

Sabancı University
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

Handbook for Political Science Graduate Students
(2010-11)

This handbook seeks to provide students with information about the Graduate Political Science Program (POLS) at Sabancı University. It addresses some of the frequently asked questions concerning the requirements for the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees. *The Handbook for Graduate Students in Political Science* is intended as a supplement to the *FASS: An Outline for Graduate Students* which has information about the general degree requirements for graduate students in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

The POLS graduate program stands out among its competitors in Turkey and abroad with its curriculum offering opportunities for rigorous training in contemporary political science. An exposure to different methodologies in the field of political science during the course of your graduate studies will be an asset in your future career.

Advising System

All new students admitted to the program are required to consult with the Initial Academic Advisor (IA) of the Political Science Graduate Program before registering for courses during the registration period in September.


Currently, Işık Özel serves as the program IA (office: FASS 2132, e-mail: ozel@sabanciuniv.edu, phone: 0216-483 9275).

Students are required to choose an advisor for the remainder of their graduate studies. The deadline for this is March 30th of the first year for M.A. students and the beginning of the 3rd semester for Ph.D. students.

All new students are required to attend the orientation meeting which is held approximately one week before the classes start in Fall Semester. This meeting is important since it provides an opportunity for the incoming students to learn more about the program and faculty.

Course Requirements

All students who are enrolled in the program are required to take the following core courses:

-  POLS 502 Modern Political Theory
-  POLS 510 Comparative Politics
-  POLS 529 Political Analysis and Research Design
-  POLS 540 International Relations Theory

All of these courses must be taken during the student's first year in the program. Students may not delay taking these courses under any circumstances.

Students who wish to substitute the graduate-level courses which they have taken in other universities in Turkey or abroad should present the following documents to the POLS

Program Coordinator for evaluation: the syllabi of the courses, term papers, and other relevant documents. Students should be aware that there is no automatic substitution of the required or elective courses and each request is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

M.A. Degree:

Students who wish to receive an M.A. degree in Political Science have the option of completing the program either with or without a thesis. Today the MA degree is no longer viewed purely conducive to an academic career. We strongly encourage our students to choose the non-thesis track, which requires writing an M.A. research project paper instead of a thesis.

All students have to register for POLS 599, Pro-Thesis Seminar, in their first semester. This is not a course on its own but students who are registered for POLS 599 are required to attend POLS seminars throughout the semester. Students will receive a grade of Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory based on their attendance at the seminars.

M.A. with Thesis:

Those who wish to pursue an M.A. with thesis must take the following courses to complete a total of 24 credits:

- ✚ four required courses listed above (12 credits)
- ✚ two core electives (6 credits)
- ✚ two free elective courses (6 credits)

The students who wish to write an M.A. thesis are required to choose a thesis advisor by March 30th and submit a thesis proposal by April 30th of their first year. This proposal will be evaluated by a designated committee within POLS faculty. Students are advised to wait for the committee's decision before beginning their research.

There is no specific length requirement for the M.A thesis. In the past, the M.A. theses have generally ranged between 50 and 100 pages-long (double-spaced, including references and bibliography). Students are advised to discuss the content, methodology and the length of their theses with their thesis advisors.

The M.A. thesis has to be defended before the members of the student's thesis committee upon its completion. M.A. Thesis Committee is formed by the initiative of the student in consultation with the thesis advisor.

M.A. without Thesis:

Those students who choose the option of an M.A. without thesis must take the following courses to complete a total of 30 credits:

- ✚ four required courses listed above (12 credits)
- ✚ four core electives (12 credits)
- ✚ two free electives (6 credits)

These students are required to complete an "M.A. project" which will be conducted and written under the supervision of an advisor. It is the student's responsibility to find an advisor by March 30th to work with on her/ his project.

Gateway Exam

Students who want to continue on to the Ph.D. program after completing core (four courses listed above) requirements for the M.A. degree are required to take the written “Gateway Exam” together with the applicants who hold M.A. degrees granted by other universities in Turkey or abroad.

The “Gateway Exam” is offered twice during the academic year. The applicants to the Ph.D. program must pass the “Gateway Exam” in their first attempt.

The “Gateway Exam” lasts four hours and it is intended to assess the applicants’ ability to write coherent and meaningful essays reflecting their grasp of the basic methodologies and debates in political science. The exam is prepared and evaluated by a committee made up of 3-5 POLS faculty members. It is “anonymous” in the sense that the students’ names are not known to the members of the committee.

Those who are successful in the Gateway Exam will move on to the Ph.D. program.

Ph.D. Degree

The course requirements for the Ph.D. degree are as follows: Those students who start the program with an M.A. degree are required to take eight courses for a total of 24 credits. These students are required to take two methods courses (POLS 530: Research Methods I and POLS 531: Research Methods II) if the methods course(s) taken in the completed M.A. program at another institution is (are) found adequate by a designated committee. If the methods course(s) taken at another institution is (are) not found adequate by this committee, then the student is required to take POLS 529 prior to taking two other methods courses. Likewise, the required courses for each field (comparative, international relations and political theory) can be waived upon the approval of the designated committee.

Those who start without an M.A. degree are required to take fourteen courses for a total of 42 credits. The requirements include three methods courses listed above (POLS 529, POLS 530 and POLS 531) and three core courses from each field (comparative politics, international relations and political theory).

All students have to register for POLS 610, Thesis Preparation Seminar, in their first semester. This is not a course on its own, but students who are registered for POLS 610 are required to attend POLS seminars throughout the semester. Students will receive a grade of Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory based on their attendance at the seminars.

After completing the course requirements, students will have to take comprehensive exams in two of the four fields in the program. The four fields consist of:

- ✚ Comparative Politics
- ✚ International Relations
- ✚ Political Theory
- ✚ Turkish Politics

Before taking the comprehensives, students are required to take the following, in addition to the core course(s), in their chosen fields. The required courses in each field consist of the following:

Comparative Politics:

Core courses:

- ✚ POLS 510 Comparative Politics
- ✚ POLS 503 Comparative Method

and one of the following area courses:

- ✚ POLS 546 Latin American Politics
- ✚ POLS 549 Middle East Politics and Governments
- ✚ POLS 581 European Politics

International Relations:

Core courses:

- ✚ POLS 540 International Relations Theory
- ✚ POLS 640 Advanced International Relations Theory
- ✚ POLS 580 Political Economy

and one course from the following:

- ✚ ES 502 Turkey-European Union Relations
- ✚ POLS 509 Greek-Turkish Relations
- ✚ POLS 543 International Negotiation
- ✚ POLS 592 European Union Politics, Policies, and Governance

Political Theory

Core course:

- ✚ POLS 502 Modern Political Theory

and two courses from the following:

- ✚ POLS 507 Political Ideologies
- ✚ POLS 524 Continental Political Thought
- ✚ POLS 525 Civil Society
- ✚ POLS 600 Seminar in Political Theory

Turkish Politics

Core courses:

- ✚ POLS 550 Turkish Politics
- ✚ POLS 555 Turkish Foreign Policy

and a course from the following:

- ✚ POLS 700 Reading and Research in Turkish Politics
- ✚ ECON 526 Political Economy of Turkey

Methodology Requirement:

All students are required to take three core methods courses listed below. Only the students, who have taken POLS 529 during their M.A. studies at the SU (or an equivalent course at another institution) are not required to take this particular course in their doctoral studies.

Core courses:

- ✚ POLS 529 Political Analysis and Research Design
- ✚ POLS 530 Research Methods I (Quantitative Methods)
- ✚ POLS 531 Research Methods II (Qualitative Methods)

Methodology electives:

- ✚ POLS 532 Survey Research Methods
- ✚ POLS 534 Formal Modeling and Political Analysis I
- ✚ POLS 535 Formal Modeling and Political Analysis II

Comprehensive exams are scheduled twice a year, in fall and spring semesters. They consist of a written and an oral part. The written field exam lasts four hours during which students are asked to write two essays (out of at least four essay questions). The exam is intended to assess the students' knowledge of the literature in the field, their ability to apply a critical perspective to the literature, and their capability to use the literature in constructing an analytically coherent argument. The comprehensive written exam is prepared by a committee of POLS faculty and it is read and evaluated anonymously.

In the oral part of the comprehensive examination, students are asked to advance their arguments which they started developing in the written exam, respond to the gaps and weaknesses in their answers, provide empirical evidence for their arguments, and demonstrate their understanding of the literature.

Failure to pass the comprehensives in two attempts will lead to dismissal from the program.

After passing the comprehensives, the students should proceed with the preparation and defense of a dissertation proposal and the formation of their dissertation committee. The committee should be formed within a month following the successful completion of the comprehensives. The oral defense of the thesis proposal before this committee should take place within six months after the completion of the comprehensives.

It is the students' responsibility to choose a thesis advisor by the beginning of their 3rd semester. Students are also required to form their thesis committee in consultation with their thesis advisor. The thesis committee should be formed by five members: the thesis advisor, two POLS faculty, a faculty member from a different field at the SU and a faculty member from another institution.

The last stage in the successful completion of the requirements for the Ph.D is the defense of the completed dissertation. After a successful defense and the completion of the suggestions for revisions and changes by the dissertation committee, the doctoral thesis must be deposited in the SU Information Center in the format that meets the SU's specifications.

CRITICAL DATES AND DEADLINES for M.A. STUDENTS	
Choosing your advisor	March 30th of the first year
Submitting a thesis proposal (for the <u>thesis track</u>)	April 30th of the first year
PhD Gateway exam	Twice a year (End of Fall & Spring semesters)

CRITICAL DATES AND DEADLINES for Ph.D. STUDENTS		
	Students admitted w/ MA	Students admitted w/o MA
Choosing an advisor	Beginning of the 3 rd semester	
Completing the coursework	4 semesters	6 semesters
Taking the comprehensives (earliest)	Following the completion of the coursework	
Passing the comprehensives	By the end of the 5 th semester	By the end of the 7 th semester
Formation of the dissertation committee	1 month after passing the comprehensives	
Submitting the dissertation proposal	6 months after passing the comprehensives	
Maximum duration of the program	8 semesters (can be granted additional 4 for thesis work)	10 semesters (can be granted additional 4 for thesis work)