



UNIVERSITY OF
GUELPH

Graduate Student Handbook

Department of Political Science

Last updated July 2026 - please notify the Graduate Program Assistant in case you encounter broken links or outdated information

Welcome to your graduate degree at the Department of Political Science of the University of Guelph! Our Department has offered an MA program since 1968, and a PhD program since 2009. In offering you a position in either the MA or PhD program, the department is confident that you have the aptitude, skills, and ambition to succeed. We will make every effort to support you in your journey through the program.

This Handbook is intended to assist you in orienting yourself within the department and in planning your route through your graduate degree. It offers general information about our MA and PhD programs, details the general policies and procedures presented in the Graduate Calendar of the Faculty of Graduate Studies, and presents additional departmental policies authorized by the Graduate Calendar. It also offers informal tips and strategies to complete the program in a timely manner.

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1. First things first: when you arrive

Registration

When you arrive, you should report to the Graduate Program Assistant and the Graduate Coordinator who will assist you with your first semester registration (see also section 7 on 'Contact Information' of this Handbook). Registration is completed online through WebAdvisor or, in case you are taking a reading course or a course which requires the instructor's written consent, with a paper add form (a so-called graduate course waiver form) that is available from the Graduate Program Assistant or the Graduate Studies forms site. Make sure to check the online schedule of dates to see when registration and payment of fees are required.

When registering on WebAdvisor, you must enter the following code each semester to activate your registration: UNIV*7510 Active Full-time Registration (scroll around in WebAdvisor for an open section and enter that number too, for example: UNIV*7510, 04). You must register for at least one course each semester; if you have completed your courses, you must register for UNIV*7500 Research/Writing or POLS*6970 Major Research Paper. You are allowed to register your courses until the end of the "add" period. Please note the last date to do so by referring to the schedule of dates in the Graduate Studies Calendar. If you miss the end of the add period, you can only enroll in courses in the exceptional event that the individual instructor agrees to take you on and the Graduate Coordinator agrees with this arrangement. In that case, a graduate course waiver form needs to be signed by you, the instructor, and the Graduate Coordinator. After you have completed your registration, you will be able to view your account on WebAdvisor.

GTA positions

Please note that if your funding letter guarantees GTAships for a specific period (e.g. Fall and Winter semesters of your first year in the program), these GTAships can be declined but not deferred to another semester. For more information on working as a teaching assistant, see the relevant sections in chapters 2, 3 and 5.

Relevant links:

- https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/sites/undergraduate/files/forms/graduate_course_waiver_request.html (graduate course waiver form)
- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/forms> (all other forms relevant for graduate studies)
- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/studentfinance/deadlines> (deadlines for registration and fee payment)
- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/2018-2019/sched/index.shtml> (graduate calendar, including last date to add courses)
- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/studentfinance/fees/payments> (information on payment methods)

2. The MA Program

Degree requirements and possibilities

The MA program revolves around the theme of Rights, Justice, Citizenship, and Identity. Within this framework, students have the opportunity to pursue two different streams: a course-based/Major Research Paper (MRP) stream and a Thesis stream. The main differences between these streams is summarized in the table below:

	<i>Course-based/MRP</i>	<i>Thesis</i>
<i>Expected duration</i>	3 semesters	4 semesters
<i>Requirements</i>	2 mandatory; 3 core; 1 elective; MRP	2 mandatory; 1 core; 1 elective; Thesis
<i>Typical student profile</i>	Wants to keep options open/is not sure what to do next Wants to obtain degree relatively quickly	Is interested in participation in an original research project Wants to find out whether doing a PhD is something they'd enjoy

All MA students will be required to take two *mandatory courses*: POLS*6940-Research Design & Methods (0.75 credits), and POLS*6900-Communications (0.25 credits).

In addition, students will be asked to complete a minimum number (3 for the course-based/MRP stream; 1 for the thesis stream) of our *core courses*: POLS*6050-Politics of Identity, POLS*6120-Theories of International Relations, POLS*6130-Rights and Public Policy, POLS*6150-Constitutionalism and Judicial Politics, POLS*6210-Conceptions of Canada, POLS*6380-Political Contention in a Comparative Perspective, POLS*6400- Citizenship and Social Policy, POLS*6500-Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis, POLS*6510-Political Participation and Engagement, and POLS*6730-Development and Global Justice (0.50 credits each).

Finally, students can choose any course from our graduate course offerings (see course selection below) as a final *elective course*.

MA students who are graduates of our department's BA program are likely to have already taken a course that is similar to some of the courses they could take to fulfill their degree requirements (in particular intensive fourth-year seminars that include graduate students). These students can approach the Graduate Program Coordinator to request using the credit of that course towards the degree requirements of the MA degree.

You might wonder which of these streams is most suitable for you. This depends on a variety of factors, such as personal preference, interest in a specific topic, your interest and ability to conduct research and write long-term projects, the time you want to stay in the program, and your career aspirations. We think that the course-based/MRP option is ideal for students without further academic aspirations who want to complete their MA degree as quickly as possible. The MA Thesis will require conducting original research and writing a lengthy report on your findings, and as such will give you a taste of what it would be like to pursue a PhD degree. Given our status as an institution that values original research, enrolment

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in this stream usually comes with more financial support. Of course, you do not need to make this decision alone. You are encouraged to discuss which of these streams is best for you with the Graduate Coordinator and possible supervisors for the MRP or Thesis.

While it is possible to switch from one stream to another (with the approval of the Graduate Coordinator), we encourage all students to decide on their stream during their first semester in the program to avoid delaying the completion of the program. In the case of a switch, you will need to submit a Study Option or Degree Program Transfer at Enrolment Services, Third Floor, University Centre. You will also be required to pay an administrative fee of \$35.00. Switching from the Thesis stream to the course-based/MRP stream will also have implications for your funding. Since your guaranteed funding is based on the expected completion time of your degree, moving to a stream with a shorter expected duration will likely result in the loss of guaranteed funding in later semesters.

Optional concentrations

The MA degree offers two optional concentrations for those who would like to explore Rights, Justice, Citizenship & Identity through a specific lens. The requirements for these concentrations are summarized in the table below.

Public Policy & Administration	Global Justice & Politics
At least 2 courses related to policy and administration and MRP or Thesis related to policy and administration	At least 2 courses related to global justice and politics and MRP or Thesis related to global justice and politics
<i>Related courses:</i> POLS*6130-Rights and Public Policy POLS*6160-Multi-Level Governance POLS*6400-Citizenship and Social Policy POLS*6550-Topics in Public Management POLS*6630-Approaches to Public Policy POLS*6560-Topics in Public Policy POLS*6640-Canadian Public Administration	<i>Related courses:</i> POLS*6120-Theories of International Relations POLS*6390-Resource Scarcity & Conflict POLS*6520-International Political Economy POLS*6530-Human Rights, Ethics & Developm. POLS*6570-IR of Middle East POLS*6580-Topics in International Relations POLS*6730-Development and Global Justice

Collaborative specializations

MA students in our department have the opportunity to participate in three collaborative specializations:

- International Development Studies
- One Health
- Sexuality, Genders and Bodies

Specializing in one of these fields means students will be exposed to both general political science content and interdisciplinary content from the area of specialization. The specific requirements differ from one specialization to another. More information can be found on the websites of each of these specializations (see relevant links at the end of this chapter) and in the graduate calendar under collaborative specializations.

Preparing for your first semester

Once you have taken care of your registration (see chapter 1 of this handbook), there are two issues that demand your immediate attention: course selection and TA responsibilities.

Course selection

Planning your program is your most important responsibility at the outset of the program. You will want to tailor your courses to meet the program requirements and your own interests. In selecting your courses, it is important to realize that most graduate courses are only offered once a year – in other words, if you are keen to take a specific course, you are best off to register for it at the earliest opportunity to avoid delays in completing the degree. You will find a detailed account of program requirements and available courses in the graduate calendar.

The table below lists the full slate of courses that our department offers to MA students (but note that not all courses are offered every year – make sure to check webadvisor for the most up-to-date information). The right-hand column flags whether a course is one of the mandatory or core courses, and whether it can be used for the specialization in Public Policy & Administration (PP&A) or Global Justice and Politics (GJ&P), and whether it is a so-called ‘twinned’ course that can also be taken by upper-year undergraduate students.

Code	Name	Note
POLS*6050	The Politics of Identity	Core
POLS*6120	Theories of International Relations	Core, GJ&P
POLS*6130	Rights, Justice & Public Policy	Core, PP&A
POLS*6150	Constitutionalism & Judicial Politics	Core
POLS*6160	Multi-Level Governance in Canada	PP&A
POLS*6170	Courts and Parliament	Twinned
POLS*6180	Women, Justice and Public Policy	Twinned
POLS*6200	Advanced Topics in Law and Politics	
POLS*6210	Conceptions of Canada	Core
POLS*6380	Political Contention in a Comparative Perspective	Core
POLS*6390	Resource Scarcity & Conflict	GJ&P
POLS*6400	Citizenship and Social Policy	Core, PP&A
POLS*6500	Qualitative and Quantitative Data Analysis	Core
POLS*6510	Political Participation & Engagement	Core
POLS*6520	International Political Economy	GJ&P
POLS*6530	Human Rights, Ethics, and Development	GJ&P
POLS*6540	Topics in Comparative Politics	
POLS*6550	Topics in Public Management	Twinned, PP&A
POLS*6560	Topics in Public Policy	Twinned, PP&A
POLS*6570	International Relations of the Middle East	Twinned, GJ&P
POLS*6580	Topics in International Relations	Twinned, GJ&P
POLS*6590	Advanced Topics in Rights and Liberties	
POLS*6630	Approaches to Public Policy	PP&A
POLS*6640	Canadian Public Administration	PP&A
POLS*6730	Development and Global Justice	Core, GJ&P
POLS*6900	Communication Skills	Mandatory
POLS*6940	Research Design & Methods	Mandatory
POLS*6950	Digital Democracy	
POLS*6960	Directed Readings	

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The last course in this table, POLS*6960-Directed Readings, requires additional explanation. If students can find a willing faculty member, they can take a directed reading course on any subject relevant to political science. The student should expect a course load equivalent to other graduate classes. Students may not request reading courses that are similar in content and/or purpose to existing courses, or reading courses that would duplicate work that will have to be done in the context of the MRP or Thesis. Once a student and instructor agree on running a directed reading course, they must jointly create a detailed course outline. This outline must specify readings, grading criteria, deadlines for submission of work, and a schedule of meetings. Then the student must complete a paper add form with a reading course code signed by the instructor. The student then submits the course outline to the Graduate Coordinator for approval. If approved, this add form is given to the Graduate Program Assistant. If the reading course instructor is also the student's Advisor, an outside reader is required to review the final submission in the course.

Apart from the range of courses that are offered within the Department of Political Science, students can also take courses from other departments at the University of Guelph. Students who are interested in doing so should discuss this with the Graduate Coordinator to ensure the course will count towards the completion requirements of the degree. Some courses that MA students in our program have taken in the past include the following:

- CCJP*6000-Courts & CCJP*6100-Governing Criminal Justice from the program Criminology & Criminal Justice Policy
- ECON*6400-Public Finance from the Department of Economics
- EDRD*6690-Program Evaluation from the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development
- EURO*6050-European Integration and the EU from the European Studies Program
- LACS*6030-Globalization and Insecurity in the Americas and LACS*6070-Civil Society and Activism in Latin America from the program Latin American and Caribbean Studies
- PHIL*6600-Social and Political Philosophy from the Department of Philosophy
- POPM*6580-Public Health Administration from the Department of Population Medicine

TA assignments

For most students, the second responsibility upon entering the program relates to the assignment as teaching assistant. Once you have accepted a position as teaching assistant for a specific course, it is essential to communicate with the instructor as soon as possible to clarify what exactly you will be expected to do. In this first meeting with the course instructor, you will jointly fill out a work assignment form that specifies your duties as a teaching assistant in the course. In most cases, you will be asked to grade assignments or exams, so you should take a look at the syllabus for the course and note down the deadlines for the assignments and exams that you have to grade so you know that you will have more work than usual after these dates. Perhaps the instructor will also want you to attend lectures. Perhaps they want you to hold office hours. Perhaps they want you to answer student e-mails. You should make sure that you are entirely clear on what you will be asked to do so you can schedule your time accordingly. Whenever you are in doubt about something, you should clarify first and foremost with the course instructor. The course instructor will be your primary work supervisor for this employment.

Starting with the very first meeting you have with the course instructor, it is important to keep track of the hours you are spending on your work as a teaching assistant: keep a document somewhere that lists all the time you are working on anything related to your TA position, whether that is meeting with the

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instructor, reading the course material, grading, or communicating with students. If you notice you are spending more hours on the course than what you planned for, contact your instructor directly. That way the instructor can make arrangements, if necessary with the help of the Graduate Coordinator and/or Chair. What we absolutely want to avoid is that you realize you have gone over hours only at the end of the semester when the instructor is counting on your help to get the final grades in on time.

By taking on a position as teaching assistant, you are making a commitment to the department to help us run our courses and offer the best learning environment to our undergraduate students. If for whatever reason you find yourself struggling to meet grading deadlines or fulfill other responsibilities, you should immediately get in touch with the course instructor and see if you can jointly make any arrangements.

The table below summarizes the mutual responsibilities of instructors and teaching assistants:

Instructor responsibilities	GTA responsibilities
- during a meeting within the first five days of the semester (as outlined in the Collective Agreement) clearly indicate duties and time allotments for each task - fill out and sign the work agreement - provide appropriate direction for tasks (such as clear guidance for running seminars including potential discussion questions, rubrics and/or instructions for assignments, marking meetings for assignments, and so on) - communicate clearly with GTAs and encourage them to communicate with you about any issues - respond to emails from GTAs within one business day - adhere to the maximum weekly hours and maximum total hours as set out in the Collective Agreement	- fulfill duties within the timelines as outlined in the contract (start early on grading to avoid a rush to completion) - sign the work agreement after discussing it with the course supervisor - fulfill tasks according to the directions set out by the course instructor (again, allocating sufficient time is important) - respond to emails from the instructor/supervisor within one business day - (if responsible for communicating with students:) respond to emails from students within one to two business days - communicate with the course instructor as soon as you notice any challenges in meeting duties or have concerns about exceeding weekly/total hours

Your second semester and beyond

The second semester is the time to start thinking about the major assignment at the end of your degree: the MRP for course-based students and the thesis for students in the thesis stream. In this semester students should find an advisor and advisory committee and get started on a proposal for the MRP or Thesis.

Advisor and advisory committee

At this point, you will likely have met most professors by this time and have had some of them as instructors in your fall term courses. Talk to the Graduate Coordinator, consult the list of faculty members on the departmental website, consult other students, and chat with course instructors in order to narrow down a list of professors with whom you think you might want to work. The more precise idea you have of your research topic, the better you will be able to select a professor with interests close to your own.

You need to assemble your Advisory Committee and submit the necessary paperwork (Advisory Committee appointment and Graduate Degree Program forms) before the 20th class day of your second semester. You will not be able to register for your third semester until the relevant forms are submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies.

It is your responsibility to approach a possible Advisor and ask him or her whether they will accept you as a student. To help them decide, it might be helpful to provide a potential Advisor with a copy of the literature review related to your research question that you completed in POLS*6940. Once you have found an Advisor, you will then jointly discuss additional member/s of your Advisory Committee, who must also agree to serve. Your Committee members should possess experience in the fields encompassing your study area. All MA students in the MRP and Thesis stream require a minimum of two Advisory Committee Members (Advisor and Second Reader/Committee Member). When relevant, it is possible to consider faculty members from other departments for your Committee. Students are strongly encouraged to carefully review the University's policy on the relative responsibilities of Advisors, Advisory Committees, and graduate students in the graduate calendar.

Proposal and plan of study

All students must meet with their Advisor at least once per semester, and meet periodically with their entire Advisory Committee. While the department's Graduate Committee and, ultimately, the Department Chair are responsible for monitoring your program and progress, the day-to-day responsibility is delegated to you, your Advisor and Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee has the major responsibility for assessing your needs and for helping you develop your program and your timetable.

As you proceed through your program, there may be compelling reasons for you to revise your Committee or to make changes to your program. You may do so, but you should not request changes without giving careful thought to their overall implications for completing your degree on schedule. Any changes in your program should be made in close consultation with your Advisory Committee. The proposed changes are then submitted to the Graduate Coordinator for further consideration. A revised Advisory Committee/Degree Program form must be completed and signed by your Advisor and the Graduate Coordinator. The Graduate Program Assistant requires a copy and will send the original form to the office of Graduate Studies.

The first step in pursuing an MRP or MA Thesis is the development of a research proposal. This will help crystallize the precise content of your project as well as establish a tentative timeline for completion. You will develop this proposal in close collaboration with your supervisor, and will receive feedback from your Advisory Committee once a full draft has been completed.

Research ethics

Students in the MA Thesis stream who are planning to conduct research involving human participations will need to obtain clearance from the University's Research Ethics Board (REB). Students should consult with their Advisor on whether ethics clearance is necessary for their research project. Students who engage in research involving human participations will also need to complete the so-called Course on Research Ethics (CORE) before commencing their research. This course is offered free online by the Tri-Council's Panel on Research Ethics, and usually takes 2 to 3 hours to complete.

Completing the program

Requirements for MRP and Thesis

The Major Research Paper should be no longer than 10,000 words of text. Students who are working on their MRP must register in POLS*6970 for every semester in which they are not taking any other courses. The MA Thesis should be no longer than 20,000 words of text. Students who are working on their Thesis must register in UNIV*7500 for every semester in which they are not taking any other courses.

How do you know when your MRP or Thesis is ready to submit?

Your Advisor will determine whether your Major Research Paper or Thesis is ready to proceed to the oral defense. Students should expect to submit at least two full drafts of their Major Research Paper or Thesis. However, it may take more than two drafts before your Thesis or Major Research Paper is ready for the oral defense. It is also customary that the entire Advisory Committee has a chance to review a full draft of the MRP or Thesis before the defence.

Advisory Committee members are required to inform the student of the approximate time it will take for submitted written material to be returned with comments. For example, if the expected time exceeds the normal two-week turnaround due to absence from campus or an unusually heavy workload, Advisory Committee members must “provide the student and the Advisor with an estimate of the time required,” as stipulated in the Graduate Calendar.

Students should “learn about all appropriate deadlines, dates and regulations associated with registration... and graduation requirements,” and are strongly encouraged to establish, as a goal, the completion of their Major Research Paper or Thesis well in advance of the deadline date for submission of their Thesis or the grade for their Major Research Paper.

The procedures for submitting a Thesis can be found in the Graduate Calendar.

The oral defense of an MRP

You will be required to orally defend your Major Research Paper. Members of your Advisory Committee will attend your defence. The defence of your Major Research Paper is not open to the public. After the defence, the paper will be graded by both members of the Advisory Committee.

The procedures for the defense of the Major Research Paper are as follows:

1. The Examination Committee will consist of the student’s Advisor and second reader. The administration of the examination procedures is the responsibility of the Examination Committee.
2. The student is allowed approximately five minutes for an opening statement.
3. The second reader is then allowed 15-20 minutes to examine the candidate.
4. The Advisor shall then examine the student for 15-20 minutes.
5. Finally, the student will be given an opportunity to make a concluding statement.
6. In general, the examination period shall not last more than one hour.
7. After the student has left the examination room, the two examiners agree upon a grade. If the two examiners cannot agree upon a grade, the average of the two grades shall be submitted as the final grade.
8. After the examiner deliberations, the student will be called back into the examination room to be informed about the evaluation.

9. The final grade will be given to the Graduate Program Assistant to submit to the Registrar's office.

The oral defence of an MA thesis

You will be required to present your Thesis and address questions at an Oral Defence Examination. In attendance at your defence will be members of the Examination Committee, which normally consists of three or four members (Advisor, Committee Member, External Examiner and Examination Chair) appointed by the department Graduate Coordinator. Your Thesis defence is open to the public and the date and time is posted in the department and distributed to the graduate student Listservs.

The MA Thesis oral defence is normally 1.5 hours in duration. The procedure for conducting the defence is as follows:

- Introduction (5 minutes)
The Chair calls the defence to order, and welcomes all in attendance. The Chair introduces the student. The Chair introduces the Examination Committee in the order of (1) the external examiner; (2) faculty member(s) from Political Science; and (3) the supervisor. The Chair outlines the procedures for the defence.
- Thesis presentation (10-15 minutes)
The candidate summarizes the Thesis' major objectives, content, results, and conclusions.
- Questioning (50 minutes)
The Chair invites the examiners to pose their questions. Comments and discussion not directly related to the questions must be saved for the post-defence meeting of the examiners. The Chair does not normally ask questions. The time allotment for each Examiner within each round will be determined by the Chair before the defense and will be defined largely by the number of examiners. The order of questioning is: (1) the external examiner, (2) faculty member(s) from Political Science; and (3) the supervisor. There is the opportunity for a second round of questioning, though individual examiners may choose not to pursue a second round. If necessary or if time allows, a supplementary round of questions is possible. After questioning is complete, the candidate has the opportunity to make a closing statement. The Chair then excuses the candidate and any audience members so that the committee can meet in private.
- Deliberations (10 minutes)
When the candidate has left, the Chair outlines the four options for a decision: (1) Pass as submitted; (2) Pass with Revisions - the Thesis is passed on the condition that the candidate makes revisions to the satisfaction of the Thesis Supervisor, or another as authorized by the Thesis Examination Committee; (3) Defer - the Thesis Examination Committee defers a decision until the candidate makes substantial changes to the Thesis, after which the candidate may be required to go through the Thesis oral defence process a second time; and (4) Fail. The Chair asks a committee member to make a motion that the decision be: Pass, Pass with Revisions, Defer, or Fail. When the decision has been made, the Thesis Examination Committee discusses the nature of the required revisions to the Thesis (if applicable), and how the candidate will complete these revisions.
- Informing the student (5 minutes)
After the Thesis Examination Committee has made their decision and finished their discussion, the Chair invites the candidate back into the room and informs the candidate of the committee's decision. If the candidate passes, the Chair congratulates the student, and thanks the Thesis Examination Committee members. If necessary, the Chair tells the candidate of the required revisions and the plan for the candidate to complete them. If the candidate passes, the Chair

ensures that the Thesis Examination Committee signs the Approval/ Signature form. The Chair then adjourns the oral defence.

Paperwork after the defense

If you have written a Thesis, a set of forms provided by the Office of Graduate Studies at the time of the final defence must be completed and filed with that office. After a successful defense, students are asked to email a final PDF to the Graduate Program Assistant for our electronic archives. The Office of Graduate Studies also requires your thesis to be uploaded electronically to the so-called 'Atrium' (our University's repository for completed theses).

If you have written an MRP, only a single form, Recommendation for Graduation, needs to be filed and sent to the Graduate Program Assistant. The department Chair then signs this form and returns it to the office of Graduate Studies. Again, the department asks students to send a final PDF of their MRP to the Graduate Program Assistant for our electronic archives.

Early completion rebate

If you complete the requirements of your degree early in a semester, you may qualify for a rebate. The deadlines for qualifying for a full or partial rebate change are posted online. In order to apply, students must complete an "Early Completion Rebate Application" form (available on the Office of Graduate Studies' website with forms). The medical insurance premium is not refundable. The effective date of the rebate calculation is when all degree requirements are complete, including receipt of library clearance and submission of one e-copy of your Thesis to Graduate Program Services (via the Atrium). Students continuing a GTA/GRA/GSA appointment to the end of the semester or remaining in the department to use library and department facilities will not qualify for a rebate. Similarly, students must remain registered in order to hold scholarships.

Application for graduation

Once you have completed all requirements of your degree, you must file an Application for Graduation form. This finalizes your degree and allows you to register for Convocation.

Relevant links

- https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/sites/uoguelph.ca.graduatestudies/files/program_study_transfer.pdf (forms for switching streams)
- <https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/programs/idev> (collaborative specialization in international development studies)
- <https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/programs/onehealth> (collaborative specialization in One Health)
- [https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/p\[rograms/Sexualities-Genders-And-Bodies](https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/p[rograms/Sexualities-Genders-And-Bodies) (collaborative specialization in Sexualities, Genders, and Bodies)
- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/2018-2019/gradprog/pols.shtml> (graduate calendar)
- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/polisci/people/> (list of faculty members in Department of Political Science)
- https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/sites/uoguelph.ca.graduatestudies/files/webform/advisory_cmte_graddegree_prgm.pdf (advisory committee forms)

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- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/geninfo/geninfo-por.shtml> (calendar regulations on relative responsibilities of advisors, advisory committees, and graduate students)
- <http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/services-divisions/ethics> (information on research ethics approval)
- https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/current/completion/submission_checklist (procedure on submitting MA thesis)
- https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/current/completion/thesis_completion (forms for completing an MA thesis)
- https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/current/completion/thesis_completion/masters_scheduled (the Atrium, the University's repository for completed MA and Doctoral Theses)
- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/2018-2019/fees/fees-rof.shtml> (deadlines for early completion rebates)
- https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/sites/uoguelph.ca.graduatestudies/files/graduation_application%20a_0.pdf (form to apply for graduation)
- https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/sites/uoguelph.ca.graduatestudies/files/GR_instruct_web_W19.pdf (procedures for convocation and graduation)

3. The PhD program

Degree requirements and possibilities

The PhD program is designed both for students interested in pursuing academic positions and also for students interested in working in research capacities in the public, non-profit or private sectors.

Course requirements

Students choose one of five fields of specialization (see below). Students will be required to complete the designated course in this field, as listed below:

Field	Course
GIRDS	POLS*6050-The Politics of Identity
International Relations	POLS*6120-Theories of International Relations
Law and Politics	POLS*6150-Constitutionalism & Judicial Politics
Comparative Politics	POLS*6380-Political Contention in a Comparative Perspective
Public Policy	POLS*6630-Approaches to Public Policy

In some years, it may happen that the designated course for a student's field is not offered. If that is the case, the student can replace the field course by a directed reading course (POLS*6960) that surveys the field of interest. This course would normally be instructed by the student's intended supervisor. (The unlikely exception is when the supervisor is not active in the primary field of interest of the PhD student, in which case the directed reading course is instructed by a different member of the student's intended advisory committee.)

In addition to the field course, PhD students are required to take two research methods courses, the communications seminar, and one elective. These course requirements are to be completed in the first year, usually as summarized in the table below.

Fall semester	Winter semester
POLS*6940-Research Design and Methods	POLS*6500-Qualitative & Quantitative Data Analysis
<i>Field course or elective</i>	<i>Field course or elective</i>
POLS*6900-Communications	POLS*6900-Communications

Fields

The PhD program offers students the opportunity to specialize in the following five fields of study: 1) Gender, Indigeneity, Race, Disability, and Sexuality; 2) International Relations; 3) Law and Politics; 4) Comparative Politics; and 5) Public Policy. The department has wide-ranging and various expertise in each of the fields. A brief description of each field follows below

The field Gender, Indigeneity, Race, Disability, and Sexuality (GIRDS) explores the relationship between identity, politics and power. The ways in which different modes of identity intersect and the implications of that intersection for politics and policy are also examined. Methodological debates about how to study identity and politics will be critically analyzed.

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International Relations seeks to understand and explain complex interactions between international, regional and local actors using theory and empirical examples. A variety of different subfields explore various aspects of these relations from conflict to international political economy to global governance.

The field of Law and Politics explores questions around how law and courts influence and are influenced by politics. Topics include the relationship between courts and other government actors; judicial decision-making; legal mobilization; and the interplay between courts, rights, and public policy.

Comparative Politics compares jurisdictions using quantitative or qualitative methods to develop and test theories that relate to the core concepts in the discipline. These concepts include power, the state, regimes and regime change, social movements, institutions, interest groups and political parties.

Public Policy seeks to identify and explain how governments determine what is a problem, what solutions to problems are proposed, and how solutions are implemented and evaluated. Relationships between the political executive and bureaucracies, the public sector, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector are explored in this context.

Collaborative specializations

PhD students in our department have the opportunity to participate in three collaborative specializations:

- International Development Studies
- One Health
- Sexuality, Genders and Bodies

Specializing in one of these fields means students will be exposed to both general political science content and interdisciplinary content from the area of specialization. The specific requirements differ from one specialization to another. More information can be found on the websites of each of these specializations (see relevant links at the end of this chapter).

Your first two semesters: coursework, TA assignments and identifying advisors

Course selection

Planning your program is your most important responsibility at the outset of the program. You will want to tailor your courses to meet the program requirements and your own interests. You will find a detailed account of program requirements and available courses in the graduate calendar.

To meet the course requirements (see above), PhD students should register for three courses in their first semester: POLS*6940-Research Design and Methods, POLS*6900-Communications, and either the designated course in their field of specialization (if it is offered in their first semester) or one elective (if the designated field course is offered in the Winter semester). In the second semester, PhD students should register again for POLS*6900-Communications, as well as for POLS*6500-Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis and either the designated course in their field of specialization or one elective course.

Some students may already have completed courses that are similar to the required courses. This is particularly likely in case of PhD students who are graduates of our department's MA program and will therefore already have completed POLS*6900 and POLS*6940. These students can approach the Graduate Program Coordinator to request waiving the requirement of these courses. In the unlikely

3. The PhD Program

scenario that this applies to more than POLS*6900 and another course (for example a former MA student who already has taken POLS*6900, POLS*6940 and POLS*6500), one of these courses can be replaced by another elective.

The table below lists the courses that PhD students could take as an elective (but note that not all courses are offered every year – make sure to check webadvisor for the most up-to-date information). The right-hand column flags designated which courses serve as ‘field courses’.

Code	Name	Note
POLS*6050	The Politics of Identity	Field
POLS*6120	Theories of International Relations	Field
POLS*6130	Rights, Justice & Public Policy	
POLS*6150	Constitutionalism & Judicial Politics	Field
POLS*6380	Political Contention in a Comparative Perspective	Field
POLS*6400	Citizenship and Social Policy	
POLS*6510	Political Participation & Engagement	
POLS*6630	Approaches to Public Policy	Field
POLS*6730	Development and Global Justice	
POLS*6960	Directed Readings	

The last course in this table, POLS*6960-Directed Readings, requires additional explanation. If students can find a willing faculty member, they can take a directed reading course on any subject relevant to political science. The student should expect a course load equivalent to other graduate classes. Students may not request reading courses that are similar in content and/or purpose to existing courses, or reading courses that would duplicate work that will have to be done in the context of the dissertation. Once a student and instructor agree on running a directed reading course, they must jointly create a detailed course outline. This outline must specify readings, grading criteria, deadlines for submission of work, and a schedule of meetings. Then the student must complete a paper add form with a reading course code signed by the instructor. The student then submits the course outline to the Graduate Coordinator for approval. If approved, this add form is given to the Graduate Program Assistant. If the reading course instructor is also the student’s Advisor, an outside reader is required to review the final submission in the course.

Apart from the range of courses that are offered within the Department of Political Science, students can also take courses from other departments at the University of Guelph. Students who are interested in doing so should discuss this with the Graduate Coordinator to ensure the course will count towards the completion requirements of the degree. Some courses that PhD students in our program have taken in the past include the following:

- CCJP*6000-Courts & CCJP*6100-Governing Criminal Justice from the program Criminology & Criminal Justice Policy
- ECON*6400-Public Finance from the Department of Economics
- EDRD*6690-Program Evaluation from the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development
- EURO*6050-European Integration and the EU from the European Studies Program
- LACS*6030-Globalization and Insecurity in the Americas and LACS*6070-Civil Society and Activism in Latin America from the program Latin American and Caribbean Studies
- PHIL*6600-Social and Political Philosophy from the Department of Philosophy

- POPM*6580-Public Health Administration from the Department of Population Medicine

TA assignments

For most students, the second responsibility upon entering the program relates to the assignment as teaching assistant. Once you have accepted a position as teaching assistant for a specific course, it is essential to communicate with the instructor as soon as possible to clarify what exactly you will be expected to do. In this first meeting with the course instructor, you will jointly fill out a work assignment form that specifies your duties as a teaching assistant in the course. In most cases, you will be asked to grade assignments or exams, so you should take a look at the syllabus for the course and note down the deadlines for the assignments and exams that you have to grade so you know that you will have more work than usual after these dates. Perhaps the instructor will also want you to attend lectures. Perhaps they want you to hold office hours. Perhaps they want you to answer student e-mails. You should make sure that you are entirely clear on what you will be asked to do so you can schedule your time accordingly. Whenever you are in doubt about something, you should clarify first and foremost with the course instructor. The course instructor will be your primary work supervisor for this employment.

Starting with the very first meeting you have with the course instructor, it is important to keep track of the hours you are spending on your work as a teaching assistant: keep a document somewhere that lists all the time you are working on anything related to your TA position, whether that is meeting with the instructor, reading the course material, grading, or communicating with students. If you notice you are spending more hours on the course than what you planned for, contact your instructor directly. That way the instructor can make arrangements, if necessary with the help of the Graduate Coordinator and/or Chair. What we absolutely want to avoid is that you realize you have gone over hours only at the end of the semester when the instructor is counting on your help to get the final grades in on time.

By taking on a position as teaching assistant, you are making a commitment to the department to help us run our courses and offer the best learning environment to our undergraduate students. If for whatever reason you find yourself struggling to meet grading deadlines or fulfill other responsibilities, you should immediately get in touch with the course instructor and see if you can jointly make any arrangements.

The table below summarizes the mutual responsibilities of instructors and teaching assistants:

Instructor responsibilities	GTA responsibilities
- during a meeting within the first five days of the semester (as outlined in the Collective Agreement) clearly indicate duties and time allotments for each task - fill out and sign the work agreement - provide appropriate direction for tasks (such as clear guidance for running seminars including potential discussion questions, rubrics and/or instructions for assignments, marking meetings for assignments, and so on)	- fulfill duties within the timelines as outlined in the contract (start early on grading to avoid a rush to completion) - sign the work agreement after discussing it with the course supervisor - fulfill tasks according to the directions set out by the course instructor (again, allocating sufficient time is important) - respond to emails from the instructor/supervisor within one business day

- communicate clearly with GTAs and encourage them to communicate with you about any issues - respond to emails from GTAs within one business day - adhere to the maximum weekly hours and maximum total hours as set out in the Collective Agreement	- (if responsible for communicating with students:) respond to emails from students within one to two business days - communicate with the course instructor as soon as you notice any challenges in meeting duties or have concerns about exceeding weekly/total hours
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Selecting an advisor and advisory committee

Incoming PhD students will be assigned an Interim Advisor before they arrive. You are strongly advised to meet with this faculty member during the first week of your first semester. The Interim Advisor may or may not become your Advisor for the remainder of your time in the PhD program but, in any case, will be available to provide you with guidance early in the program. This person will normally also help you navigate the reading list that will be examined in the Qualifying Exam (see also the next section of this handbook).

By the 20th class day of your second semester, you must formally select your Thesis Advisor and other Advisory Committee members and submit your Advisory and Graduate Degree program forms. You will likely have met most professors by this time and had some as instructors in your fall term courses. Talk to the Graduate Coordinator, your Interim Advisor, other students and professors to narrow the list of professors with whom you think you might want to work. The more precise idea you have of your research topic, the better you will be able to select a professor with interests close to your own. It is your responsibility to approach a possible Advisor and ask him or her whether they will accept you as a student.

Once you have secured a supervisor, the two of you discuss the additional member/s of your Advisory Committee, who must also agree to serve. Your Committee members should also possess experience in the fields encompassing your study area. In addition to your Advisor, you will need two other Committee members. You can consider faculty members from other departments for your Committee.

When you have formed your Committee, you must fill out the Advisory Committee and Graduate Degree Program forms. Submit these forms to the Graduate Program Assistant in Political Science. If you wish to add Committee Members from other universities, please have these faculty email their CV to the Graduate Program Assistant so that a Nomination to Graduate Faculty form can be prepared.

All students must meet with their Advisor at least once per semester and check in with their entire Advisory Committee at a regular basis. While the department's Graduate Committee and, ultimately, the department Chair are responsible for monitoring your program and progress, the day-to-day responsibility is delegated to you, your Advisor and Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee has a responsibility to assess your needs and help you develop your program and your timetable. In addition, your Committee also provides counseling throughout the program.

As you proceed through your program, there may be compelling reasons for you to update your Committee or to make changes in your program. You may do so without prejudice, but you should not request changes without giving careful thought to their overall implications for completing your degree

on schedule. Any changes in your program should be made in close consultation with your Advisory Committee. The proposed changes are then submitted to the Graduate Coordinator. A revised Advisory Committee/Degree Program form must be completed and signed by your Advisor and the Graduate Coordinator.

Your third semester: the qualifying exam

Upon completion of all course work, students must register in UNIV*7500 Research/Writing (Thesis) for each and every subsequent semester. Before students embark on their dissertation research, they must first pass the Qualifying Exam successfully. The Qualifying Exam must be written in the first summer of the program.

The Qualifying Exam will test students' understanding of a predetermined reading list in the student's field of specialization, which will be made available at the beginning of the first semester that the student joins the program. Part of this reading list will be covered during the designated course in this field (see p. 16); the remainder will need to be reviewed by PhD students themselves. PhD students can consult their Thesis Advisor in navigating the material. In the rare case that the Thesis Advisor is not an expert in a student's field of specialization, a different member of the student's Advisory Committee will be designated as the point of contact to help the student in reviewing the reading list for the Qualifying Exam.

Qualifying Exam Committee

There is one Qualifying Exam Committee per student. Each Committee will consist of five members:

- One Committee Chair, who is usually the Chair of the department or the Graduate Program Coordinator. This person cannot be on the doctoral student's Advisory Committee and does not ask questions during the oral examination. The Chair's primary role is to ensure the overall fairness of the exam process and questions.
- Two faculty members with expertise in the field of specialization. This normally includes the instructor of the designated course in the student's field of specialization.
- One member from outside the Political Science department.
- The Thesis Advisor.

In composing the committee, we normally strive to have two members of the dissertation advisory committee (including the supervisor) and two members who are not on the dissertation advisory committee.

Timing of the Qualifying Exam

The Graduate Coordinator will determine the dates of the written exam (normally scheduled in mid August) and the date of the oral exam (which will normally happen during Orientation Week in September). Students will receive written confirmation of all dates and deadlines from the Graduate Coordinator or Graduate Program Assistant. Normally, all PhD students will write the written component during the same time period.

The written examination will be distributed in electronic format, and students must confirm with the Graduate Coordinator or Graduate Program Assistant that they have received a copy of the exam. Students are required to submit their answers in electronic format by the assigned time of the fourth day

in the examination period. The Graduate Coordinator or the Graduate Program Assistant will confirm with the student that the examination has been received on time.

The timing of the qualifying examination may be altered if a student is granted an academic accommodation (see below). For scheduling purposes, students requiring any type of accommodation (related for example to religious or accessibility-related reasons) should contact the Graduate Coordinator early in the summer semester.

Components of the Qualifying Exam

In accordance with the Graduate Calendar, the qualifying exam will be deemed a pass or a fail, and will be based upon three components:

1. the written component;
2. the oral examination; and
3. the Advisor's evaluation report.

The written examination is a take home exam consisting of four essay questions. These questions will be based on the reading list in the student's field of specialization. The instructor teaching the relevant field course will provide 4-10 suggested questions to the Qualifying Exam Committee Chair. The Committee Chair will e-mail the pool of questions plus the field reading list and the syllabus of the designated course in that field to all members of the examination committee. The Committee then determines the final exam questions. The QE Chair will send the selected questions to the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Program Assistant for formatting.

Students will have a maximum of four days to complete the questions (24 hours per question). The maximum word limit for response per question is 1500 typed words (five – six pages), excluding references. The examination must be double-spaced. All answers must be properly referenced (students should use an in-text style of citation, preferably APA).

The written exam must be completed on an individual basis. Student may not discuss questions and answers during the four-day written exam period. Students may not share the written answers with any other student writing the qualifying examination prior to the end of the oral examination period. Obviously, students are also not permitted to rely on the assistance of Artificial Intelligence systems in writing the exam. Any deviation from this policy will be considered a breach of academic integrity and will be reported to the Dean's Office.

In the oral examination, the Examination Committee will ask follow-up questions based on the answers the student provided in the written examination. The oral questions cannot go beyond the scope of the written exam questions. The oral examination is normally 90 minutes in duration. Normally, there will be one round of questioning per Committee member, unless time permits. The Chair invites the examiners to pose their questions. The Chair does not normally ask questions. The typical order of questioning is:

- The external examiner
- The field expert who did not serve as the course instructor of the field course
- The instructor of the designated course in the students' field of specialization.
- The Thesis Advisor

The oral examination will not be open to the public. Students may bring a hard copy of their examination and any other relevant notes to the oral examination.

In advance of the oral examination, the Examination Committee will receive the Advisor's evaluation report. This report is prepared by the student's Thesis Advisor and provides a written evaluation of the quality of the student's research performance to date and potential as a researcher in the future. It offers an assessment of the student's performance in their coursework. The advisor will seek clarification about the student's performance from the relevant course instructor, and incorporate these comments into the evaluation report.

The evaluation report and a copy of the student's transcript will be provided to the Exam Committee before the timing of the oral examination. The student will not receive a copy of the evaluation report.

The evaluation of the Qualifying Exam

The Examination Committee's final judgment must be based upon (1) the student's knowledge of the subject matter and ability to integrate the material derived from his or her studies (as demonstrated by the written and oral examinations); and (2) the student's ability and promise in research (as indicated in the Advisor's evaluation report).

The student is deemed to have passed the qualifying examination if not more than one of the examiners votes negatively. An abstention is regarded as a negative vote. The results of the qualifying examination will be reported to the Dean of Graduate Studies through the Chair of the academic unit. The report to the Dean will record the examination performance as unsatisfactory or satisfactory. At this point UNIV*7000 (Doctoral Qualifying Exam) is added to your record.

If the performance is deemed unsatisfactory, the student is strongly encouraged to meet with their Advisor and the Graduate Coordinator as soon as possible after the oral examination. The student may be given a second attempt at the examination. A student who fails the qualifying examination and who is being given a second opportunity to pass the examination will be required to repeat it no later than six months after the failed attempt. Academic units may impose a shorter time limit. A second failure will immediately result in a recommendation to the Board of Graduate Studies that the student be required to withdraw.

Academic integrity

The Qualifying Examinations are subject to the rules governing Academic Misconduct at the University of Guelph. Students should make sure that they are familiar with all policies, especially those regarding plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration.

Academic accommodation

Academic accommodation (for example for reasons of accessibility, religious observance, or compassionate circumstances) is governed by University policy. Students should notify the Graduate Coordinator as soon as possible to set up an accommodation.

Your fourth semester and beyond

Choosing between a monograph or three-paper thesis

Once students have successfully completed their coursework and Qualifying Exam, they should start work on their dissertation research. In our department, students can write a dissertation in one of two formats.

The usual format is the monograph, a book-length manuscript consisting of a minimum of 200 pages of text. Such a dissertation should present a single unified research project, consisting at any rate of an introduction, an overview of existing literature, a discussion of the theoretical framework, a section on research methods, a presentation of the research findings, and a concluding section that summarizes the key findings and draws out their implications.

An alternative format is the three-paper thesis, which consists of three article-length papers (8,000-12,000 words each), as well as an introduction that discusses the overarching goal of the three studies and their relevance, and a concluding section that summarizes the key findings of each study and discusses their joint implications. Typically, the three papers should be prepared as manuscripts for refereed journals, but other venues may be appropriate with approval of the Graduate Coordinator. Co-authored publication (or submission for publication) of any of the papers is generally not permitted, but exemptions could be approved by the Graduate Coordinator in conjunction with the Department Chair. Exemptions can be made for scenarios such as, but not limited to, community-engaged scholarship or the use of a supervisor's database.

You are strongly encouraged to discuss with your supervisor and Advisory Committee which of these two options is most appropriate in your case. This depends on factors such as the nature of the research and your future career goals. This is obviously a consequential decision, because it will shape every subsequent step of your PhD research. Once the thesis proposal has been successfully defended (see next section), students are normally expected to follow the format set out in this proposal. If there are relevant changes in the nature of a project that warrant a reorientation, students can consider switching to a different format, but should carefully consider the implications such a change may have for the time of completion. In such a scenario, the Advisory Committee and the student should agree that the reorientation is appropriate. The Advisory Committee may also decide that the research proposal will have to be reapproved. Once the Advisory Committee and student have reached such agreement, they should send a note to the Graduate Program Coordinator providing a brief explanation for wanting to change the format of the dissertation.

Thesis proposal

Each doctoral student must submit a thesis proposal, which will include a review of the relevant literature in the field. The proposal should normally be submitted in the fifth semester after initial registration and be approved by the end of their sixth semester. Students cannot defend their thesis proposal until they have successfully passed the Qualifying Exam in their chosen field.

The student should work with the Advisor and Advisory Committee to clarify expectations for the proposal. Normally, a proposal for a monograph should contain the following components:

1. The research question(s) the thesis will address.

2. How that question is situated in the relevant literature. (Situating the question involves a discussion of how it contributes to or builds on existing literature or responds to puzzles left unexplained or unexplored.)
3. The research design. (Discuss how the research will proceed and why the approach being taken is appropriate to address the question posed. This will vary depending on the topic, subfield, and approach. As appropriate, you should address issues such as theoretical framework, hypotheses, case selection, and methods of data collection.)
4. A preliminary chapter breakdown.
5. A preliminary timetable for the completion of the research.

Normally, a proposal for a three-paper thesis should contain the following components:

1. The overarching research question(s) the thesis will address.
2. How that question is situated in the relevant literature. (Situating the question involves a discussion of how it contributes to or builds on existing literature or responds to puzzles left unexplained or unexplored.)
3. A discussion of the first study, in particular (A) its guiding research question and the way it helps to address the overarching research question set out in section 1, (B) its theoretical framework, and (C) the research methods.
4. As (3), but for the second study.
5. As (3), but for the third study.
6. A preliminary timetable for the completion of the research.

In both cases, the entire proposal should be about 35 double-spaced pages, excluding bibliography.

Developing the Proposal

Normally, the advisor serves as the primary point person to assist the student in developing a proposal. While students may consult other members of the Advisory Committee, the advisor should be the primary source of guidance in the early stages, at least on the proposal itself. The advisor should consult informally with committee members about the nature of the project and any issues that may prove difficult. The advisor should take committee members' feedback under consideration and communicate/discuss the key points with the student in a way that provides clear guidance to move the proposal forward towards a successful defence.

Proposal defence

The purpose of the defence is to provide feedback to allow the student to successfully embark on the thesis research. A proposal defence should normally be scheduled within four weeks of the student submitting the final draft of the proposal. The defence is scheduled by the Advisor (cc'ing the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Program Assistant). The defence should normally include all members of the Advisory Committee (in cases where a member cannot attend in person or via technology, the member should provide detailed written feedback to the supervisor by the defence date and provide to the Chair a vote on the written proposal – see below). A member of the Department of Political Science who is not on the Advisory Committee will chair the defence. Thesis proposal defences are not open to the public.

The defence should be no longer than 90 minutes. The student will be given 15 minutes to give an oral presentation of the proposal. The Chair will invite each examiner to provide feedback and ask questions.

After the defence the Advisory Committee will discuss the proposal and vote on whether the proposal is approved. The possible outcomes are:

1. Approval with no or minor changes
In this case, no subsequent draft is required.
2. Approval with specified substantive changes
The student is required to make relatively minor changes in line with feedback from committee members. The required changes will be clearly communicated to the student. After having made the revisions, the student sends the new draft to the entire advisory committee. A second defense is not necessary.
3. Rejection of proposal
The student is required to make significant and major revisions to the proposal in line with feedback from committee members. The required changes will be clearly communicated to the student. After having made the revisions, the student sends the new draft to the entire advisory committee and a new defense is scheduled.

The proposal is rejected if more than one member of the committee (including the supervisor) does not approve the proposal. Substantive changes are required only if more than one committee member (including the supervisor) votes to require substantive changes.

Regardless of the outcome, the student should be provided, in writing, comments, feedback and corrections for improvement. This document should be prepared by the advisor with input from the committee. If the student is unsuccessful, a timeline for a subsequent proposal and defence should also be provided. Normally, the new defense should take place during the subsequent semester.

Once the student actually embarks on the Thesis research, it is very common to modify the project. The proposal does not need to be re-approved if this happens, unless the change is significant enough to result in change in composition of the thesis committee (and even then, only if deemed necessary by the Advisor and the Graduate Coordinator).

Ethics

If thesis research involves working with human subjects (e.g. interviews or observation research), students will need to apply for ethical review through the University of Guelph Research Ethics Board (REB). With their advisor's approval, a student may work on their REB application in tandem with the proposal, normally after a first draft has been completed.

The Department of Political Science does not treat the proposal requirement as fully satisfied until ethics approval has been granted. The Advisor must provide a copy of the REB approval to the Graduate Program Assistant. The student may not undertake any research with human participants before obtaining REB approval and proposal approval. It will be the Advisor's role to interpret the Tri-Council guidelines on when REB approval is required.

Completing the program

How do you know when your thesis is complete?

Normally, students will commence research on their thesis in semester six and defend their thesis in semester twelve.

Students should expect to submit at least two full drafts of their thesis to their Advisor. However, it may take more than two drafts before the thesis is ready for the oral defence examination. Once the advisor believes the thesis is (almost) ready, the draft should be sent to the entire Advisory Committee for feedback and to ensure every member of the committee believes the thesis is ready to proceed to the defence. Of course, members of the Advisory Committee can be involved more frequently when appropriate (for example, in case one of the committee members has expertise that is specifically relevant to a particular chapter in the thesis).

Advisory Committee members are required to inform the student of the approximate time it will take for submitted written material to be returned with comments. If the expected time exceeds the normal two-week turnaround, for instance because of absence from campus or an unusually heavy workload, the Graduate Calendar requires Advisory Committee members to “provide the student and the Advisor with an estimate of the time required.”

Students should “learn about all appropriate deadlines, dates and regulations associated with registration... and graduation requirements,” and are strongly encouraged to establish as a goal, the completion of their Thesis well in advance of the deadline date for submission of their Thesis.

Submitting and defending your thesis

The thesis is expected to be a significant contribution to knowledge in its field. It must demonstrate mature scholarship and critical judgment on the part of the candidate, expressed in a satisfactory literary style. Approval of the thesis implies that it is sufficiently meritorious to warrant publication in reputable scholarly outlets.

You will also be required to present your thesis and address questions at an oral defence examination. The oral defence examination will typically last two hours and consist of questions about the thesis itself as well as more general issues related to the area of research.

For each oral defence examination, an external examiner from outside the university is appointed on behalf of the Dean of Graduate Studies by the Department Chair, in consultation with your advisor. The external examiner should receive a copy of your thesis at least four weeks prior to the oral defence date. The external examiner will submit a written appraisal of the thesis at least seven days prior to the examination to the Chair of the Department, who will then provide these comments to you and your advisory committee.

In attendance at your oral exam will be:

- A member of the graduate faculty who is not a member of the advisory committee appointed to act as chair by the Department Chair on behalf of the Dean;
- The External Examiner;
- A member of the graduate faculty, who is not a member of the Advisory Committee, selected by the Department's Graduate Committee;
- Two members of the student's Advisory Committee, selected by the Advisory Committee.

The Dean of Graduate Studies, or a designate, may attend part or all of the examination. The examination is open to the public but members of the audience may question you only upon invitation by the Committee.

The members of the examination committee, including the external examiner, report individually on the final examination and the thesis. You are deemed to have passed if no more than one of the five examiners votes negatively.

Oral defence guidelines

The oral defence is normally three hours in duration. The procedure for conducting the defence is as follows:

- Introduction (10 minutes)
 - The chair calls the defence to order, and welcomes all in attendance.
 - The chair introduces the student.
 - The chair introduces the examination committee in the order of (1) the external examiner; (2) any other examiners external to the University of Guelph; (3) faculty members who are external to the Department of Political Science; (4) faculty members from the Department of Political Science; and (5) the supervisor.
 - The chair states that all members of the examination committee have read the thesis and have agreed that it is ready for defence.
- Thesis presentation (35 minutes)
 - The candidate summarizes the thesis' major objectives, content, results, and conclusions.
- Questioning (95 minutes)
 - The chair invites the examiners to pose their questions. Comments and discussion not directly related to the questions must be saved for the post-defence meeting of the examiners. The chair does not normally ask questions.
 - The time allotment for each examiner within each round will be determined by the chair before the defense and will be defined largely by the number of examiners.
 - The order of questioning is (1) the external examiner; (2) any other examiners external to the University of Guelph; (3) faculty members who are external to the Department of Political Science; (4) faculty members from the Department of Political Science; and (5) the supervisor.
 - There is a second round of questioning, though individual examiners may choose not to pursue a second round.
 - If necessary or if time allows, a supplementary round of questions is possible.
 - After questioning is complete, the Chair excuses the candidate and any audience members, asking him or her to leave the room so that the committee can meet in private.
- Deliberations (30 minutes)
 - When the candidate has left, the chair outlines the four options for a decision:
 - Pass – the thesis is passed as submitted
 - Pass with revisions – the thesis is passed on the condition that the candidate makes revisions to the satisfaction of the thesis supervisor or another as authorized by the thesis examination committee

- **Defer** – the examination committee defers a decision until the candidate makes substantial changes to the thesis. The candidate may be required to go through the thesis oral defence process a second time.
 - **Fail** – the thesis is failed.
- The chair asks a committee member to make a motion that the decision be: Pass, Pass with Revisions, Defer, or Fail.
- When the decision has been made, the examination committee discusses the nature of the required revisions to the thesis (if applicable), and how the candidate will complete them.
- **Informing the Student (10 minutes)**
 - After the examination committee has made its decision, the Chair:
 - Invites the candidate back into the room.
 - Informs the candidate of the committee's decision.
 - If necessary, tells the candidate of the Thesis revisions required, and the plan for the candidate to complete them.
 - If the candidate is successful, he/she will submit via the atrium, one PDF copy of the Thesis in the final form, as soon as possible thereafter. Information can be found on the Graduate Studies website.
 - If the candidate passes, congratulates the student, and thanks the Thesis Examination Committee members.
 - If the candidate passes, ensures the Thesis Examination Committee signs the Approval/ Signature form.
 - Adjourns the Thesis oral defence.

Final steps

The University of Guelph requires the electronic submission of all theses. The procedures for submitting your completed thesis can be found in the graduate calendar, as can the procedures for the defence examination.

When you have completed your degree, you need to submit a number of forms: the Application to Graduate form, the Proquest Subject Code Form, the Authority to Distribute form, the Theses Non-Exclusive License form, and the Theses Submission Control sheet. These will be distributed to you by the Graduate Program Assistant and can also be found online.

Early completion rebate

If completion of your work has been delayed by some unexpected event, you must pay tuition for the following semester. If you complete your requirements before the end of the semester you may qualify for a rebate.

In order to receive the rebate, you must complete an "Early Completion Rebate Application" form (available on the office of Graduate Studies form site). The medical insurance premium is not refundable. The effective date of the rebate calculation is when all degree requirements are complete, including receipt of library clearance and submission of two thesis copies to the office of Graduate Studies. Students continuing a GTA/GRA/GSA appointment to the end of the semester or remaining in the department in order to use library and department facilities, will not qualify for a rebate. Similarly, students must remain registered in order to hold scholarships.

Relevant links

- <https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/programs/idev> (collaborative specialization in international development studies)
- <https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/programs/onehealth> (collaborative specialization in One Health)
- [https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/p\[rograms/Sexualities-Genders-And-Bodies](https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/p[rograms/Sexualities-Genders-And-Bodies) (collaborative specialization in Sexualities, Genders, and Bodies)
- https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current//gradprog/sec_d0e24111.shtml (graduate calendar)
- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/polisci/people/> (list of faculty/possible members of your advisory committee)
- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/geninfo/geninfo-por.shtml> (University policy on advisors and advisory committees)
- https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/2018-2019/genreg/sec_d0e2632.shtml (policy on academic integrity and academic misconduct)
- https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/current/completion/thesis_completion/doctoral_scheduled (schedule for thesis completion)
- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/thesis/index> (process for final thesis submission)
- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/forms> (graduate forms, including those required to graduate)
- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/2018-2019/fees/fees-ecr.shtml> (fee information, including regarding early rebate applications)

4. Funding

The offer letter you received upon admission to the program details the funding the department guarantees to you. The precise funding varies from student to student based on a number of factors, in particular the level of study and competitiveness of the student, and the amount of funding the department has at its disposal.

All PhD students will receive at the very least a guaranteed position as teaching assistant in to semesters per academic year, for four academic years. International students with an admission average of at least an A- will also be eligible for the International Doctoral Tuition Award, which covers the gap between domestic and international tuition fees for four years. At the beginning of each academic year, doctoral students will receive an academic funding letter outlining the terms of their funding from the Department Chair for the upcoming academic year.

All MA students will receive at the very least a guaranteed position as teaching assistant in two separate semesters.

In addition to guaranteed positions as teaching assistant, the funding offers can also include other scholarships, stipends, or positions as research assistant. All funding opportunities are conditional on certain criteria. If a student declines a GTA assigned to them for a specific semester, this funding will not be deferred to a different semester. All scholarships and stipends are conditional on full-time registration, reasonable progress through the program, and in case of MA students, continued registration in the stream (course-based, MRP, thesis) in which students were accepted. Some scholarships cannot be combined with each other, so in the event students obtain additional (external) funding, the level departmental funding might change. For PhD students, all funding in excess of GTA positions is conditional on students making a *bona fide* application every year for major scholarships for which they are eligible (in particular those offered by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council and the Ontario Graduate Scholarship).

Graduate Teaching Assistantships

Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) positions are posted online for 10 working days towards the end of each semester. Students must apply online. Once you have been assigned your GTA, you will need to contact the course instructor for whom you will be working, find out the instructor's expectations of you for the Assistantship and negotiate its terms by completing an Assignment of Work Agreement (see below). If you feel uncomfortable with some aspect of the contract, discuss it with the instructor at that time and reach out to the Graduate Program Coordinator if that discussion does not lead to a satisfactory resolution. Please refer as well to the table on page 9 and 20, which outlines the mutual responsibilities of teaching assistants and course instructors.

The allocation of GTA positions will be based on a number of factors, including:

- 1) Eligibility for funding under Offer of Admission and funding letters
- 2) Levels of consideration (*1st level* - candidates within their job security period. i.e. 6 semesters for MA students and 12 semesters for PhD students, guaranteed funding not yet met; *2nd level* - candidates that have met their guaranteed funding but are still within the above-mentioned job

- security period; and *3rd level* - candidates that have exceeded the above-mentioned job security period)
- 3) GTA experience in a particular course, familiarity with the subject matter, and skills and abilities required to be a successful GTA. (Note that prior evaluations of your GTA work may be consulted in making a hiring determination).
 - 4) Seniority points: one seniority point is assigned for each GTA position held (whether it is a half or full GTA position)

The department tries to place all teaching assistants in courses for which they are most suited. MA candidates receive GTA training in the Communications course. Course instructors are also responsible for training their GTAs. Finally, students are encouraged to ask experienced GTAs for assistance.

One of the tests of a good graduate student is time management. Undergraduate students' essays and final examinations that you might be asked to grade are likely due at roughly the same time that your own assignments are due. Plan ahead for your own essays and seminar presentations. You must fulfill the responsibilities of your job, but you also remain responsible for completing the expectations in your own courses.

Some instructors will ask you to hold office hours. All GTAs have access to an office in MacKinnon 528 for the purposes of holding office hours with students. Email the Undergraduate Program Assistant to book office hours: pols.undergraduate@uoguelph.ca.

GTA contracts

Every GTA and course instructor must submit an "Assignment of Work Agreement" outlining the GTA's specific duties and specifying the breakdown of hours. This agreement must be submitted to the Graduate Program Assistant within 7 days of the commencement of your employment. Both the student and instructor retain a copy of the agreement.

If there are revisions to your GTA duties during the assigned semester, the agreement needs to be updated to reflect those changes. Blank copies are available from the Graduate Program Assistant.

A full GTA position comes with 140 hours over approximately 14 weeks (one semester). As such, a full GTA is expected to work an average of 10 hours per week. A half GTA works 70 hours over approximately 14 weeks. Under the terms of the collective agreement, GTAs cannot work more than 28 hours in any one week. The department normally does not have funding to pay overtime. If you are approaching the 28-hour maximum in any one week or the total number of hours in your contract, please notify your instructor immediately.

GTAs at the University of Guelph are unionized. They belong to CUPE 3913, Unit 1. Copies of the collective agreement between the University and CUPE are available online.

Graduate Conference & Research Travel Reimbursement Award

The Political Science program has a (limited) budget to help defray some of the costs for graduate students who plan to present at an academic conference or conduct research that requires travel. Up to a maximum of \$750 per PhD student and \$500 per MA student is available for successful applicants during the duration of their studies. Please note that the funds are intended to subsidize cost of travel, not to cover them

totally, so the department encourages students to seek funding from alternate sources such as university travel grants, supervisors, and so on.

Priority will be given to graduate students who are presenting papers or posters that are subject to some form of vetting and have been accepted for presentation, and to graduate students who are conducting dissertation or MA Thesis research in order to fulfill requirements of the PhD or Master's program. Only those students who are enrolled at the time of the conference or research trip are eligible.

Applications

Applications must be submitted electronically to the graduate program assistant and should include:

For conference travel:

- Confirmation of paper or poster acceptance
- Name of conference
- Location of conference
- Dates of conference
- Short description of the conference
- A description of the process used to select papers or posters for the conference
- An explanation of the nature of your participation in the conference
- An explanation of the relevance & benefit of conference for your research
- An abstract or brief summary of the paper or poster you are to present
- A breakdown and justification of conference costs (Please note that only transportation, accommodation, food and registration costs will be considered.)
- A letter or email from your Advisor indicating whether or not they will be contributing to the travel costs and a declaration of other funds that have been secured.

For research travel:

- A letter from your Advisor that research travel is required for completion of your dissertation or thesis research
- A copy of your dissertation or thesis proposal
- A breakdown and justification of research travel costs
- A letter or email from your Advisor indicating whether they will be contributing to travel costs and a declaration of other funds secured through other channels.

Graduate students should apply well ahead of the date they plan to travel and are encouraged to pursue other avenues of funding.

Please submit your applications via email to pols.chair@uoguelph.ca.

Internal funding opportunities

The University offers some financial support to MA and PhD students. The website of the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies includes a search tool that can help you identify the available internal scholarships and awards, as well as the procedures for applying for them. Students are strongly encouraged to take some time to review available funding opportunities and to apply to all for which they meet the eligibility criteria.

External funding

Students are also encouraged to investigate opportunities for external funding such as the Ontario Graduate Scholarship, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada Scholarships, and the Canadian International Development Agency Scholarships. Information on these and other scholarships and fellowships can be obtained from the office of Graduate Studies.

To determine eligibility for nomination for awards and to encourage equity in their distribution, the department requires graduate students to notify the department graduate office and present documentation of any scholarships, bursaries, or awards received while in the program.

Relevant links:

- https://www.uoguelph.ca/vpacademic/facultyrelations/pdf/CUPE_Local_3913_Unit1_C.pdf (collective agreement between University and CUPE)
- https://www.uoguelph.ca/sessional_ta/faqs (general information about working as a TA at the University of Guelph)
- <https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/current/funding/scholarships/internal> (search tool for internal scholarships)
- <https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/current/funding/scholarships/externalawards> (overview of external awards that are not government-funded)
- <https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/current/funding/scholarships/gov-fundedawards> (overview of external awards that are government-funded)

5. Other regulations

Progress reports

All graduate students should initiate a progress report every semester in which they are in the program. They can use the same link on the website of Graduate Studies where they also create their student profile. Once students have started these reports, they will be routed for review and approval to all members of the Advisory Committee and the Graduate Program Coordinator. Initiating these progress reports every semester is of key importance, because they communicate whether your progress through the department is proceeding satisfactorily, and as such avoid unwelcome surprises at a later point.

Academic integrity

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Graduate Calendar.

Safe travel policy

The University's Safe Travel Policy applies to any activity undertaken outside of Canada by the University's students in connection with their academic work or any other activity officially organized under the auspices of the University including thesis field work. More information is included on the University website.

Relevant links:

- <https://graduatestudies.uoguelph.ca/current/gryphformsstudentguide> (website that helps students initiate progress reports)
- https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/2018-2019/genreg/sec_d0e2977.shtml (section on academic misconduct in graduate calendar)
- <https://www.uoguelph.ca/cip/safe-travel-information> (information on the University's safe travel policy)

6. Troubleshoot

There might be times that you are running into unforeseen challenges. There are many people on campus who are available to help you. Ask your peers, rely on the key contacts in the program such as the Graduate Program Assistant and the Graduate Program Coordinator, or take advantage of specific services and resources including those listed at the end of this handbook. If you cannot continue your studies as planned, you might decide to move to part-time status, take a leave of absence, or withdraw from the program.

Part-time status

If you decide to take some time off from the program, you must submit a Leave of Absence form. This is subject to department review and recommendation. The Leave of Absence must be for a specified period of time (not exceeding one year) and be approved by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Research. Note that your guaranteed funding is conditional on being registered as a full-time student. Normally scholarships or stipends that you have been guaranteed are reduced to 1/3rd in case you decide to take a leave of absence.

Leave of absence

If you decide to take some time off from the program, you must submit a Leave of Absence Form. This is subject to department review and recommendation. The leave of absence must be for a specified period of time (not exceeding one year) and be approved by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Research. During a leave of absence, it is understood that you will not use any University resources (either personal or physical), cannot work with your Advisory Committee, are ineligible to apply for any GTAs, and lose guaranteed funding that was earmarked for the relevant semesters.

Withdrawal

If you permanently withdraw from the program, you must complete a Withdrawal Notice form. In this instance, the approving department officer will be the Graduate Coordinator.

7. Contact information

Your main contacts in the program

Graduate Program Assistants: Graduate Program Assistants are the daily link between students and the department. S/he can advise on most technical issues relating to matters such as course additions and deletions, deadlines, leaves of absence – almost anything you might need to know.

Graduate Coordinator: The Graduate Coordinator is the academic head of the graduate program. S/he is responsible for approving your course selections for each semester and can give permission to substitute courses if appropriate. The Coordinator approves advisory committees and, after students obtain approval from each of their committee members for their thesis proposals or major research paper proposals, the Graduate Coordinator ultimately approves these documents. The Graduate Coordinator is also responsible for organizing MA and PhD Thesis defences.

Graduate Committee: The Graduate Committee consists of the Coordinator and a minimum of two other faculty members, as well as a graduate student representative (see below). The committee considers course changes and changes to the structure of the program. The committee also decides on admissions and award nominations, but the student representative does not participate in those deliberations. Students should feel free to approach any member of the Graduate Committee for advice.

Graduate Representative: The Graduate Representative is elected in the fall by the graduate students in an online election. The Graduate Representative attends and votes at all meetings of the Graduate Committee, except for meetings or portions of meetings in which specific graduate students are discussed. The graduate student representative may also act as spokesperson in the case of student grievances or conflicts between (a) graduate student(s) and an instructor. This participation could include written inputs to the Graduate Committee at the time of the student progress review at the end of the semester.

The Department Chair: The Department Chair is the head of both the academic and administrative unit of the department. S/he has ultimate responsibility for the Graduate Program and for ensuring that the program conforms to the rules established by the University Senate.

The Associate Dean of Graduate Studies: Like the Chair, the Dean of Graduate Studies has many responsibilities. Most importantly, it is the Dean's duty to ensure the fair application of the rules and procedures of the university relating to graduate students. You can appeal any decision that affects you as a graduate student to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

On campus work and support

There are a number of facilities on campus to help you complete your work while staying connected to the Department and your colleagues in the program.

Career services: There are a number of career advisors on campus that can help students who are looking for jobs. See: <https://www.recruitguelph.ca/cecs/>.

Communication: Each student will be assigned a University of Guelph email address. This address is the University's primary mode of communication with you regarding important deadlines, course selection

7. Contact information

etc. Your email address will also be added to the department Listserv to ensure that you receive regular messages regarding important deadlines, awards applications and department lectures. If you have any issues with your email address, please contact Computing & Communications Services (CCS) at 58888help@uoguelph.ca.

Computing and Communication Services (CCS): Located directly behind the MacKinnon Building, CCS is your main point of contact for help with computer applications. See <http://www.uoguelph.ca/ccs/>.

Counselling services: Counselling Services offers several resources to support students as they work through personal challenges that affect their ability to succeed at school and in other areas of their lives. See <https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/counselling>.

Graduate Students' Association: The Graduate Students' Association aims to advance the academic and social goals of graduate students at the University of Guelph through advocacy, social, and financial resources. See <http://www.uoguelph.ca/gsa/>.

Graduate Student Learning Initiative (GSLI): The GSLI is a collaborative endeavour that brings together key campus services that support academic and professional skill development for graduate students as learners, instructors, researchers and professionals. It offers a wide range of free workshops (teaching, research, career) for graduate students each semester. GSLI also offers free and confidential individual assistance for graduate students. For more information, see <http://gsli.uoguelph.ca>.

Housing: Consult the website www.housing.uoguelph.ca for more information. You can apply for graduate housing at <http://www.housing.uoguelph.ca/page.cfm?id=cbbd1f31-6dbb-48c9-983a-4cff55f1e2ff>.

International student support: Student Life offers specific services to assist international students. See <https://studentlife.uoguelph.ca/oia/international-students/supporting-your-success>.

Learning Commons: Located in the library, the Learning Commons offers a range of workshops and services, including writing and research support. See <https://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/get-assistance> for more information.

The Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (OGPS): OGPS is located on the third floor of the University Centre. See also: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/current>. You can find specific information on its policies, guidelines, and graduate calendar on <https://www.uoguelph.ca/graduatestudies/current/policy>.

Schedule of dates: For up-to-date information on key dates and deadlines, consult <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/sched/index.shtml>.

Student Accessibility Services (SAS): SAS helps students who experience disabilities with full and equitable participation in academic life. See for more information <https://wellness.uoguelph.ca/accessibility/>.

Student Financial Services: In case you encounter any problems with your GTA or tuition payments, please contact SFS. See <https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/studentfinance/>.

7. Contact information

Work space: While you might like working off campus, there are a number of facilities reserved especially for you on campus.

- First, you can contact the administrative assistant to the chair to request keys for our MA study space in Blackwood Hall, room 202, or for PhD office space on the fifth floor of the Mackinnon Building. A small key deposit is required. You will be reimbursed this deposit when you return your keys. You can retain your keys throughout your time in our program.
- Second, you can apply for a study space in McLaughlin Library, which provides desk space and a locker for books. See <http://www.lib.uoguelph.ca/using-library/spaces>.