Degree Requirements

The doctoral program in political science provides intensive training in the following areas of concentration. Ph.D. candidates must select three from this list:

- US Politics (which may include institutions, behavior, minority and urban politics, public law, and/or public policy and administration foci).
- Comparative Politics
- International Relations

Ph.D. candidates must select three concentrations which may consist of either of the following combinations:

1. a major in US Politics with two foci, and either Comparative Politics or International Relations as a third field; or
2. all three fields with either Comparative Politics or International Relations as a major, and minors selected from the remaining fields.

Requirements

Ph.D. students must complete a set of examinations and course work. The first is the Qualifying Exam. The Qualifying Exam in political science is an oral examination that may be taken the semester following the completion of 9 credit hours in the Ph.D. program, and must be taken no later than the semester following the completion of 15 credit hours. Students with an M.A. in political science from UNO, however, may take the qualifying examination during their first semester in the Ph.D. program, and they must take the examination no later than the semester following the completion of 15 credit hours. All students are encouraged to take this exam at the earliest feasible time. The exam may be repeated once. Failure to pass the exam on the second attempt results in termination from the program.

In addition to successful completion of the Qualifying Exam, a student must complete a minimum of 60 graduate credit hours overall. Included in this must be at least 30 credit hours in the student's areas of concentration, as determined by the Qualifying Committee. In addition, students must complete the research methods sequence of Political Science 6001, 6002, and 6003 with grades of “B” or better and six credit hours in dissertation research. Work taken toward a M.A. degree may be counted for this purpose, but at least 24 hours must be completed as a Ph.D. student.
After completion of all course work, but before completion of dissertation research, students must pass the General Exam. The candidate will be tested in two of the areas listed above. For majors in US Politics, both exams will be limited to US Politics. For majors in Comparative Politics and International Relations, the exam will consist of the major and one of the minor fields, as determined by the student’s exam committee. The examination will be both oral and written. If the Ph.D. degree is not completed within five years after passing the General Exam, that examination must be retaken. The General Exam may be repeated once. Failure to pass the second attempt results in termination from the program.

Upon passing the general exam, students must prepare and submit a prospectus of the dissertation to a committee of faculty members. The prospectus must be defended in an oral examination. The student receives the Ph. D. once the dissertation is completed and defended.

Additional requirements are described in the Department’s Guide to Graduate Study.