



Department of Political Science
PhD Regulations / Handbook
2018 – 2019

Disclaimer: If there is a discrepancy between this Handbook and the School of Graduate Studies Calendar, [the School of Graduate Studies Calendar](#) will prevail.

McMaster University
Department of Political Science
Ph.D. Degree in Political Science

The Department of Political Science at McMaster University offers the Ph.D. degree in the fields of Comparative Public Policy and International Relations.

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Admissions

Potential applicants are advised to consult the "Admission Requirements" set out in the [School of Graduate Studies Calendar](#). In addition, the following regulations also apply in the Department of Political Science.

Admission to the Ph.D. program in Comparative Public Policy or International Relations in the Department normally will require a Master's degree with a clear average of at least an A- (A minus) from a recognized university.

Applicants should submit the following:

- Completed the [online application](#) through Mosaic located at: <https://www.mcmaster.ca/ola/grad.html> ;
- ONE (1) official transcript from ALL universities attended, including undergraduate work;
- Three (3) confidential e-Reference letters by instructors most familiar with the applicant's work;
- A 500 word Statement of Interest (approximately 500 words, single or double-spaced, maximum of 1 page) that outlines their research interests and reason for choosing McMaster University for their Ph.D. degree in Political Science;
- Application fee of \$110 (Canadian) made payable by credit card;
- Evidence of English proficiency where required, i.e. TOEFL, IELTS

The deadline for submission of applications is January 18, 2019 for September entry only. Applications may be submitted after this date, but there is no guarantee that there will be places available in the program.

Recommendations for admissions will be made to the Graduate Faculty by a Ph.D. Admissions Committee which will consist of the Graduate Committee and the International Relations and Comparative Public Policy faculty. Sub-committees of IR and PP work through their respective field files and agree upon the top 10 candidates for their field (including possible supervisors). These ten candidates are recommended to members of the other field. A Graduate Committee along with members of the International Relations and Public Policy faculty convene a meeting where consideration is given to the final 20 candidates. This structure would not prevent any individual from raising particular cases or reading all applications.

In this case of students seeking to transfer into Political Science Ph.D. from another Ph.D. discipline, candidates are required to prepare a regular application which will be evaluated alongside all new applications in the next admission cycle.

McMaster University, Calendar Copy - Ph.D. Political Science

The Department of Political Science at McMaster University offers the Ph.D. degree in the fields of Comparative Public Policy and International Relations.

The public policy specialization will include courses and comprehensive examinations in:

- Approaches and methods for policy analysis
- A Policy field
- And at least two political systems (one of which may be Canada)

The international relations specialization will include courses and comprehensive examinations in:

- International Relations Theory
- International Political Economy
- Globalization and Transnationalism

Graduands can expect to be qualified to conduct research and teach at the university level in comparative public policy or in international relations and in one other field of political science in Canada.

Admission Procedures

Admission to the Ph.D. program normally will require an M.A. degree with an average of at least an A- (A minus) from a recognized university. Applicants must complete the required online McMaster application form, arrange to have 3 academic e-References submitted to the Department, submit one original transcript(s) from all universities and evidence of English language proficiency where required, i.e., TOELF, and submit a 500 word statement of research interests and reasons for choosing McMaster University for their Ph.D. degree in Political Science. The deadline for submission of applications is February 1.

Degree Requirements

Normally, candidates for the Ph.D. will

1. Complete 18 units (6 half courses) of course work beyond the M.A. level, including the following required courses:

Required Courses

For students in Public Policy

- 783 / Comparative Public Policy
- 784 / Quantitative Political and Policy Analysis
- 796 / Research Design and Methods

For students in International Relations

- 772 / Theories in International Politics or 771 Advanced Concepts of International Relations Theory
- 774 / Global Political Economy
- 796 / Research Design and Methods

Additional Information

Other approved courses will be drawn from other departmental courses, and courses offered by other departments and schools. At least three of these selected units should be from Major Field 2.

All courses are half courses (three units) unless otherwise specified.

2. Demonstrate reading and research competence in an approved language other than English.
3. Complete the required comprehensive examinations in Comparative Public Policy or International Relations and other field: and
4. Submit a thesis on an approved subject and defend it by oral examination.

Supervisors and Supervisory Committees

Successful applicants will be assigned a temporary supervisor of studies upon admission. No later than six months following arrival, a supervisory committee for each Ph.D. student will be appointed by the Graduate Committee, on the recommendation of the student and a willing thesis supervisor. This committee will consist of at least three members: a thesis supervisor, one other member of the Department and a third member, whose scholarly interests include the area of the student's main interest, and who may be from outside the Department.

Comprehensive Examinations

Students in the Ph.D. program will write comprehensive examinations in two fields:

For students in Comparative Public Policy

Students will write comprehensive examinations in two fields - public policy and a second field drawn from one of Canadian politics, comparative politics, international relations or political theory.

Major Field 1

In the Public Policy field, students will write an examination covering the three subfields of public policy:

- Theories and approaches to comparative public policy
- Public administration
- International dimensions of public policy

Major Field 2

To be selected from:

- Canadian Politics
- Comparative Politics
- International Relations
- Political Theory

Students are normally required to have completed at least three units beyond the M.A. level at McMaster in this area prior to writing their comprehensive examination.

Normally, students will write their Major Field 1 exam in August of their first year and their Major Field 2 exam in December of their second year.

For Students in International Relations

Students will write comprehensive examinations in two fields - international relations and a second field drawn from one of Canadian politics, comparative politics, political theory, or public policy.

Major Field 1

In the International Relations field, students will write an examination covering the three subfields of international relations:

- International relations theory / State of the field
- Global political economy
- Globalization, governance and security

Major Field 2

To be selected from:

- Canadian Politics
- Comparative Politics
- Political Theory
- Public Policy

Students are normally required to have completed at least three units beyond the M.A. level at McMaster in this area prior to writing their comprehensive examination.

Normally, students will write their Major Field 1 exam in August of their first year and the Major Field 2 exam in December of their second year.

Other Regulations

Applicants should consult the [School of Graduate Studies Calendar](#) for a complete listing of [Regulations for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree](#).

Department of Political Science - Guidelines and Regulations

Students are advised to consult the regulations set out in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar. The following regulations are also followed in the Department of Political Science.

Admissions: see "Departmental Regulations" governing admission to the Ph.D. program.

Supervisor and Supervisory Committee

Upon entering the program, students will be assigned a temporary supervisor, No later than six months following the student's arrival; a supervisory committee for each student will be appointed by the Graduate Committee on the recommendation of the students and a willing thesis supervisor drawn from the faculty. This committee will consist of at least three members: a supervisor and two other faculty members. One member may be from outside the department but within the university. Composition of the Committee is to be approved by the Graduate Committee. The functions of the supervisory committee are as follows:

- To meet with the student at least twice a year to ensure that the student is making satisfactory progress towards the timely completion of the degree.

- To provide advice to the student in his/her preparation for the Comprehensive Examinations.

After the student has completed his/her comprehensive examinations the Graduate Committee will review, and if necessary, reconstitute the supervisory committee to reflect the specific dissertation interests of the student. If more than one individual is from outside the Department or university, the committee will have to be expanded beyond three members.

The function of the supervisory committee with regard to the dissertation will be:

- To guide the student in developing a thesis proposal and to make arrangements for a Departmental seminar at which the student provides detailed outline of the proposal. The Supervisory Committee, in conjunction with the Chair of the Graduate Committee and one other member of the core faculty must approve the thesis proposal.
- To meet formally every academic year to assess the student's progress. The Supervisory Committee will inform the student of their conclusions. In all cases, meetings must be concluded no later than August 31st. If progress is deemed unsatisfactory, written notice will be issued. If the committee considers the lack of progress particularly serious, the student will be required to withdraw from the program.
- To respond to drafts of the thesis or portions of the thesis within a reasonable period of time ([See Regulations for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in the School of Graduate Studies Calendar](#)).
- To arrange for the completed thesis to be submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies in accordance with the [guidelines provided by the School of Graduate Studies](#).

If a student feels he/she is receiving unsatisfactory supervision, he/she should consult the Department Chair or the Chair of the Graduate Committee. Supervisory Committees will be reviewed periodically by a Departmental committee made up of the department's faculty and the Chair of the Department as an ex officio member.

Course Work

Students will normally be required to complete 18 units (6 half courses) of course work beyond the M.A. level, including the following required half (3 unit) half courses:

For students in Comparative Public Policy

- 783 Comparative Public Policy
- 784 Quantitative Political and Policy Analysis
- 796 Research Design and Methods

For students in International Relations

- 772 Theories of International Politics or 771 Advanced Concepts of International Relations Theory
- 774 Global Political Economy
- 796 Research Design and Methods

At least three of these 18 units should be from Major Field 2 (Teaching Field). Students should consult with their supervisor on the appropriate courses to take.

In order to remain in the program a student must maintain a clear B+ average. (For example, two marks of B+ and one of B would not constitute a clear B+ average). Failure to maintain a B+ average will normally result in the student being asked to leave the program.

Comprehensive Examinations

Each student will write comprehensive examinations in the Major Field and Major Field 2 (Teaching Field).

Comprehensive examinations consist of two exams (one in Major Field 1 and 1 in Major Field 2 [Teaching Field]). Normally, these Examination Periods will be scheduled such that students write their Major Field 1 exam in August of their first year, followed by the Major Field 2 exam in early December of their second year. The fields to be examined at each of these Examinations Periods will be determined by the Chair of the Graduate Committee in consultation with the supervisors of the students writing these examinations. Students cannot expect to be exempted from TA/RA duties during Examination Periods.

For students in Public Policy

Major Field 1:

Comparative Public Policy - within this major field students will write one examination covering the subfields:

- theories and approaches to comparative public policy
- public administration
- international dimensions of public policy

Major Field 2 (Teaching Field):

Additionally, students will write 1 examination in one of the following teaching fields: Canadian politics, comparative politics, international relations or political theory. Students are normally expected to have completed at least three units beyond the M.A. level at McMaster in this area prior to writing their comprehensive examination.

For students in International Relations

Major Field 1:

International Relations - within this major subfield students will write one examination covering the subfields:

- international relations theory / state of the field
- global political economy
- globalization, governance and security

Major Field 2 (Teaching Field):

Additionally students will write 1 examination in one of the following teaching fields: Canadian politics, comparative politics, political theory or public policy. Students are normally expected to

have completed at least three units beyond the M.A. level at McMaster in this area prior to writing their comprehensive examination.

The comprehensive examinations will be in the form of a take-home exam (89 hours for the Major Field 1 exam and 65 hours for the Major Field 2 exam) with a maximum number of words indicated in the exam. The maximum may vary according to the exam but under no circumstances may it exceed 7,500 words for the Major Field 1 exam and 5,000 words for the Major Field 2 exam. Study guides consisting of bibliographies for each examination paper will be revised at least every other year and made available to students in May in their examination year.

The examining committee for Major Field 1 will consist of the convenor or his/her delegate, and one other member of the faculty, who would normally be the student's supervisor. The examining committee for Major Field 2 (Teaching Field) will consist of one member of the faculty who is in the field to be examined and one other faculty member. The latter may, when appropriate, be drawn from the wider University Community. Responsibility for appointing members will rest with the appropriate field convenor in consultation with the Supervisor. The examining committees will normally mark the exams and paper and inform the student of the results within one month of the exams taking place. In order for the student to pass, he/she must receive an A- (A minus) or better from each committee. When a set of exams has been deemed not to have reached the required standard, the student must be provided with a written explanation.

Requests for delays in writing Comprehensive Examinations or writing at other times will be decided on the Graduate Committee.

A student who fails one or more parts of the Comprehensive Examinations may be asked to leave the program.

Language Requirements

Students must demonstrate reading and research competence in an approved language other than English. Competence in a language is deemed to mean the ability to comprehend government documents, newspapers and scholarly publications with the aid of a dictionary and, when it is appropriate to the student's intended means of research, to be able to speak and comprehend to a level that will allow the student to conduct interviews.

Language competence will be assessed by the Chair of the Graduate Committee, in consultation with the student's supervisor. Examples of demonstrated competence may include any one of the following:

- i) passing a language test, arranged by the Chair of the Graduate Committee (see below)
- ii) obtaining a mark of B+ or higher on any 6 unit language course offered at a post-secondary institute
- iii) Evidence of at least 60 hours of certified language tutoring, plus evidence that the student is capable of translating documents and/or interviews into English
- iv) evidence that the student speaks and is otherwise competent in a native language/mother tongue other than English.

Students must submit a formal request for assessment of language competence to the Chair of the Graduate Committee. If competence is to be assessed on a basis other than i) a language test, ii) a post-secondary language course, the student should submit an appropriate dossier of supporting evidence, along with supporting letter from his/her supervisor.

Students will be formally notified of the results of this assessment by the Chair of the Graduate Committee.

Students are strongly encouraged to complete the language requirement before seeking approval of their thesis proposal (i.e. normally by April of the student's second year in the doctoral program). However, there may be cases where this is not feasible (e.g., where language training in conjunction with fieldwork). In such cases, the student must outline within the thesis proposal a clear plan and timetable of meeting the language requirement, with this plan to be approved by the relevant committee. **In all cases, the language requirement must be met prior to scheduling the thesis defense.**

Language test

A French language test will be administered at a set date each year, normally at the end of April. An example of the test will be to translate pages of a CJPS article from French into English, and to translate a French language newspaper item into English. Students who are interested in writing a similar test in another language should consult with the Chair of the Graduate Committee.

Thesis Proposal

The thesis subject will be written in the field of comparative and/or international public policy, or in international relations. The student will develop his/her thesis proposal in consultation with the thesis supervisor and other members of his/her Supervisory Committee. The thesis proposal will normally be about 50 double-spaced pages and will include a description of the research problem in the context of the scholarly literature, an overview of research methods and sources, and a timetable for completion.

The thesis proposal shall then be submitted to the student's Supervisor Committee for approval. Following this, the student will give a short oral presentation based on their thesis proposal and answer questions.

The thesis proposal will normally be considered for approval by April of the second year of the student's program. If the student wishes to delay submission of the thesis proposal he/she must make a request to the Graduate Committee for permission to do so. The request must be accompanied by a supporting letter from the student's supervisor. Should the Graduate Committee approve the request, it must also set a new, reasonable deadline by which a proposal must be submitted. Students who do not pass a part of all of the December Comprehensive Examinations and elect to rewrite the Examinations in April will be required to submit their thesis proposal to the Supervisor Committee by the following September. Students must complete the oral presentation of their thesis proposal prior to embarking on major fieldwork. Students should also note that approval of the School of Graduate Studies is required for any prolonged period of absence from campus (e.g., to conduct fieldwork).

Research Ethics

Should a student's proposed thesis research involve human subjects, the student is responsible for ensuring that their proposed thesis research conforms to the guidelines for such research and for securing approval from [the McMaster Research Ethics Board](#) (MREB) prior to initiation of research activities. Students will normally submit their application to the MREB within four weeks of the defense of their thesis proposal.

Additional information can be found on the MREB site: <https://reo.mcmaster.ca/>

Thesis

The Ph.D. thesis is to be no more than 60,000 words of text. The thesis must not exceed 300 pages double-spaced inclusive of notes and bibliography). Normally, students will take two years to complete the thesis. They should at all times, maintain regular contact with their supervisor. When required, additional members may be added to the supervisory committee to ensure proper supervision of particular aspects of the thesis.

The thesis defense is to be undertaken according to the regulations set out by the School of Graduate Studies.

Administrative Issues

Terms of Reference for the Graduate Committee and Public Policy and International Relations area committees.

1. Area committees review applications for the Ph.D. program, selects candidates to be admitted, and recommends funding to the Graduate Committee.
2. In consultation, with area committees, the Graduate Committee assigns and approves supervisors and committee members for Ph.D. supervisory committees.
3. Graduate Committee maintains the Departmental regulations for the Ph.D. program.
4. Graduate Committee establishes processes for setting Ph.D. comprehensive examinations.
5. Graduate Committee annually reviews the progress of Ph.D. students.
6. Graduate Committee ranks students for external scholarships such as the Ontario Graduate Scholarships (OGS) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Scholarships (SSRHC).
7. Graduate Committee seeks to promote the Department's ability to recruit Ph.D. students through preparing publicity and other means.
8. Graduate Committee reviews and develops the Ph.D. program as needed.

The Graduate Committee will interpret these guidelines and regulations should that prove to be necessary.

Graduate Course Offerings

Political Science

The complete list of Political Science graduate courses is available in the [School of Graduate Studies Calendar](#). Political Science grad courses being offered for the 2018-2019 academic year are listed on the [Department of Political Science website](#).

School of Graduate Studies (mandatory requirements)

SGS 101 (1) Academic Research Integrity and Ethics
SGS 201 (1) Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)

All graduate students, including part-time students, exchange and visiting students must complete and pass the course SGS 101 Academic Research Integrity & Ethics within the first month of their first term after admission. You can enroll in this on-line course in Mosaic and it will be available to you via [Avenue to Learn](#) to complete.

Graduate students are also required to complete and pass SGS 201. You can enroll in this on-line course in Mosaic and it will be available to you as well in [Avenue to Learn](#). More information about this can be found through the [Accessibility Hub](#).

Students may not graduate or register in subsequent terms without having completed this required training.

School of Graduate Studies / McMaster University (mandatory requirements)

McMaster's Environmental and Occupational Health Support Services ([EOHSS](#)) Health and Safety Training Program provides mandatory training for all employees, grad students, volunteers and visitors working in the University. Self-registration offered by EOHSS is available through Mosaic. As a graduate student at McMaster you are required to complete the following 7 modules: 1) Asbestos Awareness, 2) Ergonomics, 3) Fire & Safety, 4) Health & Safety Orientation, 5) Slips, Trips & Falls, 6) WHMIS 2015, and 7) Violence & Harassment Prevention.

University Regulations

For complete listing of Regulations for Master's Degrees, students are advised to consult the current edition of the [School of Graduate Studies Calendar](#).

Other Administrative Information

Personal Information

Students are responsible for keeping the personal contact information, such as addresses and phone numbers up to date. Additions and changes must be completed through your Student Center in Mosaic.

Transportation

All full-time graduate students will be given a PRESTO card which you can use for free on the Hamilton Street Railway (HSR) and on GO Transit. More information about this can be found on the [Graduate Students Association website](#).

CUPE

Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), [Local 3906](#), Unit 1, represents all individuals employed as teaching assistants (TAs) and Research Assistants in lieu (RAs in lieu), demonstrators, tutors & super tutors and markers. If you are a TA or an RA in lieu of a TA, you are a member of CUPE. Union dues are deducted when you receive TA/RA payments. The [Union office](#) is located in KTH-B111.

Dental Plan

All full-time graduate students who are receiving a TA and/or RA in lieu of a TA of 130 hours or greater will have Dental Plan premiums deducted each month for the full year, September to August). Provisions for opting-out of the [Dental Plan](#) or for obtaining family coverage can be found online through the CUPE Local 3906 website.

Employment Regulations

Full-time students who are participating in McMaster-based paid employment should work no more than an average of 10 hours a week to a maximum of 505 hours in the academic year. Normally students who exceed this limit are asked drop down to part-time status, to stop working or reduce their hours of work. Changing student status from full-time to part-time will affect a student's scholarship funding, OSAP, and student visa.

No exceptions totaling 505 hours or more per academic year (September-August) will be approved.

Full-time Status

Full-time students are obliged to be on campus, except for vacation periods or authorized off-campus status, for all three terms of the university year. Any student who is away from campus for longer than one week, which is not part of the student's vacation entitlement, requires their supervisor's approval in writing. If this period of time exceeds two weeks, the approval of the department chair is also required. Students who will be away from campus for more than four weeks require not only permission from the Department but also that of the appropriate Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and must submit a Request to be Full Time off Campus.

Note that this permission is needed even for field work or study elsewhere in the world, in order to allow the University to comply with the regulation requiring that a written explanation for such absences be lodged in the Graduate School office.

Students may arrange, through the Department and the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, to be "full-time off-campus" for periods of up to a year. Students will also be required to complete the Risk Management Manual (RMM) 801 forms and gain approval through EOHSS. In cases of unauthorized absence the student will be deemed to have withdrawn voluntarily from graduate

study and will have to petition for readmission. No guarantee of readmission or of renewal of financial arrangements can be made.

In order to receive a degree, the student must fulfill all departmental or program requirements and all University regulations, including those of the School of Graduate Studies. Students who have outstanding financial accounts at the end of the academic year will not receive their academic results, diplomas, or transcripts.

Student Vacations

Full-time graduate students are expected to be on campus for all three terms of the university year. In addition to statutory holidays and the closure of the University normally late December until early January, normal vacation entitlement for a graduate student is two weeks of vacation during the year, to be scheduled by mutual agreement with the research supervisor. An exception to this allotment requires approval from the supervisor or in the supervisor's absence the Graduate Chair.

Students who are also employees of the University must seek vacation approval from their employment supervisor and are entitled to vacation time pursuant to the terms of their employment contract.

Teaching Assistantships/RA in lieu of TA

Some full-time graduate students are offered a TA (or RA in lieu) as part of their funding package. Duties vary according to department/course requirements but will normally consist of leading tutorials, meeting with students, email communication, marking, and other duties as discussed with the course instructor. It is important to note that TA positions will be distributed in the first or second week of September.

Transcripts

Unofficial transcripts are available through Mosaic. Access is available to view and print on demand through the My Academics tab. You can also request an official transcript through Mosaic with options to include in-person pick-up (GH-108) or mail. For rush, courier or fax requests processing charges will apply. More information can be found through the [Office of the Registrar](#).

Universal Health Insurance Plan (UHIP) for Visa Students

The [Universal Health Insurance Plan](#) (UHIP) is a mandatory, comprehensive health insurance plan that provides health coverage for International and Incoming Exchange Students. UHIP covers medically necessary doctors and hospital visits within Ontario. International students are automatically enrolled in UHIP every year. The student is responsible to ensure that the coverage is correct and are asked to check student account in Mosaic. For more information please visit the Health Care portal through McMaster's [International Student Services website](#). More detailed information and what you need to know is listed on this site.

Contacts and Facilities

Graduate Committee 2018-2019

Chair: Dr. Robert O'Brien

MA International Relations Graduate Advisor: Dr. Peter Nyers

MA Political Science Graduate Advisor: Dr. Peter Graefe

Scholarships Coordinator: Dr. Tony Porter

TA Coordinator: Dr. Stephen McBride

Curriculum Coordinator: Dr. Katherine Boothe

Recruitment Coordinator: Dr. Michelle Dion

PhD Graduate Student Representative: TBA

MA Graduate Student Representative: TBA

Area Convenors

Canadian Politics: Dr. Greg Flynn

Comparative Politics: Dr. Nibaldo Galleguillos

International Relations: Dr. Peter Nyers

Political Theory: Dr. Inder Marwah

Public Policy: Dr. Katherine Boothe

Administrative Assistant

Manuela Dozzi

Email: dozzim@mcmaster.ca

Office: Kenneth Taylor Hall, Room 527 (KTH-527)

Tel: (905) 525-9140 extension 24742

Please feel free to visit the [Political Science website](#) to view faculty profiles and contact information.

Graduate Student Computer Lab

At present, graduate students in Political Science have access to a small computer lab located on the 5th floor of Kenneth Taylor Hall in KTH-501. Some if not most course readings will be placed in KTH-501 and can be borrowed for photocopying. The access code to this room will be given to all MA students after the Orientation Session.

Photocopying/Printing

A network photocopier is available for students to use and is located in KTH-501. The service is available at a cost of \$0.10/printed per side (not per page) for black and white printing only. Individual photocopier codes will be given to each student in September.

Billing cycle 1: Tuesday, September 4, 2018 – Sunday, December 2, 2018

- Bill date: Monday, December 3, 2018
- Payment due date: Monday, December 17, 2018

Billing cycle 2: Monday, December 3, 2018 – Tuesday, April 30, 2019

- Bill date: Wednesday, May 1, 2019
- Payment due date: Wednesday, May 15, 2019

There will also be one final billing date in mid to late summer of 2019.

Mail Services

Each graduate student will have their own mailbox located in KTH-526. This room can be accessed at any time and we ask that you regularly check your mailbox. The access code for this room will be given to all MA students after the Orientation Session.

Department Checkout Requirements

Upon completion of all degree requirements, students will be required to empty their mailboxes, return any keys (if applicable) and to make sure that their contact information in Mosaic is current and up to date. Any mail collected will be forwarded to you for up to three months.

Departmental website

More information about the department, courses, news, research, people and contacts can be found on the [Department of Political Science](#) website.

Appendix I Ph.D. Comprehensive Examination Procedures

Setting

1. About 6 weeks before exams are written a list of previous/banked questions will be distributed to members of the area group by the Graduate Administrative Assistant.
2. Members of the area group are asked to submit additional questions to the area convenor.
3. Two weeks before exams, the area group meets and reviews all questions. Supervisors should be invited, but are not required to attend the meeting.
4. Five questions are chosen from the questions available for the Major Field 2 exam. For the Major Field 1 exam in International Relations, seven questions are chosen (2 in International Relations Theory/State of the Field, 2 in Global Political Economy, and 3 in Globalization, Governance and Security). For Major Field 1 exam in Comparative Public Policy, nine questions are chosen (3 for each subfield). Should the area convenor be unable to get a group consensus on the exam, the method of selection will be simple majority. In the event of a tie, the student's supervisor casts the tie-breaking vote.
5. For Major Field 1 exam, the student picks up the exam at 4:00 p.m. on day 1 and must return the completed exam by 9:00 a.m., 4 days later, no more than 89 hours after picking up the exam. For the Major Field 2 exam, the student picks up the exam at 4:00 p.m. on day 1 and must return the completed exam by 9:00 a.m., 3 days later, no more than 65 hours after picking up the exam.
6. The examinations are scheduled in an order to be discussed between the Graduate Chair and the supervisors of the students taking the examinations.

Marking the Comprehensive Examinations

1. There are 2 markers for each exam. The markers will be determined by the area convenor and the student's supervisor. At least one of the markers must be from that particular area. A student's supervisor may or may not be a marker.
2. The Graduate Administrative Assistant distributes the completed exam and grade sheets to the markers. Exams with grades and comments are returned to the Graduate Administrative Assistant normally within 2 weeks. Comments are to be made only on the grade sheet.
3. When all exams are returned, the Graduate Chair will give each examiner a copy of the other examiner's comments on each exam. The Chair then determines the final mark - "Pass with Distinction (P+)", "Pass" (P), or "Fail" (F) and returns exams to the Graduate Administrative Assistant. When an exam scores a mark of A+ or contains one A+, the Chair will encourage the examiners to discuss the exam and come to a decision as to whether or not it merits a distinction. Distinctions are awarded per exam. For example, there could be a distinction in the major exam and the teaching field. The Graduate Chair informs the Graduate School of the results. This milestone will be added to the student's record.
4. In case of "Pass" or "Pass with Distinction" the comments from the grade sheets are given to the supervisor who verbally provides feedback to the student.
5. In case of a "Fail" a letter is given to the student indicating the reasons for the failure and areas needed for improvement. The letter is written by the convenor in consultation with the supervisor. The letter is sent by the Graduate Chair. Included with the letter will be comments from the markers, which will be all typed but anonymous.
6. Both markers must agree for a failing grade to be given to a student. Failure on one question does not automatically represent failure on the exam. If in the judgement of the markers the exam represents a "satisfactory grasp of the subject matter" a passing grade for the overall exam may be given even if one question is not satisfactory. If necessary a third reader can be consulted.

Appendix II Ranking of Applicants for Scholarships

The ranking of Ph.D. students applying for SSHRC scholarships will be done by a committee composed of the following people: the Chair of the Graduate Committee, and the members of the International Relations and Public Policy fields.