



**SCHAR SCHOOL OF POLICY
AND GOVERNMENT**

George Mason University®

**PhD Student/Faculty Handbook
2025-2026**

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This Handbook incorporates most of the requirements and rules pertaining to the doctoral programs in Biodefense, Political Science, and Public Policy 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 **2025-2026**.

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 the Schar School of Policy and Government's PhD programs in Biodefense, Political Science, and Public Policy. The faculty looks forward to a rewarding professional association with you during this important part of your career.

This Handbook

The Student/Faculty Handbook guides each incoming class, although details may differ slightly between each edition. This handbook applies to the class of students entering during the 2025-2026 academic year. Students are expected to read it carefully to learn about their respective programs and refer back to it as they progress through the stages.

Parts I-IV of this handbook cover details common to the Schar School's three PhD programs: Biodefense, Political Science, and Public Policy. Parts V-VII comprise each program's unique requirements. Students are guided by the terms of this handbook throughout the PhD 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 Schar School doctoral education serves as an "apprenticeship" to provide students with the knowledge and experience that will enable them to move confidently into advanced positions. 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 provide valuable complements to study in the classroom.

At established milestones, the School will make assessments of student progress to determine whether each student is ready for the next step of the academic journey. A satisfactory grade in each of the foundation and 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. This faculty member will act as mentor, advisor, evaluator, and supervisor. However, students are ultimately responsible for the development of their own education and for making progress in the program. While the journey will be demanding, difficult, and time consuming, students should also find it exciting 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 doctoral education and research program that is designed to develop a fully capable and responsible scholar.

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 or Qualifying Examination (depending on program), 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 research.

Students are expected to become acquainted with the research projects of program faculty, staff, and fellow students. A range of colloquia, brown-bag lunch presentations, and other informal research reviews provide opportunities to familiarize themselves with advancing research. 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 engage with the scholarly community outside the classroom by attending academic seminars and workshops both on and off campus, and to identify professional or academic conferences where they might present. Students in the PhD program are expected to seek out opportunities to write or co-author papers suitable for presentation at professional conferences or publication in scholarly journals.

Publication in peer-reviewed journals is one of the primary ways that scholars communicate new research and contribute to knowledge in their fields. Such publications are important indicators of scholarly achievement and are used by universities and organizations to judge the quality of young scholars. Doctoral students should pursue opportunities to present their research at professional meetings and publish in journals. Students will find outlets for presenting their research at the research workshops organized by Schar School doctoral students. These workshops help students develop their work and to refine their presentation skills. Attending professional meetings and related social functions also enhances a student's professional development. The Schar School PhD Student Services office has a fund available to help students participate in academic and professional conferences.

Schar School of Policy and Government at George Mason University

Founded as a branch of the University of Virginia in 1957, George Mason University became an independent institution in 1972. As Virginia's largest public university, Mason drives a pioneering vision of what the modern, public university can be through its commitment to academic excellence, research, and accessibility. Mason's dynamic culture and innovative academic programs prepare Mason's hard-working students for 21st century careers, enabling graduates to meet the complex needs of a rapidly changing world. A Tier 1 Research University, Mason's commitment to teaching excellence and cutting-edge research enrich 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, and Prince William Counties), 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 activities and enhanced its ability to lead in these areas. In establishing the Schar School, the University sought to take advantage of its location adjacent to the nation's seat of government while maintaining its connection to the northern Virginia region. This prime location offers students and faculty unique opportunities to study federal executive and legislative governance 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 terminal degrees in a wide range of fields including political science, economics, sociology, international relations, geography, regional science, international relations, civil engineering, education, medicine, history, anthropology, organizational behavior, software engineering, and law.

Current faculty members include eminent academics. Five faculty hold named chairs, six hold University Professorships and three 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 a former member of Congress, multiple former Governors of Virginia, senior officials from the Departments of State and Defense, a former Director of the CIA, a former deputy director of the FBI, and the General Counsel of the NSA.

The Schar School is known worldwide for research that discovers new knowledge and develops practical solutions to challenges in international affairs, policy, and government. The School is home to thirteen research centers that span diverse policy areas, including public-private partnerships, economic development, and energy policy. 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.

I: PhD Program Administration, Policies, and Procedures

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

Dean	Professor Mark J. Rozell
Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs	Professor Ming Wan
Senior Associate Dean for Administration	Doug Goldstein
Biodefense Doctoral Program Director	Professor Gregory Koblentz
Political Science Doctoral Program Director	Professor Robert McGrath
Public Policy Doctoral Program Director	Professor Robert McGrath
Senior Assistant Dean for Student and Academic Affairs	Jill Deering
Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Services	Silva Pecini Morris
Director of PhD Student Services	John Washington
Director of Career Development	Duane Bradshaw
Assistant Director of Career Development	Brian Bar
Senior Director of Enrollment and Marketing	Kristina Bonfiglio
Director, Public Policy Public Admin Program Faculty	Professor Stefan Toepler
Director, Gov. and Intl. Affairs Program Faculty	Professor Michael Hunzeker

The PhD 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 core faculty may be found in Appendix A.

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

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

The Advisor

Key to each student's success in the program is close and continuing consultation with a member of the core faculty who serves as advisor. This begins as soon as a student 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. This 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 making any program changes 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 them. It is to the student's advantage to keep the advisor informed of progress and any special circumstances that arise.

PhD Student Services

Schar School PhD Student Services complements the student-faculty advising relationship by providing guidance on scheduling, university requirements, program details, and other administrative matters. The office is a unified home for the many co-curricular resources students need during their time at Mason. The PhD Student Services staff partners with faculty, alumni, and the Mason community to offer targeted activities that provide guidance and support as students work towards completing their degrees.

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 (POGO 796), courses through the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area, and courses requiring special permission, e.g., 998 and 999 credits.

Credit for Prior Graduate Work

The Doctoral Program Director may approve a maximum of 30 semester hours of relevant prior graduate work toward program requirements. These hours must have been completed as part of a master's degree or equivalent, conferred prior to the start of the PhD program. Official transcripts must be provided, and degrees earned outside the US must include an official transcript evaluation. Credits that are applied to both an undergraduate and graduate degree in a joint bachelor's/master's program or in Mason's bachelor's/accelerated master's programs will not be eligible for transfer credit.

A maximum of 12 relevant credits taken at George Mason University while in non-degree status may be transferred to the program with the approval of the Doctoral Program Director. Any non-degree credits granted will be included in the 30 semester hours. See University Catalog [AP.6.5](#) for additional information.

- Students in the [Biodefense](#) and [Political Science](#) programs should meet with PhD Student Services to discuss any transfer credit. **This should be done in the first semester to ensure appropriate course choices.** Students, in consultation with their advisors, will make requests to the Doctoral Program Director as to how many credits should be transferred and toward which requirements they will be counted. When making decisions about prior work, advisors should consider both the subject and quality of the course requirements and student performance in courses. Students must provide their advisors with catalog copy and syllabi for the courses they wish to have considered for prior credit. The University catalog describes standards for prior course credits.
- Students in the [Public Policy](#) program will receive notification from the Director of PhD Student Services indicating the number of master's degree credits (up to 30) that may transfer to the 82-credit minimum required for the degree.

Class Locations and Times

Courses are offered on the Fairfax and Mason Square campuses, primarily Monday through Thursday, from 4:30pm-7:10pm or 7:20pm-10:00pm. The Schar School also offers online and hybrid classes. 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.

Institutional Credit Requirement

- The [Biodefense](#) and [Political Science](#) PhD program must include a minimum of 42 hours of graduate work after admission to degree status.
- The [Public Policy](#) PhD program must include a minimum of 50 hours of graduate work 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 may be terminated from the program.

Full-Time/Part-Time Status

Full-time students are expected to take a minimum of 9 credits every semester until course requirements are complete. In the dissertation proposal stage (i.e., taking 998), full-time students must take 6 credits to maintain full-time status. This does not include summer. Students who wish to register for more than 12 credits in a semester must seek permission from the Doctoral Program Director. Students who wish to request any adjustments to these full-time requirements must consult with PhD Student Services.

- In the Biodefense and Political Science programs, part-time students are expected to take a minimum of two 3-credit courses each semester until completing course requirements. Students may request adjustments to this course load in consultation with PhD Student Services and with prior advisor approval of any changes to the degree plan.
- In the Public Policy program, part-time students are required to take a minimum of two 3-credit courses each semester prior to passing the Qualifying Exam. For part-time students, the Doctoral Program Director may approve a schedule with fewer credits in one semester, provided four courses are taken during the academic year and associated summer. Keep in mind, however, that required courses generally are not offered during the summer.

The School makes every effort to schedule courses to accommodate the needs of part-time students. However, offering courses to meet diverse scheduling needs is a challenge. Those who pursue doctoral studies on a part-time basis must understand the schedule and plan ahead to meet the requirements of the program. Flexibility on the part of employers is essential for successful participation in the doctoral program. Failure to meet program requirements, particularly prior to completion of the Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination, may be grounds for termination.

Entities outside the university may have requirements about your full-time or part-time status. These can include funding agencies, SEVP (visas), workplaces, the US military, and student loans. It is important to check the terms carefully. “Part-time” and “half-time” status may be defined differently by different entities. For example, part-time students who have completed the majority of their coursework may request approval to take 3 credits in a semester. However, most student loans require half-time status, which is defined as 4.5 credits. Please confer with PhD Student Services when making determinations about the number of credits required to maintain your status in the program.

Directed Readings and Research (POGO 796)

Prerequisites:

- Biodefense and Political Science students must have completed 15 credits of coursework at the 500-level and above after admission to degree status.
- Public Policy students must pass the Qualifying Exam.

Directed readings courses may have 1 to 3 credits. *A maximum of 6 credits of directed readings courses may be counted toward degree requirements; more than 6 credits of directed readings will not be counted for the degree.* 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.

Study Abroad

PhD doctoral students may participate in Mason study abroad courses. These courses will be posted to the Mason transcript, and the credit will be counted toward the credit total required for graduation.

- In the Public Policy program, a study abroad course may *not* count as one of the advanced elective courses required for the degree.
- In the Biodefense and Political Science programs, students must attain prior advisor approval for any study abroad courses intended to fulfill program requirements.

Courses at Other Institutions

After matriculation, students may take a maximum of 12 credits at other accredited institutions, if they have not reached the 30-credit transfer limit. 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 texts used in the course, and written approval of the student's advisor or chair.

Consortium Courses

Up to 6 credits of coursework taken at any member institution of the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area may be billed at Mason tuition rates. These credits are considered resident, not transfer credit. Please refer to the University Catalog [AP.6.5.3](#) for more information.

Secondary Program

In accepting admission to a Schar School PhD Program, 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 termination from the PhD program.* Violations of this policy will result in termination, which is not subject to appeal.

*The only exceptions to this policy are as follows:

- For Biodefense PhD students: Admission into the Biodefense MS at George Mason University or admission into the Biodefense Graduate Certificate Program at George Mason University
- For Political Science PhD students: Admission into the Political Science MA at George Mason University
- For Public Policy PhD students: Admission into the Master's in Public Policy (MPP) at George Mason University

Students who would like to pursue one of the approved secondary degrees must declare their intent to do so by the end of their second year in the program. Master's degree course requirements and time limits are different than those of the doctoral degree; additional coursework is required. Only 30 credits from a master's degree may be applied to the doctoral degree. Doctoral students do not automatically complete master's degree requirements as part of their studies and need to be advised appropriately. Please contact PhD Student Services if you are considering this option.

Graduate Assistantships

Each year, the Schar School provides a limited number of funded positions to full-time doctoral students. Typically, this takes the form of a Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA) or Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA). Each year, the Office of the Provost publishes “[Graduate Student Hiring Rules and Procedures](#).” This document includes a number of policies and procedures defining the scope, roles, rules, and regulations governing such appointments. All assistantships assume a work commitment of 20 hours per week during the academic year.

Full-time GRAs and GTAs must enroll in a minimum of 6 credit hours each semester (excluding summer) and are expected to maintain high academic performance. GRAs and GTAs are encouraged to take 9 credits each semester during their first year. GRAs and GTAs may only have other employment with the approval of their supervisor, the Program Director, and the Dean. Appointment as a GRA or GTA does not constitute employment but rather is seen as part of one’s academic training. 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.

Grants for Research and Conference Support

The Schar School may award PhD students research grants for dissertation research (e.g., expenses associated with original data collection), presentation of a paper at a discipline-appropriate conference, attendance at a professional conference (limited to students in the first two years of the doctoral program), and other expenses related to their studies. In order to apply for funds, students are required to submit a written proposal, supporting documentation, a budget, and approval from their advisor. The student must submit all materials and receive approval one month prior to purchase and travel. Please note that all conference support funding is subject to taxation. The School considers applications on a case-by-case basis throughout the year. Details about the application process are available on the Scholarships and Funding page of the Schar School website.

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.

Degree Progress and Evaluation

Beginning in the spring semester of the student’s first year, the program faculty conducts an annual review to evaluate the student’s progress in the program. Satisfactory performance in a doctoral degree program involves much more than achieving passing grades in courses and on

examinations. The faculty is concerned particularly with the capability of students to conduct individual scholarly inquiry, communicate their work effectively, and serve as members of the professional community. Timely progress in the program is also a significant consideration. Periodic student evaluations take all these factors into consideration, and pertinent feedback is provided to the student.

In addition to the annual review, at the time of the Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination, the faculty evaluates whether students should be encouraged to continue pursuing 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 faculty advisors to represent their students in the faculty discussion of student progress. Students should keep their advisors informed of progress or areas of concern.

Students who are concerned about their progress or ability to finish the doctoral degree should contact PhD Student Services to discuss options and explore the possibility of earning a master's degree.

Termination

A student may be terminated from the program for the following reasons:

- 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 or core course after the second attempt.
- Plagiarizing on the Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination, Dissertation Proposal, or Dissertation.
- Failing the Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination on the second attempt.
- Failing to meet advancement to candidacy or degree time limits.
- Failing to carry a sufficient credit load or meet continuous registration requirements.
- Failing to complete the Comprehensive/Qualifying Examination in the required timeframe.
- Failing to meet conditions of provisional admission status.

A student in any PhD program who receives a grade of B- or below in a foundation or core course must retake the course. The student must retake the course during the next term in which it is offered. Should a student fail to receive a grade of B or better in the core course on the second attempt, the student may be terminated from the program.

In the Public Policy program, the following additional reasons may lead to a student's termination:

- Receiving a grade of B- or below in two or more 800-level courses, even if retaken.

A student who is facing termination from the program will receive written notification from the Dean or Dean's Designee. A student facing termination may file a petition for an Academic Exception Request.

Graduate students who have been terminated from a Mason graduate program are not permitted to take any additional coursework at Mason unless a new graduate program application has been submitted and the applicant has been admitted to graduate study.

Academic Exception Request

A student who is facing termination from the program may file a petition for an exception to the termination policy (known as an Academic Exception Request, or AER). All AERs must be in writing and must be received by the Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Services within 10 calendar days of the date on the notice of termination. A committee of three faculty members will be appointed by the Dean to review the AER. A recommendation concerning the petition will be made to the Dean who will make the final determination.

Students whose AERs are denied by School may have a further appeal option available to them. Information regarding policy exception procedures, including how and when one can submit an appeal of the Academic Exception Request decision to the Associate Provost for Graduate Education, can be found [here](https://graduate.gmu.edu/studying-here/graduate-policy-resources/graduate-academic-exceptions) .

(URL:<https://graduate.gmu.edu/studying-here/graduate-policy-resources/graduate-academic-exceptions>)

Grade Appeal

Although faculty members are generally the best judges of student performance, there may be times when a student believes a grade is unfair. In such cases, the student should first ask the instructor to reconsider the grade. If the student is not satisfied, a grade appeal may be submitted. To initiate the appeal, the student should contact the Senior Assistant Dean of Student and Academic Affairs who will guide the student on the process.

Grade appeals are submitted to the Program Faculty Director of the program offering the course. The Program Director should first ask the student to return to the instructor who assigned the grade for further consultation. If a mutually satisfactory agreement between the instructor and student is not reached and the student wishes to continue with the appeal process, the student should inform the Program Faculty Director. If the Program Faculty Director believes the student's appeal does not have merit, this reservation is reported to the Dean. If the Dean also concludes that the student's appeal does not have merit, no additional review is conducted.

If the Program Faculty Director or Dean determines that additional review is necessary, the student may request that the Program Faculty Director form a review committee of three faculty peers of the instructor who assigned the grade. If a committee is formed, the instructor or the student may challenge and have one of the three members of the committee replaced without giving a reason for the challenge. The committee meets separately with the instructor and the student to explore the full particulars of the case. A nonparticipating observer of the student's choice may attend the meeting.

After the committee has reviewed the case thoroughly, it issues a written recommendation to the Program Faculty Director (with a copy to the instructor) that includes the reasons for its findings. At this time, the instructor has an opportunity to take the recommended action, if any. If the matter is not resolved at this point, the Program Faculty Director considers the committee's recommendation and makes a recommendation to the Dean. The Dean will review the appeal and make a decision. The decision of the Dean is not subject to further appeal.

Grade appeals are not accepted after the last day of classes of the following semester (spring for fall grades, fall for spring and summer grades).

Grading of the Comprehensive/Qualifying Exam is not subject to appeal.

<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/grading/#ap-3-9>

Canceling Registration/Retroactive Withdrawal/Retroactive Drop

Graduate students may drop from any or all courses during the drop period and withdraw from any or all courses during the unrestricted withdrawal period. See the Office of the University Registrar's [Calendars website](#) for deadlines. After these deadlines have passed, students may request a retroactive drop or retroactive withdrawal. To review the registration and attendance policies, please visit <https://registrar.gmu.edu/ufaq-category/drop-withdraw/>.

Retroactive Withdrawal Requests Policy

Withdrawal after the unrestricted withdrawal deadline is an exception to George Mason University policy and is only permitted for non-academic reasons. Retroactive withdrawals may be considered when there are extreme unforeseen circumstances outside of the student's control which prevented the student from withdrawing by the unrestricted withdrawal deadline and/or completing the course requirements. Requests are considered only under exceptional circumstances. Students may request a retroactive withdrawal after the unrestricted withdrawal deadline and up until the [degree conferral date](#) for the term, if the student experienced an extreme unforeseen medical/mental health or other emergency that prevented the student from withdrawing by the unrestricted withdrawal deadline AND prevented the student from attending and completing assignments for the course/s. Students will need to provide verifiable, third-party documentation with the request. Such documentation is required of all students submitting requests to ensure equity and fairness.

The full policy can be found under Schar School Course Withdrawal Policy at <https://schar.gmu.edu/current-students/academic-advising-student-services/masters-student-services/academic-policies-and>.

If you are granted a withdrawal, it will result in a "W" on your permanent record. The Schar School of Policy and Government does not reimburse tuition. Retroactive withdrawals are not subject to tuition reimbursement.

Retroactive Drop Requests Policy

Drops after the drop deadline are considered “retroactive drops” and are an exception to George Mason University policy. They are permitted for non-academic reasons and may be considered when:

- There is documented administrative error, or
- there are extreme unforeseen and serious medical/mental health circumstances outside of the student’s control which prevented the student from dropping by the drop deadline.

Retroactive drop requests are considered only under exceptional circumstances. If there was an administrative error or the student experienced an extreme unforeseen medical/mental health or other emergency that prevented the student from dropping by the drop deadline, students may request a retroactive drop after the drop deadline up until the degree conferral date for the semester. Students will need to provide verifiable, third-party documentation with the request. Such documentation is required of all students submitting requests to ensure equity and fairness. Uniformed service students who are called to duty should refer to the university’s Military Activation Policy.

The full policy can be found under Schar School Course Withdrawal Policy at <https://schar.gmu.edu/current-students/academic-advising-student-services/masters-student-services/academic-policies-and>.

If you are granted a retroactive drop, the course(s) will be removed from your permanent record. The Schar School of Policy and Government does not reimburse tuition; therefore, students are requested to work with the Office of Student Accounts regarding tuition and fee refunds.

Tuition and Fees

Tuition and fees for graduate students at George Mason University are posted on the Student Accounts website: <https://studentaccounts.gmu.edu/tuition-fees>. Students can find the requirements for establishing Virginia residency at: <https://registrar.gmu.edu/students/domicile>.

Tuition Insurance

The Tuition Protection Insurance Plan helps students overcome the financial losses that may result from events which force students to withdraw from the semester due to a covered medical reason. Mason has partnered with GradGuard™ to make the Tuition Insurance Plan available to all students. This plan covers tuition, housing and other payments if a student withdraws for any covered medical reason at any time during the semester. The deadline to purchase for each term is the last day to drop. Learn more at <https://studentaccounts.gmu.edu/tuition-insurance/>

Leave of Absence

In certain circumstances, permission for a leave of absence may be granted. See University catalog [AP.6.4](#) for leave of absence policies.

Re-Enrollment Procedures

A student who has failed to enroll in at least one credit of coursework for one or more consecutive semesters (not including summer) at George Mason University and do not have a university approved leave or permission to study elsewhere 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>. 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.

II: Preparing and Writing the Dissertation

Selecting a Dissertation Topic

Schar School doctoral programs follow the social science tradition requiring a student to complete most coursework and exams before beginning work on a dissertation proposal. However, the Schar School expects its PhD students to focus much of their coursework and research around a specific dissertation topic. Early in the program, students should aim to identify a general topic, issue, or problem to motivate a dissertation. This will allow students to begin structuring the program and other experiences at the Schar School in preparation for the dissertation. The Schar School encourages its students to begin research and consider topics, advisors, and committee members well in advance of these milestones.

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 core 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 a 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.*** The student's failure to do so may result in termination from the program. A list of eligible faculty members who may serve as dissertation chair is included in Appendix A.

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 Development, Integrity, and Assurance (RDIA) prior to implementation of the research activities. Refer to <http://rdia.gmu.edu/>
- Serve as the principal investigator for the research and assume 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 activities to recognize the student's graduation

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 B for the Change of Committee Member form.)

Dissertation Committee

The first formal step in pursuing the dissertation is the formation of a dissertation committee. The chair, in consultation with the student, selects the other members from among Mason faculty. At least three members are required for a committee. All must be members of the Mason Graduate Faculty, and at least two—including the chair—must be from the Schar School faculty. Students and committee chairs are encouraged to select a third member from another unit of the University who is not from Schar School. The chair and those who have agreed to serve must sign the Dissertation Committee form (see Appendix B).

In the Public Policy program, the members of the dissertation committee will, in most cases, have served on the student's field research committee. Public policy students must also have an additional external scholar as a dissertation reader. (See the External Reader section in Part VII.)

With the approval of the Doctoral Program Director and Dean, 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 approves the members. (See Appendix B 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.

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

Members of the dissertation committee are required to be present in person at the dissertation defense.

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.

The proposal narrows the scope of research from broad fields or areas of specialization to a focused research question or hypothesis. The precise format of the proposal will take shape in consultation between the student and committee members. 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 or field, and shows how the dissertation relates to the broader area of

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 far? What is the gap in the scholarship that the dissertation is intended to fill? The literature review should not be seen as a survey of related scholarship; it should be carefully integrated into the purpose of the proposed dissertation.
4. Research Questions and Hypothesis: 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 qualitative 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 the field? 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 the discipline or field 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.

Dissertation Proposal Defense

Once the committee has reviewed and approved the proposal, the student schedules a 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, students, or members of the public 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 physically 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 B)
- 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 and submitting the Dissertation Proposal Defense form to PhD Student Services (found in Appendix B).

Advancement to Candidacy

Advancement to candidacy for the doctoral degree occurs when a student has met the coursework requirements, passed all required examinations, established an approved dissertation committee, 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 Schar School expects doctoral candidates in the Public Policy program to complete their dissertations within *three years* of advancement to candidacy. The Doctoral Program Director and the Dean must approve all dissertation work completed beyond three years, and new coursework or examinations may be required.

The Dissertation

The doctoral dissertation is a critical element of advanced research-based education. A dissertation is expected to contribute significantly to new knowledge 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 grasp 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 their fields or disciplines. 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.

Oral Defense

After each committee member has signed the Oral Dissertation Defense Readiness form, the candidate must defend the dissertation in public before the dissertation committee, the Schar School faculty, fellow graduate students, the University community, and other scholars. (See Appendix B for the Oral Dissertation Defense Readiness form.)

As with the dissertation proposal defense, candidates will contact PhD Student Services for a room and equipment reservation. Candidates must submit to PhD Student Services **at least 15 calendar days** before the scheduled date of defense:

- A signed Oral Dissertation Defense Readiness form (see Appendix B)
- An e-mail including the dissertation title, date and time of defense, all committee members (including external reader), and an abstract of no more than 100 words
- A copy of the final draft of dissertation

At the same time, the candidate provides copies of the dissertation to all members of the dissertation committee. The candidate also must place a copy on reserve at the Reserve Desk of either the Fenwick Library or the Mason Square Campus Library 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 physically present for the defense. Availability of the committee is especially

important during the summer, as faculty members are not obliged to be on campus during summer session. For Public Policy students, the external reader may either physically attend the defense or submit a written report.

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 BIOD/GOVT/PUBP 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>

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 the above form 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.

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.

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, MSN 2FL, telephone: (703) 993-2222.

For Public Policy students, the signature sheet must list the external reader's name. However, the reader is not required to sign the sheet if the chair receives a written report in lieu of attendance at the defense.

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. (See Dissertation Electronic Access Guidance below.)

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

Dissertation Electronic Access Guidance

In the final dissertation submission stage, University Dissertation and Thesis Services (UDTS) requires you to submit a UDTS Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Embargo Request form. The form presents options for broad or restricted public access to the finished dissertation. Schar School students have varying goals for their research, which will influence the degree of access you choose. Considerations include the impact on publication, employment, and research collaboration and funding. No single approach is right for everyone.

While considering the options available, please keep the following in mind:

1. Schar School recommends immediate, open access availability of its graduates' dissertations. Students who wish to request an embargo must provide a compelling argument for delayed access and must receive approval from their dissertation committee chair.
2. Dissertations embargoed from universal access for any period of time still will be available electronically on campus in the [Special Collections Research Center](#). The Schar School agrees with and supports this policy of on-campus availability.
3. The UDTS form includes the option of delaying the availability of your work in MARS (see below). The form does not outline the required ProQuest process that involves parallel yet separate procedures. Each of these services mean something different for public access to your dissertation.
 - [MARS](#) (Mason Archival Repository Service) is free and open access. Anyone anywhere with an internet connection will be able to see your work.

UDTS requires you to decide when your work will be available on MARS. You may choose either 1) immediate availability, or 2) a delay of two years, five years, or ten years. For students who forgo immediate access and receive embargo approval, Schar School recommends a two-year delay for dissertations. Two years provides the graduate a reasonable period for publication and while also allowing wider access when the research is still timely or relevant.

- [ProQuest](#) is a subscription service with a worldwide reach. It only publicly displays the abstracts of dissertations free of charge. To view the full dissertation, users need

a subscription. Most academic institutions and other organizations with library collections maintain subscriptions.

UDTS requires you to upload your dissertation to ProQuest. You have several options: 1) making the dissertation available immediately to anyone holding a subscription; 2) paying a fee to make it possible for all users to have full and open access to your complete dissertation; 3) delaying availability in ProQuest for certain periods of time. As with MARS, for students who forgo immediate access and receive embargo approval, Schar School recommends a two-year delay for dissertations.

4. Please note that for any delay of MARS access, the signatures of your advisor as well as the school are required. After you've gathered your chair's signature, please submit the UDTS Embargo Request Form to [Schar School PhD Student Services](#) for administrative approval.

If you need help thinking through these options, please contact [Schar School PhD Student Services](#).

Graduation and Commencement

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

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 degree celebration ceremonies. Information and dates relating to graduation and Commencement can be found at:

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

III. University Services and Policies

Electronic Communication

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:

<https://its.gmu.edu/knowledge-base/how-to-log-in-to-office-365-email-for-the-first-time/>

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, choose to not save a copy of e-mails on the server. If students have any difficulties with this process, they should contact Information Technology Services 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 can be found at Student Health Services webpage. Contact Student Health Services at (703) 993-2831 or visit the Student Health Services web site at: <http://shs.gmu.edu/>

Human Subjects Research - IRB

All researchers must receive written approval from Mason's Institutional Review Board (IRB) office prior to conducting a research project involving human subjects. Human subjects research may include interviews, surveys, focus groups, and other forms of personal data collection. Ethical review of projects will be conducted either by IRB staff or by members of the Board. The Board is a committee composed of faculty, staff, and community members who are trained in issues related to protecting human participants in research. Please see the RDIA website for more information: <http://rdia.gmu.edu/>

Student researchers must complete both online training and an application in order to be considered for IRB research approval:

1. Student researchers must complete required CITI Program Human Subjects Ethics Training at www.citiprogram.org. To learn more about how to register and access the program, refer to the Human Subjects Training guide on the RDIA website. After completing the basic human subjects course and any applicable optional modules, you will receive a Completion Report. Print a copy of the completion report for your records and submit a copy of it with your Human Subjects Application.
2. To submit a Human Subjects Application, students must first create an account at irbnet.org. On the site, students can find video instructions and an IRB application checklist.

The IRB office reviews completed applications in the order they are submitted. While some human subjects research can receive an expedited review, other projects must be reviewed by the full IRB. If the project requires full board review, students must submit the application by the submission deadline, typically three weeks prior to the IRB meeting. IRB meetings are generally held monthly and the schedule is posted on the RDIA website. It is up to the student to track and complete all steps in the process. Incomplete applications are not considered.

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, Fairfax Campus, Suite 4300, (703) 993-2970, <http://oips.gmu.edu/>. OIPS also holds office hours at Mason Square 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.

International Travel for Educational Purposes

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

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 ODS website for more information:

<http://ds.gmu.edu/>

Schar School Career Development

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 Development provides students with the skills needed for a successful career search.

Together with Mason's Office of Career Services, Schar School's Career Development team maintains an online job and internship database through **Handshake**. The application provides up-to-date listings of current positions and career events. Students who register for Handshake can review job and internship positions, as well as connect with employers actively recruiting. For more information, please visit:

<https://gmu.joinhandshake.com/login>

Students are also encouraged to take advantage of Schar School's LinkedIn group to maintain contact and network with faculty, fellow students, and alumni. To join, please visit the link below and request membership to the group.

<https://www.linkedin.com/school/gmu-schar/>

Once you are approved, you will receive an email notification of acceptance into the group.

IV. Ethics and Professional Conduct

Mason Honor Code

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. Doctoral study 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 by the American Association of University Professors. These statements are incorporated in the George Mason University Faculty Handbook, which is available on the Mason website:

<https://provost.gmu.edu/administration/policy>

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 of Policy and Government 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 (e.g. 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 Academic Standards Code; it is not intended to replace it or substitute for it.

<https://academicstandards.gmu.edu/academic-standards-code/>

V. Biodefense Doctoral Program

The goal of the Biodefense Program is to educate the next generation of biodefense and biosecurity professionals and scholars. The program operates at the nexus of science and policy to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and training to assess the risks posed by natural and man-made biological threats, while teaching them to develop strategies for reducing these risks to national and international security. The Biodefense Program seeks to train students for employment in all sectors, including work with the US Government, private corporations, and non-governmental organizations. The program provides students with a broad background in the science and technology of biodefense, while giving them the opportunity to specialize in the narrower fields of International Security; Terrorism and Homeland Security; and Technology and Weapons of Mass Destruction.

By combining a foundation in the biological sciences with a focus on policy analysis, Mason's Biodefense Program is the first of its kind in the US to offer a broad program of study in the defense against all biological threats. The risks posed by these threats have steadily increased due to globalization, advances in science and technology, the changing nature of conflict, and a more nuanced definition of security. The dual-use nature of the biotechnology revolution and accelerating pace of innovation in the life sciences presents the world with both new opportunities and new dangers. The 2001 anthrax letter attacks highlighted the vulnerability of modern society to biological terrorism. Even before the COVID-19 epidemic, the mounting toll of HIV/AIDS; the emergence of new infectious diseases such as Zika, SARS, and pathogenic avian influenza; and the potential for an influenza pandemic reinforced the need for a comprehensive biosecurity strategy to address the risks posed by naturally occurring diseases at home and abroad. The globalization of science and technology, disease outbreaks, and terrorist activities underscore the need for an international response to these issues.

Preventing and responding to man-made and naturally occurring disease outbreaks requires interdisciplinary collaboration, interagency coordination, intergovernmental coalitions, public-private partnerships, and international cooperation. The Biodefense Program is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills to bridge the gap between scientists and policy-makers on each of these levels. These skills are also essential to combating terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and other transnational threats.

Students can select one of three fields for their specialization: International Security; Terrorism and Homeland Security; or Technology and Weapons of Mass Destruction. These specializations provide students with an in-depth understanding of the theory and practice of their chosen field. Due to the complexity and scope of biodefense and biosecurity, doctoral students are also required to take two courses from the fields in which they are not concentrating.

Within the Schar School of Policy and Government, students can benefit from the extensive knowledge and experience of faculty whose areas of expertise range from chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons (CBRN) and terrorism to microbiology.

In addition to being able to take advantage of the array of courses within the Schar School, students in the Biodefense Program can also pursue courses in biology, bioinformatics, bioscience, health

sciences, and communication. Mason is also home to the National Center for Biodefense and Infectious Diseases and an NIH-funded Biomedical Research Laboratory to develop techniques and products for the detection, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of infectious diseases resulting from natural outbreaks, intentionally released, or genetically engineered pathogens.

The Curriculum

In addition to meeting the following requirements for this degree, students must meet the university requirements for all doctoral degrees.

To receive a PhD in Biodefense, students must complete a minimum of 72 credits. Students are strongly encouraged to take core courses as early as possible because they provide the foundation for the rest of the program. Course planning should be done in consultation with the advisor and documented in the Degree Plan during the first semester. Students may take up to 12 credits of courses outside of the Biodefense Program with prior written approval of their advisor. Students should consult with the Doctoral Program Director or PhD Student Services for a list of biodefense electives and approved non-biodefense electives that can be used to fulfill degree requirements.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Graduates from the program will demonstrate superior academic skills in the field of biodefense. They will complete introductory courses in the foundations of the field and then develop a major specialization from among the sub-fields of International Security, Terrorism and Homeland Security, and Technology and Weapons of Mass Destruction.

By the time students reach candidacy, they are expected to possess the quantitative and 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 field of biodefense. Students are required to present their research findings in both written and oral formats.

Program Requirements

The program allows students to specialize in one of three fields: International Security, Terrorism and Homeland Security, or Technology and Weapons of Mass Destruction. Courses in Research Methods are required of students in all fields. The degree requires **72** credit hours divided among core courses; advanced courses in one primary field of specialization; additional courses from a secondary field of specialization; supporting courses that can be taken outside the Schar School; research methods courses; electives; and dissertation guidance.

The course work is allocated as follows:

- **Core Courses (21 credits)**
Seven core courses include six required BIOD, GOVT, POGO, and PUAD courses and one additional advanced research course.
- **Field of Specialization (12 credits)**
Four courses from one of the fields of specialization:
 - International Security
 - Terrorism and Homeland Security
 - Technology and Weapons of Mass Destruction
- **Courses from outside the specialization (6 credits)**
Of the courses listed for the fields of specialization above, students must select two courses from those that are not in their chosen primary field.
- **Electives (9 to 21 credits)**
Students complete the remaining credits through additional elective courses chosen in consultation with their advisor. These courses may be in the School or may be offered by other departments in the University.
- **Continuous enrollment in dissertation proposal and research (12-24 credits)**
 - BIOD 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal: Students may apply a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6 credits of 998.
 - BIOD 999 Doctoral Dissertation Research: Students may apply a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 18 credits of 999.
 - BIOD 998/999 Combined: A minimum of 12 and a maximum of 24 dissertation credits (998 and 999 combined) apply to the degree. The student will need to take three credits of 998 per semester until they successfully defend their proposal. Students must enroll in a minimum of 3 credits per semester until 12 total combined dissertation credits have been completed (6 of 998 and 6 of 999). Students may register for one credit a semester thereafter.

Once enrolled in BIOD 998, Dissertation Proposal, a student must maintain continuous registration in BIOD 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.

Biodefense Degree Program Details

Courses for the Degree

Core courses

- BIOD 604 Emerging Infectious Diseases I: Bacteria and Toxins
- BIOD 605 Emerging Infectious Diseases II: Viral Agents
- BIOD 609 Biodefense Strategy
- BIOD 620 Global Health Security Policy
- BIOD 710 Health Security Preparedness
- GOVT 500 The Scientific Method and Research Design
- GOVT 540 International Relations

One additional advanced research course (3 credits) chosen from the following:

- POGO 611 Advanced Data Analysis for Policy and Government
- POGO 646 Policy and Program Evaluation
- PUBP 754 GIS and Spatial Analysis for Public Policy
- PUBP 791 Advanced Field Research – Theory and Method
- POGO 793 Big Data Analytics for Policy and Government
- An alternative research course approved by the Program Director

Fields of Specialization: 12 credits from one specialization; 6 credits from another specialization

Specialization I: International Security

- Two required field seminars (6 credits)
 - GOVT 744 Foundations of Security Studies
 - GOVT 745 International Security
- Two elective courses (6 credits)

Specialization II: Terrorism and Homeland Security

- Two required field seminars (6 credits)
 - BIOD 722 Examining Terrorist Groups
 - BIOD 725 Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction
- Two elective courses (6 credits)

Specialization III: Technology and Weapons of Mass Destruction

- Two required seminars (6 credits)
 - BIOD 706 Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Weapons Policy and Security
 - BIOD 760 National Security Technology and Policy
- Two elective courses (6 credits)

Electives

Students complete the remaining credits through additional elective courses chosen in consultation with their advisor. These courses may be in the School or may be offered by other departments in the University.

Degree Plan

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

The Degree Plan states which courses the student is taking or has taken to fulfill his or her degree requirements. 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 transfer credits are accepted, 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.

Qualifying Examination

At the conclusion of their course work, students will take a written qualifying examination. This exam is based on the student's course work and on the reading lists prepared for the biodefense core and each field of specialization. The purpose of the qualifying exam is to determine if the student is ready to engage in dissertation research. The exam must be completed before the student takes dissertation proposal or dissertation guidance courses.

Students will take two day-long exams, one in biodefense and one in the student's field of specialization. The office publishes two dates, usually one week apart. The categories of science and policy will be on one date and the exam on the student's field of specialization will be given on a separate date. 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.

At least one month prior to the first exam date, students planning on taking the qualifying exams must submit to PhD Student Services an exam application and a completed Degree Plan approved by their advisor. The purpose is to verify that all course requirements have been completed. Students do not need to be registered for credits in order to take a PhD Qualifying Exam. However, students who are unregistered may lose their Mason library privileges.

Exam questions will be constructed so that students can use information gleaned from the reading list, coursework, and other published work to demonstrate a rational thought process in the service of problem-solving, providing evidence and logical justifications for their conclusions.

To prepare for the Qualifying Exam, students are advised to review lecture notes, assigned readings and other material from the biodefense courses they have taken. In addition, students should consult the texts listed in the biodefense reading list. The reading list is available on the Schar School PhD Student organization on Canvas. A list of questions from previous Qualifying Exams is also available.

Each day of the exam is made up of an 8-hour session on Canvas. The exam will be open book and note **but no collaboration is allowed**. You must sign and submit an honor statement with your completed exam. All submissions will be run through a plagiarism check software program.

All sources are permitted, including use of the internet, provided they are documented. Citations of sources and the sparing use of short quotations of published material and coursework are encouraged when 1) they support the student's independent line of argument, analysis, and justification; and 2) when these are properly cited. When you include quotations or paraphrases of written material or lectures, be sure to cite your sources using a recognized citation format such as APA, Chicago Manual of Style, or MLA.

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 each exam. 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 each exam overall: FAIL, PASS or HIGH PASS. Any question that is failed must be re-taken and passed at the next 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.

Dissertation Stage

Please see the Dissertation section of PhD Program Administration, Policies, and Procedures (Part I) for information on the following:

- Dissertation committee
- Dissertation proposal and defense
- Advancement to candidacy
- The dissertation
- Oral defense
- Dissertation format and delivery of final copies
- Graduation

Registration during Dissertation Work

Once enrolled in BIOD 998 Dissertation Proposal, students must maintain continuous enrollment in BIOD 998 or BIOD 999 Dissertation Research each semester (excluding summers) until the dissertation is submitted to and accepted by the University Libraries. Once enrolled in 999 students must follow the university's continuous registration policy as specified in the Academic Policies section of the Catalog. Students must register for at least 1 credit of 999 in the semester in which they intend to graduate (including summer).

Students may apply 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 they have completed 12 total combined credits of 998 and 999. Students may register for one credit

a semester thereafter. Failure to be continuously enrolled in 998 and 999 will result in termination from the program.

To register for BIOD 998, the student must first have passed the qualifying exam 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 the code to use to register.

Before registering for BIOD 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.

Enrollment in Other Degree Programs

In accepting admission to the PhD Program in Biodefense, 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 termination from the PhD program.* Violations of this policy will result in termination.

*The only exceptions to this policy are admission into the George Mason University Biodefense MS (see Secondary Program in section I, Program Administration, Policies, and Procedures) and admission into the Biodefense Graduate Certificate Program at George Mason University (see information on graduate certificates below). Approval of the Biodefense Doctoral Program Director is required for admission to either program.

Guidelines for Biodefense Graduate Certificate Programs

The Biodefense graduate program offers four 15-credit graduate certificates. Each certificate has a specialized focus within the field of security studies. Students pursuing a certificate as a secondary program to the PhD must be admitted to the graduate certificate program at least one semester before completion of certificate requirements. Students may be enrolled in one graduate certificate program while they pursue a master's or doctoral degree.

Selecting Electives

The certificates require two core courses and three electives. Electives for the certificate will be selected in consultation with student's advisor. The student must submit an approved Degree Plan to PhD Student Services to receive credit for these electives. Electives that have not received advisor approval will not count towards the certificate.

Transferring Certificate Credits to the PhD

Students who have completed a Biodefense Program graduate certificate may subsequently be approved to apply the credit hours for the certificate to the PhD as long as the courses for the certificate were taken within six years of official enrollment into the PhD degree program. All 15 credits will transfer into the PhD Biodefense program.

Graduate Certificate Time Limit

The time limit for completion is six years from the date of admission to the graduate certificate program. International students attending in F-1 or J-1 status have more restrictive time limits; contact the Office of International Programs and Services for information. The time limit is not extended because of an absence and subsequent re-enrollment into the graduate certificate program. Failure to meet the time limit or to secure an extension request may result in termination from the program.

Biodefense Certificate Options

Terrorism and Homeland Security Certificate

The certificate in terrorism and homeland security is an interdisciplinary introduction to the phenomenon of modern terrorism and its implications for US domestic and foreign policy. It focuses on multidisciplinary analysis and holistic cross-sectorial approaches to long-term prevention of and response to terrorism.

Global Health & Security Certificate

The certificate in global health and security provides an introduction to the intersection of global public health and security, covering topics such as emerging infectious diseases, bio surveillance, the development of vaccines, and emergency response to public health disasters.

Science, Technology, and Security Certificate

The certificate in science, technology, and security provides an introduction to the intersection of science and security, covering topics such as the technology of CBRN weapons, proliferation, technical countermeasures, and the role of science and technology in the policy making process.

Biodefense Certificate

The certificate in biodefense provides an interdisciplinary introduction to manmade and natural biological threats, including a background in the science and technology of biodefense and the specialized areas of threat assessment, non-proliferation, and medical and public health preparedness.

Social Media

The Biodefense Program has a strong online presence, and all students are encouraged to engage with the program through social media.

[The Pandora Report](#): The Pandora Report in the Biodefense program's blog and weekly newsletter which provides news and analysis related to biodefense and global health security. Doctoral students are strongly encouraged to contribute articles.

[Twitter](#): Please follow the Biodefense program on Twitter. Our handle is @pandorareport.

[Instagram](#): Please follow the Biodefense program on Instagram. Our handle is @thepandorareport.

[Pandemics, Bioterrorism, and Global Health Security on LinkedIn](#): Members range from current students to professionals well-established in the field. Current biodefense students are encouraged to join and engage.

Biodefense Program Faculty

Biodefense Full-Time Faculty

Sonia Ben Ouagrham-Gormley is Associate Professor in the Schar School, Biodefense Program. She received her PhD in Economics of Development at the Advanced School of Social Sciences in Paris, France. In 1999-2001 she lived and worked in Kazakhstan, where she supported US government-funded bio-engagement and nuclear nonproliferation programs. From 2008-2012 she conducted an oral history of the former Soviet and American bioweapons programs. Currently, her research focuses on studying the ethical, social and security challenges of emerging biotechnologies, such as the gene-editing technique CRISPR. Dr. Ben Ouagrham-Gormley has expertise in the field of nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), WMD terrorism, arms control, export controls and WMD-related trafficking, proliferation finance, science and technology studies, including safety and security threats posed by emerging biotechnologies, and the challenges of managing large scientific and weapons projects. She is a member of the National Academies Committee on Addressing Mis- and Disinformation about Biothreats, and a member of the Global Congress on Chemical Security and Emerging Threats steering committee.

Gregory D. Koblentz is Associate Professor in the Schar School and Director of the Biodefense Graduate Program. Dr. Koblentz is also a member of the Scientist Working Group on Chemical and Biological Weapons at the Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation and an associate faculty with the Center for Security Policy Studies at the Schar School. His research and teaching focus on international security, terrorism, homeland security, and weapons of mass destruction. He received his Master in Public Policy from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University and his PhD in Political Science from the Security Studies Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Bonnie Stabile is an Associate Professor in the Schar School, Associate Dean for Student and Academic Affairs, and Director of the Gender and Policy Center. She teaches courses in Policy Analysis, Policy and Program Evaluation, and Ethics. Professor Stabile's research has a focus on gender issues as they relate to policy.

Adjunct Faculty

Charles Blair is the Senior Fellow on State and Non-State Threats at the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) and an adjunct professor at Mason, where he lectures on the nexus of terrorism and WMD. Since the 1980s, Mr. Blair has worked on issues relating to the diffusion and diversification of WMD in the context of proliferation amid the rise of mass casualty terrorism incidents and the centripetal and centrifugal elements of globalization. Mr. Blair's work focuses on state and violent non-state actors – amid a dystopic and increasingly tribal world. Before joining FAS in 2010, he was a research associate with the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism

and Responses to Terrorism where, among other projects, he managed the Global Terrorism Database, the largest open-source compilation of terrorist events in the world. Mr. Blair also spent two years exploring elements of the Pakistani Neo-Taliban, and for almost a decade he has studied US right-wing “White” nationalist groups, apocalyptic millenarian ideologies, and other groups with interest in and experiences with WMD. Mr. Blair has also worked with the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, the National Nuclear Security Administration, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Center for Terrorism and Intelligence Studies. Mr. Blair is also a lecturer at Johns Hopkins University where he instructs graduate students about the technologies underlying WMD.

Richard T. Cupitt is Senior Fellow and Director of the Partnerships in Proliferation Prevention program at The Henry L. Stimson Center. His areas of expertise include WMD nonproliferation, export controls, and foreign policy. Prior to joining Stimson, he served as the Special Coordinator for U.N. Security Council resolution 1540 in the Office of Counterproliferation Initiatives at the U.S. State Department. He has also worked as an Expert for the Committee established pursuant to U.N. Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), a subsidiary body of the U.N. Security Council, monitoring and facilitating implementation of the resolution in all U.N. Member States. Cupitt also held a position as Scholar-in-Residence at American University and worked as Special Adviser for International Cooperation for the U.S. Undersecretary of Commerce in the Bureau of Industry and Security. Cupitt has held academic positions at Emory University and the University of North Texas as well as various posts for the Center International Trade and Security (CITS) of the University of Georgia, including Associate Director, and currently as an adjunct at Georgetown University School of Law. He also has been a visiting scholar at Northwestern University School of Law and at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS). He has produced four books and more than 20 peer-reviewed articles on nonproliferation export controls, along with dozens of other security or trade-oriented publications. In addition, he has served as a consultant on projects for the U.S. State Department, several U.S. national commissions, U.S. national nuclear laboratories, and various international organizations.

Daniel M. Gerstein received a bachelor’s degree from the United States Military Academy and has master’s degrees from Georgia Tech, National Defense University and U.S. Army Command & General Staff College, and a Ph.D. in Biodefense from George Mason University. Dr. Gerstein has extensive experience in the security and defense sectors in a variety of positions while serving as a Senior Executive Service (SES) government civilian and political appointee, in uniform, in think tanks, in industry and in academia. His most recent government position was as Under Secretary (Acting) and Deputy Under Secretary in the Science and Technology Directorate in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Gerstein’s latest book, *The Story of Technology: How We Got Here and What the Future Holds*, was published in August 2019. His new book, *Tech Wars: Transforming U.S. Technology Development*, will be published in September 2022.

Ashley Grant is the Group Leader of Countering Weapons of Mass Destruction at the MITRE Corporation and an Adjunct Professor at George Mason University's Biodefense Program. As a Group Leader, she supervises a group of scientists focused on countering the devastating effects of weapons of mass destruction. In addition, she is a member of a COVID-19 crisis response team, evaluates Department of Defense activities, serves as a subject matter expert on chemical and biological issues across multiple government agencies, and is the Principal Corporate Bio-Nano

Laboratory Biosafety Officer. Dr. Grant was previously the Senior Biological Scientist at the Government Accountability Office where she led government-wide technical performance audits focused on biosafety and biosecurity issues and pandemic response. Dr. Grant was an American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science and Technology Fellow in the Chemical and Biological Defense Program Office in the Department of Defense and also worked at the National Academies of Science on the Committee on International Security and Arms Control. Her work focused on international security, nonproliferation, and medical countermeasures against chemical and biological threats. Dr. Grant received her PhD in experimental pathology and a MPH in epidemiology from the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston. Her graduate work focused on investigating pathogenesis and potential countermeasures for viral hemorrhagic fevers under biological safety level (BSL)-4 conditions. In addition, she received a MA in Defense and Strategic Studies from the United States Naval War College and a BS in Chemistry and a BS in Business Economics and Management from the California Institute of Technology. She is a National Registry of Certified Microbiologists in Biological Safety Microbiology and a certified Project Management Professional. Ashley is the current Caltech women's water polo single-season goal record holder.

Forrest Hare is the founder of Summit Knowledge Solutions, a knowledge engineering consulting firm for the Department of Defense. Recently he was a solutions architect with the Cyberspace Operations and Knowledge Models team at SAIC. Dr. Hare retired from the US Air Force as a Colonel where he held various positions in the fields of Intelligence and Information Operations. He serves as an adjunct professor in the Schar School and is a grey shirt with Team Rubicon.

Robert V. House is an adjunct professor teaching medical countermeasure development. He is President of Dr RV House LLC, a consulting firm providing services to entities seeking to develop medical countermeasures supported by the US Government. He was formerly Senior Vice President of Government Contracts at Ology Bioservices, Inc., a Contract Development and Manufacturing Organization. He has more than 30 years of experience in biomedical research and development, specializing in the preclinical assessment of inadvertent and therapeutic immunomodulation. Dr. House earned his MSPH and PhD degrees in Medical Parasitology from the University of North Carolina School of Public Health (Chapel Hill) and is the author, co-author, or editor of more than 100 journal articles, 30 book chapters and two books in the areas of immunotoxicology, host defense, cytokine biology, and biodefense.

Andy Kilianski is currently a faculty member at George Mason University in the Schar School of Government where he teaches courses on emerging infectious diseases and biosurveillance policy and implementation. When not teaching, Dr. Kilianski is the Senior Director, Emerging Infectious Diseases at IAVI. At IAVI he leads strategy development, key stakeholder engagement, and current and future execution of IAVI's growing emerging infectious disease vaccine and therapeutic portfolio. Andy bring his recent experience working on the U.S. Government's COVID-19 medical countermeasure response to position IAVI's EID portfolio for continued success in fighting future pandemics and reducing infectious disease burden around the world. Prior to IAVI, Andy was working at the Department of Defense as a Senior Scientist and Program Manager. He has led numerous scientific, analytic, and programmatic efforts to counter emerging threats internationally and within the United States working collaboratively with a

variety of government, NGO, and foreign partners. He started his scientific career as a National Academy of Sciences Fellow, working as a principal investigator on research programs aimed at characterizing emerging infectious disease threats with next-generation sequencing and multiomics approaches. He received his Ph.D. in Microbiology and Immunology from Loyola University Chicago where he discovered virus-host interactions necessary for coronavirus pathogenesis and leveraged these pathways for vaccine design and antiviral drug development.

Katalin Kiss received a bachelor's degree in Biology from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a PhD from Texas A&M University. She began her career working with immunotoxins- antibodies that recognized cancer cells conjugated to the toxin, ricin. Upon returning to graduate school, she worked with *Coxiella* and then *Francisella*. She has more than 20 years of experience in cell biology and microbiology.

Saskia Popescu is an infectious disease epidemiologist and infection preventionist. She received a bachelor's degree in classical history from the University of Arizona, where she also completed her MPH in Epidemiology and an MA in international security studies. Dr. Popescu holds a PhD in biodefense from George Mason University and has worked in hospital epidemiology and biopreparedness for over a decade, responding to biological events such as Ebola, measles, and COVID-19. She served on a National Academies of Science committee on the data needs for monitoring SARS-CoV-2 evolution, is a member of the Federation of American Scientists COVID Task Force, and is an alumni of the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security Emerging Leaders in Biosecurity Initiative. Dr. Popescu is certified in Infection Prevention and a member of the Scientists Working Group on Biological and Chemical Security – Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation and a Research Fellow on the Council on Strategic Risks. Dr. Popescu has provided guidance in COVID-19 response for the World Health Organization, local governments, and global businesses.

Dr. Lauren Quattrochi is classically trained as an electrophysiologist and neuropharmacologist. Over the evolution of her career, she has worked within the biopharma industry, non-profits, not-for-profits and the government sector. She is currently a Program Officer within the Joint Program Executive Office (JPEO) in the Chemical, Biological, Radiological & Nuclear (CBRN) division of the US Army. Most recently, Dr. Quattrochi served as a key technical advisor for the Army on government-funded COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics amidst the COVID pandemic. This work served as a launch point for her current role: repurposing licensed therapies as medical countermeasures. Prior to her current work, she spearheaded projects at MITRE Corp and Pfizer on medical countermeasures, Bioindustrial base, bioeconomy and supply chain risk management, drug delivery, Schizophrenia, depression and Alzheimer's disease. In addition to GMU, Dr. Quattrochi has had the pleasure to teach STEM on infectious diseases in partnership with Brown University at the NIH, Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and overseas in Greece. In her spare time, she teaches restorative yoga and studies geology.

Philip Thomas Phillip Thomas has been an Affiliate faculty Member, Research Fellow, and Head of Mason's Global Food Security Project at the Schar School since August 2013. The Project is a cross-cutting effort addressing critical global food security policy issues through the development of targeted research projects, conferences, and curriculum. Professor Thomas also teaches a graduate course on food security and national security at the Schar School. He is currently engaged

in research on the impact of the climate crisis, COVID, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine on global food security. He has also recently contributed to a GMU authored journal article on nutrition and indigenous foods in Kenya and a 2015 GMU report on US international food aid. Professor Thomas is also an adjunct at GMU's Honors College where he has taught cross-cultural global food security and globalization courses since 2015. As a global food security expert he regularly participates in several key Washington area Global Food Security working groups. Professor Thomas retired as an Assistant Director for International Affairs with the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) in 2013 after serving over 40 years where he directed numerous major reviews of U.S. international food aid, global food security, agricultural trade, and United Nations management reform. His leadership on these issues resulted in many program and legislative reforms. He received GAO's Congressional and Distinguished Service Awards in 2003 and 2009 for extraordinary performance in congressional relations and leadership of major international food aid and food security reviews. Professor Thomas has an M.A. and B.A. in International Affairs from California State University at Sacramento. He was elected to the Falls Church Virginia City Council in 1990 as a non-partisan candidate. He served for 4 years and was Vice-Mayor for 2 years (1992-1994). He is also a veteran of the US Navy.

Scott Wollek is a Senior Program Officer with the Board of Health Sciences Policy at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, where he serves as the Director of the Forum on Medical and Public Health Preparedness for Disasters and Emergencies. Since joining The Academies staff in 2015, Scott has worked on a range of projects focused on medical countermeasures, civilian biodefense, workforce resilience, healthcare capacity building and other health security topics. Prior to joining The Academies, Scott served as the Senior Disaster Program Manager at The American Red Cross in the National Capital Region. In that role he was responsible for the management of preparedness, response and recovery programs throughout the National Capital Region, including the response to over 500 local disasters each year. During eleven years with the Red Cross, Scott held a variety of paid and volunteer staff positions involving local disaster response, training, exercises, plans and operations. Scott served in leadership positions during disasters and special events including the 2009 and 2013 Presidential Inaugurations, 2010 blizzard and the NCR response to Hurricane Irene, Tropical Storm Lee, the 2012 derecho, Hurricane Sandy, and the shootings at the Washington Navy Yard. Scott earned a Bachelor's degree in Emergency Health Services from The George Washington University and a Master's degree in Public Administration, with a concentration in Homeland Security and Emergency Management, from George Mason University.

VI. Political Science Doctoral Program

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. Graduates will be scholars and teachers, and experience-based understanding within the kinds of complex domestic and international political organizations they are studying will enhance their analytic skills. Our large and distinguished faculty offers both depth and breadth in the scholarship of the five primary fields of the degree: a) the institutions and processes of American government, b) international relations, c) comparative politics, d) public administration, and e) political theory. 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 Islamic Studies and Latin American Studies Programs, and the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution.

The Curriculum

The program allows students to specialize in two of four fields: American Government and Politics, International Relations, Comparative Politics, or Public Administration. Students may choose a minor in the field of Political Theory or may develop their minor field in consultation with the advisor. 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. Institutions, federalism, state politics, and local politics are also well-developed areas in the School, thanks to long-established offerings in public administration. 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. 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 is comprised of specialists in the full range of issues that concern contemporary international affairs. These include 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. Faculty are grounded in specific areas of expertise common to the sub-field of comparative politics. These include 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, Central and East Asia, Europe, and Latin America.

In addition to rich course offerings in international relations and comparative politics, students have the opportunity to attend a great variety of talks by academics, political leaders, and officials from around the world in the greater Washington, DC area.

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, recent trends allocate authority and responsibility for the delivery of public services to such nongovernmental actors as private profit and nonprofit organizations. Reflecting these trends, 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. 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 privatization, nonprofit governance, intergovernmental management, homeland security, accountability in third party governance, and public management and organization theory. 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.

Political Theory (minor field). The field of political theory focuses on core concepts such as sovereignty, power, democracy, rights, and freedom. The theory curriculum is designed to provide knowledge of the key thinkers, arguments, and debates in the history of political thought; practice in the rigorous analysis of fundamental concepts; and experience in the application of these concepts to contemporary political problems. The Schar School is particularly strong in canonically grounded political theory. The program's research and teaching is based upon careful

engagement with the long tradition of political thought but focused on directing the resources of that tradition to grappling with contemporary problems.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Graduates from the program will demonstrate superior academic skills in the field of political science. They will complete introductory courses and then develop a major and minor concentration from among the fields of American Politics, International Relations, Comparative Politics, Public Administration, or Political Theory. By the time students reach candidacy, they are expected to possess the quantitative and 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.

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/POGO 840, GOVT 520, GOVT 530, GOVT 540, and GOVT 550.
- **Major Field Courses:** at least 21 credits of advanced coursework 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 political theory or 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 Design for the Social Sciences and Public Policy (POGO 801), Introductory Data Analysis for Policy and Government (POGO 511), and three credits of courses focusing on 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 fulfill the methods requirement with approval.
- **Research Seminar:** 3 credits of GOVT 800 Research Seminar. This course prepares students for producing publishable research in their area of expertise.
- **Electives:** up to 9 credits in electives.
- **Continuous enrollment in dissertation proposal and research** (12-24 credits)

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- GOVT 998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal: Students may apply a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6 credits of 998.
- GOVT 999 Doctoral Dissertation Research: Students may apply a minimum of 9 and a maximum of 18 credits of 999.
- GOVT 998/999 Combined: A minimum of 12 and a maximum of 24 dissertation credits (998 and 999 combined) apply 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 enrollment 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.

Recommended Course Sequences

Full-time student with 30 transfer credits from master's degree applied to minor and elective courses

<u>First Year</u>		<u>Second Year</u>	
<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>	<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>
Foundation course 1	Foundation course 3	Field seminar 3	Field seminar 4
Foundation course 2	Field seminar 1	POGO 511*	Field seminar 5
POGO 801	Field seminar 2	Advanced methods	GOVT 800
	POGO 850 (1 cr)		

**Students are encouraged to take the PhD section of 511 offered in the fall semester*

<u>Third Year</u>	
<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>
Field seminar 6	GOVT 998
Field seminar 7	

Part-time student with 30-transfer credits from master's degree applied to minor and elective courses

<u>First Year</u>		<u>Second Year</u>	
<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>	<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>
Foundation course 1	Foundation course 2	Field seminar 1	Field seminar 2
POGO 801	Foundation course 3	POGO 511*	Advanced methods
	POGO 850 (1 cr)		

Students are encouraged to take the PhD section of POGO 511 offered in the fall semester

<u>Third Year</u>		<u>Fourth Year</u>	
<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>	<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>
Field seminar 3	Field seminar 5	Field seminar 6	GOVT 998
Field seminar 4	GOVT 800	Field seminar 7	

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Full-time student who begins the program with a bachelor's degree (no transfer credits)

<u>First Year</u>		<u>Second Year</u>	
<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>	<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>
Foundation course 1	Foundation course 3	POGO 511*	Field seminar 4
Foundation course 2	Field seminar 1	Field seminar 3	Minor field 2
POGO 801	Field seminar 2	Minor field 1	Advanced methods
	POGO 850 (1 cr)		

Students are encouraged to take the PhD section of POGO 511 offered in the fall semester

<u>Third Year</u>		<u>Fourth Year</u>	
<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>	<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>
Field seminar 5	Field seminar 7	Elective 2	GOVT 998
Field seminar 6	Elective 1	Elective 3	
Minor field 3	GOVT 800	Elective 4	

Part-time student who begins the program with a bachelor's degree (no transfer credits)

<u>First Year</u>		<u>Second Year</u>	
<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>	<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>
Foundation course 1	Foundation course 2	Field seminar 1	Field seminar 2
POGO 801	Foundation course 3	POGO 511*	Field seminar 3
	POGO 850 (1 cr)		

** Students are encouraged to take the PhD section of POGO 511 offered in the fall semester*

<u>Third Year</u>		<u>Fourth Year</u>	
<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>	<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>
Field seminar 4	Field seminar 5	Field seminar 7	Minor field 2
Advanced methods	Field seminar 6	Minor field 1	Minor field 3

<u>Fifth Year</u>		<u>Sixth Year</u>	
<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>	<u>Fall Term</u>	<u>Spring Term</u>
Elective 1	Elective 3	GOVT 998	GOVT 998
Elective 2	GOVT 800 (elective 4)		

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. 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

Select POGO 750 courses may fulfill program requirements with Program Director approval.

Foundation Courses (9 credits from the following):

GOVT 510 American Government and Politics/POGO 840 Policy, Politics, and American Government Institutions
GOVT 520 Political Theory
GOVT 530 Comparative Politics
GOVT 540 International Relations (students should enrolled in the PhD section of 540)
GOVT 550 Public Administration

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 Seminar in Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations
POGO 841 US Political Behavior and the Process of Policymaking

Comparative Politics Field Courses (the following 2 seminars are required):

GOVT 631 or POGO equivalent course: Seminar in Comparative Politics and Institutions
GOVT 731 or POGO equivalent course: Advanced Seminar in Comparative Politics

International Relations Field Courses (2 of the following 4 seminars are required):

PUBP 783 Global Governance
GOVT 741 or POGO equivalent course: Advanced Seminar in International Relations
GOVT 743 International Political Economy
GOVT 745 International Security

Public Administration Field Courses (the following 2 seminars are required):

GOVT 753 Seminar in Third Party Governance
GOVT 755 Seminar in Politics and the Bureaucracy

Political Theory Minor Field Courses (3 courses beyond GOVT 520, selected from among the following):

GOVT 631 Seminar in Comparative Politics and Institutions
GOVT 725 Democratic Theory
GOVT 726 Theories of Justice
GOVT 727 Restorative Justice
GOVT 733 Islam and Politics

Methodology Courses (9 credits):

POGO 801 Research Design for the Social Sciences and Public Policy

POGO 511 Introductory Data Analysis for Policy and Government

Three additional credits in quantitative or qualitative methods are 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 with approval.

Below is a list of Schar School methodology courses that are offered regularly. These count toward the methodology course requirement without consultation with the Doctoral Program Director. Students are encouraged to seek out appropriate methodology courses elsewhere, such as those offered by other Mason departments or consortium universities. Other methodology courses may be substituted with the approval of the Doctoral Program Director. Beyond these requirements, depending on program of study and research interests, advisors/committee chairs may mandate more coursework in particular methodologies.

- POGO 550 Various methodology topics (1.5 credits each; must complete two unique sections to fulfill requirement)
- POGO 611 Advanced Data Analysis for Policy and Government
- PUBP 754 GIS and Spatial Analysis for Public Policy
- PUBP 791 Advanced Field Methods for Policy Research
- PUBP 792 Advanced Economic Analysis for Policy Research
- POGO 793 Big Data Analytics for Policy and Government

Research Seminar (3 credits):

GOVT 800 Research Seminar

Minor Field

Students may choose political theory as a minor field or construct a minor field of their own in consultation with their advisor. The courses in the minor field should complement the two major fields and need the prior written advisor approval.

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 Program 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 Program Director must also approve.

Certification of the student’s proficiency in the designated language must be arranged for, paid by, and provided to the PhD Student Services by the student. It is solely the responsibility of the student to ensure that certification is received before Comprehensive Examinations are taken. There are no exemptions from this requirement.

Certification through Language Testing International (LTI) of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) must be obtained at the level of proficiency for speaking, reading, and writing. 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/> for proficiency scales as well as testing and payment details. No other certification from any other source will be accepted. Mason’s Department of Foreign Languages does NOT test for proficiency.

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. Any language certification that is approved as a substitution for one methodology requirement will not result in a reduction of credit hour requirements.

Degree Plan

The Degree Plan states which courses the student is taking or has taken to fulfill degree requirements. PhD students must submit their Degree Plan worksheet 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 transfer credits are approved, those credits should be included on the form. Degree Plan worksheets are available from PhD Student Services and are also available on the Schar School website. Any changes in the plan must be documented with an amended Degree Plan worksheet 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.

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 termination from the PhD Program.* Violations of this policy will result in termination.

*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 in section I, Program Administration, Policies, and Procedures).

Comprehensive Examination

At the conclusion of their course work, students will take a written Comprehensive Examination in their two primary fields of specialization. Students should take these exams by the semester following their completion of their coursework and any student seeking to postpone the exam must obtain prior permission of the Program Director. These exams will be based on the student's course work and on the reading list prepared for each field. The exams must be completed before the student takes dissertation proposal or dissertation guidance courses.

Students take exams in their two fields of specialization during a pre-determined two-week period in either January or over the summer months. A few months in advance, PhD Student Services will announce the dates for the next cycle of Comprehensive Exams. Students planning to take their comps during a given cycle must be available for all scheduled dates. Students who cannot make the written dates must request permission in advance from the Program Director to postpone the exam until the next offering.

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

Exams are prepared and graded by Program Director-appointed field committees in international relations, American politics, comparative politics, and public administration. Each field committee is comprised of three members selected on the basis of research expertise. Field committees develop questions for their exams, based on canonical literature in the field (legible from course syllabi and field reading lists available on the Schar website). Field committee members generally serve through summer and then January exams before rotating off, or serving for another 2-exam cycle (depending on faculty availability).

Examination Format

Each exam is administered in a single 8-hour in-person session in a designated university classroom or testing facility. Students will take exams in each of their two fields on separate days during the two-week examination period, typically one week apart.

The exam is open-note. Students are permitted to bring any prepared notes, outlines, or printed materials they wish to reference during the exam. Students may also bring printed copies of books, articles, or reading lists. Students are not permitted to use the internet or consult online

sources during the exam. Students must not use laptops, tablets, smartphones, or any other electronic devices to access online materials. University-provided computers will be made available for typing exam responses. No collaboration is allowed.

Students must sign and submit an honor statement with the completed exam. All submissions will be run through a plagiarism check software program.

Each exam is divided into two or three sections, with multiple questions offered in each. Students must answer three questions total, including one from the methodology section, which is always included as its own section. The number of questions available in each section exceeds the number that students are required to answer. Past exams are available on the Schar website for reference.

Grading of the Exam

Exams are blind graded by the same field committee that developed the exam. Through its deliberations, the committee evaluates the exam and then reaches a single result for each answer. 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: FAIL, PASS or HIGH PASS. Any question that is deemed a FAIL must be re-taken and passed in the subsequent exam administration in order to pass the exam. For example, if a student fails any portion of the exam in the January administration, the student must retake the failed portion in the following August administration of 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 may be terminated from the program. The termination policy and academic exception request process can be found on pages 19-20 of the PhD Student Handbook.

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 POGO 801 and POGO 511)
 - 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 may be terminated from the program).

A passing grade on Comprehensive Exams does not modify degree requirements. Students must complete all required PhD coursework prior to advancing to candidacy.

Dissertation Stage

Please see the Dissertation section of PhD Program Administration, Policies, and Procedures (Part I) for information on the following:

- Dissertation committee
- Dissertation proposal and defense
- Advancement to candidacy
- The dissertation
- Oral defense
- Dissertation format and delivery of final copies
- Graduation

Registration during Dissertation Work

To register for GOVT 998, students must first have passed the Comprehensive Exams and identified the Chair of their Dissertation Committee. The faculty member who has agreed to serve as chair must notify PhD Student Services. PhD Student Services will then provide the student with the code 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.

VII. Public Policy Doctoral Program

The public policy PhD program prepares its graduates for positions in academia, government, and the private and non-profit sectors. The key skills for these positions are those used in original research, and even for non-academic positions the standard for research quality remains academic publication. Research in the program seeks to understand the underlying determinants of public policy choices, to analyze and improve the implementation of policy, and to identify and assess new opportunities to address emerging issues.

The program places heavy emphasis on research methods and scholarly literature, effective professional communication to both expert and lay audiences, and an interdisciplinary approach that accounts for significant dimensions of policy issues. Policy understanding and appreciation are informed by theory, model building, statistical analysis, and historical and real-world knowledge of specific circumstances, cases, and issues. In addition to focused studies and research in specific areas of concentration, the program requires preparation in quantitative methods for policy evaluation, the culture and value choices inherent in public policy-making, comparative analysis of public policy problems, and international dimensions of policy issues.

At the PhD level, all public policy students are required to complete coursework emphasizing methodological foundations, the context of public policy-making, and a field of study in an important substantive domain of public concern. Students may choose one of the established areas of emphasis or work with a faculty committee to create their own.

The established emphasis areas in the Public Policy doctoral program at present are the following: Economic Policy, Population and Migration, Regional Development and Transportation; Technology, Science, and Innovation; Entrepreneurship, Growth, and Public Policy; US Governance; Culture and Society; and Global and International Systems. The program does not view these areas as isolated from one another but rather as focal points for interaction among students and faculty with shared interests. See the Public Policy Doctoral Emphasis Areas section below for detailed descriptions of each.

The Curriculum

The degree requires a minimum of 80 credit hours of coursework and supervised research beyond the bachelor's degree. A minimum of 50 hours of coursework must be taken in degree status with the Schar School, excluding any required prerequisites. The specific set of courses students take will depend on their preparation and interests. Prerequisites include three courses involving core competencies in economics (PUBP 720), statistics (POGO 511) and government (PUBP 730). A maximum of 30 credits of relevant graduate work associated with the master's degree may be accepted toward the total of 80. The Doctoral Program Director will determine the relevancy of previously earned graduate credits.

All students are required to take a set of core courses or to present compelling evidence that they have achieved equivalency. In rare instances, students may have sufficient preparation to qualify for an exemption from a required 800-level course. Any exemptions will not result in a reduction

of credit hour requirements.

The program is divided into four major stages. These serve as guideposts. It should be noted that overlap often occurs as students move from one stage to the other. **Stage One** involves development of core skills, **Stage Two** involves policy fields and skills in specific areas, **Stage Three** involves research foundations, and **Stage Four** is doctoral candidacy and dissertation research.

Stage One: Core Skills

Prerequisite Courses
Core Courses
Qualifying Exam

This stage provides a solid foundation through coursework covering:

- Methodology, including policy research, economic analysis, and other modes of statistical analysis and management science methodology, and
- The context of public policy issues.

Students generally are expected to complete their core courses before taking any electives, although full-time students with no required prerequisites might take one or two electives concurrently with core courses. After successful completion of the core courses, students take the Qualifying Exam, which is the first major evaluation of academic progress.

Prerequisites: Methodological and Substantive Foundations

POGO 511 Introductory Data Analysis for Policy and Government
PUBP 720 Microeconomics for Policy Analysis
PUBP 730 National Policy Systems and Theory

Public Policy PhD students are required to have competence in these three areas, either by taking the prerequisite courses above or by proving competence through a placement exam and/or evidence of previous relevant coursework. If the student's master's degree did not include equivalent courses, or if the student does not perform satisfactorily on the relevant placement exam, these courses must be taken as soon as possible upon entering the program and no later than one year after admission. Each student's letter of admission specifies which, if any, prerequisite courses are required.

For students who enter the PhD program with a conferred master's degree, prerequisite courses will not count as part of the 80 credit hour requirement. For those students who enter the program without a master's degree and who do not have transfer credits, the prerequisite courses may apply towards the 80 credit hour requirement.

Prerequisite/Core Course Exemption

Students may have completed graduate courses which they believe are equivalent to one or more of the required prerequisite or core courses. Those seeking exemption from courses may submit a written petition to PhD Student Services for review by the course instructor, who will make a

recommendation to the Doctoral Program Director. The petition must include the following documentation (items 1-4 are mandatory; items 5 and 6 will help make the case):

1. Course title and a transcript showing the grade earned
2. A copy of the catalog description of the course
3. A syllabus for the course or a list of topics covered
4. Identification of the text(s) used in the course
5. Examination questions and results from the course
6. Any papers or projects written for the course

Students will not receive credit toward the total credit-hour degree requirements for a core course from which the student has been exempted unless that course is included within the 30-credit maximum allowed for prior graduate work.

Core Courses

Completion of all core courses with a grade of B or better is required. Students failing to earn a grade of B or better are required to retake the course the next semester it is offered. Failure to earn a grade of B or better after retaking the course will result in termination from the program. (For more details, see Terminations in the Part I: Program Administration, Policy, and Procedures.)

PUBP 800	Culture and Public Policy
POGO 801	Research Design for the Social Sciences and Public Policy
PUBP 804	Multivariate Statistical Analysis in Public Policy
PUBP 805	Foundations of Social Science for Public Policy

Qualifying Examination

The Qualifying Examination assesses the ability of a student to understand a complex policy problem, to analyze the problem and its underlying data, and to prepare a written report on that problem. Additionally, the Qualifying Examination assesses core knowledge and methodological/substantive foundations. This examination is offered in May and January each year. ***Full-time students are required to take the examination at the end of their first year of study, while part-time students are required to take the examination no later than the completion of their second year. All students must take the examination as soon as they have completed the core courses.*** Students who wish to postpone the exam must make the request in advance and obtain prior written approval from the Doctoral Program Director. This will be granted only once and, if granted, the student must take the examination at the next offering.

Students will have two opportunities to earn a passing grade on this examination. In the case of an unsuccessful first attempt, evaluators will provide students with written comments for improvement/further study. Second attempts of the Qualifying Examination are limited to the part (the two parts are described in more detail below) that a student did not pass on the first attempt. Students taking any portion of the exam a second time must make the second attempt when the exam is next offered. Students failing to pass the Qualifying Examination on the second attempt face termination from the program. With the exception of POGO 850, the prerequisite and core

courses listed above must be taken within the required time frame prior to the Qualifying Examination.

The Doctoral Program Director will coordinate the development of the examination. The examination consists of two parts: a timed three-hour quantitative portion followed by a three-day qualitative exam. The exam presents a salient public policy issue and accompanying data and other materials from which students must provide an integrated interdisciplinary analysis. The possible policy topics of a Qualifying Examination are not limited to those of student or faculty expertise. Instead, the examination assesses the extent to which students apply the analytical tools from core courses. The Qualifying Examination grades are as follows: pass with distinction, pass, and fail.

Students may be required to submit their exams in electronic format. All Qualifying Examinations will be reviewed for plagiarism. Plagiarism on the qualifying examination will result in termination from the program. For further information on termination and Schar School's policy on plagiarism, please see the Program Administration, Policy, and Procedures section.

Stage Two: Policy Fields and Skills

POGO 850: Professional Development Seminar	(one credit)
Elective courses	(three courses)
Advanced Methods course	(one course)

POGO 850: Professional Development Seminar

Becoming a successful scholar in public policy is about more than taking courses and writing a dissertation. Students also need to become familiar with the culture and norms of the profession, such as navigating the journal publication process, giving effective academic presentations, making career choices, bridging the gap between academic research and policy making, and engaging in professional networking. This required one-credit course provides students with a glimpse into this body of informal knowledge.

Elective Courses

In addition to the specified core courses for the student's Field of Study Plan (see Stage Three: Research Foundations below), each student is required to take three additional courses of at least 3 credits each. These courses must be selected in consultation with the student's field research committee chair, field research committee, or the chair of the doctoral dissertation committee. These courses should build on and extend the knowledge base and methodological skills in the field, and the courses should be relevant to the student's research interests. These courses may be selected from across the Mason curriculum and from those available through the Consortium of Washington Area Universities, as appropriate for doctoral-level education.

Advanced Methods in Policy Research

Students are required to take a minimum of two advanced methodology courses, one of which must be included in the student's Field of Study Plan (see the Stage Three: Research Foundations section). Below is a list of Schar School methodology courses that are offered regularly. These count toward the methodology course requirement without consultation with the Doctoral Program Director. Students are encouraged to seek out appropriate methodology courses elsewhere, such as those offered by other Mason departments or consortium universities. Other methodology courses may be substituted with the approval of the Doctoral Program Director. Beyond these requirements, depending on program of study and research interests, advisors/committee chairs may mandate more coursework in particular methodologies.

- POGO 611 Advanced Data Analysis for Policy and Government
- PUBP 754 GIS and Spatial Analysis for Public Policy
- PUBP 791 Advanced Field Methods for Policy Research
- PUBP 792 Advanced Economic Analysis for Policy Research
- POGO 793 Big Data Analytics for Policy and Government

Recommended Course Sequences

Full-time Student (no prerequisites required)

<u>First Year</u>		<u>Second Year</u>	
<u>Fall term</u>	<u>Spring term*</u>	<u>Fall term</u>	<u>Spring term</u>
PUBP 800	PUBP 804	Emphasis 1	Emphasis 2
POGO 801	PUBP 805	Elective 3	Emphasis 3
Elective 1	Elective 2	Adv Methods 1	Adv Methods 2
	PUBP 850 (1)		
	Writing course**		

Part-time Student (no prerequisites required)

<u>First Year</u>		<u>Second Year</u>		<u>Third Year</u>	
<u>Fall term</u>	<u>Spring term*</u>	<u>Fall term</u>	<u>Spring term</u>	<u>Fall term</u>	<u>Spring term</u>
PUBP 800	PUBP 804	Elective 1	Elective 2	Emphasis 1	Emphasis 2
POGO 801	PUBP 805	Adv Methods 1	Elective 3	Adv Methods 2	Emphasis 3
	POGO 850 (1)				
	Writing course**				

Full-time Student (with need for all prerequisites)

<u>First Year</u>		<u>Second Year</u>		<u>Third Year</u>
<u>Fall term</u>	<u>Spring term</u>	<u>Fall term*</u>	<u>Spring term</u>	<u>Fall Term</u>
POGO 511	PUBP 804	PUBP 800	Emphasis 1	Emphasis 2
PUBP 730	PUBP 805	Elective 1	Adv Methods 1	Emphasis 3
POGO 801	PUBP 720	Elective 2	Elective 3	Adv Methods 2
	POGO 850 (1)			
	Writing course**			

Part-time Student (with need for all prerequisites)

<u>First Year</u>		<u>Second Year</u>	
<u>Fall term</u>	<u>Spring term</u>	<u>Fall term</u>	<u>Spring term*</u>
POGO 511	PUBP 804	PUBP 800	PUBP 805
POGO 801	PUBP 720	PUBP 730	Elective 1
	POGO 850 (1)		
	Writing course**		

<u>Third Year</u>		<u>Fourth Year</u>	
<u>Fall term</u>	<u>Spring term</u>	<u>Fall term</u>	<u>Spring term</u>
Elective 2	Emphasis 1	Elective 3	Emphasis 3
Adv Methods 1	Emphasis 2	Adv Methods 2	

* **Qualifying Exam** taken upon completion of all core courses.

** Students whose final paper in **POGO 801** is deemed unacceptable for communication and writing purposes must take a course in research design and writing the following semester, in consultation with the student's advisor and as approved by the doctoral Program Director. These credit hours will not count towards the 80 hours of PhD coursework.

Stage Three: Research Foundations

Field of Study courses (three courses)
Advanced Methods course (one course)
Field of Study Plan

Fields allow students to define themselves on the job market, market themselves in particular areas, and define their areas of expertise. The interdisciplinary nature of public policy gives students the flexibility to design their own fields by selecting courses either within or outside the Schar School. These courses should provide a framework for mastering the relevant scholarship within the student's chosen areas of expertise. Students are expected to work closely with a member of the graduate faculty to define their fields, select relevant courses, and identify the body of scholarship that they need to master.

Field Committee

By the end of the third semester for full-time students (fourth semester for part-time), students must choose a chair for their field committee. The chair of the field committee is the Schar School core faculty member who will oversee the Field of Study plan and usually becomes the chair of the dissertation committee. The chair, with advisory input from the student, selects at least two additional committee members from Mason, one of whom must be Schar School core faculty. The committee should reflect a broad representation of the areas to be covered by the Field of Study Plan. The field committee follows the same structure as the dissertation committee (see [Dissertation Committee](#) section)

Field of Study Coursework

In consultation with the Field Committee Chair, students must identify three substantive courses and at least one advanced methods course that will serve as a foundation for the Field of Study. The three substantive courses must include at least one 800-level Schar School doctoral seminar course (excluding core and advanced methods courses).

The Field of Study must include one advanced methods course from the approved list for the doctoral program, or be approved in writing by the Field Committee Chair and Doctoral Program Director. Where appropriate courses are not available from Schar School, students may petition the Director of the PhD program for substitute courses to count for their Field of Study Plan.

Field of Study Plan

By the start of the fourth semester for full-time students (fifth semester for part-time), students must submit to the chair of their field committee a Field of Study Plan. The Field of Study Plan is an outline of the student's proposed research areas. Drawing upon relevant coursework, scholarship, and faculty expertise, the Plan both clarifies research goals and provides a structure for reaching those goals.

The Field of Study Plan should be approximately 1000 words (excluding bibliography). A basic Plan should include the following elements:

1. Proposed research areas. The Plan should identify areas of interest and potential questions the student intends to explore while enrolled in field courses. Identified areas should be similar in breadth to fields of specialization in a disciplinary PhD program. For each area, the student should include a bibliography of significant scholarship and describe the literature most relevant to current research. If the student has begun to consider research design, notes on this may be included. While enrolled in field courses, students are expected to become familiar with the scholarship of their fields and meet regularly with the Field Committee Chair to integrate this scholarship with the Field of Study courses.

2. Relevant coursework. The Plan should list four substantive courses beyond the core that serve as the foundation for the student's field of study. These may include courses previously taken or courses the student plans to take. Three of these are substantive: one 800-level Schar School course (excluding core and advanced methods courses), one Schar School course at the graduate level (excluding those courses not eligible for PhD credit), and one substantive graduate course which may be from Schar School or may be an approved graduate-level course from another department. The fourth is the advanced methods course covering methodology the student intends to apply to the research.

3. Faculty involvement. The Plan should indicate which faculty members will be involved in the student's research. The Field Committee must approve the Plan before the student begins work on the dissertation proposal.

The Field of Study Plan with faculty signatures must be submitted to the Program Director and Dean for approval. The student is responsible for collecting faculty signatures and submitting the form to PhD Student Services.

Registration During Fields

Students are expected to complete coursework before taking PUBP 998 credits. A student may take no more than six credits of PUBP 998 before completing a Field of Study plan and having it approved by three Graduate Faculty members.

Stage Four: Dissertation

Please see the Dissertation section of PhD Program Administration, Policies, and Procedures (Part I) for information on the following:

- Dissertation committee
- Dissertation proposal and defense
- Advancement to candidacy
- The dissertation
- Oral defense
- Dissertation format and delivery of final copies
- Graduation

Registration during Fields and Dissertation Work

A student may register for PUBP 998 when all of the following conditions are met:

1. Student has passed the Qualifying Exam.
2. Student has completed all required coursework for the doctoral program, or PhD Student Services has approved the student's proposed plan for completing any remaining coursework concurrently with PUBP 998 credits.
3. Student has a Field Committee Chair who is willing to oversee their Field of Study plan.
4. Once the student has completed six credits of PUBP 998, they must have on file a Field of Study plan approved by the full field committee before enrolling in additional credits.

While enrolled in PUBP 998, students are expected to consolidate knowledge from field courses and relevant scholarship identified in the Field of Study plan, gain mastery of a portion of this literature, identify gaps in knowledge, and develop a dissertation proposal. During this time, students may take a maximum of 12 credits of PUBP 998 Research/Proposal for Dissertation.

- There is no minimum number of PUBP 998 credits required.
- PUBP 998 must be taken in increments of at least 3 credits per semester.
- Students are permitted to take additional courses along with PUBP 998 in order to maintain full-time status (including a 3-credit directed readings course).
- Prior to defending a dissertation proposal, a student must have on file an approved dissertation committee.
- Students who do not successfully defend a dissertation proposal after completing 12 credits of PUBP 998 must maintain continuous enrollment in coursework while completing the proposal.

After a successful dissertation proposal defense, students may enroll in PUBP 999 Dissertation.

- Students are required to take a minimum of 6 credit hours of PUBP 999.
- Students may apply only 12 credits total of PUBP 998 and PUBP 999 toward the 82 credit graduation requirement. (Examples: 0 credits PUBP 998 plus 12 credits PUBP 999; 3 credits PUBP 998 plus 9 credits PUBP 999; 6 credits PUBP 998 plus 6 credits PUBP 999)
- Until a student has taken 12 credits of PUBP 998 and 999 combined, PUBP 999 must be taken in increments of at least 3 credits per semester.
- Students who have fulfilled all degree requirements may take 1 credit of PUBP 999 each semester and be considered full-time until the program is completed, provided they are making adequate progress. Full-time status at this stage must be documented in the Office of the Registrar.

A total of 12 credits of PUBP 998 and PUBP 999 combined are required for graduation. Students will need to contact PhD Student Services prior to registration in dissertation coursework. Students must maintain continuous enrollment during proposal and dissertation stage until graduation, excluding summer.

External Reader

In the public policy program, after proposal defense, the candidate and chair must identify an external reader—selected from outside Mason—in **addition** to the three committee members.

1. The chair, dissertation committee members, or Doctoral Program Director may suggest nominees for external reader.
2. After the chair and candidate agree on an appropriate reader, the chair will forward the recommendation, along with the reader’s current CV and the signed Dissertation External Reader form (found in Appendix B), to PhD Student Services.
3. The recommendation will consist of a brief written statement (letter, memo, e-mail, etc.) to the Doctoral Program Director verifying that the reader meets the following criteria:
 - a. The reader has a strong academic and research background (including scholarly publications) in a field relevant to the dissertation;
 - b. The reader is currently active in the field and is working in an academic or research setting;
 - c. The reader has no present or past relationship with the candidate which might hamper objectivity (e.g., formal supervisory or employer role); the relationship should be “arm’s length.”
4. If the reader does not meet one or more of these criteria, the chair must offer a rationale for why this reader should be approved.
5. After approval by the Doctoral Program Director, the recommendation goes to the Dean for review and approval.

The external reader is invited to the dissertation defense, but is not required to attend. If the external reader cannot attend the defense, the candidate must request that the reader write a short report and recommendation which comments on the quality and appropriateness of the candidate’s dissertation and research. This report and recommendation are submitted to the student’s chair and the Doctoral Program Director.

The reader’s report may identify problems in the dissertation or may recommend substantive changes. In such a case, the candidate and chair will determine together how to incorporate those suggestions into the dissertation. Along with the external reader’s report, the candidate and chair must submit to the Doctoral Program Director a written description of changes made to the final dissertation in response to the reader’s comments.

Enrollment in Other Degree Programs

In accepting admission to the PhD Program in Public Policy, 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. Violations of this policy will result in termination.

*The sole exception to this policy is admission into the MPP program at George Mason University as an approved secondary program (see Secondary Program above).

Public Policy Doctoral Fields of Study

American Foreign and National Security Policy

Faculty and students in the Schar School interested in American foreign and national security policy come to the School from a wide range of academic and applied settings. Research efforts focus both on critical international and transnational issues facing America and the world – for example, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, energy security, interstate conflict, and the emergence of new potential threats and adversaries – and on the challenges of policy-making itself. Employing a broad set of historical and social scientific research approaches and methods, Schar School research examines the functioning of executive branch, legislative branch, private-sector, and international institutions, and explores the role of political, economic, cultural, and intellectual pressures and constraints in determining options and outcomes. Degree recipients pursue careers not only in academic and research settings, but in U.S. government, business and consulting, and non-profit sectors.

Affiliated Faculty

Colin Dueck
Michael Hunzeker
Kendrick Kuo
Jerry Mayer

Economic Policy

The economic policy area emphasizes the application of economic theory and econometrics to analyzing a wide variety of public policy issues. Course offerings build from the PhD core and include both more advanced methods and various applied fields of economics. Topics included in this area include employment, inequality, taxes, retirement, health, entrepreneurship, poverty, development, education, productivity, international trade and investment, and all the public policies relevant to these issues, both in the U.S. and in other countries.

Affiliated Faculty

John Earle
Maurice Kugler
Catherine Maclean
Anh Pham
Ken Reinert
J.P. Singh
Sita Slavov

Energy and Environmental Policy

Students pursuing the energy and environmental policy field of study investigate how public policy and governance more generally shape the extraction, transformation, exchange, and consumption of natural resources and how these activities, in turn, impact human and natural systems, including attempts at creating sustainable policy instruments and governance that enable conservation, preservation, or restoration, of those resources. The specialization also focuses on corruption and illicit trade in natural resources. Energy and environmental policy is made at multiple levels of governance, from local to global, in every corner of the world, all of

which lie within the scope of this field of study. Students develop a diverse, interdisciplinary tool kit with which to carry out analyses of energy and environmental policy formation, implementation, and impact and the conditions that may also lead to the abuse of these natural resources. They learn to employ both quantitative and qualitative methods and draw on analytical traditions in political science, economics, public administration, sociology, and others, with the capacity to enhance these traditions through normative analysis. This knowledge base and the original work carried out for the dissertation provide a foundation to pursue energy and environmental policy research careers in academia, government, non-governmental organizations, and business

Affiliated Faculty

Guadalupe Correa-Cabrera
Todd LaPorte
Andrew Light

Population, Migration, and Public Policy

Students working the field of **population, migration and public policy** study how changes in the movement and composition of populations create challenges for public policy, and seek to develop creative and effective solutions. These challenges include responding to marked changes in the volume and sources of immigration; adjusting to how internal and international migration shape labor markets, politics, and identities; coping with changes in the age structure of society and how that affects the costs and demands for pensions, health care and social services, as well as the nature of work and cross-generational social contracts; understanding how shifting ethnic composition impacts social and political cohesion and conflict; and devising functional national and international legal frameworks to govern international migration and asylum. Students working in this area are eligible for five-year funding for their PhD studies and research. They will be prepared for careers in an increasingly vital field, with job opportunities in government, the private sector, academia, NGOs and international organizations.

Affiliated Faculty

Guadalupe Correa-Cabrera
John Earle
Justin Gest
Jack Goldstone
Eric Max McGlinchey
Sita Slavov

Regional Development and Transportation

Public policy is influenced by location and mobility. This emphasis area focuses on two policy areas. It looks at the changes in economic structure of sub-national regions, and how policies affect these changes and direct these dynamics. It also considers how movement of goods and people can influence the ways regions and cities develop, and how transportation policy has evolved, not only to afford greater economic efficiency in its own right, but also as part of the spatial development process. While policymakers less commonly discuss the development of sub-national regions than

national macroeconomic policy, this development affects where people live, train, look for work, and raise families. Transportation and modern communications allow people and institutions within a region to interact and provide the basis of everyday life and, as a result, develop in an internally coherent and externally unique way. The history of regions' and transport's legal, economic, industrial, and cultural development leaves a legacy that evolves, but is seldom broken. Hence, the development of social and cultural expressions and values needs to be recognized in the design and execution of regional policy. In addition, there is increasing awareness that regional economies contain the basis for national economic well-being.

Technology, Science, and Innovation (TSI)

New technologies present extraordinary opportunities for achieving major public policy objectives such as economic growth, environmental sustainability, public health, military security, and the advancement of knowledge. Yet they may also place the very same objectives in jeopardy. Whether the public benefits from technological change depends on how well the processes of innovation and diffusion are governed. The TSI emphasis area focuses on understanding and improving the institutions that are engaged in governing these processes.

TSI embraces a broad vision of institutions and governance, and of understanding and improvement. The institutions of interest to scholars within the concentration include formal organizations—public, private, and non-profit—and informal patterns of belief and practice. Governance encompasses not simply the exercise of public authority, but also patterns of private decision-making and behavior that influence the types of new technologies that are created, how quickly they are taken up by potential users, and the distribution of their benefits and costs in practice. Faculty and students in TSI seek to develop new and deeper understanding of the processes of scientific discovery and of technological innovation and change to improve the foundation for analysis of related governance challenges.

Entrepreneurship, Growth, and Public Policy

Entrepreneurship is the process of uncovering an opportunity to create value through innovation, and entrepreneurs are rewarded for transforming knowledge into new products and bringing them to the market. This multidisciplinary area examines entrepreneurship policy from the perspective of the agent, business, economy, and society. Relying less on the state for wealth creation, distribution, and ownership, an entrepreneurial society looks to individual initiative to propel the economy and the society. Increasingly, the concept of entrepreneurship is being adjusted and applied to the public and nonprofit sectors. Building on and expanding existing strengths in the Schar School in regional economic development and in science and technology policy, this emphasis area in entrepreneurship policy prepares students to understand the role of entrepreneurship in society and help create entrepreneurial economies.

This emphasis area encompasses a number of considerations, including the role of occupational choice in the exploitation of opportunity; the process by which new ventures are created in a variety of spheres (economic, governmental, associational) and the direct and indirect economic and social consequences of these ventures; the intersection of theories of entrepreneurship and theories of innovation; the evaluation of public policies that encourage entrepreneurship and economic development; the role of entrepreneurship in economic growth; the role of entrepreneurship in the design of new organizations; the factors that influence the levels of entrepreneurship in a region,

nation, and the global economy; the forms and effects of social entrepreneurship within public institutions; the use of an entrepreneurship lens to find and implement novel solutions to public problems; and the role of human and financial resource assembly in entrepreneurship.

US Governance

This emphasis area is concerned with the nature of governance in the United States, and with appropriate comparisons with non-US and international systems. Governance includes the theoretical and practical approaches that societies take to organizing themselves for making decisions about public policy issues. Emphasis is placed upon the values that underpin institutional and policy choices, including the ethical and accountability aspects of policymaking. Particular attention is devoted to policy-making institutions such as Congress, the Presidency, executive branch agencies, and state and local governments as well as to the theories and processes of public policy, including agenda building, the media, instruments of implementation, regulation, interest group activity, intergovernmental relations, budgeting, and tax policy.

Culture and Society

The Culture and Society emphasis area emphasizes the role that social institutions, social processes, and culture play in the development and implementation of public policy. Study in this area is grounded in the understanding that public policy decisions are not made in a vacuum; they are the result of cultural and social forces, from both contemporary and historical perspectives. These forces also provide the context for policymaking.

In order to analyze public policy, the student will be exposed to a wide range of theoretical and methodological frameworks that offer insight into the policy process both in the U.S. and internationally. Through exposure to these frameworks and the development of others, the student will be able to analyze how public policy is made and implemented, determine why specific policies are formulated, and evaluate their relative merit and effectiveness. Students in this emphasis area are expected to focus on both functional areas of public policy as well as attend to their contextual frameworks. These include attention to specific issues and areas in public policy such as education, race and ethnicity, crime, gender, health, family, corruption, immigration, and the media, among others.

Global and International Systems

Students in the Global and International Systems emphasis area can pursue a wide range of international and comparative policy issues, including those related to economics, development, conflict and security, democracy and governance, and international relations. The consideration of organizational and global processes, technological change, and the economic, political, and cultural aspects of international policy are an integral part of this area. Also, given the nature of international policy issues, informal or formal links to the other emphasis areas within the Schar School are appropriate. The coursework surveys the field of Global and International Public Policy with a focus on relevant theoretical and methodological approaches and debates, and provides students with tools for analyzing various world problems and policies. Students may also choose to study international trade policy, addressing international trade theory, trade policy analysis, regional economic integration, and the institutional arrangements governing world trade.

Appendix A: 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; social enterprise; collaborative governance.

Katrin B. Anacker, Professor; Ph.D., City and Regional Planning, The Ohio State University, 2006.

Housing; housing policy; urban policy; race, ethnicity, and public policy; real estate markets; statistical methods; qualitative methods; research writing.

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

Sonia Ben Ouagrham-Gormley, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Development Economics, School of Advanced Social Sciences, Paris, 1999.

International security; arms control and nonproliferation; science and technology; emerging technologies and security; biological weapons threats; biodefense and biosecurity; WMD terrorism; export control and illicit trade; economic and financial sanctions; former Soviet States.

Christopher Berk, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, University of Chicago, 2016.
Politics of punishment; penal law; democratic theory.

Jo-Marie Burt, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Columbia University, 1999.
Comparative politics; Latin America; state-society relations; democracy and authoritarianism; political violence; revolutions and social movements; human rights; transitional justice; gender-based violence.

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

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.

Guadalupe Correa-Cabrera, Professor, Ph.D., Political Science, The New School for Social Research, 2010.

Comparative politics; Latin American studies; border studies; security studies; immigration; Mexican politics; Mexico-U.S. relations and social movements.

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

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

John S. Earle, Distinguished University Professor; Director, Center for Micro-Economic Policy Research (CMEPR); Director; Ph.D., Economics, Stanford University, 1988.
Labor economics; entrepreneurship; small business growth and finance; political economy; transition and development; corporate governance and firm performance; reallocation and productivity; industry dynamics; growth and finance; inequality; globalization; institutional economics; comparative analysis of economic policies and systems; micro-econometrics; program evaluation.

Michael K. Fauntroy, Associate Professor of Policy and Government; Ph.D., Political Science, Howard University, 2000.
African American politics; the presidency; political parties; elections.

Meghan M. Garrity, Assistant Professor International Security; Ph.D., Political Science, University of Pennsylvania, 2022.
International peace and security; political violence; forced migration

Justin Gest, Professor of Policy and Government and Director, Master of Public Policy Program; 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, infrastructure, mobility, micro-mobility, 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; democracy and dictatorship; global economic history and long-term economic growth; immigration and population policy; impacts of population changes on economic growth and international security.

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

Qian Hu, Professor; Ph.D., Public Administration, Arizona State University, 2011.
Network governance; emergency management; social media; big data.

Michael Hunzeker, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Public and International Affairs, Princeton University, 2013.
International security; military innovation; conventional deterrence.

Mirae Kim, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Public Management, Rutgers University-Newark, 2014.
Nonprofit management, nonprofit finance, nonprofit-government relationships, racial/ethnic diversity, arts and cultural organizations, online research panel, experiment studies.

Gregory Koblentz, Associate Professor and Director of Biodefense Graduate Program; Ph.D., Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2004.
International Security; global health security; dual-use research; emerging technology; biodefense; biorisk management; proliferation of nuclear biological and chemical weapons; nonproliferation; arms control; terrorism; homeland security.

Naoru Koizumi, Professor, Associate Dean 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 statistical modeling and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in health/medical services and policy research.

Maurice D. Kugler, Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Economics, University of California at Berkeley, 2000.
Macroeconomic impact of globalization; new technologies and economic growth; automation, digitization and international development; global value chains and foreign direct investment; labor productivity and inequality; job flows and international migration.

Kendrick Kuo, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, The George Washington University, 2021.
International security; military innovation and adaptation; military power and effectiveness

Siona Listokin, 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 López-Santana, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, University of Michigan, 2006.
Comparative politics; welfare states, employment and social policy; federalism and multilevel governance; State-Society relations.

Catherine Maclean, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Economics, Cornell University, 2012.
Health economics, substance use (alcohol, illicit drugs, and tobacco products), mental health, insurance, public policy, labor economics, and empirical econometrics.

Peter Mandaville, Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, University of Kent at Canterbury, 1999. International relations; Islam and politics; religion and global affairs.

Philip Martin, Assistant Professor, Ph.D., Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2019. Comparative politics; African politics; security studies; conflict and political violence; post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction.

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

Eric M. McGlinchey, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Princeton University, 2003. Comparative politics; Eurasian politics; research methods; international security; international relations.

Robert J. McGrath, Associate 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. Complex Organizations and Institutional Analysis; Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy; Medical and Health Policy; Globalization and International Development; Cultural Analysis; Comparative Education; Social Justice and Governance; Race, Ethnicity, and Nation; Gender; Stratification and Inequality; Social Theory.

Thema Monroe-White, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Science Technology, and Innovation Policy, 2014. Artificial intelligence; comparative studies; critical quantitative and computational methods; data science education; economics, development & public finance; entrepreneurship & innovation; methods & data science; public private & nonprofit management; racial equity in STEM; science & technology.

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

Lucas Núñez, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., Social Science, California Institute of Technology, 2018. Political behavior; voting behavior; electoral politics; quantitative methods.

James L. Olds, University Professor; Ph.D., Neurosciences, University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, 1987. Science policy; AI; Macrosystems biology; COVID-19; team science; crisis management in science agency administration.

Anh Pham, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Economics, University of California-San Diego, 2015. Public economics; tax policies; developing countries.

Kenneth A. Reinert, Professor of Public Policy and Director, International Commerce and Policy Program; Ph.D., Economics, University of Maryland, 1988.

International economic policy; international development policy; economic globalization.

J. Luis Rodriguez, Assistant Professor International Security; Ph.D., Political Science, Johns Hopkins University, 2021

Global South; international law; international security; international order

Hilton L. Root, Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Economics and History, University of Michigan, 1983.

International economic policy; law, development and governance; comparative economics; east Asia; institutions; collective action; networks; complex systems; and economic history.

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; federalism; southern politics; media and politics.

Matthew Scherer, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Johns Hopkins University, 2007.

Political theory; religion and politics; constitutional law.

Laurie A. Schintler, Associate Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Urban and Regional Planning, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1995. Science and Technology; Regional Science, "Big Data" and Data Analytics

J.P. Singh, Professor; Ph.D., Political Economy and Public Policy, University of Southern California, 1995.

International trade; development; cultural economics & policy; science & technology; negotiations.

Sita Nataraj Slavov, Professor of Public Policy; Ph.D., Economics, Stanford University, 2003.

Public finance; economics of aging; retirement policy; Social Security and Medicare; tax policy; economic analysis of political processes.

Faye S. Taxman, University Professor; Ph.D., Criminal Justice, Rutgers University – Newark, 1982. Health services; criminal justice policies; organizational science; probation supervision; substance use disorders and treatments; international justice organizations; risk and need assessment; fairness; equity; implementation science; translational science; and evidence-based policies.

Jessica N. Terman, Associate 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, M.S. in Organization Development & Knowledge Management Program; Ph.D., Organizational Behavior, Case Western Reserve University, 1994. Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI), Enhancing innovation and entrepreneurship using Appreciative Intelligence®; mindfulness & creativity; creating knowledge-sharing organizational culture; change management; organization transformation; quiet leadership; talent management, Asian American professional growth, and glass ceiling; collaborative technology and knowledge management.

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

Jennifer Nicoll Victor, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Washington University in St. Louis, 2003. American politics; U.S. Congress; political networks; quantitative analysis; political parties; campaign finance.

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

Janine R. Wedel, University Professor; Ph.D., Anthropology, University of California-Berkeley, 1985. Shadow elites and elite influencers; new structures of power; corruption and the state; uniting fieldwork with data analytics; mapping policy and governance processes; governance and privatization of policy; accountability; social networks; Central and Eastern Europe; foreign aid; anthropology of policy.

Fengxiu Zhang, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., Public Administration and Policy, Arizona State University, 2020. Climate adaptation; Disaster resilience; Extreme events; Decision making under risk and uncertainty; Critical infrastructure protection; Technology in government; Public Participation.

Ketian Zhang, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Political Science, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2018. International security; rising powers; Chinese foreign policy; coercion; economic statecraft; maritime disputes.

Edmund J. Zolnik, Associate Professor; Ph.D., Economic Geography, University of Connecticut, 2004. Safe/sustainable transportation; community/regional development; multilevel modeling.

Selected Affiliated Faculty

Andrew Light, University Professor of Philosophy, Public Policy, and Atmospheric Sciences; Ph.D., Philosophy, University of California – Riverside, 1996.

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.

Instructional and Research Faculty

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.

Robert L. Deitz, Term Professor International Security Program; M.P.A., Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton University, 1972; J.D., Harvard Law School, 1975; B.A., Middlebury College, Phi Beta Kappa, 1968.

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

Richard Kauzlarich, Distinguished Visiting Professor; M.A, Indiana University 1967; M.A., University of Michigan, 1976.

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

Ellen Laipson, Term Professor and Director, International Security Program; M.A. School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, 1978.

Philip Mink, Term Assistant Professor; J.D., University of Mississippi, 1981.

Kelly Richter, Term Assistant Professor; Ph.D., History, Stanford University, 2015; J.D., Georgetown University, 2018.

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

Alan Shark, Term Associate Professor; D.P.A., Public Administration, University of Southern California, 2001.

Bonnie Stabile, Term Associate Professor, Ph.D., George Mason University, 2006.

Appendix B: Doctoral Forms

1. Biodefense Qualifying Exam Application
2. Political Science Comprehensive Exam Application
3. Public Policy Qualifying Exam Application
4. Dissertation Committee (Biodefense and Political Science)
5. Dissertation Committee Form (Public Policy)
6. Change of Dissertation Committee Member
7. Statement of Readiness for Proposal Defense
8. Dissertation Proposal Defense
9. Dissertation External Reader (Public Policy)
10. Oral Dissertation Defense Readiness

George Mason University
Schar School of Policy and Government
Political Science Comprehensive Exam Application

Student Name: Date:
G Number: Handbook Year:

Major Fields

Please identify your major fields for this exam:

- 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 Exam. Please make the necessary updates to your degree plan and include a current version with this application.

- Current degree plan attached

Advisor

Before you return this form, please have a conversation with you advisor informing them you plan to take the comprehensive exams. **You must get their approval before sending this form back.**

Advisor:

Committee Chair

After passing the Comprehensive Exam and before registering for GOVT 998 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 Schar School PhD Student Services: jwashi4@gmu.edu

Comprehensive Examination Application Approved by:

	Name	Signature	Date

Director, PhD Student			
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George Mason University
Schar School of Policy and Government
Public Policy Qualifying Exam Application

Student's Name:		Date:	
G Number:		Advisor:	
Handbook Year:		Exam Semester/Year:	

Please indicate which courses you have taken and the grades you received. If you have taken a course but have not yet received a grade, please leave the Grade field blank.

<i>Core Courses</i>	<i>Year/Semester</i>	<i>Grade</i>
PUBP 800		
POGO 801		
PUBP 804		
PUBP 805		
PUBP 850		

Approved by:

	Name	Signature	Date
Director, PhD Student Services			

Please return this form to Schar School PhD Student Services, MSN 3B1, jwashi4@gmu.edu

George Mason University
Schar School of Policy and Government
Dissertation Committee
Biodefense & Political Science

Student's Name:		Date:	
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Program: Biodefense Political Science Public Policy

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

	Name	Signature	Date
Chair			
Member			

Approved By:

	Name	Signature	Date
Asst Dean, Student Engagement			
PhD Program Director			
Dean			

Please return this form to Schar School PhD Student Services, MSN 3B1, jwashi4@gmu.edu

George Mason University
Schar School of Policy and Government
Dissertation Committee
Public Policy

Student's Name:		Date:	
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I have read the Field of Study (FOS) Plan as titled below and agree to serve on this student's public policy dissertation committee.

FOS Plan/ Tentative Dissertation Title:	
--	--

Committee Members:

	Name	Signature	Date
Chair			
Member			
Member			
Member			

Approved By:

	Name	Signature	Date
Asst Dean, Student Engagement			
PhD Program Director			
Dean			

Please return this form to Schar School PhD Student Services, MSN 3B1, jwashi4@gmu.edu

George Mason University
Schar School of Policy and Government
Change of Dissertation Committee Member

Student's Name:		Date:	
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Program: Biodefense Political Science Public Policy

Tentative Title:	
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	Name	Signature	Date
Chair			
Leaving Committee			
Joining Committee			
Leaving Committee			
Joining Committee			

Approved By:

	Name	Signature	Date
Asst Dean, Student Engagement			
PhD Program Director			
Dean			

Please return this form to Schar School PhD Student Services, MSN 3B1, jwashi4@gmu.edu

PhD Student/Faculty Handbook 2025-2026

George Mason University
Schar School of Policy and Government
Statement of Readiness for Proposal Defense

Student's Name:		Date of Defense:	
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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:

	Name	Signature	Date
Chair			
Member			
Member			
Member			

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

	Name	Signature	Date
Director, PhD Student Services			

Please return this form to Schar School PhD Student Services, MSN 3B1, jwashi4@gmu.edu

PhD Student/Faculty Handbook 2025-2026

George Mason University
Schar School of Policy and Government
Dissertation Proposal Defense

This is to certify that this student has successfully defended the dissertation proposal.

Student's Name:		Date of Defense:	
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Program: Biodefense Political Science Public Policy

Title:	
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	Name	Signature	Date
Chair			
Member			

Approved By:

	Name	Signature	Date
PhD Program Director			
Dean			

I have received a copy of the dissertation proposal.

	Name	Signature	Date
Director, PhD Student Services			

Please return this form to Schar School PhD Student Services, MSN 3B1, jwashi4@gmu.edu

PhD Student/Faculty Handbook 2025-2026

George Mason University
Schar School of Policy and Government
Public Policy Dissertation External Reader

Student's Name:		Date:	
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Dissertation Title:	
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The following professor has agreed to serve on my dissertation committee as an external reader:

	Name	Signature	Date
Chair			
Reader			

Approved By:

	Name	Signature	Date
PhD Program Director			
Dean			

Please return this form to Schar School PhD Student Services, MSN 3B1, jwashi4@gmu.edu

George Mason University
Schar School of Policy and Government
Oral Dissertation Defense Readiness

Student's Name:		Date of Defense:	
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Program: Biodefense Political Science Public Policy

Dissertation Title:	
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We certify that this student is prepared to orally defend the dissertation.

Committee Members:

	Name	Signature	Date
Chair			
Member			

I have received a copy of the dissertation.

	Name	Signature	Date
Director, PhD Student Services			

Please return this form to Schar School PhD Student Services, MSN 3B1, jwashi4@gmu.edu