisory committee established. Students planning to go on to the PhD program must apply. Students planning to advance to the PhD should take POLS 8501 at this juncture.	POLS 7300 (Master's Thesis) **Master's Thesis Defense**

1.2. Timetable for the Traditional MA Degree–Nonthesis (MA-NT)

The MA-NT program of study must contain a minimum of 33 hours of graduate coursework. In lieu of an MA thesis, the student will complete an article for approval by their major professor.

These 33 hours must also include at least 21 hours of coursework exclusive of POLS 7000 (Master's Research). Twelve of these 21 hours must be courses restricted to graduate students (i.e., not 4000/6000 split-level courses).

The MA methods requirement is 9 hours: POLS 7010, 7012, 7014. MA students who entered through the Double Dawgs Pathway are not required to take POLS 7010.

A typical MA-NT program of study is outlined below. Individual student programs may vary.

	Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**
Year 1	One core seminar POLS 7010 POLS 7012 GRSC 7770 for new TAs GRSC 7001 (GradFIRST seminar)	POLS 7014 Two seminars
Year 2	Three seminars Major professor established. Students planning to go on to the PhD program must apply. Students planning to advance to the PhD should take POLS 8501 at this juncture.	Two seminars **Paper Completion**

1.3 Timetable for the MA Political Analytics Track – Traditional Two-Year Timetable

The MA-Political Analytics program of study must contain a minimum of 30 hours of graduate coursework. A practicum and a capstone research project are the cornerstones of the track.

MA-Political Analytics students must complete the same methodology core (POLS 7010, INTL/POLS 7012, and INTL/POLS 7014) expected of all MA tracks. MA-Political Analytics students must also complete two additional INTL and/or POLS methodology courses. Further, MA-Political Analytics students must complete graduate-level seminar courses for two of the following fields:

- International Relations (INTL 6200), or
- Comparative Politics (INTL 6300), or
- American Politics (POLS 6100 or any graduate level course in AP), or
- Political Theory (POLS 8000 or any graduate level course in Political Theory).

Students will complete a major practicum under the guidance of a faculty member (INTL/POLS 9101) and a capstone project (INTL/POLS 9200). A remaining elective course on a substantive topic related to the student's career plans or academic interests will be determined in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and GPA.
A typical MA-Political Analytics program of study is outlined below. Individual student programs may vary.

	Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**
Year 1	Core seminar 1 - International Relations (INTL 6200), or Comparative Politics (INTL 6300), or American Politics (POLS 6100 or a graduate level course in American politics) or Political Theory (POLS 8000 or a graduate level course in Political Theory) POLS 7010 INTL/POLS 7012 GRSC 7770 for new TAs GRSC 7001 (GradFIRST seminar)	INTL/POLS 7014 Core seminar 2 - International Relations (INTL 6200), or Comparative Politics (INTL 6300), or American Politics (POLS 6100 or a graduate level course in American politics), or Political Theory (POLS 8000 or a graduate level course in Political Theory) An INTL/POLS methodology course from the previous list Practicum site and advisor established
Year 2	Practicum (INTL/POLS 9101) Elective course A second INTL/POLS methodology course from the previous list	Any additional electives Capstone (INTL/POLS 9200)

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
	Capstone advisor and topic identified.	

1.4. Timetable for the MA Degree–Political Analytics Track – Accelerated One-Year Timetable

The MA-Political Analytics program of study must contain a minimum of 30 hours of graduate coursework. A practicum and a capstone research project are the cornerstones of the track.

MA-Political Analytics students must complete the same methodology core (POLS 7010, INTL/POLS 7012, and INTL/POLS 7014) expected of all MA tracks. MA-Political Analytics students must also complete two additional INTL and/or POLS methodology courses. Further, MA-Political Analytics students must complete graduate-level seminar courses for two of the following fields:

- International Relations (INTL 6200), or
- Comparative Politics (INTL 6300), or
- American Politics (POLS 6100 or any graduate level course in AP),
- or Political Theory (POLS 8000 or any graduate level course in Political Theory).

Students will complete a major practicum under the guidance of a faculty member (POLS/INTL 9101) and a capstone project (INTL/POLS 9200). A remaining elective course on a substantive topic related to the student's career plans or academic interests will be determined in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and GPA.
A one-year accelerated MA-Political Analytics program of study is outlined below. Individual student programs may vary.

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Summer Semester
Year 1	Core seminar 1 - International Relations (INTL 6200), or Comparative Politics (INTL 6300), or American Politics (POLS 6100 or a graduate level course in American politics), or Political Theory (POLS 8000 or a graduate level course in Political Theory) POLS 7010 INTL/POLS 7012	INTL/POLS 7014 Core seminar 2- International Relations (INTL 6200), or Comparative Politics (INTL 6300), or American Politics (POLS 6100 or a graduate level course in American politics), or Political Theory (POLS 8000 or a graduate level course in Political Theory) Two INTL/POLS methodology course selected from the previous list	Practicum (POLS/INTL 9101) Capstone (INTL/POLS 9200)

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester	Summer Semester
	Elective course GRSC 7770 for new TAs GRSC 7001 (GradFIRST seminar)	Capstone advisor and topic identified. Practicum site and advisor established.	

1.5 Timetable for the PhD Degree

The PhD program of study must contain a minimum of 30 hours of graduate coursework beyond the MA, 3 of which must be POLS 9300 (Doctoral Dissertation). These 30 hours must also include 16 hours of coursework at the 8000/9000 level, exclusive of POLS 9000 (Doctoral Research) and POLS 9300 (Doctoral Dissertation).

Students must complete a minimum of five courses in their major field and three courses in their minor field. Additionally, they must take at least one class in a field other than the two fields in which comprehensive exams are taken (i.e., the "third-field course"), to be chosen in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). Graduate courses taken at UGA or another institution may count toward these field requirements if approved by the DGS. In all cases, however, the required number of hours in residence (30) must be earned at UGA.

A full-time course load is 9 hours (18 for those on assistantship, including 1–9 hours of POLS 9000 and/or POLS 9300).

The PhD methods requirement beyond the 9 hours for the MA degree is 3 hours: POLS 8501

A typical PhD program of study is outlined below. Individual student programs may vary.

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
Year 1	One core seminar POLS 7010 POLS 7012 GRSC 7770 for new TAs GRSC 7001	POLS 7014 Two seminars

	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
Year 2	Two seminars POLS 8501	Three seminars
Year 3	0-3 seminars **May take comprehensive exams** **May defend dissertation prospectus** May be required to take one or more seminars to complete major or minor field requirements.	INTL 7002 POLS 9300 (Doctoral Dissertation) **May take comprehensive exams** **May defend dissertation prospectus** **May defend dissertation** INTL 7002
Year 4	POLS 9300 (Doctoral Dissertation) **Dissertation prospectus defense, if not already completed** **May defend dissertation**	POLS 9300 (Doctoral Dissertation) **May defend dissertation**
Year 5	POLS 9300 (Doctoral Dissertation) **May defend dissertation**	POLS 9300 (Doctoral Dissertation) **Dissertation defense, if not already completed**

2. Overview of Methods Sequence

Required for the traditional MA: POLS 7010, 7012, and 7014
Required for the Double Dawgs MA: POLS 7012 and 7014

POLS 7010: Research Design (3 credit hours)
Basic scientific methods, broadly defined, to include problems of definition, concept formation, hypothesis testing, explanation and prediction, and theory construction.

POLS 7012: Introduction to Political Methodology (3 credit hours)
Review of basic math skills and summary statistics such as measures of central tendency and dispersion, and crosstabulation. Also includes an introduction to probability theory, probability distributions, confidence intervals, and hypothesis testing. Statistical software and discussion of political science data sources will also be covered.

POLS 7014: Intermediate Political Methodology (3 credit hours)
Thorough coverage of the ordinary least squares regression model. Focus on assumptions of OLS, remedies for violations of the assumptions, and applications to political science research. Topics include interactive specifications, nonlinearities, and diagnostics.

Required for the PhD: POLS 7010, 7012, 7014 + POLS 8501

POLS 8501: Advanced Quantitative Methods I (3 credit hours)
Prerequisite: POLS 7014
Maximum likelihood estimation and advanced regression applications. Topics include models with qualitative or limited dependent variables (binary, ordered, and unordered logit and probit; event count models; tobit and selection models), regression with time series cross-sectional data, systems of simultaneous equations, and measurement models.

POLS 8501 does not double-count toward the Political Methodology minor (effective Fall 2023).

3. Guidelines for Comprehensive Exams in Comparative Politics and International Relations (effective for students matriculating in Fall 2024 and beyond)

3.1.The Major Field Exam

For their major field of study, students taking comprehensive exams in Comparative Politics or International Relations must complete the following tasks:

1. **Prepare a syllabus for an introductory graduate seminar in their major subfield, along with**
2. **A written justification (15–20 pages, single-spaced, work cited not included, 12-point font) of the syllabus and the decisions they made while preparing it.**

   The syllabus itself should include a description of the assignments students would complete while taking the course, as well as a structured topic and reading list that covers 15 weeks.

   The document submitted with the syllabus should offer detailed justifications for the topics and works included/excluded. It should discuss topics that are included on the syllabus and explain why it is essential that all CP/IR students be exposed to these topics. If there are any commonly covered topics the student chooses to omit, detailed justifications should be offered for these omissions.

   Additionally, students should identify particular readings they believe are essential to the course and explain why these are essential readings for all CP/IR graduate students. If any canonical readings are omitted, these omissions should also be justified.

Students should make their own determination about which topics and readings are common/canonical by examining syllabi from current/previous introductory seminars at UGA and many (more than 10) syllabi from comparable Ph.D. programs.

The written justification should also include a discussion of how the syllabus would be adjusted if the course were to be taught to undergraduates.

3. **Complete a Research Paper that addresses a relevant topic/research question in their major subfield.**

   To ensure the paper's relevance, students must get prior approval from the Director of the Graduate Studies for their topic/question between 60-90 days prior to the exam.

   The paper cannot be coauthored and must not be used for multiple comprehensive exams. Students are strongly encouraged to submit papers they have written for past graduate seminars, though their past seminar papers will almost certainly require further development and revisions to meet the standards of the comprehensive exam.

As a guideline, research papers are expected to be of the quality typical of papers presented at professional conferences.

Papers must include empirical analysis but may use qualitative or quantitative data and methodology. The paper will be evaluated primarily on the quality of its literature review, theory, research design, and analysis. (Technical or minute details of the methodology are less important but are also subject to evaluation by the committee.)

4. In addition to the paper itself, for the oral portion of the exam students should prepare a 10–15-minute presentation of their paper that includes the following:

(1) The research question and its importance/relevance to ongoing inquiry/debate in the subfield
(2) A summary of the argument
(3) A summary of the analysis and findings
(4) The implications of the findings for the larger body of research to which the student is contributing

3.2. The Minor Field Exam

For their minor field of study, students taking comprehensive exams in Comparative Politics or International Relations must complete task #1 above, Prepare a Syllabus.

Exams must be turned in by 5pm on the respective exam date. Major field exams are typically held or due on the second Friday after the first full week of classes in the fall and spring semesters (except when this would conflict with APSA). Minor field exams are typically held or due on the fourth Friday after the first full week of classes in the fall and spring semesters.

3.3. Embargo Period

The CP and IR faculty are not available to discuss individual comprehensive exam plans, syllabi, or papers for the 30 days prior to the comps; this time period is for individual study and effort only. Faculty members who graded the written components are available to meet, at their discretion, between the written and oral exams.

3.4. Academic Honesty

All materials will be submitted through plagiarism software. Any student found to have committed academic dishonesty in preparing the written comprehensive exam materials will be dismissed from the graduate program. See Section 4.8.1.

4. Doctoral Program for Active-Duty Military Students

The PhD in Political Science & International Affairs welcomes active-duty military students. The administrators and faculty are experienced with the unique needs of this student population and have designed processes and policies to help facilitate the accelerated completion of the PhD (typically, 3 years) required by military support.

Most of the program policies and procedures are identical to those described in Section II of this Handbook. However, some notable differences are outlined below. This appendix is not intended to be a comprehensive guide.

4.1. Pre-Enrollment Tasks

4.1.1. Draft and Final Education Plans

Prior to beginning the PhD at UGA, active-duty military students are generally required to submit a draft education plan mapping out the courses and credit hours they will take in each semester of their doctoral program. Specifics of this form may vary depending on the branch of service. The Graduate Program Administrator (GPA) works with each student to complete this initial form.

Generally, in the semester before anticipated graduation, the student and the GPA will work to complete the final education plan, which reflects all coursework and credit hours taken.

4.1.2. Letter Waiving Out-of-State Tuition for Active-Duty Military

Some military offices may require a formal letter stating that active-duty military students attending the PhD program will pay in-state tuition. The Office of the Registrar at UGA can assist students with providing such documentation, if needed.

4.2. Doctoral Timeline

Active-duty military students are typically required to complete the PhD in 3 years. Any extensions to this timeline are at the discretion of the student's military superiors, and the student must secure any such extensions.

4.2.1. Example PhD Timeline for Active-Duty Military

	Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**	**Summer Semester**
Year 1	Pre-seminar (POLS 6100, INTL 6200, INTL 6300) POLS 7010 POLS 7012	POLS 7014 Three upper-level seminars (8XXX)	One to two upper-level seminars or directed reading courses (POLS 9200)

	Fall Semester	**Spring Semester**	**Summer Semester**
	Upper-level seminar (8XXX) GRSC 7001 *Total: 13 credits*	*Total: 12 credits*	*Total: 6 credits*
Year 2	POLS 8501 Three upper-level seminars (8XXX) 3 hours of POLS 9300 (required for comprehensive exams) *Total: 15 credits*	**Comprehensive exams** (POLS 9300) **May defend prospectus** *Total: 6 credits*	**Doctoral dissertation** (POLS 9300) *Total: 6 credits*
Year 3	**May defend prospectus** **Doctoral dissertation** (POLS 9300) *Total: 6 credits*	**Defend dissertation** **Doctoral dissertation** (POLS 9300) *Total: 6 credits*	

4.3. Course Exemptions

All incoming graduate students, including those with a prior graduate degree, are required to take GRSC 7001, the GradFIRST seminar. The Political Science & International Affairs graduate program has a specific version of this course designed for entering PhD students.

Due to their accelerated degree timeline, active-duty military students may find that they plan to complete and defend their dissertation prospectus before the INTL 7002 prospectus workshop course is offered in the spring. Hence, active-duty military students are not required to complete INTL 7002, although they are recommended to do so if it aligns with their timeline.

4.4. Applying for Additional Funding

Active-duty military students may apply for certain sources of additional funding in support of conference travel and other research activities, including those offered by the Graduate School and SPIA. However, it is *highly recommended* that the student consult with their military liaison prior to such applications to ensure that any funding obtained from UGA is in accordance with military policies and guidelines.