

**UCLA DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**  
**GRADUATE HANDBOOK**  
**2025-2026**

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*The Graduate Handbook may be subject to change by the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC).*

## **Important Dates for Academic Year 25-26:**

First day of instruction:

F'25: Thurs - 09/25/25

W'26: Mon - 01/05/26

S'26: Mon - 03/30/26

Enrollment deadline:

F'25: Fri - 10/10/25

W'26: Fri - 01/16/26

S'26: Fri - 04/10/26

Last day of instruction:

F'25: Fri - 12/05/25

W'26: Fri - 03/13/26

S'26: Fri - 06/05/26

Field Paper Proposal Due:

April 10<sup>th</sup> (For Second Years)

Field Paper Due:

- For those entering the program in Fall 2025 or later, the qualifying paper is due **October 10<sup>th</sup>** at 11:59PM of the third year.
- For students who entered in 2023, the deadline is **January 12, 2026** at 11:59pm.
- For students who entered in 2024, the deadline is **January 11, 2027** at 11:59pm.

(ESTHER WILL INSERT MORE DEPT CALENDAR DEADLINES FOR GRADS)

Language Petitions for Doctoral Degree;

Due October 10, January 10, April 10

Master's Degree Advancement to Candidacy:

Due October 10, January 10, April 10.

Change of Advisor petition:

Due Winter quarter of second year (January 10). Grads may change advisors again after that time, but an initial advisor must be selected by January 10<sup>th</sup> of the second year.

## **Introduction**

This handbook is designed to provide students with information about basic elements of the graduate program. It answers many frequently asked questions about university policy, department policy and the regular practices of successive Graduate Studies Committees. It is meant to serve as a supplement to the UCLA General Catalog and Graduate Division's websites, which should also be consulted for information on rules and procedures.

## **I. Department Communications**

**Email:** The department will communicate with students using the email address that students provide. Students may choose whether to use the “.ucla.edu” address provided by UCLA or some other address. If students do not read their mail at least daily on the address that we have on record, please set it to forward the email to whatever address the student uses.

**Department Resources Website:** The Department maintains a [Box folder](#) of resources for grad students and faculty. Students will need to log in with their UCLA credentials to access this website. Additionally, please see our department website for the graduate handbook and student forms: <https://polisci.ucla.edu/academics/graduate/student-forms/>.

## **II. Enrollment**

**Enrollment:** Graduate students are required to enroll in 12 units per quarter to maintain full-time student status. Grads who receive any funding through UCLA or are employed as a GSR/ASE must maintain the 12 unit minimum otherwise the campus has the discretion to revoke the award. Graduate students who are on in-absentia status are required to enroll in a minimum of 8 units (while still maintaining full-time status). Grads are expected to enroll in classes **by the end of the second week of the quarter**. Any late enrollments must be completed by the end of the third week of the quarter. Students must maintain full-time enrollment throughout the quarter to protect their employment benefits and to meet the terms of any financial awards.

The last day of classes in a quarter (i.e., Friday of the tenth week) is the deadline for dropping classes and making grading basis changes. If a student drops a class, no notation appears on their transcript. Please note that the Division of Graduate Education is very strict about approving retroactive changes. As graduate students have the entire 10-week quarter to make changes, DGE only approves retroactive requests under extenuating circumstances.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Grads are allowed to take three quarters leave of absence during their graduate career at UCLA. They may request up to three quarters at one time. To activate a leave, [fill this form out](#) and email it to the grad advisor. When students are on leave, they will have access to the Young Research Library (YRL) and Bruin Online. All other university services will be closed to grads, including your health insurance.

For more information about a leave of absence, please see this link here:

[Leave of Absence \(Registrars Office\)](#)  
[Leave of Absence \(Division of Graduate Education Office\)](#)  
[Leave of Absence Details \(Polisci Website\)](#)

## IN ABSENTIA

Grads are allowed to take up to six quarters of in absentia during their graduate career at UCLA. While on in absentia status, students are considered full-time and pay about 1/3 of the quarter tuition. Health insurance is included in this reduced tuition rate but can also be waived if students have proof of health insurance elsewhere. In absentia students are required to enroll in a minimum of 8 units per quarter to maintain full-time status.

[In Absentia Form \(Division of Graduate Education Office\)](#)  
[In Absentia Details \(Polisci Website\)](#)

**Confused on which status is right for you? [Please see this chart from DGE comparing Leaves of Absence vs. In Absentia.](#)**

## FIRST YEAR ADVISORS & CHANGE OF ADVISORS

Your first-year advisor is assigned by the Graduate Vice Chair based on your interests as an incoming student. These assignments will be sent to all incoming graduate students the summer before they begin. This first-year advisor helps grads navigate their new field and help offer course and research advice in their first year.

It is normal and unproblematic, however, for students to change advisors as their research trajectories develop. Students should meet with their faculty advisor at least once each quarter. If a student is not regularly in contact with their advisor, they should email him or her to set up an appointment.

Each year, advisors will report to their relevant field chair on their students' progress in the graduate program, based on a review of the student's performance, discussions with other faculty in their field, and a self-assessment that the student will compose.

Students may change their advisor at any time, including during their first year, for any reason: e.g., they have developed a working relationship with a different member of the

faculty, their interests have changed, or they simply want to work with someone else. To make such a change, the student must get the consent of their new advisor but not their old one, and they need not provide a reason. Just submit a [Change of Program Advisor form](#) at any time to the Graduate Advisor.

**All grads must submit a [Change of Program Advisor form](#) by the winter quarter of their second year even if they wish to keep their first-year advisor as their advisor.**

This advisor will help oversee their field paper proposal and paper and possibly be their field chair. Students who are unable to identify an advisor should see their field chair and the Vice Chair as soon as possible. For students who wish to change to an advisor in a different field, please speak with the new field chair on how to petition to change fields and advisors at the same time and fill out the [petition form](#).

If a student has an advisor that leaves the university, the student must choose another advisor in the department. Please note that the advisor (or future committee chair) must be in the Political Science department. Faculty outside the department can serve on a student's committee or even as a co-chair, but all grads will need at least one Political Science dept faculty to serve as their main advisor/chair. As stated above, if the new advisor is in a new field, please speak with the new field chair on how to petition to change fields and advisors at the same time and fill out the [petition form](#).

### **MATH and R CAMP**

Math camp is a three-week crash course in core concepts like algebra, calculus, and matrices. R camp is a crash course in using the statistical software, R. While not required, it is strongly recommended that students attend this virtual workshop to prepare for the first-year methods sequence. Students watch videos and join for live problem-solving sessions. The camps are a low stress way to either refresh old math concepts or learn them for the first time and to use R. The course materials are on [bruinlearn](#), and this year's course instructor is [Josh Goetz](#).

Math Camp is always offered in the summer before Fall quarter begins (usually starts the last week of August) and is taught in a hybrid format.

## **III. Course Requirements & Fields of Study**

Grad students must choose a first major field, a second major field and one minor field. There are five choices for first major field: American Politics (AP), Comparative Politics (CP), International Relations (IR), Political Theory (PT), and Race, Ethnicity & Politics (REP).

For the second major field and minor field, students can choose among the above five substantive fields or the additional option of Formal Theory and Quantitative Methods (Methods). The fields each specify their own course requirements, which are listed below.

In addition to the field-specific requirements, there are additional requirements that apply to

all students:

- All incoming students must take PS 292A “Introduction to Political Inquiry” in the fall quarter of their first year.
- All incoming students must take PS 495A in the spring of their first year and PS 495B in the fall of their second year. This teaching practicum course is required by the University for students to be eligible to teach in the department.
- All incoming students must take 2 two-quarter field seminars by the end of their second year. One field seminar should be in the student’s first major field and one in the student’s second major field. Methods does not have a two-quarter field seminar. Students who choose Methods as their second field will take regular methods courses instead of the two-quarter field seminar. Please see the methods field requirements below.
- Students must pass the preliminary exam in their first major field. Both field seminars and the preliminary exam are generally completed in the student’s first year; they *must* be completed by the end of the second year in the program.

All students are required to take at least **16 graded courses**, in addition to PS 292A, 495A, and 495B. At minimum, all students are expected to complete at least **7 graded courses plus PS 292A and 495A by the end of the first year**, and at least **12 graded courses (cumulative, plus PS 292A, 495A, and 495B) by the end of the second year**. Failure to meet these requirements may result in the student’s dismissal from the program (see Section XI (page 19)). The M.A. degree may be awarded after the student completes 12 courses, passes their preliminary exam (in first major field), and passes their qualifying paper (as described in Section V below).

Independent studies courses (PS 596) may satisfy major or minor field requirements so long as grads petition the course to the Vice Chair and Field Chair (who may consult the field chair). (See more information on how to petition on Page 20).

[See page with pre-approved course substitutions here](#)

Students are welcome to take courses outside of the department. Many of our faculty teach courses in other programs and those outside courses can be petitioned to be used towards the Political Science PhD course requirements. (See more information on how to petition on Page 20).

Once grads have taken their required coursework, they can continue to take academic courses on campus or they can enroll in Directed Research (596), 597 (Preparation for PhD Qualifying Examinations) or 599 (Research for and Preparation for PhD Dissertation). Since all students must enroll in 12 units per quarter, many senior students will take 12 units of 597 before they advance and 12 units of 599 after they advance. Both 597 and 599 do not require the student to attend class or submit any research project/paper. These are units for students to maintain full-time status while working towards advancing to candidacy and/or filing their dissertation.

For a look at our department courses, please see the [Course Descriptions here](#).

**Transfer of previous graduate work:** It is possible to apply courses taken at another graduate program to degree requirements here. If a student has graduate level course work but no M.A., they **may petition to apply courses** from their previous graduate program to fulfill UCLA requirements. The courses should be similar to UCLA courses (for example, they must be aimed at Poli Sci Ph.D. students) and should fit into their program of study. Syllabi and transcripts for these courses should be turned into the Graduate Office along with the petition. (Please see the “How to Petition” section on page 20). The Graduate Vice Chair will consult with the appropriate field chair before approving a petition. Once approved, the petition and information will be added to the student’s file. Please note that this transfer for coursework will be internal and the student will still need to take their remaining courses for letter grade. No notations appear on the student’s transcript. The number of courses a student must take will be reduced to 14. Students **are still required to satisfy all other program requirements, and the waived credits cannot count towards your M.A.**

*If a student already has an M.A. degree, they may still be eligible to receive the UCLA Political Science M.A. degree. UCLA does not award double degrees in the same field. Only if a student’s field of study is different from their previous degree, will they be eligible for an M.A. degree at UCLA. Please ask Esther Blair for more information.*

Specific field requirements, which are in addition to those described above, are outlined in the table below:

### Field Requirements

Field	Major Field Requirements	Minor Requirements
American Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 260A, 260B</li> <li>• Any 2 AP courses</li> <li>• No transfers or 596s.</li> <li>• Must complete 200A, B, C during the first year.</li> <li>• Preliminary exam (first major field students only)</li> </ul>	Any 2 courses in American Politics
Comparative Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 240A, 240B</li> <li>• Any 2 CP courses</li> <li>• Preliminary exam (first major field students only)</li> </ul>	Any 2 courses in Comparative Politics
Formal Theory and Quantitative Methods ( <i>Not available as first major field</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any 4 methods courses</li> <li>• (Methods does not have a field seminar sequence)</li> </ul>	Any 2 courses in Methods

International Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 220A and 220B</li> <li>• Any 2 IR courses (220C-231 or 239)</li> <li>• Preliminary exam (first major field students only)</li> </ul>	Any 2 courses in International Relations
Political Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 210A, 210B</li> <li>• Any 2 PT courses</li> <li>• Preliminary exam (first major field students only)</li> </ul>	Any 2 courses in Political Theory
Race, Ethnicity & Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 280A, 280B</li> <li>• Any 2 REP courses (214, 241, 261A, 261D, 264C, 289A/B, Psych 222C, Psych 255, 292A, 292B, 259, 269) Preliminary exam (first major field students only)</li> </ul>	Any 2 courses in Race, Ethnicity, and Politics

#### **IV. Course Grading**

**All courses used to meet degree requirements must be taken for a letter grade.**

Courses taken on an S/U basis do not affect the GPA and cannot be used towards the PhD or Master's Degree requirements

**Cumulative GPA:** Grad students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 to remain in good standing with the university. Failure to meet this minimum will result in being put on probation. If a student's GPA falls below 3.0 for more than two quarters (not necessarily consecutive), they may be recommended for termination. According to university guidelines, termination due to low GPA is not subject to appeal. Notwithstanding this university rule, the department requires maintaining a higher GPA (the specific level of which is specified in the student's offer letter) to retain eligibility for a TAship. For more information about the department dismissal process, please see Section XI (page 19).

**Incompletes:** Taking a short-term Incomplete may occasionally be an appropriate way to deal with the crunch of work at the end of a quarter. However, accumulating more than 2 incompletes is generally a cause for concern.

Some instructors do not grant Incompletes under any circumstances. If a student wants to take an Incomplete in a course, they must be sure to discuss this ahead of time with the instructor. There is no paperwork needed to take an Incomplete; the course instructor will report that grade along with the others on his/her end-of-quarter report. Once an Incomplete (I) grade is assigned, it remains on the transcript along with the passing grade students may later receive for the course.

**Grad students have one quarter in which to remove an Incomplete before it automatically lapses to an F.** When the student hands in all the missing assignments to



the course instructor, they must contact the instructor to make sure he or she has received it. Grads are responsible for ensuring that the course instructor has changed the student's grade on myUCLA before the next term ends. The grade will then be officially posted on the student's transcript. It may take several weeks before the grade is entered on your transcript.

Incompletes do not factor into a student's GPA. However, **if a student fails to remove an Incomplete by the end of the subsequent quarter, the Incomplete lapses to an F**, which is averaged with other grades to compute GPA. Students may clear up the F by filing an extension of their incomplete and completing the coursework. Note: instructors do not have to grant the extension. As a general rule, the department does not approve extensions beyond a year from when the incomplete grade was given. For example, if a student gets an incomplete in the Fall quarter, they have until the end of Fall quarter the following year to clear up the F grade. If it is not cleared up within a year, the grade for the course is an F.

**Instances where students receive too many Incomplete grades, have too many lapsed F grades, and/or have a cumulative or term GPA below 3.0 may be subject to dismissal. Please see Section XI (page 19) for more information.**

## **V. Preliminary Field Exam and Qualifying Field Paper<sup>1</sup>**

In addition to the other course requirements, students must pass a preliminary exam ("field exam") in their first major field and complete a single qualifying paper ("field paper") in order to advance to candidacy.

### **Preliminary Field Exam Deadlines and Procedures**

Students are expected to pass the preliminary field exam before the end of their second year. Grads should take the preliminary field exam at the conclusion of the two-quarter field seminar in their first major field. Exams are usually given during exam week of Winter Quarter.

Unlike a traditional "comprehensive exam" the preliminary field exam will focus on the material covered in the two-quarter course; the best way to prepare is by taking the course and learning the material.

**Field seminars are not always offered each year.** Grads should check with their field chair to learn more about when their first and second field seminars will be offered and plan accordingly. Depending on when the field seminar is offered, some students may not be able to take their field exam until their second year.

Each field offers a different format for the field exam, which may consist of essay exam, oral exam, or research paper. If a field exam is used as the final exam for the two-quarter field seminar, **students must declare whether that they are using the exam as their preliminary field exam.** Students should note this on the front of their exam in the case of

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<sup>1</sup> These requirements changed in Fall 2016. Students who entered the program prior to that date should consult the 2017-2018 version of this Handbook for applicable rules.

a written exam or inform the evaluators at the start of an oral exam. Please check with the field seminar instructors for more details.

Students who transfer from another UCLA department must take the preliminary field exam in their new first field **BY THE END OF THEIR FIRST YEAR IN THE PHD PROGRAM.**

### **Procedure in case of a student does not pass the preliminary field exam the first time**

Students who do not pass the field exam in their first major field, will have one additional opportunity to take the in the Spring Quarter of the same year they failed the field exam. Note: the exam will be the same format as the first exam but will not be the same exam.

Students who fail a field exam (first time) will receive written feedback from the evaluator(s). This feedback should be used to help the student prepare for the second exam. Faculty will also be available to meet with students to discuss their performance and provide suggestions for improvement.

### **Procedure in case of a student does not pass the preliminary field exam a second time**

If a student does not pass the field exam a second time, evaluators will provide written feedback on the exams to the students about why they failed.

Students will not remain in that field as a first field nor will be allowed to rejoin the field later. If the students passed the two-quarter seminar, they will be allowed to use the field as their second field.

If students fail the exam a second time in their first year of the program, they can choose **to leave the program or if they wish to remain in the program they must complete the following to transfer to a new first field:**

- **BY AUGUST 15<sup>TH</sup> BEFORE THEIR SECOND YEAR**
  - Contact the vice chair, field chair of their desired new field, and graduate advisor via email to declare their intent to switch first fields.
  - Find an advisor in consultation with the field chair who is a ladder faculty member (not emeritus or 0% appointment) in the field they wish to transfer to and submit a change of advisor form.
  - NOTE: Fields may have additional requirements before students are allowed to declare their intent to transfer. It is incumbent upon the students to discuss these requirements with the field chair.
- **BEFORE THE END OF THE SECOND YEAR**
  - Take the two-quarter field seminar for their new field if they have not already taken it
  - Take additional courses needed to fulfill field requirements
  - Passed the field exam in their new field by the end of their second year
    - Should students fail the first exam, they will have an opportunity to retake it in Spring Quarter

- They will receive written feedback from the evaluators should they fail.
  - Find a field paper advisor and completed a field paper proposal form for their new field by the April 10 deadline.
- NOTE: Fields may have additional requirements to transfer. Students need to meet with the field chair about these requirements and ensure they are all completed by the end of the second year.

Students who fail to meet any of these requirements will be subject to dismissal.

SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS WHO FAIL THE FIELD EXAM OF THEIR FIRST FIELD MAY BE SUBJECT TO DISMISSAL, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THEY SWITCHED FIELDS.

**DISMISSAL PROCEDURE:**

- The Vice Chair will notify the student that they are now subject to dismissal
- The student will have 14 days to appeal the decision to the GSC and include any information they wish the GSC to evaluate. These decisions are based on the student's entire record in the graduate program and are made in consultation with the student's advisor.

**Procedures to switch fields after passing the preliminary field exam**

Students who have passed the preliminary field exam and later wish to switch their major field may do so. To switch fields, they must:

- Email the Vice Chair and Field Chair of the field they wish to switch into of their intent to switch fields.
- Meet with the Field Chair of the new field to discuss any requirements for switching fields.
  - Fields have different requirements to switch. Field may require students to take the preliminary field exam to switch.
  - Political Theory and REP require students to take the preliminary field exam to switch fields. REP has additional requirements.
- In consultation with the field chair, find a new advisor in the field.
- Have approval of the Field Chair and Vice Chair.

**Qualifying Field Paper Proposal and Field Paper Deadlines**

Qualifying Field Paper Proposal Deadlines:

- Students must get approval of their qualifying field paper proposal from their qualifying paper advisor. The qualifying field paper proposal advisor must be a ladder-track faculty member in the department (regular or by courtesy), unless permission is given by the Vice Chair.
- Students must complete the [Field Paper Proposal Form](#) by April 10<sup>th</sup> of their second year in the program.
- **Students are responsible for ensuring their advisor has completed the [Field](#)**

- [Paper Advisor Confirmation](#) form by April 10<sup>th</sup> of their second year as well.
- **Failure to submit the qualifying field paper proposal form or the field paper advisor confirmation form by the deadline may trigger a review process that may lead to dismissal from the Ph.D. program. Please see Section XI (page 19) for more information.**

#### Qualifying Field Paper Deadlines:

- For those entering the program in Fall 2023 or Fall 2024, the qualifying paper is due on Monday (or Tuesday in cases where Monday is a holiday) of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of the student's 8<sup>th</sup> quarter (ordinarily Winter of their 3<sup>rd</sup> year).
- For those entering the program in Fall 2025 or later, the qualifying paper is due **October 10<sup>th</sup>** at 11:59PM of the third year.
- Resubmissions (in the event of receiving a “not qualified” grade) are due six weeks after the failed evaluation and comments are given to the student. The student must resubmit the paper to the graduate office by 4pm via email.
- For those students wishing to submit their paper early, qualifying papers will be due on January 10<sup>th</sup>, April 10<sup>th</sup>, and June 10<sup>th</sup> of each year.
- All qualifying papers should be submitted through the [Field Paper Submission Form](#). Papers may be submitted early but will not be sent to the field to grade until the next due date. For example, a paper submitted on March 15<sup>th</sup> would not be sent to the relevant field chair to grade until April 10<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Qualifying Paper Procedures:**

Students must submit papers by the stated deadlines. Postponements will be allowed only in extreme circumstances and must be approved by the Graduate Vice Chair. Petitions to postpone because of an inability to locate or gather data will not be approved. Please see page 20 for How to Submit Petitions.

**Evaluation:** Qualifying field papers are assigned by the appropriate field chair for evaluation to two faculty members in the relevant field(-s). In the event that the two readers return different evaluations, a third reader is chosen by the field chair. All readers submit written reports. Grads cannot choose their own readers, but will be told who the readers are once the evaluation process is complete and the student has received the written reports. The student's field paper advisor is not excluded from being a reader, nor is the advisor a guaranteed reader.

Papers are graded: Qualified; Not Qualified; or Qualified with Distinction. They are evaluated for knowledge of subject, originality of ideas, and craftsmanship of research. They are also evaluated for conciseness. They need not be of publishable quality, but they must follow APSR guidelines for format. Good papers should not exceed about 35 pages; and papers, including footnotes, may not exceed 40 pages. References do not count toward the page count. **Papers longer than 40 pages (excluding appendices) will not be read.**

Papers that are graded “not qualified” by two readers must be revised and resubmitted. In such instances, the Graduate Advisor will attach the comments received on the original submission to the revision before it is distributed for its second review. Students should

provide a response to the comments, explaining how they addressed them in their revision. The readers of the resubmitted paper may or may not be the same as the readers of their original paper.

A resubmitted paper will be evaluated on whether it adequately responds to the comments of the first set of reviewers. Any new material that was not evaluated by the first set of readers will be judged by the same standards as a newly submitted field paper. The standard for passing a resubmitted qualifying paper is neither lower nor higher than the standard for passing a first submission.

**Failure of a resubmitted qualifying paper triggers a review process that may lead to dismissal from the Ph.D. program.** Please see Section XI (page 19) for more information.

AFTER A SECOND FAILED FIELD PAPER, STUDENT MAY REQUEST THAT THE PAPER BE EVALUATED AT THE MASTER'S LEVEL AND RECEIVE THE MASTER'S DEGREE.

**Appeals:** If a student's resubmitted qualifying paper fails, they are entitled to appeal the decision. Appeals may be substantive or procedural. In either case, appeals must be filed within two weeks after the student is notified of the grade.

Appeals should not be submitted after the first qualifying paper fails. Any comments/opinions at that stage should be addressed in the resubmission. The department will not consider any appeal at this juncture. Only after the resubmission fails can a student appeal the decision under one of the two circumstances below:

*Substantive appeals* are to be submitted in writing and offer a detailed response to the readers' comments. They must provide intellectual grounds for appeal. The appeal will be sent to two new readers. The readers of an appeal will receive copies of the written comments by the first set of readers. The appeal is successful if two readers agree that the paper should pass. In that case, the paper passes. If only one reader passes the paper, the appeal will be sent to a third reader. If the third reader passes the paper, the paper passes. If the third reader fails the paper, the paper fails.

*Procedural appeals* go to the GSC. A procedural appeal argues that something was at fault with the administration of the qualifying paper process that caused a student to fail. To exercise a procedural appeal, students must submit a written statement describing what procedure was violated. If the appeal is successful, the paper result is voided. It is as if the paper had not been handed in. The student must resubmit the paper the following quarter, at the next regular submission date.

## **VI. Foreign Language Requirement**

Please note that there are several ways to fulfill the foreign language requirement (see the graduate handbook policy below).

For graduate students who are planning to advance soon, please make sure you submit this form as soon as possible. Students must have completed the foreign language requirement before you defend your prospectus.

1. **The foreign language requirement is satisfied by passing the 6th quarter or 4th semester of a 2-year language class sequence with a grade of B or better. Any course beyond the first two years also meets the requirement.**

\*Students who took this at another institution must provide the transcript with their language petition.

2. **An alternative method is to take a language exam at UCLA. The requirement is satisfied if an instructor in one of UCLA's language departments certifies comprehension at the second-year level.**

3. **If research methodology is more useful to the student than a foreign language, the foreign language requirement can be met by taking three quantitative methods courses at the PS 200A level or above. Typically, students satisfy this requirement with PS 200A, 200B and 200C. All courses must be graded.**

**The foreign language (or research methodology) requirement should be passed before a student takes their oral Ph.D. exam. It must be passed before a student will be advanced to candidacy, and no later than their 15th quarter in the program.**

If a student has satisfied their foreign language requirement, please fill out this form below and submit it to the petition form (instructions on page 20)

[Language Petition and Instructions \(Polisci Website\)](#)

Students should remember to attach their transcript/paperwork and highlight the courses they would like to use to satisfy the requirement. If a student is using their native language to satisfy it, no additional paperwork is needed (beyond the form).

## **VII. Advancing to Candidacy and Doctoral Committees**

Grad students are expected to advance to candidacy by the end of your 12th quarter (usually four years) in the graduate program. If a student does not advance by that time, they will be considered Not on Time to Degree. In order to advance, the student must complete all course requirements, their preliminary field exam, their qualifying field paper, and the foreign language requirement. Then they must assemble a doctoral committee and defend a written dissertation prospectus.

**Doctoral Committees:** Doctoral committees must have a minimum of four members. No more than two can be at the assistant professor level. Faculty at other universities may be included (by petition to Grad Division) among the four members. For full regulations

regarding doctoral committees, students should consult *Standards & Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA*, published by Grad Division (<http://www.gdnet.ucla.edu/gasaa/library/spfsgs.pdf>).

As soon as all four members agree to be on the committee, fill out this Nomination of Doctoral Committee form, get the relevant signature and submit it to the graduate office via the Petition form (please see page 20). The graduate office will submit this form to DGE on the student's behalf. Please plan to submit this form at least 1 month prior to the oral defense. **Grad Division's approval of a student's committee is not automatic — especially if it includes faculty from outside UCLA, in which case approval can often take up to six weeks.** Students should not assemble the committee so late that if Grad Division disapproves it, disaster will befall them.

Grads MAY NOT defend their prospectus until they receive approval of their committee by DGE. There must be at least 24 hours from the approval date and the defense date. DGE will not process an oral defense approval on the same day the committee approval was sent out.

Once the nomination of doctoral committee is approved, students should book a seminar room with the front office and send the Grad Office a calendar invite to which day/time the defense will be held. That Calendar invite will ensure that the grad office sends the docusign for the student's committee to approve their defense and finalize their advancement to doctoral candidacy.

If the student or one or more members of a student's committee cannot make it in-person, **the student may email the Dept Chair petitioning for one or more members to join via zoom.** Please note that students must receive this prior approval before they can defend with some members zooming in.

**Prospectus:** The dissertation prospectus is generally about the length of a research paper. It should describe the central argument of a student's proposed thesis, the relevant existing literature on the topic, the research they have accomplished thus far, the research that needs to be completed, and their strategy for completing it. It should also generally contain a chapter outline. Students should, however, consult closely with their advisor about the contents of their prospectus, since s/he may not require each of these elements, or may require others not listed here.

*The University requires an oral exam on the student's dissertation prospectus.* Students are expected to distribute a copy of the prospectus to committee members and the graduate office at least three weeks before the oral exam. Scheduling a date and time when all members can attend the oral is your responsibility. Once a student has settled on time and date, contact the front desk to reserve a seminar room. Normally students should not schedule an oral exam until their committee members have indicated that they believe the student's prospectus is ready to be examined. Naturally, such indications are not a guarantee that a student's advancement to candidacy will be approved.

*Final oral exams for completed dissertations take place only when required by the committee.*

If the committee does not approve a student's advancement to candidacy, the student should

consult with their advisor on necessary revisions to their prospectus. The expectation that the student will advance to candidacy by the end of their 12th quarter does not change.

If a student needs to drop or add committee members after they have passed their oral, Please fill out [this form](#) and submit it to the graduate office via petition process (please see page 20).

Students who have advanced to candidacy should provide a copy of their prospectus to the Grad Office for inclusion in their files. Each year following advancement to candidacy, students should submit a dissertation project update. These are kept in your dossier for fellowship review.

For rules governing the final completion and deposit of student dissertations, please see these links below:

(ADD DEPT LINK FOR FORM AND INSTRUCTIONS)

- <https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/graduate-study/file-your-thesis-or-dissertation/>
- <https://grad.ucla.edu/academics/calendar/thesis-dissertation-filing-deadlines-and-workshops/>
- <https://grad.ucla.edu/gasaa/etd/filingrequirements.pdf>

**Students who fail their oral defense may be subject to dismissal by the Vice Chair.**

**Students who do not advance in a timely manner or are beyond time-to-degree may be subject to dismissal by the Vice Chair.**

**Please see the dismissal and appeal information in Section XI (page 19).**

## **END OF YEAR PROGRESS EVALUATIONS**

All graduate students will receive an end of year progress evaluation from their field in Spring Quarter (no later than June 30<sup>th</sup>). These letters will provide updates of what was completed that year and what milestones/deadlines remain. Students who are not on time-to-degree will receive deadlines in which they must meet to get back on track. Failure to meet these deadlines and milestones may result in a dismissal recommendation. Please see Section XI (page 19) for more information.

These end of year evaluations should not be a surprise. Grads should be meeting with their advisors regularly and discussing progress in the program, research goals, time-to-degree, upcoming deadlines/expectations, etc.

## **VIII. Funding**

Graduate funding is first determined by commitments that incoming students receive in their offer letters from the Vice Chair of Graduate Studies. These commitments are contingent upon good performance in the program and remaining on time to degree.



For students without initial commitments, or whose commitments have lapsed, departmental fellowship funds, when available, may be allocated by the GSC on the basis of review of student dossiers, consultation with students' advisors, fit between student interests and fellowship designations (e.g., a fellowship restricted to CP students must perform go to a CP student).

Students are also encouraged to apply for other forms of support outside the department:

- University support, such as Graduate Research Mentorships and Dissertation Year Fellowships
- Extramural funding, information about funding can be found on the APSA website and via the Division of Graduate Education website

(ADD LINK TO SITE WHERE WE LIST GRADS WHO HAVE WON AWARDS)

When funds are available, the department attempts to provide modest amounts of summer support to students and to top up extramural funding to equal the stipend a student would have received from a TAship. In order to be eligible to apply for these funds, students must be on time to degree and be in good standing in the department, which is defined as maintaining a GPA of 3.0 or above (note that this is a higher threshold than is required by the University). Applications for summer support cannot be considered from students with another source of summer research support (e.g. a GSRM or a departmental commitment letter).

If a student is awarded a Dissertation Year Fellowship by the university, it is expected that they will finish their dissertation during the fellowship year. Once a student accepts a DYF, they are ineligible to receive any future fellowship/scholarship funding or other resources from university or departmental sources. (Students can, of course, receive outside funding after a DYF and be employed as an ASE or GSR.)

*University regulations preclude students who have been at UCLA more than eight years from receiving any university fellowships or departmental financial resources.*

### **TA Requirements & Regulations:**

By University rule, grad student may serve a maximum of 12 quarters (four years) as a TA. If a student has advanced to candidacy, they may apply for an exception to work more than 12 quarters. Students will not be able to work more than 18 quarters (six years). Exceptions beyond 18 quarters will not be approved.

All new TAs must complete the TA training course, PS 495A and 495B, prior to or concurrently with their first appointment as a TA. The course is offered in Fall and Spring quarters only, so students who expect or hope to work as a TA at any time during the year, must take the TA training course in the fall. In addition, students whose native language is not English must pass an oral English (TOP) exam before their first appointment to a

TAship. Failure to take and pass the exam will result in loss of the guaranteed appointment.

For more information about the TOP EXAM: <https://wp.ucla.edu/placement/top/>

For more information about the OID training courses: <https://wp.ucla.edu/graduate/ta-training/>

A TA appointment in the department is at 50% time (20 hours/week). If a student wishes to work for the university in any other capacity at the same time as their TA appointment (bringing their total employment above 20 hours a week), a letter of exception to the Dean's Office and/or Division of Graduate Education will have to be written by the Graduate Vice Chair on their behalf. Letters of exception are written only if a student has no lapsed Incompletes. Do not assume Division of Graduate Education will grant the exception, as many are not approved. Ask to have the letter of exception written before the start of the relevant quarter.

With the exception request, graduate students can work up to 75% depending on the combination of appts/fellowships the student is holding. Please note that any request to work above 75% will be denied by the university. Some fellowships do not allow grads to work at all or above 25%/50% so please read student fellowship policies closely before accepting any employment positions.

International students should check in with the Dashew Center regarding employment over 50% as some visa/student statuses do not allow it. If international students are able to work above 50%, it is usually for students who have advanced to candidacy, are in good academic standing and on time to degree.

TAs are appointed to courses by a process of matching students to courses that they are qualified to teach. All students with TA appointments will receive a letter of employment that must be signed by the date on the letter. If a student fails to sign the letter by the deadline, the position will be reassigned, and the student will no longer be guaranteed a position.

TAs are expected to act professionally, abide by the TA responsibilities outlined in your offer/supplemental letters and follow University guidelines set forth by the student code of conduct. Failure to meet any of these could possibly lead to dismissal of employment and/or disciplinary action.

TAs at UCLA have union representation, although membership in the union by individual TAs is voluntary. TA appointments, contracts, and any possible disciplinary action (such as removal from a TA position for failure to perform the contracted functions) conform to guidelines that have been negotiated between the union and the University.

## **IX. Withdrawal and Re-admission**

If a student withdraws from the program and then wants to re-enter, they will need to apply

for re-admission. If the student is advanced to candidacy when they re-apply, their admission is automatic. If the student had not advanced at the time they withdrew, the GSC will review their application for readmission in comparison with more recent applicants. Students should not assume they will be readmitted. If a student has met all requirements except for the oral exam, they should consult an advisor before applying. The advisor must write a letter to the graduate vice chair confirming that the student is ready for an oral, and this letter must accompany their application. The standards for re-admission will be the same as those for admission for the current year.

Graduate students who have taken coursework over 10 years prior may be required to either re-take coursework and/or reconstitute their committee. DGE also requires students in these cases to hold a final defense before they can file their dissertations. Each situation is unique, please contact the graduate advisor for more details.

## **X. Time-to-degree**

Students who have not advanced candidacy by the 12<sup>th</sup>\* quarter are considered Not on Time to Degree. Students who have been enrolled in the program more than 18\* quarters are considered Not on Time to Degree. These deadlines exclude leaves of absence quarters. The University and Department receive no funds from the State if you have been here more than three years beyond advancement.

International students who fail to file their dissertations nine quarters after advancing to candidacy are required by the university to resume payment of Non-Resident Tuition.

Grad student dissertations must be filed no later than 10 elapsed years after advancing to candidacy. If a student has not filed after ten years they will not be permitted to remain in the program.

**Failure to advance by the end of the 12<sup>th</sup>\* quarter or file a dissertation within 24 quarters of starting the program (not including leaves) may lead to a review and dismissal from the Ph.D. program. Please see Section XI (page 19) for more information.**

*\*Quarter count might vary depending on entering year. Please check with your graduate advisor if you are unsure which requirement you entered under.*

## **XI. Dismissal**

Students may be recommended for termination from graduate study for any of the following reasons, but not limited to: failing a preliminary field exam for the second time in the second year of the program or failing to meet the requirements to switch fields if the student failed in the first year, failing a field qualifying paper for the second time, GPA falling below 3.0 for more than two quarters, failing to complete seven graded courses by the beginning of the fourth quarter or twelve graded courses by the beginning of the seventh quarter, failing to take the oral Ph.D. exam by the end of fourth year, and failure to meet any

deadlines/milestones outlined in the end of year progress letters.

Dismissal evaluations are made by the Vice Chair for Graduate Studies in cases where the student has failed the preliminary exam for a second time, failed their qualifying paper for a second time, or failing to complete seven graded courses by the beginning of the fourth quarter or twelve graded courses by the beginning of the seventh quarter, failing the oral defense, or too many lapsed incomplete grades. Students may appeal these decisions to the Graduate Studies Committee.

Dismissal evaluations are made by Graduate Studies Committee in cases where the student's GPA falling below 3.0 for more than two quarters or failing to take the oral Ph.D. exam by the end of fourth year\*. These decisions are based on the student's entire record in the graduate program and are made in consultation with the student's advisor. Students may appeal the decision to the Graduate Studies Committee. Termination decisions are made by the Division of Graduate Education.

No student is evaluated for dismissal or recommended for termination unless so notified in writing by the departmental Vice Chair for Graduate Studies.

*\*Quarter count might vary depending on entering year. Please check with your graduate advisor if you are unsure which requirement you entered under.*

## **APPEALS**

Grads have 10 days from the date they received a dismissal recommendation from the Vice Chair/Graduate Office to appeal the decision. They should include:

- Statement of Appeal
- Supporting materials, they will in the file to be evaluated by the Vice Chair for Graduate Studies, the Field Chair and/or the GSC depending on the dismissal recommendation.
- Letters of support from their advisor/faculty

Appeals can only be submitted one time for the dismissal recommendation. Any late appeals will not be considered and the recommendation to dismiss will be sent to the Division of Graduate Education.

## **HOW TO SUBMIT PETITIONS**

Students should submit their petition/request to the graduate office [petition google form](#). These petitions/requests will be reviewed by the Graduate Office and Vice Chair of Graduate Studies every other week. Notices for these petitions will go out to grads after a decision has been reached. Petitions can include Change of Advisor, Major Field Changes, Petition for Funding, Language Requirement, MA ATC Paperwork, Petition for Course Credit, etc.

## **XII. Questions and Problems**

Routine administrative questions should be addressed first to the Graduate Advisor and next, to the Vice Chair for Graduate Studies. In addition, the Graduate Vice Chair functions as informal ombudsman for graduate affairs. Graduate students and faculty should bring all matters of concern to his or her attention.

Graduate students may also consult with the Department Ombudsperson.

This handbook represents an effort to bring together information, university policy, department policy and the regular practices of successive Vice Chairs for Graduate Studies. However, students should be aware that these policies and practices can change (by vote of the Department or by decision of the Vice Chair, the GSC, the University Graduate Council or Graduate Dean, depending on the policy) and that the existence of this handbook does not represent a promise that they will not be subject to change. Often when university or department policies are changed, currently enrolled students are grandfathered into preexisting requirements. However, this is not always the case. Levels of the University above the department are particularly likely to enact sudden changes that affect all graduate students, and these changes in policy may contravene information in this Handbook.

## **XIII. On-Campus Resources**

UCLA is a large institution with many resources available to you during your years as a graduate student. The Graduate Advisor is knowledgeable about them. In addition, information about resources of every sort, from counseling services to lectures in other departments, is posted regularly to the departmental intranet site. Below are links to some of the basic resources on campus. We encourage students to familiarize themselves with these:

The **Dean of Students** office provides resources for students of many sorts. These specifically include resources for students who have been raped or sexually assaulted, discriminated against at UCLA, who wish to take a workshop on academic integrity, or who wish to learn about First Amendment right.

<http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/>

UCLA maintains a **Sexual Harassment Prevention Office**, led by Sexual Harassment Prevention Officer and Title IX Coordinator Muhammed Cato. **Note: all faculty are mandatory reporters of sexual harassment and assault.**

<http://www.sexualharassment.ucla.edu/>

**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** provides confidential individual counseling services as well as different small group programs. Students may call for appointments. Crisis counselors may be reached 24 hours a day at 310-825-0768. The website provides meditation podcasts of various sorts.

<http://www.counseling.ucla.edu/>

The **University Ombudsman for Conflict Resolution** is staffed by trained professionals who are able to provide independent, neutral and confidential assistance in resolving conflicts or issues of concern.

<http://www.ombuds.ucla.edu/>

Resources to Prevent Discrimination include the **Campus Human Resources, Staff Diversity and AA/EEO Compliance Office** (email: [ebui@chr.ucla.edu](mailto:ebui@chr.ucla.edu); tel: 310-794-0691) and the office for **Campus Human Resources, Employee & Labor Relations** (tel: 310-794-0860).

UCLA has an **Economic Crisis Response Team** to help students who need food or have extreme financial difficulties. They run a food pantry on campus where students who qualify can go and get groceries each day.

<https://www.studentincrisis.ucla.edu/Economic-Crisis-Response>

Additional resources are summarized on the website of the **Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**, led by Vice Chancellor Jerry Kang.

<https://equity.ucla.edu/programs-resources/campus-resources/>