Revised August 2016

This Handbook incorporates most of the requirements and rules pertaining to the Doctoral Program in Political Science at George Mason University. In addition, the University Catalog (current edition), requirements, and rules, along with other pertinent University policies apply to and, in the case of inconsistency, take precedence over this Handbook. These rules apply to the incoming class of 2016-2017.

Certain information in this Handbook (e.g., credits, names, places, times, course numbers, and URLs) is subject to change.
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Introduction
Welcome to George Mason University’s PhD Program in Political Science. The program faculty looks forward to a rewarding professional association with you during this important part of your career.

This Handbook
This Handbook should be used as a reference to proceed through the program. Students are expected to read it carefully to learn about the program and refer back to it as they progress through the stages of the program. The Student/Faculty Handbook guides each incoming class, although details may differ slightly between each yearly edition. This Handbook applies to the class of students entering during the 2016-2017 academic year. Students are guided by the terms of this version throughout the program, though the faculty reserves the right to make changes to the program. The provisions of this handbook supplement, but do not replace, those of the University Catalog.

Your Education is in Your Hands
A doctoral education will serve as an “apprenticeship” to provide students with the knowledge and experience that will enable them to move confidently into advanced positions in the field of political science. As students develop professionally and academically through coursework and a variety of research experiences, they will progress from the core courses to specialized field and content courses. Research and practical experience both inside and outside Mason will provide valuable complements to studies in the field of political science.

At established milestones, assessments will be made of each student’s progress to determine whether s/he is ready for the next step of the academic journey. A satisfactory grade in each of the core courses, plus an overall satisfactory rate of progress (particularly on written research material), allows the student to continue in the program.

To facilitate the development of necessary skills, students will work with a faculty advisor from the beginning of the program. The faculty member will act as mentor, advisor, evaluator, and supervisor. However, each student is ultimately responsible for the development of his/her own education and for making progress in the program. The journey will be demanding, difficult, and time consuming, but students should also find it exciting, challenging, and intellectually fulfilling.

Upon completing all requirements, along with the positive assessment and formal recommendation of the faculty, students are awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. This degree symbolizes the completion of a comprehensive political science education and research program that is designed to develop a fully capable and responsible scholar. This degree also marks the beginning of a career in continuing education, a journey that will never be complete.

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Scholarly Research

Receiving a PhD is an honor awarded by the faculty of a university for advanced scholarly achievement. It is awarded for scholarship, not merely for the successful completion of coursework. Students must also successfully complete the comprehensive qualifying examination, the dissertation proposal, and the dissertation.

In addition to conveying existing knowledge to a new generation, doctoral programs are dedicated to expanding the knowledge base of a field. Hence, the development of research skills is of primary importance. In contrast to master’s programs, students will spend much time on research not directly related to coursework but essential to mastery of the scholarship in a particular focus area. Students are expected to work with faculty-led research teams throughout their program, which will foster the maturation of research skills and facilitate the development of a doctoral dissertation proposal that addresses a significant issue in the field.

Many students return to academia after a significant period of time in the workforce, and many continue to work while pursuing degrees. Nevertheless, the program places a heavy emphasis on contributions by each student to the intellectual life of the program and the School. This includes participation in research projects; attendance at seminars, conferences, and workshops; and publication of on-going research.

Students are expected to become acquainted with the research projects of program faculty, staff, and fellow students through attending colloquia, brown-bag lunch presentations, and other informal research reviews. As students develop research interests, they should ask to join appropriate research teams. As new members of our scholarly community, doctoral students bring not only substantive knowledge of topics in the field, but also a set of analytical methods and the ability to use as well as expand on them.

Oral and written presentations serve as practice for a scholarly or professional career. The Schar School encourages its students to present their research at colloquia, professional conventions, and meetings with other political science professionals. Additionally, by the end of their second year in the program, students in the PhD program are expected to have written a paper suitable for presentation at a professional conference or publication in a scholarly journal.

Publication in peer-reviewed journals is one of the primary ways that scholars communicate new research and contribute to the understanding of the discipline. Such publications are important indicators of scholarly achievement and are used by universities and political science organizations to judge the quality of young scholars. Doctoral students should pursue opportunities to present their research at professional meetings and publish in journals. One outlet for presenting student research is the research workshops organized by Schar School doctoral students to help their colleagues develop research and present their findings. In addition to presenting research, attending professional meetings and related social functions enhances a student’s professional development and also provides opportunities to network.

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Schar School of Policy and Government

Founded as a branch of the University of Virginia in 1957, George Mason University became an independent institution in 1972. Today, Mason is Virginia’s largest public university and is setting the gold standard for the modern, public university. Its dynamic culture and innovative academic programs prepare Mason’s hard-working students for 21st century careers. Its commitment to teaching excellence combines with cutting-edge research that enriches the academic experience. Located in the National Capital Region, students enjoy extensive cultural experiences and access to the most sought-after internships and employers in the country. The university has campuses throughout Northern Virginia (Fairfax Arlington, Prince William, and Loudon County, as well as in Songdo, Korea.

In 2014, Mason strengthened its commitment to policy, government, and international affairs education, research, and service. By merging two substantial units, the University consolidated its activity in these areas and enhanced its ability to be a leader. In establishing the Schar School, the University sought to take advantage of its location adjacent to the nation’s seat of government and still make it sensitive to the Northern Virginia region. This prime location offers students and faculty unique opportunities to study federal executive and legislative policymaking in addition to agency policy activities.

Cross-cutting and innovative partnerships define Mason’s growing impact, and central to these activities is the diversity of the faculty and students. Mason and the Schar School attract students from every continent, while a dynamic, international faculty generates academic opportunities and research collaborations that span the globe.

With over eighty full-time faculty, the Schar School of Policy and Government is one of the largest and most vibrant schools of its kind. The faculty hold their terminal degrees in a wide range of fields including political science, economics, sociology, international relations, geography, regional science, international relations, civil engineering, education, philosophy, medicine, history, anthropology, business, organizational behavior, psychology, software engineering, civil engineering, planning, and law.

Former and current faculty members include eminent academics. Six faculty hold named chairs, eight hold University Professorships, and four are members of the National Academy of Public Administration. A number serve as editors of major academic and professional journals and several have served as the presidents of their professional societies. Many members of the faculty have received awards for their teaching, research, and service.

Current and former policymakers serve on the School’s faculty, including members of Congress, a former Governor of Virginia, senior officials from the Departments of State and Defense, a former Deputy Chair of the Federal Reserve, a former Director of the CIA, the former Parliamentarian of the United States Senate, and the General Counsel of the NSA. Schar School faculty members have won the Pulitzer Prize, Emmy Awards, and Peabody Awards.

Throughout the year, Schar School events feature practitioners and scholars from the National Capital Region, across the country, and around the world. Students have many opportunities to build their professional and scholarly communities by participating in colloquia, conferences, research seminars, campaign events, and topical workshops available both on and off campus.
The Schar School is known worldwide for research that discovers new knowledge and develops practical solutions to challenges in policy, government, and international affairs. The School is home to ten research centers that span diverse policy areas, including public-private partnerships, economic development, energy policy, and emerging markets. Over the past decade, the National Science Foundation has ranked Mason’s programs in political science, public administration, public affairs, and public policy among the top ten in the country for research expenditures in these combined disciplines.

The scholars and experts of the Schar School community seek to push the frontiers of conventional wisdom, apply rigorous analysis to complex issues, and make a positive contribution to the world. Innovations in teaching, research, and policy are hallmarks of this community, and its impact reaches well beyond campus. The contributions of the Schar School begin in the Washington, DC region and extend throughout the world.

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Doctoral Program Overview
The objective of the PhD program is to prepare political scientists for professional careers in research and/or teaching by combining academic education in the field with opportunities for experience within the kinds of complex domestic and international political organizations they are studying. Graduates will be scholars and teachers, but experience-based understanding will enhance their analytic skills. Our large and distinguished faculty offers both depth and breadth in the scholarship of the four primary fields of the degree: a) the institutions and processes of American government b) international relations c) comparative politics and d) public administration. Students also have the opportunity in this program to take advantage of the courses in other Mason graduate units, such as the Middle East and Latin American Studies Programs, and the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

The Curriculum
The program allows students to specialize in one of four fields: American Government and Politics, International Relations, Comparative Politics, or Public Administration. In addition, courses in Research Methods are required of students in all fields.

American Government and Politics. The field of American government and politics examines the principles, processes, institutions, behaviors, and development of the American political system. The curriculum in this field is designed to provide a strong knowledge base and the analytical skills that will enable students to understand, evaluate, and critique the complex interdependencies of American politics.

Schar School faculty includes scholars in American institutions, which form the basis for understanding political behavior and governmental processes. Federalism and state and local politics are also well developed areas in the School, thanks to long-established offerings in public administration. The School has a growing expertise in political behavior and political development. Moreover, public forums in American politics at the Woodrow Wilson Center Institution, numerous Washington area think-tanks, and at other metro-area universities further enrich the intellectual setting for the PhD program.

International Relations. The field of International Relations focuses on the changing structure of international politics, including post-cold war security issues, the rise of international terrorism, foreign policy development, international political economy—including the effects of economic globalization, the information technology revolution, and the enhanced role of global corporations and nongovernmental organizations – and the rise of other nonsecurity issues on the emerging international agenda, from environmental policy to human rights.

Our approach, influenced by the reality of globalization, is grounded in the belief that the intersection of domestic politics and international affairs is of increasing importance in this globalized and interconnected world, and that a theoretical approach that aims to unite the concerns of both comparative politics and international affairs best prepares students to analyze the complex political dynamics that today affect global peace and stability.

Our International Relations faculty include specialists in the full range of issues that concern contemporary international affairs including security policy, foreign policy, international political
economy, war and peace, post-colonial and ethnic politics, ethics in international affairs, and human rights and humanitarian intervention. Many are also area studies specialists.

**Comparative Politics.** The field of comparative politics focuses on the governance processes and institutions of other nations and regions of the world, as well as the comparative and cross-national analysis of political institutions, processes, and behavior. Comparative politics faculty at George Mason University are grounded in specific areas of expertise common to the sub-field of comparative politics, such as democratization, political parties and other democratic institutions, state-society relations, revolutions, warfare, social movements, ethnic politics, and political economy. Many also bring expertise as area studies specialists in the key regions of the world, including the Middle East, Europe, Latin America, Central and East Asia, and Africa.

In addition to the rich course offerings in international relations and comparative politics, students have the opportunity to attend an extraordinary number of talks by academics, political leaders, and officials from around the world in the greater Washington, DC area. Our location affords students the opportunity to participate in forums organized by other area universities, think tanks, advocacy groups, governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations such as the Organization of American States, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank.

**Public Administration.** The field of public administration examines how government and other sectors work to achieve policy goals and objectives through various forms of collective action. The curriculum in this field traditionally has focused on the organization and management of public bureaucracies and their contributions to public policy outcomes.

However, reflecting recent trends allocating authority and responsibility for the delivery of public services to such nongovernmental actors as private profit and nonprofit organizations, the field has expanded to include a focus on whether and how networks of public and private actors collaborate to achieve public objectives. The field also has become more global as public management practices and theories are diffused across national and regional administrative settings. George Mason’s public administration program has been among the nation’s leaders in incorporating this shift into the core of its curriculum.

Our faculty’s research interests include work on accountability in third party governance, public management and organization theory, privatization, nonprofit governance, intergovernmental management, and homeland security. In addition, many members of the faculty maintain strong ties to the world of public management practice, including involvement as Fellows of the National Academy of Public Administration, consultant roles with federal and nonprofit agencies and active participation in public management associations. George Mason’s public administration program also enjoys advantages from our location in suburban Washington, DC, which provides easy access to a wide array of national and international organizations, firms, and think tanks, as well as to the institutions and agencies of the federal government.

PhD students have many opportunities for exposure to the numerous conferences and forums held on public management issues in the Washington area by such organizations as the National Academy of Public Administration, the Brookings Institution, the World Bank, the Urban Institute, and the Council on Excellence in Government.
Program Requirements

The degree requires 72 hours of coursework divided among foundation courses; advanced courses in the student’s major and minor fields; supporting courses that can be taken outside the Schar School; research methods courses; experiential learning; and dissertation guidance.

The course work is allocated as follows:

- **Foundation Courses**: 9 credits chosen from five core courses: GOVT 510, GOVT 520, GOVT 530, GOVT 540, and GOVT 550.

- **Major Field Courses**: at least 21 credits of advanced course work divided between two major fields (American government and politics, public administration, international relations, or comparative politics).

- **Minor Field Courses**: at least 9 credits of advanced coursework in a third field to be designed by the student and advisor to complement the major fields and with written approval of student’s advisor on the education plan.

- **Methodology Courses**: 9 credits to include Research Methods in Political Science (GOVT 500), Problem Solving and Data Analysis (GOVT 511), and one other course in quantitative or qualitative methods. The last of the three methodology courses should be tailored to the student’s dissertation research needs. Language coursework and proficiency may count as the third methodology course with approval.

- **Electives**: at least 12 credits in electives. Six credits may come from practical experience in the field.

- **Continuous registration: GOVT 998 (3 to 6 credits) and GOVT 999 (6 to 18 credits)**

  Students may apply to this degree a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6 credits of 998 and a minimum of 6 credits of 999. They apply a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 24 dissertation credits (998 and 999 combined) to the degree. Students must enroll in a minimum of 3 credits per semester until 12 total combined credits have been completed. Students may register for one credit a semester thereafter.

  Once enrolled in GOVT 998, Dissertation Proposal, a student must maintain continuous registration in GOVT 998 or 999 each semester (excluding summers) until the dissertation is submitted to and accepted by the University Library. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment is grounds for termination from the program.

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Political Science Degree Program Details

During their first semester in the program, students meet with their advisors and with PhD Student Services to complete a degree plan. (See Appendix III for degree plan forms.) Students are expected to discuss this plan periodically throughout their time in the program, make updates, and submit revisions for approval.

Courses for the Degree

Foundation Courses (9 credits from the following):
GOVT 510 American Government and Politics
GOVT 520 Political Theory
GOVT 530 Comparative Politics
GOVT 540 International Relations
GOVT 550 Public Administration

Methodology Courses:
GOVT 500 The Scientific Method and Research Design
GOVT 511 Problem Solving and Data Analysis I

One additional course in quantitative or qualitative methods is required. The last of the three methodology courses should be tailored to the student’s dissertation research needs. Language coursework and proficiency may count as the third methodology course work with approval on the education plan form.

American Government and Politics Field Courses (2 of the following 4 seminars are required):
GOVT 603 Seminar in Courts and Constitutional Law
GOVT 604 Seminar in Congress and Legislative Behavior
GOVT 605 Seminar on the Presidency
GOVT 706 Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations

Comparative Politics Field Courses (the following 2 seminars are required):
GOVT 631 Seminar in Comparative Politics and Institutions
GOVT 731 Advanced Seminar in Comparative Politics

International Relations Field Courses (2 of the following 4 seminars are required):
GOVT 641 Global Governance
GOVT 741 Advanced Seminar in International Relations
GOVT 743 International Political Economy
GOVT 745 International Security

Field of Public Administration Field Courses (the following 2 seminars are required):
GOVT 753 Third Party Governance
GOVT 755 Seminar in Politics and the Bureaucracy

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Minor Field

Students choose one minor field in consultation with their advisor. The courses in the minor field should complement the two major fields and need the prior written approval of the advisor.

The minor field is a substantive area, often one that could or will likely be related to the dissertation. The student’s advisor and the Graduate Director must approve any choice of courses constituting a minor field. Further, the minor field may not be made up of more than one directed reading or independent study course. Illustrative examples: Middle East studies, interest groups, French politics, peasant movements, state theory, etc.

A minor field chosen in methods may not include any of the courses counted for the methods requirement. Moreover, a methods minor may not be a foreign language. Courses chosen for a minor in methods must cohere in some substantive way; they may not simply be a list of “methods” courses.

Foreign Language as Methods Elective

Advanced knowledge of a foreign language, as attested to by specific outside examination, may substitute for one methodology course requirement. The student’s faculty advisor or probable dissertation advisor must certify that advanced knowledge of the language designated is essential and necessary to the successful doctoral dissertation work of the student. The Graduate Director must also approve.

Certification of the student’s proficiency in the designated language must be arranged for, paid by, and provided to the graduate office by the student. It is solely the responsibility of the student to ensure that certification is received before comprehensive field examinations are taken. There are no exemptions from this requirement.

Certification must be obtained at the required level for speaking, reading, and writing (see below) through Language Testing International (LTI) of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). (See http://www.languagetesting.com/ for details of all logistical elements of testing and payment.) No other certification from any other source will be accepted. (Note: The Department of Foreign Languages at George Mason University does NOT test for proficiency.)

Proficiency is defined as “advanced – sub-grade mid” for speaking and reading and “intermediate” for writing on the LTI scale of: Novice, Intermediate, Advanced (with three sub-grades: low, mid, and high), and Superior. (See http://www.languagetesting.com/proficiency-scales for details of these levels and all logistical elements of testing and payment.)

Certification of all required levels must also be provided for any language approved for doctoral dissertation work under this rubric, which may also be the student’s first language.

Comprehensive Qualifying Examination

At the conclusion of their course work, students will take a written Comprehensive Examination in their two primary fields of specialization. This exam will be based on the student’s course work and on the reading list prepared for each field. The exam must be completed before the student takes dissertation proposal or dissertation guidance courses.
A few months in advance, PhD Student Services will announce the dates for the next cycle of qualifying exams. Students will take two day-long exams, one in each of the student’s fields.

At least one month prior to the first exam date, students planning on taking comprehensive exams must submit to PhD Student Services a comprehensive exam application and a completed Degree Plan approved by the advisor. The purpose is to verify that all course requirements have been completed.

Students planning to take their comps during a given cycle must be available for both dates. Students who cannot make both dates must postpone until the next offering. No dispensation or special provision is needed for a “late” exam, as long as the maximum semesters of enrollment allowed by the university are respected.

Exams are prepared by duly appointed field committees in international relations, American politics, comparative politics, and public administration. Each exam requires that three questions be answered, the subject of one of which is methodology. The required number of answers is structured through an element of choice: i.e., in each section the number of questions from which to choose is greater than the number of answers required. The exam may be otherwise structured as the exam committee sees fit; the three required answers, for example, may be distributed across two or three sections. (Methodology must always constitute its own section.)

Each day of the exam is made up of an 8-hour session. The Director of PhD Student Services will proctor the exam. A computer is provided for writing the exam. Online access is prohibited, as well as the use of outside materials and electronic devices. Students are not permitted to use any of the following tools while taking the exam:

- Notes
- Books
- Reading lists
- Internet
- Personal computers of any kind
- Handheld devices (including but not limited to smartphones, tablets, iPads, handheld devices, and anything with document storage or internet access)
- Electronic storage devices (including but not limited to USB devices, flash drives, thumb drives, external hard drives)

Using any of the items above during the exam is grounds for failing the exam.

Exams are graded by the field committee appointed by the program director. Through its deliberations, the committee reaches a single result for each answer and, then, a single result for the exam overall. All answers must achieve a PASS or higher for a grade of PASS for the overall exam. The committee will render a single grade for each question and for the exam overall: FAIL, PASS or HIGH PASS. Any question that is failed must be re-taken and passed at a subsequent exam cycle in order to pass the exam. Any question area that is failed may be re-taken no more than once. Failing a question area twice means that the overall exam is failed and that the student is terminated from the program.

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Requests for Early Comprehensive Examinations

Students who have been enrolled in the political science doctoral program for at least one academic year may request to take the comprehensive examination prior to completing all coursework. These students must submit the following for consideration by the program director:

1. A note from their academic advisor supporting the request.
2. A written request to the program director from the student. This must be submitted at least two months prior to the date of the exam. The request will include a description of how the student will meet following criteria by the time of the exam:

   - Complete three required core courses (nine credits from GOVT 510, 520, 530, 540, or 550)
   - Complete two of the three core methods requirements (six credits, preferably GOVT500 and GOVT/PUAD/PUBP511)
   - Complete at least 24 credits of required coursework within the Political Science PhD program, which may include transfer credits.

Under exceptional circumstances and with advisor approval, students may be allowed to take the comprehensive exam prior to completing the 24 credits of required coursework.

Taking the exam before completing coursework may increase the risk of failing. All students are bound by the policy relating to failing grades on the exam (a student who fails any part of the exam twice is terminated from the program).

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Dissertation

Registration during Dissertation Work

To register for GOVT 998, the student must first have passed the Comprehensive Exams and identified the Chair of the Dissertation Committee. The Chair must notify PhD Student Services that he/she has agreed to serve as the Dissertation Chair. PhD Student Services will then provide the student with CRN to use to register.

Before registering for GOVT 999, students must offer a successful public defense of the dissertation proposal. Successful completion of a dissertation is contingent on final approval of the dissertation committee and the dean.

Dissertation Chair

An important key to success in a dissertation is the selection of a dissertation chair who must be a member of the Schar School graduate faculty. The dissertation chair gives primary guidance to the student during the proposal and dissertation stages of the program.

Typically, students and faculty members discover or develop mutual interests, and the decision of who will be the chair flows naturally from their evolving relationship. This decision is voluntary on both sides; that is, the student is free to select the dissertation chair, and the faculty is free to decide which students’ committees to chair. It is the responsibility of the student to identify a dissertation chair who will accept the responsibility of supervision. Failure to do so may result in termination from the program. A list of eligible faculty who may serve as dissertation chair is included in Appendix I.

The Role of the Chair

Chairs serve as the major advisor and mentor to the doctoral candidates as they research and write their dissertation. Expectations of the chair include the following:

For the Proposal:

- Consult and meet with the student on a regular basis
- Advise on topic selection (e.g., appropriateness, academic value)
- Guide the student in the proposal writing process (e.g., understanding the need for a clearly defined problem statement, precise research questions, viable methodology, focused literature review, and thorough bibliography)
- Counsel student on reliability and validity of data-gathering methods
- Ensure that all research activities are reviewed by the Office of Research Integrity and Assurance (ORIA) prior to implementation of the research activities. Refer to http://oria.gmu.edu
- Serve as the principal investigator for the research and assumes responsibility for the legal and ethical conduct of the work.
- Facilitate committee discussions about creating and improving the proposal

For the Dissertation:

- Meet with student on a regular basis to provide guidance and evaluation during the research and writing stages
- Review dissertation drafts in a timely manner
- Offer recommendations for revisions
- Communicate with committee members
- Discuss any problematic issues in the dissertation with the committee, student, and program director
- Approve the final draft for the dissertation defense, with the concurrence of the committee members
- Attend and supervise the dissertation defense
- Attend graduation/convocation to hood the candidate

Members of the dissertation committee are expected to be present in person at the dissertation defense. A change in dissertation chair is unusual and reflects extraordinary circumstances. A discussion of the proposed change must involve the present chair, the proposed chair, and the Doctoral Program Director. Both the Doctoral Program Director and the Schar School Dean must approve a change in chair. (See Appendix II for the Change of Committee Member form.)

**Dissertation Committee**

The dissertation committee chair, in consultation with the student, selects the other committee members from among Mason faculty. At least three members are required for a committee. All must be tenured or tenure-track members of the Mason faculty, and at least two—including the chair—must be from the Schar School faculty. The chair and those who have agreed to serve must sign the Dissertation Committee form (see Appendix II).

With the approval of the Doctoral Program Director, the committee may include additional members. These additional members may be part of the Mason faculty, or they may have other affiliations. The Doctoral Program Director recommends the dissertation committee to the Dean of the Schar School. The Dean appoints the members and reserves the right to make such substitutions as necessary, after consultation with the dissertation committee chair. (See Appendix II for the Dissertation Committee form.)

The dissertation committee is responsible for supervising and approving all aspects of dissertation preparation and production: additional coursework, research design, model building, data collection, data analysis, dissertation writing, and the oral defense. The committee reads the various drafts of the dissertation, advises the student about directions the dissertation should take, and identifies changes the student may need to make.

Student-initiated changes in the composition of the dissertation committee may occur only with the approval of the PhD Program Director and Dean in consultation with the committee. Faculty may resign from a dissertation committee with appropriate notice by submitting a written resignation.

If the dissertation chair departs from the university, the following will apply: With the approval of the PhD Program Director, faculty departing at the end of the academic year (spring) will be allowed to continue in that role until the deadline for submitting dissertations for the summer. If the student does not or will not meet the deadline for submission in summer, the student must identify a new chair for the committee.

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The Role of the Committee
The dissertation committee works with the chair to provide advice and consultation to the candidate throughout the process of research and writing. Expectations of the committee members include the following:

For the Proposal
- Meet with the student
- Advise on topic selection (e.g., appropriateness, academic value)
- Offer expertise in the member’s area of study
- Read and review the proposal in a timely manner
- Discuss any recommendations for revisions with the committee chair and student

For the Dissertation
- Meet with the student to provide guidance and evaluation during the research and writing stages
- Review dissertation drafts in a timely manner
- Offer recommendations for revisions
- Discuss any problematic issues in the dissertation with the committee chair and student
- Approve the final draft for the dissertation defense, in consultation with the other committee members

Dissertation Proposal
Before writing the dissertation itself, each student must prepare a dissertation proposal and defend it successfully. The purpose of the proposal is to demonstrate to the committee that the student has conducted sufficient research and planning to be able to complete the dissertation. Passing the proposal defense constitutes approval for the student to undertake the research and writing of the dissertation. Students should expect to spend several months writing the proposal, which is usually thirty to forty double-spaced pages, but the dissertation chair will determine the appropriate length for any specific proposal.

While the structure of each individual student’s proposal might differ somewhat, the following outline serves as a guide for both the student and the committee.

1. Title and Abstract: A working title for the dissertation and an abstract will head the proposal; the student should be able to state the purpose of the dissertation in one sentence.

2. Introduction: The introduction defines the area of inquiry, explains why it is important to the discipline, and shows how the dissertation relates to the broader area of political science scholarship. The introduction also briefly states the research question or hypothesis, and it lays out the framework for the rest of the proposal.

3. Literature Review: The proposal includes a focused survey of the field to which the student will make a new contribution. The literature review is not merely a descriptive list of related books and scholarly articles or an annotated bibliography. It should focus on scholarship directly relevant to the dissertation and show how the dissertation will contribute new knowledge to that literature. What are the major controversies in the field and how will the dissertation help advance knowledge of the issue in question? How has the literature dealt with these topics thus
4. **Research Questions and Hypotheses**: After placing the dissertation topic in the extant literature, the proposal explains in detail the research question or hypothesis and how the dissertation will answer the central question. Secondary questions or hypotheses are appropriate, but overall, the dissertation should address one central question. What theoretical or causal connections will the dissertation demonstrate? What leads the student to expect the predicted outcomes? What sub-questions will the student answer in addressing the main research question?

5. **Data Collection**: This section of the proposal describes how the data will be collected. What data or information will the student explore in order to bring empirical evidence to bear on the topic (databases, archival sources, documents, laws, survey data, interviews, etc.)? What new evidence will the student develop that has not been available before? Alternatively, how will the student use the existing data to address questions that have not yet been addressed?

6. **Methods of Analysis and Limitations of the Data**: Once the proposal addresses theoretical, substantive, and data gathering issues, it then explains the methodology of the inquiry. The methods used should flow from the type of question the proposal asks and the nature of the evidence available (or to be developed). If the proposal uses quantitative data, how will the student operationalize the main concepts being addressed? That is, how will the data being explored represent the issues the student is addressing? Is the fit tight or loose? Is the student aware of the limits of the data? If the proposal uses quantitative data or evidence, what specific data analysis techniques will be used? If the proposal uses qualitative data, how will the student evaluate the empirical data? If the proposal uses a case study, how representative will the case be? The proposal should be clear about gaps or limitations in the data selected.

7. **Implications of the Research**: Finally, the proposal addresses the potential implications of the research. How will this research improve our understanding of political science? The significance might be theoretical (e.g., how can we understand the issue better?), methodological (e.g., how can we use better measurements in understanding the issue?), or practical (e.g., how can this area of political science be better implemented?). The student should be clear about the limitations of the research and the potential gaps between what the study is measuring and the conclusions the student wishes to draw from it.

8. **Time Frame and Bibliography**: The proposal should include a concrete time frame for completing the research and tentative chapter titles, as well as a bibliography of the sources cited in the proposal, using the citation or reference style that the dissertation chair has approved.

It is essential for students to keep in touch with their committee members, especially their dissertation chairs. Students should avoid surprising their committees with what they think are finished products. The expectation is that students correspond regularly with their committee members, sending outlines and ideas, and reporting progress on the research. It is the responsibility of the student to keep the committee informed of the status of the research and writing.

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**Dissertation Proposal Defense**

Once the committee has reviewed and approved the proposal, the student schedules the defense with the help of PhD Student Services. At the defense, the student makes an oral presentation of the proposal to the committee and any other Schar School faculty, fellow students, or outside scholars who wish to attend.

In scheduling the defense, it is the student’s responsibility to ensure that all members of the committee are available and will be present for the defense. This is especially important during the summer, as faculty members are not obligated to be available during summer session. Any requests for exceptions to these requirements must be made well in advance in writing by the student's committee chair and approved by the Program Director and the Dean.

Students must submit to PhD Student Services **at least 15 days** before the scheduled date of defense:

- a signed Statement of Readiness for Proposal Defense form (found in Appendix II)
- an e-mail with the proposed dissertation title, date and time of defense, names of the committee members, and an abstract of no more than 100 words
- a copy of the final draft of the full dissertation proposal

After the proposal defense, the student is responsible for collecting faculty signatures on and submitting the Dissertation Proposal Defense form to PhD Student Services.

**Advancement to Candidacy**

Advancement to candidacy for the doctoral degree occurs when a student has met the coursework requirements, passed the comprehensive qualifying examination, has an approved dissertation committee, and has presented and successfully defended a dissertation proposal.

In accordance with University requirements, the total time to degree for all doctoral students will not exceed **nine calendar years** from the time of first enrollment. Doctoral students are expected to progress steadily toward their degree and to advance to candidacy within **six years** of enrollment in the program. **Failure to do so may result in termination from the program.**

**The Dissertation**

The doctoral dissertation is a critical element of advanced research-based education. A dissertation is expected to contribute significantly to new knowledge and understanding of the world in which we live. It builds on the best of what has been discovered and understood by scholars who came before, and it provides a foundation on which further inquiry and additional understanding can be built in the future. Occasionally, a dissertation results **de novo** from a blinding flash of original insight. However, most often a dissertation represents a logical extension of past work and demands that the author have a comprehensive understanding of prior work in the chosen field of inquiry. Thus, a substantial part of the effort of doing research and writing the dissertation is devoted to building and codifying that base of prior knowledge.

The Schar School of Policy and Government expects its candidates’ doctoral dissertations to represent outstanding contributions to the base of scholarly inquiry relevant to political science. A candidate’s dissertation research should be significant to some political science issue of importance. Thus a marriage of scholarship and relevance is the hallmark of a good dissertation. A dissertation should
incorporate the best professional practices related to style, format, referencing, graphics, and language. Publication is an appropriate goal of any dissertation, and candidates should write with that goal in mind.

Policies and procedures for the submission of the dissertation can be found on the University Dissertation & Thesis Services website at [http://library.gmu.edu/udts](http://library.gmu.edu/udts). It is critical that the PhD student fulfill the requirements prior to defending the dissertation.

**Oral Defense of the Dissertation**

The candidate must defend the dissertation in public before the dissertation committee and members of the University community who wish to attend.

As with the dissertation proposal defense, candidates will contact PhD Student Services for a room and equipment reservation. Candidates must submit the following to PhD Student Services at least fifteen days before the scheduled date of defense:

- A signed Oral Dissertation Defense Readiness form (see Appendix II)
- An email including the dissertation title, date and time of defense, all committee members, and an abstract of NO MORE THAN 100 WORDS
- A copy of the final draft of dissertation

At the same time, the candidate must provide copies of the dissertation to all members of the dissertation committee. The candidate also must place a copy on reserve at the Gateway Library Reserve Desk so that it is available to the University community at least fifteen days before the scheduled oral defense. In scheduling the defense, it is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure that all members of the committee are available and will be present for the defense. This is especially important during the summer, as faculty members are not obliged to be available during summer session. Any requests for exceptions to these requirements must be made well in advance in writing by the student’s committee chair and approved by the Program Director and the Dean. Candidates must be registered for at least one credit of GOVT 999 during the semester in which they graduate. August graduates must register for summer session.

It is common for a committee to require revisions after a successful defense to accommodate both substantive improvements and editorial corrections. If the defense is successful, all members of the dissertation committee sign at least three copies of the signature sheet. Candidates can find a sample sheet on the University Dissertation & Thesis Services (UDTS) website: [http://library.gmu.edu/udts](http://library.gmu.edu/udts)

The candidate must ensure that the signature sheet follows the formatting guidelines before presenting it to the committee for signatures. After a successful defense, the candidate must submit all copies of the signature sheets to PhD Student Services to obtain final approval from the Doctoral Program Director and Dean. If the defense is unsuccessful, the candidate may need to revise the dissertation and schedule a new defense date with the committee. The decision to allow a second defense is at the discretion of the dissertation committee.

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Dissertation Format and Delivery of Final Copies

Candidates are required to follow the University’s “Thesis, Dissertation, or Project Guide.” The University rigidly applies its requirements for format, graphics, style, and timeline. It is the responsibility of the candidate to follow the established guidelines, available on the web at:

http://library.gmu.edu/udts

The University requires a format review by the University Dissertation & Thesis Services (UDTS) Coordinator in Fenwick Library. The candidate should forward a copy of the dissertation to the Coordinator as soon as possible before the defense to allow time to make the necessary changes to the document. The Coordinator reviews the completed dissertation for compliance with the guidelines. The Coordinator does not assume responsibility for editing or putting the dissertation in final form, which is fully the responsibility of the candidate. UDTS is in Room 2005 Fenwick Library on the Fairfax campus, MS 2FL, telephone: (703) 993-2222.

Once the candidate receives all necessary approvals, the dissertation must be submitted to the University under the mandatory Electronic Submission Policy and will be placed in the Mason Archival Repository Service (MARS). It is the candidate’s responsibility to review the dissertation submission information available online and to contact the UDTS Coordinator to understand the submission requirements. Please note that the School requires immediate availability of all Schar School dissertations. Schar School students and graduates do not have the option of placing an embargo on their work on MARS.

The candidate must deliver two unbound copies to PhD Student Services for the Schar School’s permanent collection. The candidate is also required to provide bound copies for each member of the dissertation committee.

Intent to Graduate Form & Graduation Application

At the beginning of the semester in which a candidate intends to graduate, the student must file an “Intent to Graduate” form on PatriotWeb at:

https://patriotweb.gmu.edu/

The current deadlines are available on the web at:

http://registrar.gmu.edu/graduation/

Participation in Commencement/Convocation

Candidates who have qualified for graduation for the summer, fall, and spring semesters are invited to participate in the University’s commencement and the School’s convocation ceremonies. Information and dates relating to Commencement can be found at:

http://events.gmu.edu/commencement/

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International Student Services

Visa Status
Each international student is responsible for having a current and valid visa. Students on F-1 and J-1 visas must maintain their full-time status, demonstrate appropriate financial resources, and remain in good academic standing. All visa-related issues are handled through the Office of International Programs and Services.

Office of International Programs and Services (OIPS)
OIPS provides advice on immigration matters, employment applications, taxation, Mason academic policies, cultural adjustment, and other practical issues. The office conducts an international student orientation each semester, organizes outings, arranges bi-weekly workshops on topics of interest, and co-sponsors International Week each spring.

To learn more, visit the Office of International Programs and Services located in Student Union Building I Addition, Fairfax Campus, Suite 4300, (703) 993-2970, http://oips.gmu.edu/. OIPS also holds office hours in Arlington. Please check the OIPS website for more information.

International Student Health Insurance
Health insurance is required for all F-1 and J-1 visa holders. Health insurance fees are deducted from all payments received by the University before funds are applied to tuition or other charges. Failure to make this payment may result in cancellation of classes. See the Health Insurance section for further information.

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University Services

Electronic Communication and Mason E-mail Accounts
Students are required to activate and access the e-mail account provided by the University. The University will communicate only via Mason e-mail accounts for registration, student accounts/billing, and financial aid. Students are responsible for the content of any communication sent to them by e-mail. Students may choose to have Mason e-mails forwarded directly to another account. Account setup instructions can be found at the MasonLive website:

http://masonlive.gmu.edu

Please note that the default setting for mail forwarding retains copies of e-mail on the Mason server. To avoid errors due to mailboxes being over quota, students should either regularly delete e-mail from their Mason account or, when setting up mail forwarding, students can choose to not save a copy of e-mails on the server. If students have any difficulties with this process, they should contact ITS at support@gmu.edu or by phone at (703) 993-8870.

Health Insurance
Students may purchase health insurance through Aetna Student Health. F-1 and J-1 visa students are automatically enrolled in the University’s plan. The deadline for an annual policy or for fall semester enrollment is September 15, 2016. George Mason University’s policy number is 724536. For additional information contact Student Health Services at (703) 993-2831 or visit the Student Health Services web site at: http://shs.gmu.edu/ or the Aetna Student Health website at:

http://www.aetnastudenthealth.com/schools/georgemason

Schar School Career Services
The Schar School offers comprehensive career service assistance for all current Schar School graduate students. Staff is available to help students review and revise resumes and cover letters, explore career goals, and identify employment opportunities. Through one-on-one meetings and regular workshops, Career Services provides students with the skills needed for a successful career search.

Career Services maintains an online job and internship database, Schar School CareersNow, which provides up-to-date listings of current positions and career events. Students who register for CareersNow can review job and internship positions, as well as connect with employers actively recruiting. For more information, please visit:

http://schar.gmu.edu/current-students/career-services/

In addition to Schar School CareersNow, students may also wish to Use Mason’s general job and internship database, HireMason http://careers.gmu.edu/, or to take advantage of Schar School’s LinkedIn group to maintain contact and network with faculty, fellow students, and alumni.

Office of Disability Services
As part of Mason’s continuing commitment to uphold the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities, the university established and maintains the Office of Disability
Services (ODS). The mission of the ODS at Mason is to facilitate equal access for students with disabilities to university programs, events, and services. They do this by collaborating with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable. Students who believe they may be eligible for disability-related services should call ODS at (703) 993-2474 or visit the office on the Fairfax Campus in the Student Union Building (SUB) I, Room 2500, to find out what is needed to establish a file and receive services. Please see the following website for more information:

http://ods.gmu.edu/

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Program Administration, Policy and Procedures

The Schar School of Policy and Government administers the PhD program in Political Science. Key individuals responsible for the administration of the program include:

Dean  
Professor Mark J. Rozell
Associate Dean and PhD Program Director  
Professor Ming Wan
Associate Dean  
Professor Robert L. Dudley
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs  
Professor Matthys K. van Schaik
Assistant Dean for Graduate Program Management  
Elizabeth Eck Olchowski
Director of PhD Student Services  
Shannon Williams
Director of Career Development  
Duane Bradshaw
Assistant Director of Career Development  
Laura Hills
Director of Graduate Admissions  
Travis Major
Academic Programs Coordinator  
Erin Embrey

The PhD program core faculty is composed of tenured and tenure-track members of the Mason faculty whose primary affiliations are with the School. It also includes several members of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (Departments of Psychology, Sociology, and History) and the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution. A list of the core faculty may be found in Appendix I.

The program is administered by the Political Science Doctoral Program Director and PhD Student Services. The Program Director takes the lead in proposing policy changes, and in chairing and appointing curriculum and admissions committees, making assistantship appointments, organizing comprehensive examinations, and making recommendations on dissertation committee membership to the Dean. PhD Student Services administers the program, including responding to information requests, communicating information about requirements and changes in status to students, and tracking application and graduation forms.

The Admissions Committee, chaired by the Political Science Doctoral Program Director, will make determinations regarding admissions and the awarding of assistantships and fellowships. Decisions about whether each student has made adequate progress and may continue in the program will be made by the faculty annually.

The Advisor

Key to each student’s success in the program is close and continuing consultation with a member of the core faculty as advisor. This begins as soon as one enters the program. Initially, program administration assigns advisors based on students’ interests and on the need to balance the advising load among the faculty. Later the advisor typically is the faculty member who agrees to chair the student’s dissertation committee, and does not have to be the person originally assigned to the student. Students may change advisors with the agreement of both professors, provided all parties inform PhD Student Services in writing.
The advisor helps determine the student’s schedule of classes for each semester, answers general questions about the program, and guides the student in selecting a specialty and defining a research orientation. The advisor is the first point of contact for problems that may arise. Students must consult their advisors before any program changes are made and keep the advisor up-to-date on decisions regarding the program. The advisor helps the student with research skill preparation as well as with the formation of the dissertation committee. In addition, the advisor serves as primary facilitator for the School’s evaluation of the student’s progress in the program. Because faculty advisors are advocates for their advisees, students should develop professional relationships with their advisors. It is to the student’s advantage to keep the advisor informed of progress and any special circumstances that arise.

**Degree Plan**

The Degree Plan states which courses the student is taking or has taken to fulfill his or her degree requirements. PhD students are strongly encouraged to submit their Degree Plan form periodically to both their advisor and PhD Student Services for review. The review is to ensure that the student is adhering to the requirements of the program. If a Reduction of Credits is to be applied, those credits should be included on the form. Degree Plan forms are available from PhD Student Services and are also available on the Schar School web page. Any changes in the plan must be documented with an amended Degree Plan form signed by the student’s advisor.

It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of the requirements of the PhD program and to adhere to those requirements.

**Class Locations and Times**

Courses are offered on the Fairfax and Arlington campuses, primarily Monday through Thursday, from 4:30pm-7:10pm or 7:20pm to 10:00pm. The Schar School also offers occasional classes online for students’ convenience. The School reserves the right to select the time and place of each class or seminar, within the limits set by general University policies and procedures.

**Credit for Prior Graduate Work**

The Doctoral Program Director may approve a maximum of 30 semester hours of relevant prior graduate work toward the PhD requirements. These hours must have been completed as part of a conferred master’s degree or equivalent. A maximum of 12 relevant credits taken at George Mason University while in Extended Studies may be transferred to the program with the approval of the Doctoral Program Director. Any Extended Studies credits granted will be included in the 30 semester hours.

Students should meet with Shannon Williams, Director of PhD Student Services, to discuss any reduction of credit. **This should be done in the first semester to ensure appropriate course choices.** Students and their advisors will make recommendations to the director as to how many credits should be accepted and toward which requirements they will be counted. Advisors should consider both the subject and quality of the course requirements and the quality of the student performance in the course in making decisions about prior work. Students must provide their advisors with catalog copy and syllabi for the courses they wish to have considered for prior credit. University standards for prior course credits are described in the University Catalog.
Credit Residency Requirement
The Political Science PhD program must include a minimum of 72 hours of graduate work, 42 of which must take place after admission to degree status. Students must register with the University for every semester (excluding summers) until they have completed all degree requirements. Students who fail to do so will be dropped from the program.

Registration
Before the beginning of each semester, students should consult with their advisors regarding course registration for the upcoming semester. Registration is the responsibility of the student. Registration for most classes takes place electronically through PatriotWeb:

https://patriotweb.gmu.edu

Students should contact PhD Student Services regarding registration for Directed Readings Courses (GOVT 796) and courses requiring special permission, e.g., GOVT 998 and GOVT 999 credits.

Enrollment in Other Degree Programs
In accepting admission to the PhD Program in Political Science, students certify that they are not currently enrolled in any other degree program, either at Mason or elsewhere.* Further, after admission to the doctoral program, students are not permitted to enroll in any other degree program, either at Mason or elsewhere, at any time prior to graduation, resignation, or dismissal from the PhD Program in Political Science. Violations of this policy will result in automatic dismissal, which is not subject to appeal.

*The sole exception to this policy is admission into the MA in Political Science at George Mason University as an approved secondary program (see “Secondary Program” below).

Secondary Program
Students who have been admitted after the bachelor’s degree and wish to obtain a MA in Political Science as an admitted PhD student may do so. The MA in Political Science will be a “Secondary Program”. A doctoral student must complete at least 18 hours of the MA in Political Science AFTER approved for the master’s degree as a secondary program.

Please Note: The MA is a 36 credit program. Only 30 credits of the MA will apply to the PhD in Political Science.

To apply for the MA in Political Science as a secondary program, please complete the Secondary Program application and return the form to PhD Student Services. This form should be completed and submitted in your first semester of the program.

GOVT 796—Directed Readings and Research
Prerequisites: 15 credits of GOVT courses at 500 level and above, and permission of instructor.

Directed readings courses may have 1 to 3 credits. A maximum of 6 credits of directed readings courses may be counted toward degree requirements. Students wishing to pursue directed readings courses in
areas not covered by regular course offerings should contact PhD Student Services. The student must assign a course title and have the faculty member directing the readings approve the course (e-mail approval is acceptable). A course outline of topics to be covered and a preliminary bibliography is required, as well as a statement on evaluation procedures for the course.

**Time Limit**

For both full-time and part-time students enrolled in Mason doctoral programs, whether entry is post-baccalaureate or post-master’s, the total time to degree will not exceed nine calendar years from the time of first enrollment as a doctoral student. Doctoral students are expected to progress steadily toward their degree and to advance to candidacy within no more than six years.

**Expected Learning Outcomes**

Graduates from the program will demonstrate superior academic skills in the field of political science. They will complete introductory courses in four fields of the discipline and then develop a major and minor concentration from among the fields of American Politics, International Relations, Comparative Politics, or Public Administration. By the time students reach candidacy, they are expected to possess the quantitative and/or qualitative skills to design an original research project for their doctoral dissertation. All dissertations satisfying the requirements for graduation will make an independent scholarly contribution to the academic discipline of political science. Students are required to present their research findings in both written and oral formats.

**Evaluations**

Beginning at the end of the student’s first year, the program faculty conducts an annual review to evaluate the individual’s suitability to continue in the program. Satisfactory performance in a doctoral degree program incorporates much more than achieving passing grades in designated courses and successfully completing examinations. The faculty is concerned particularly with the capability of students to conduct individual scholarly inquiry, to communicate their work effectively, and to serve as members of the professional community. Timely progress in the program is also a critical element in assessing continuation. Periodic student evaluations take all these factors into consideration. The School, at its sole discretion, may terminate a student from the program during for any reason whatsoever.

In addition to the annual review, at the time of the comprehensive examination, the faculty evaluates whether students should be encouraged to continue the pursuit of a doctoral degree. Many factors are examined such as GPA, academic performance, and the capability of the student to successfully complete a dissertation. Either the Doctoral Program Director or the student’s advisor conveys the results of the evaluation to each student. For students making good academic progress and fulfilling all requirements in a satisfactory manner, the formal evaluation is typically pro forma in character.

It is the responsibility of each student’s faculty advisor to represent his/her student in the faculty discussion of student progress. Students should keep their advisors informed of progress or areas of concern.

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Termination
The student may be terminated from the program if the faculty feels the student has not made sufficient progress or has major academic deficiencies. The following is a list of reasons that will lead to a student’s automatic termination from the program:
- Receiving a grade of F in a single graduate level course.
- Receiving a grade of B- or below in two or more courses.
- Receiving a grade of B- or below in a single foundation course after the second attempt.
- Plagiarizing on the Comprehensive Qualifying Examination, Dissertation Proposal, or Dissertation
- Failing the Comprehensive Examination after the second attempt.

A student who is terminated from the program will receive written notification from the Doctoral Program Director. The termination is effective upon receipt of this notification. The notation of academic termination is affixed to the graduate student’s official record.

Appeals of Termination
A student who is terminated from the program for any reason other than an automatic termination described above may appeal the decision to the Dean of the School. This appeal must be in writing and must be received within 30 calendar days of the date on the notice of termination. The Dean of the School may appoint a committee to review the appeal. This committee will make a recommendation concerning the appeal, and the Dean will make a final determination. This determination cannot be appealed.

There is no appeal of academic termination from the program if such action is an automatic termination that results from a student’s failure to meet the above stated requirements. However, students are entitled to an appeal of the grade that led to the termination.

Grade Appeals
Although the individual faculty member is the best judge of student performance, there may be instances when a student disagrees with a grade or other evaluation. In such cases, the student first must ask the faculty member concerned to reconsider the grade. If the student is not satisfied, a written request for review may be made to the Dean of the School. This request must be submitted prior to the end of the drop period of the next regular session, excluding summer. The Dean of the School may dismiss the appeal as being without merit; uphold the appeal and issue a change of grade; or appoint a committee to review the appeal. This committee will make a recommendation concerning the appeal, and the Dean will make a final determination, which cannot be appealed. Grading of the comprehensive exam is not subject to appeal.

Drops/Withdrawals
Students may be dropped from the program for failure to do any of the following:
- Carry a sufficient credit load
- Meet continuous registration requirements
- Take the comprehensive qualifying examination in the required timeframe
• Resolve incomplete grades in a timely manner
• Meet conditions of provisional admission status.

Students may submit a written request to withdraw from the program to the Doctoral Program Director, who will make a recommendation to the Dean of the School. Requests for nonacademic reasons are generally accepted. The Dean reserves the right to reject any withdrawal, particularly when the student’s academic performance is in question.

Students who were terminated or have withdrawn are not permitted to enroll in any classes at George Mason University unless the Dean of the School approves their written request for reinstatement. The Dean reserves the right to deny this request, send this request to the Admissions Committee for re-evaluation, or to place conditions upon reinstatement. Such conditions may include, but are not limited to, resolution of outstanding incomplete coursework, completion of specified courses, achievement of specified grades in coursework, or meeting deadlines for taking required examinations. The Dean of the School may also require that students meet the requirements of the Student Handbook in effect at the time of reinstatement.

**Leave of Absence**

The Schar School does not grant a formal leave of absence from the Political Science PhD program. Students who wish to take leave from the program should write the Doctoral Program Director beforehand, explaining their circumstances. The School will evaluate each student’s situation when the student wishes to re-enroll (see below). Should a student need to withdraw mid-semester, it is critical either to complete courses or go through formal withdrawal procedures so that future enrollment may be possible.

**Re-Enrollment Procedures**

A student who has failed to enroll in at least one credit of coursework for two or more consecutive semesters (not including summer) at George Mason University must obtain permission to re-enroll in the program. The student should complete and submit a Graduate Re-Enrollment form to PhD Student Services. This form is available on the Registrar’s website at [http://registrar.gmu.edu](http://registrar.gmu.edu). The Doctoral Program Director, the student’s advisor and, when necessary, the Admissions Committee, will conduct a review of the student’s file for any academic deficiencies. If they grant the student permission to re-enroll, they will send notification to the Registrar’s Office.

**Courses at Other Institutions**

After matriculation, students may take a maximum of 12 credits at other accredited institutions. The School must approve such coursework in advance. A student seeking approval should provide the Doctoral Program Director with a written request that includes a copy of the catalog description of the course, a syllabus for the course (or a list of topics covered in it), identification of the text(s) used in the course, and written approval of the student’s advisor/chair. Courses taken at any member institution of the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area may be billed at Mason tuition rates.

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The Honor Code and Professional Conduct

Mason operates under an honor system that has existed in the Commonwealth of Virginia for over 150 years. Students are responsible for understanding the provisions of the code that is described in detail in the George Mason University Catalog. The Mason Honor Code is as follows:

To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

PhD studies go hand-in-hand with participation in an academic community, and students who pursue the degree must understand and uphold the norms and values of that community. The Doctoral Program is a rigorous intellectual endeavor. Students can expect the Schar School and the University to hold them to the highest standard of scholarly conduct. Students should familiarize themselves with the “Statement of Professional Ethics” and “Statement on Plagiarism” adopted the American Association of University Professors. These statements are incorporated in the George Mason University Faculty Handbook, which is available on the Mason website:

http://www.gmu.edu/facstaff/handbook

As members of the academic community, students are held to these standards of professional conduct. Should disagreements between students or between a student and faculty member arise, every effort should be made to resolve these differences in a collegial manner. If this is not possible, students are responsible for taking the initiative to consult with their advisors, the Program Director, and then the Dean to discuss their concerns.

Schar School Policy on Plagiarism

The profession of scholarship and the intellectual life of a university depend fundamentally on a foundation of trust. Thus, any act of plagiarism strikes at the heart of the meaning of the University and the purpose of the Schar School of Policy and Government. It constitutes a serious breach of professional ethics and it is unacceptable. Plagiarism is the use of another’s words or ideas presented as one’s own. It includes, among other things, the use of specific words, ideas, or frameworks that are the product of another’s work. Honesty and thoroughness in citing sources is essential to professional accountability and personal responsibility. Appropriate citation is necessary so that arguments, evidence, and claims can be critically examined.

Plagiarism is wrong because of the injustice it does to the person whose ideas are stolen. But it is also wrong because it constitutes lying to one’s professional colleagues. From a prudential perspective, it is shortsighted and self-defeating, and it can ruin a professional career.

The faculty of the Schar School takes plagiarism seriously and has adopted a zero-tolerance policy. Cases of suspected plagiarism are referred to the Office of Academic Integrity and may lead to termination from the program. This termination will be noted on the student’s transcript. For foreign students who are on a university-sponsored visa (eg. F-1, J-1 or J-2), termination also results in the revocation of their visa.
To help enforce the Schar School policy on plagiarism, all written work submitted in partial fulfillment of course or degree requirements must be available in electronic form so that it can be compared with electronic databases, as well as submitted to commercial services to which the School subscribes. Faculty may at any time submit a student’s work without prior permission from the student. Individual instructors may require that written work be submitted in electronic as well as printed form. The Schar School policy on plagiarism is supplementary to the George Mason University Honor Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it.

http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/

**Use of Editors**

Schar School doctoral students are permitted to use copy editors for the sole purpose of formatting dissertations according to Fenwick Library requirements. Outside editors may not be used for a draft dissertation prior to the defense.

**Funding**

The Schar School attempts to provide, but does not guarantee, financial support to all new full-time political science doctoral students. Typically, this takes the form of a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA). Each year, the Office of the Provost publishes “Guidelines for Appointing Graduate Research and Teaching Assistants.” This document includes a number of policies and procedures defining the scope, roles, rules, and regulations governing such appointments. All assistantships assume a minimum work commitment of 20 hours per week during the academic year.

Full-time GTAs must enroll in a minimum of 6 credit hours each semester (excluding summer), and are expected to maintain high academic performance. GTAs are prohibited from having other meaningful outside employment, and may only have other Mason employment with the approval of the Dean. GTAs are encouraged to take 9 credits each semester during their first year. Appointment as a GTA does not constitute employment but rather is seen as part of one’s academic training. Therefore, the School may determine at any time to discontinue support for any individual for any reason.

The School makes decisions on funding annually. Both the sponsoring faculty member and the student’s advisor make recommendations each year regarding requests for continued support. The School typically will not renew individuals who have received any grade below a B. All assistantships include some tuition remission, depending on the availability of funding.

**Conference Support**

The Schar School may award student research grants for dissertation research (e.g., expenses associated with original data collection), presentation of a paper at a discipline-appropriate conference, and other expenses related to their doctoral studies. In order to apply for funds, a student must submit a written proposal, supporting documentation, a budget, and approval from advisor or chair. The advisor or chair should email the Assistant Dean for Graduate Program Management to indicate support for the conference as a means to move the student forward toward dissertation completion. Additional steps may be required. The student must submit all materials and have them approved prior to purchase and travel. Applications are considered on a case-by-case basis throughout the year. Details about the application process are available on the Schar School website.
**Human Subjects Research**

All researchers must receive written approval from Mason’s Office of Research Integrity and Assurance (ORIA) prior to conducting a research project involving human subjects. Ethical review of projects will be conducted either by ORIA staff or by members of the Institutional Review Board (IRB), a committee composed of faculty, staff, and community members who are trained in issues related to protecting human participants in research. Please see the ORIA website for more information:

http://oria.gmu.edu/

**Educational Travel**

Students pursuing independently arranged international educational travel experiences such as internships, independent study, service learning, or dissertation research must:

1. Register travel through the Mason Abroad Travel Registration System
2. Sign and file *Acknowledgement of Risks and Medical Consent Form*
3. Attend any required orientations
4. Pay applicable tuition, administrative, and program fees, if any
5. Comply with policies and procedures regarding academic advising
6. Abide by applicable University regulations and policies, including but not limited to the University Catalog, the Code of Student Conduct, and University drug and alcohol policies
7. Students must purchase the University-approved travel insurance for the duration of the international educational travel

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Appendix I: Schar School Faculty

Schar School Faculty and Their Research
(may chair a doctoral committee or serve as a primary member)

Alan J. Abramson, Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Yale University, 1990. Nonprofit organizations; philanthropy; social entrepreneurship; collaborative governance.


Mark Addleson, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Management Economics, Graduate School of Business, University of Witwatersrand, 1993. Organizational change; knowledge management; knowledge work; work practices; organizational networks; methodology of social inquiry; Austrian economics.

Katrin B. Anacker, Associate Professor; Ph.D., City and Regional Planning, The Ohio State University, 2006. Housing; housing policy; urban policy; race and public policy; real estate markets; statistical methods; qualitative methods; research writing.

Enrique Desmond Arias, Associate Professor and Director, Peace Operations Program; Ph.D., Political Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2001. Armed actors and governance; comparative politics; criminal organizations and conflict; drug trafficking; extortion, corruption, and racketeering; policing; democratization; Latin America; research methods in violent settings.

Philip E. Auerswald, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Economics, University of Washington, 1999. Entrepreneurship; innovation; global development.

Peter J. Balint, Professor of Environmental Policy; Ph.D., Policy Studies, University of Maryland, 2000. Environmental policy; community-based conservation; natural resource management; ‘wicked’ environmental problems.

Jo-Marie Burt, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Columbia University, 1999. Comparative politics; Latin America; state-society relations; political violence; human rights; transitional justice.

Ahsan I. Butt, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, University of Chicago, 2012. Ethnicity and nationalism; international security; international relations theory; South Asia.

Kenneth J. Button, University Professor; Ph.D., Economics, Loughborough University, 1981.
Transportation economics; transport planning; economics of privatization and regulation; environmental economics; regional economics; urban economics.

**Terry L. Clower**, Northern Virginia Chair and Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Information Sciences, University of North Texas, 1997.
Regional economic development; economic and fiscal impact analysis; transportation; labor market analysis; land use planning; housing markets and policies; commercial development; community development; economic and demographic forecasting.

**James K. Conant**, Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1983.
Public administration; public budgeting; homeland security; environmental politics, policy, and administration.

**Timothy J. Conlan**, University Professor; Ph.D., Government, Harvard University, 1982.
Federalism; intergovernmental relations; public policy making; Congress.

**Desmond Dinan**, Professor of Public Policy, *ad personam* Jean Monnet Chair; Ph.D., Modern European History, National University of Ireland, 1985.
Global governance; European Union governance and institutions, history, and historiography.

**Robert L. Dudley**, Professor, Associate Dean; Ph.D., Political Science, Northern Illinois University, 1980.
Judicial behavior; decision-making; legal processes and public policy.

**Colin Dueck**, Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Princeton University, 2001.
U.S. foreign policy; international relations; American defense policy; international security.

**John S. Earle**, Professor of Public Policy and Economics; Ph.D., Economics, Stanford University, 1988.
Labor economics and policies; human resource practices; transition; development; corporate governance and firm performance; reallocation; industry dynamics; entrepreneurship; inequality; globalization; growth and finance; political economy; institutional economics; comparative analysis of economic policies and systems; microeconometrics; program evaluation.

**Stephen S. Fuller**, Dwight Schar Faculty Chair and University Professor of Public Policy and Regional Development; Ph.D., Regional Planning and Economic Development, Cornell University, 1969.
Regional economic development; urban development; housing; urban planning; demographics; the Washington area’s development; economic analysis; labor force; forecasting – population, income, employment, real estate development; economic and fiscal impact analyses; economic development in developing countries.

**Justin Gest**, Assistant Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Government, London School of Economics and Political Science, 2010.
Comparative politics; immigration and citizenship; minority political behavior; Muslim politics; Western Europe; qualitative and multi-method inquiry.
Jonathan L. Gifford, Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Civil Engineering (Transportation), University of California-Berkeley, 1983. Transportation public-private partnership policy; transportation policy, planning and finance; infrastructure policy, planning and finance; urban and metropolitan planning and land use; technology standards and public policy; transportation and regional development policy; freight transportation in megaregions; transportation governance; infrastructure banks.

Jack A. Goldstone, Virginia E. Hazel and John T. Hazel, Jr. Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Sociology, Harvard University, 1981. Revolutions and social protest; democratization; state failure and reconstruction; global economic history and long-term economic growth; impact of global demographic change on security.

Bassam Haddad, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Georgetown University, 2002. Comparative politics; political economy; Middle East politics.

David M. Hart, Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1995. Science and technology policy; U.S. public policy process; U.S. policy history, especially business, economic, and political history; international migration; entrepreneurship; manufacturing policy; energy innovation policy.

Andrew Hughes Hallett, University Professor of Public Policy and Economics; D.Phil., Economics, University of Oxford (Nuffield College), 1976. Open economy macroeconomics; policy coordination and exchange rate management; monetary integration (monetary and fiscal union in Europe); political economy models; fiscal policy; monetary policy; regionalism; economic policy and institutional design; dynamic games and bargaining; risk and decisions under uncertainty; commodity markets, financial policy.

Michael Hunzeker, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, 2013. International security; military innovation; conflict termination.

Mark N. Katz, Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1982. Comparative politics; revolution; Russian politics and foreign policy; war and terror.

Gregory Koblentz, Associate Professor and Director of Biodefense Graduate Program; Ph.D., Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2004. International security; biological warfare; nuclear proliferation; terrorism.

Naoru Koizumi, Associate Professor and Director of Research; Ph.D., Environmental and Preventative Medicine, Hyogo College of Medicine, Japan, 2005, and Ph.D., Regional Science, University of Pennsylvania, 2002. Applications of quantitative modeling and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in health and environmental policy research.

Siona Robin Listokin-Smith, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Business and Public Policy, University of California-Berkeley, 2007.
Public finance; political economy; corporate social responsibility; corporate governance; retirement and welfare policy.

**Mariely Lopez-Santana**, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, University of Michigan, 2006. Comparative politics; comparative welfare states; comparative federalism (including decentralization and devolution); Europeanization; new modes of governance.

**Stuart S. Malawer**, Distinguished Service Professor of Law & International Trade; Ph.D., International Relations, University of Pennsylvania, 1976; Diploma, Hague Academy of International Law (Research Centre for International Law & International Relations), 1971; J.D., Cornell Law School, 1967. U.S. trade law; U.S. & global trade politics; international trade relations; World Trade Organization; national security law & policy.

**Peter Mandaville**, Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, University of Kent at Canterbury, 1999. International relations; political Islam.

**John Marvel**, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., Public Administration, American University, 2012. Public management issues; public sector work motivation; manager-employee relationships.

**Jeremy D. Mayer**, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Georgetown University, 1996. Public opinion; racial politics; foreign policy; presidential elections; media politics.

**Eric M. McGlinchey**, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Princeton University, 2003. Comparative politics; Eurasian politics; international political economy.

**Robert J. McGrath**, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, University of Iowa, 2011. American institutions; state politics and policy; health policy, political methodology.

**Connie L. McNeely**, Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Sociology, Stanford University, 1990. Culture; science and technology policy; globalization and international development; complex organizations and institutional analysis; comparative education; stratification and inequality; social theory.

**Char R. Miller**, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Johns Hopkins, 1999. Ancient and contemporary political theory; political culture; violence and discipline.

**Sonia Ben Ouaghram-Gormley**, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Development Economics, School of Advanced Social Sciences, Paris, 1999. International security; arms control and nonproliferation; WMD terrorism; illicit trade; former Soviet States; biological weapons threats; biodefense and biosecurity; science and technology; emerging technologies and security.

**James P. Pfiffner**, University Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Wisconsin-Madison, 1975. The presidency; Congress; national security policy process; intelligence; public administration.

**Anh Pham**, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., Economics, University of California-San Diego, 2015.
Taxation; firm behavior; developing countries.

Paul L. Posner, Professor and Director, Master of Public Administration Program; Ph.D., Political Science, Columbia University, 1995. Political science; public policy process; intergovernmental management; budgeting; tax policy.

Priscilla M. Regan, Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Cornell University, 1981. Privacy and surveillance; public policy process; information and communication technologies; e-government.

Kenneth A. Reinert, Professor of Public Policy and Director, International Commerce and Policy Program; Ph.D., Economics, University of Maryland, 1988. International trade policy; international development policy; economic globalization.

Edward Rhodes, Professor of Government and International Affairs; Ph.D., Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, 1985. International relations; international security; US national security policy; US foreign policy; US naval strategy and force posture; American isolationism; identity and foreign policy.

Hilton L. Root, Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Economics and History, University of Michigan, 1983. International economics; international finance; international development; developing nations; political economy of the design and implementation of development policy; economic policy reform; North-South relations; Asian-Pacific affairs; the sciences of complexity and institutional change.

Mark J. Rozell, Dean and Ruth D. and John T. Hazel Chair in Public Policy; Ph.D., American Government, University of Virginia, 1987. The presidency and separation of powers; religion and politics; media and politics.


Matthew Scherer, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Johns Hopkins University, 2007. Political theory; religion and politics; constitutional law.

Laurie A. Schintler, Associate Professor of Public Policy and Director, Transportation Policy, Operations, and Logistics Program; Ph.D., Urban and Regional Planning, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1995. “Big Data” and network analysis; critical infrastructure; transportation; quantitative methods; regional development; Geographic Information Systems (GIS); network analysis; housing market; science and innovation policy.

Louise Shelley, Omer L. and Nancy Hirst Endowed Chair and University Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Sociology, University of Pennsylvania, 1977.
Transnational crime; terrorism; corruption; human trafficking and smuggling; illicit trade; sustainability; Soviet successor states.

**J.P. Singh**, Professor; Ph.D., Political Economy and Public Policy, University of Southern California, 1995.
International trade; development; cultural policy.

**Sita Nataraj Slavov**, Professor of Public Policy and Director, Public Policy Doctoral Program; Ph.D., Economics, Stanford University, 2003.
Public finance; economics of aging; retirement policy; Social Security and Medicare; tax policy; economic analysis of political processes.

Virtue ethics; political theory; democracy and education.

**Rainer Sommer**, Associate Professor of Public Policy and Enterprise Engineering; Ph.D., Software Engineering, Columbia Pacific University, 1991, and Information Technology, George Mason University, 1998.
Enterprise business systems; enterprise engineering; strategic planning; change management.

**Roger R. Stough**, University Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Geography and Environmental Engineering, Johns Hopkins University, 1978.
Modeling and policy in regional economic development, transport, information technology and entrepreneurship.

**Jessica N. Terman**, Assistant Professor, Ph.D., Public Administration, Florida State University, 2012.
Contracting-out/public procurement; state/local government administration; bureaucratic policymaking and behavior; rule making.

**Tojo J. Thatchenkery**, Professor of Organization Development and Director, Organization Development & Knowledge Management Program; Ph.D., Organizational Behavior, Case Western Reserve University, 1994.
Enhancing innovation and entrepreneurship using Appreciative Intelligence; creating knowledge-sharing organizational culture; change management; organizational transformation; quiet leadership; diversity and Asian American glass ceiling.

**A. Trevor Thrall**, Associate Professor of International Security; Ph.D, Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1996.
International security; US national security policy; political communication; public opinion on foreign policy and war.

**Stefan Toepler**, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Business and Economics, Free University of Berlin, 1995.
Nonprofit management and policy; philanthropy; NGOs and global civil society; NGO/Government relationships; arts and cultural policy.

**Toni-Michelle C. Travis**, Professor of Political Science; Ph.D., Political Science, University of Chicago, 1983.
Race and gender issues in political participation; public administration; urban politics.

**Jennifer N. Victor**, Associate Professor and Director of Undergraduate Programs; Ph.D., Political Science, Washington University in St. Louis, 2003.
Legislative politics; political networks; quantitative analysis.

**Ming Wan**, Professor, Associate Dean and Director of Political Science Graduate Studies; Ph.D., Political Science, Harvard University, 1993.
International political economy; Chinese foreign policy, Sino-Japanese relations; Asian Pacific region.

**Anne L. Washington**, Assistant Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Information Systems and Technology Management, The George Washington University, 2011.
American government and politics; Congress; information policy; eGovernment/Gov 2.0; human-computer interaction; information retrieval; knowledge management; legislative studies; qualitative methods; social theory; technology management; analytics; data science; transparency.

**Janine R. Wedel**, University Professor; Ph.D., Anthropology, University of California- Berkeley, 1985.
Shadow and influence elites; anthropology of policy; governance and privatization of policy; corruption and the state; accountability; social networks; Central and Eastern Europe; foreign aid.

Safe/sustainable transportation; community/regional development; multilevel modeling.
Selected Affiliated Faculty

Kevin Avruch, Henry Hart Price Professor of Conflict Resolution, Professor of Anthropology and Dean, School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution, School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution; Ph.D., University of California, San Diego, 1978.

Gregory A. Guagnano, Associate Professor of Sociology; Department of Sociology and Anthropology; Ph.D., University of California-Davis, 1986.

Hugh Heclo, Robinson Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Yale University, 1970.

John Paden, Robinson Professor of International Studies; Ph.D., Harvard University, 1968.

Steven Pearlstein, Robinson Professor; BA Trinity College, 1973.

Joseph A. Scimecca, Professor of Sociology; Department of Sociology and Anthropology; Ph.D., New York University, 1972.

Martin Jay Sherwin, University Professor of History; Department of History and Art History; Ph.D., University of California-Los Angeles, 1971.
Instructional, Research, and Administrative Faculty

(May serve on committees but not as primary member or chair)

James N. Burroughs, Term Assistant Professor; J.D., College of William and Mary, 1981.

Delton T. Daigle, Term Assistant Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Ohio State University, 2010.


Michael V. Hayden, Distinguished Visiting Professor; M.A., Duquesne University, 1969.

Todd M. La Porte, Term Associate Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Yale University, 1989.

Arnauld Nicogossian, Distinguished Research Professor; M.D., Tehran University, 1964; Internal Medicine and Pulmonary Medicine Fellowship, Mount Sinai Medical Center/Elmhurst City Hospital, NY; Board Certified Preventive Medicine/Aerospace Medicine, 1973.

Charles Robb, Distinguished Professor of Law and Public Policy; J.D., University of Virginia, 1973.

Bill Schneider, Professor of Public Policy and Public and International Affairs; Ph.D., Harvard University, 1972.

Frank Shafroth, Research Professor; J.D., Georgetown University, 1984.

Jessica Srikantia, Term Associate Professor; Ph.D., Psychology and the Conceptual Foundations of Science, The University of Chicago, 2005.

Bonnie Stabile, Research Assistant Professor and Director, Master of Public Policy Program; Ph.D., Public Policy, George Mason University, 2006.

Laura Walker, Term Assistant Professor; J.D., University of Toledo College of Law, 1977, and Ph.D., Public Policy, George Mason University, 2012.

David C. Williams, Distinguished Visiting Professor; M.Ed., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1973.

Matthys van Schaik, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Ph.D., University of South Carolina, 1995.

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Appendix II: Forms

These and other forms can be found online here.

1. Comprehensive Qualifying Exam Application
2. Dissertation Committee
3. Change of Dissertation Committee
4. Statement of Readiness for Proposal Defense
5. Dissertation Proposal Defense

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Police Science Comprehensive Exam Application

Student Name: __________________________________________ Date: __________________

G Number: __________________________ Handbook Year: __________________

Major Fields

Please identify your two major fields:

☐ American Government  ☐ International Relations
☐ Comparative Politics  ☐ Public Administration

Coursework and Degree Plan

A review of your coursework must be completed before you are approved to take the comprehensive qualifying exam. Please make the necessary updates to your degree plan and include a current version with this application.

☐ Current degree plan attached

Committee Chair

After passing the comprehensive exam and before registering for GOVT998 proposal credits, students must identify a faculty member to serve as dissertation committee chair. The faculty member must indicate in writing a willingness to serve in this capacity. If you have already identified a committee chair, please specify here.

Dissertation Committee Chair: __________________________________________

☐ Tentative  ☐ Confirmed in writing (documentation attached)

Please return this form to Shannon Williams, Schar School PhD Student Services.

Comprehensive Examination Application Approved by:

Director,  
PhD Student Services __________________________ __________ _______
Name Signature Date
Dissertation Committee

Student’s Name: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Program:  □ Biodefense  □ Political Science  □ Public Policy

Tentative Dissertation Title:

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

______________________________________________________________________________

The following professors have agreed to serve on my dissertation committee:

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Approved By:

Assistant Dean,  
Program Management ______________________  ______________________  _____

PhD Program Director ______________________  ______________________  _____

Dean ____________________________________  ______________________  _____

Please return this form to Schar School PhD Student Services
Arlington: Founders Hall 5th Floor, MS 3B1
Fairfax: A201 Robinson Hall, MS 3F4
Change of Dissertation/Field Committee Member

Student’s Name: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Program:  ☐ Biodefense  ☐ Political Science  ☐ Public Policy

Tentative Title: _________________________________________________________________
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Approved By:

Assistant Dean
Program Management

PhD Program Director

Dean

Please return this form to Schar School PhD Student Services
Arlington: Founders Hall 5th Floor, MS 3B1
Fairfax: A201 Robinson Hall, MS 3F4
Statement of Readiness for Proposal Defense

Student’s Name: ___________________________ Date of Defense: _____________________

Program:  □ Biodefense  □ Political Science  □ Public Policy

This form needs to be signed and submitted at least 15 days prior to the scheduled defense.

I have read the draft dissertation proposal as titled below and it is of sufficient quality for proceeding to the oral defense.

Tentative Title: ____________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Committee Members:

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I have received a draft copy of the document named above.

Director, PhD Student Services ____________________________________________  ________________

Signature  Date

Please return this form to Schar School PhD Student Services
Arlington: Founders Hall 5th Floor, MS 3B1
Fairfax: A201 Robinson Hall, MS 3F4
George Mason University  
Schar School of Policy and Government  

**Dissertation Proposal Defense**

This is to certify that this student has successfully defended his/her dissertation proposal.

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**Approved By:**

PhD Program Director ___________  
Dean ___________  

I have received a copy of the dissertation proposal.

Director, PhD Student Services ___________  
Signature ___________________________  
Date ___________________________  

---

**Please return this form to Schar School PhD Student Services**

Arlington: Founders Hall 5th Floor, MS 3B1  
Fairfax: A201 Robinson Hall, MS 3F4
George Mason University
Schar School of Policy and Government
Oral Dissertation Defense Readiness

Student’s Name: ________________________________ Date of Defense: _________________

Program: ☐ Biodefense ☐ Political Science ☐ Public Policy

Dissertation Title: _______________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
We certify that this student is prepared to orally defend his/her dissertation.

Committee Members:

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