

YALE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
GRADUATE MENTORING AND ADVISING GUIDELINES

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Welcome to the PhD program in Political Science at Yale. We are thrilled that you have chosen to pursue your doctoral studies with us.

In your studies, you will aim to complete an innovative and rigorous dissertation on an important political problem. This may seem like a daunting task. With this document, we offer some general guidelines for a successful experience in the program, and a healthy and productive relationship between graduate students and their advisers. While there are many paths to a successful graduate career, all advising relationships benefit from clear communication about individual responsibilities and expectations. We hope that this document can offer some ideas for facilitating this conversation between advisers and advisees, breaking down the large goal of completing the dissertation into a set of small, manageable steps, and getting the most out of your graduate studies (for resources on graduate school, the hidden curriculum, and research and writing, see, e.g., Calarco 2020, Lamott 1995, Kelsky 2015, and Thomson 2011).

This document walks the reader through the various stages of the graduate program. In the first section, we review the program chronologically, briefly mentioning its requirements and expectations before discussing all the resources available in the department to meet them. In the second, we present some basic principles for successful advising relationships. In the third, we list some additional resources for any advising-related challenges. In the Appendix, we include some sample questions that may guide the advising relationship, as well as annual checklists, written by Greg Huber in 2012-2013.

I. ADVISING RESOURCES
IN THE POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

1. THE FIRST TWO YEARS

In the first two years of the program, students mainly focus on taking courses, gaining substantive and methodological expertise, while also getting started on a research project.

¹ Email: alexandre.debs@yale.edu. This is the third version of the advising guidelines. Earlier versions were shared on June 1, 2021 and August 12, 2022. For feedback on this third version, I thank Colleen Amaro. All remaining errors are my own.

1.1 Program Requirements and Expectations

a. Overview: Students are required to take sixteen courses in the first two years, with at most four courses taken outside of the department. They must take courses in at least three substantive fields. They must certify in three fields, at least two of which are substantive. They must also produce a second-year research paper. For more information about program requirements, including rules for transfer credits, see [here](#) and [here](#).

b. Courses: Students can consult the list of courses typically offered in the department [here](#) and the list of courses in a given semester on [courses.yale.edu](#). Students may also set up a directed reading course with a faculty member. The student and instructor should first agree on a syllabus, which the student produces, and which must be reviewed and approved by the DGS. This syllabus should closely resemble a typical graduate seminar, with detailed reading list, course requirements, etc. The frequency of meetings are at the discretion of the student and faculty member, but they are typically at least bi-weekly.

c. Field Certification: Fields set their own guidelines for certification. In most fields, certification can be done by exam or by coursework. Each student must certify by exam in at least two fields. For certification by exam, students typically take two courses before taking the exam. Exams are offered in January and August each year. They consist of a few questions based on a reading list, itself based on the syllabi of courses offered in the field. Each year, students are asked in the Spring whether they plan to take an exam in the coming August, and in the Fall for January. An exam committee is formed, with two or three faculty members in the field. The committee generally holds a meeting in late Spring to discuss the content and format of the exam with any interested students. In any exam cycle, field exam committees can choose whether their exam should be taken at home or in person in Rosenkranz Hall. Students are encouraged to study together in preparation for the exam. The exam itself is an individual assignment. For certification by coursework, students typically take three courses and produce a seminar paper that shows a strong command of the substantive and methodological approaches in the field. Certification must be completed before the start of the fifth semester, though students may be granted a one-semester extension if needed. For more information about conditions for field certification, see [here](#).

d. Language Certification: Students must demonstrate elementary reading competence in one foreign language. Such competence is usually demonstrated by taking, or having completed, two years of undergraduate course work or by examination. Alternatively, the language requirement can be satisfied by successfully completing two terms of formal theory or two terms of statistical methods at the graduate level (beyond the introductory course in statistical methods offered in the department). Language certification must be completed before the start of the fifth semester, though students may be granted a one-semester extension if needed.

e. Second-Year Research Paper: The second-year research paper is an independent research project, developed in the context of the second-year Research and Writing (RW) course, and advised by a faculty member in the department. The objective of the course is to help students propose, develop, and complete a project that yields a journal-length article manuscript of publishable quality.

1.2 Departmental Resources

a. Professionalization Courses: The department offers professionalization and research advice in the first two years in two required courses: Introduction to the Study of Politics (ISP), taught in the Fall of the first year, and Research and Writing (RW), taught over the course of the second year. These courses cover various skills: how to read and write papers, how to present research, how to write referee reports, etc. In ISP, students will be exposed to the research conducted by faculty members in the department. In RW, students will receive feedback on their second-year research project from two instructors and from their classmates.

b. Director of Graduate Studies: The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and the Departmental Graduate Registrar, Colleen Amaro, are the first points of contact for graduate students. Students may meet with the DGS to discuss their course plan and progress in the program. They may also consult with the DGS in case of conflict between the student and the adviser.

c. Sources of Funding: Students have access to various sources of funding to support research projects, language training, conference travel. For more information, see [here](#).

d. Review of Students: All students are reviewed by the department at the end of the academic year. Field coordinators collect comments from their colleagues about any of their advisees in the field, and relay them to the DGS ahead of the meeting. After the meeting, the DGS reaches out to students when particular concerns were raised.

e. Residence Requirement and Exchange Programs: Students are required to be in residence in New Haven in three of their first four years. They may apply to various exchange programs, such as the IvyPlus Exchange program, the Fox Fellowship program, and the International Exchange programs with Sciences Po and Nuffield College, Oxford. They should review their plan to apply for an exchange program with their adviser. For more information on how to apply, see [here](#).

1.3 Faculty Advisers

a. Assignment: Incoming students will be provisionally assigned a faculty adviser by the start of the year, though they can of course change their adviser in the course of the year (as discussed in point 1.3.d. below).

b. Frequency of Meetings: Students should plan a conversation with their adviser early in the Fall to discuss their research interests and coursework. Advisers are expected to reach out to their first-year advisee at least once more during the Fall. After the Fall of the first year, advisers should reach out to their student at least once per semester through the end of the second year. The DGS will issue reminders for such conversations.

c. Informal Advisers: Students are encouraged to cultivate relationships with multiple faculty members to discuss their research interests and planned coursework. Students can find out more information from individual faculty members' research and availability from their websites, accessible from the departmental website [here](#). They may also learn about their research in ISP.

d. Changing Advisers: Students may request a change in adviser at any point. We understand that research interests evolve and there may be other constraints due to personal preferences or faculty leaves. It is not unusual for students to change primary advisers early in the program. Students can arrange the change of advisers themselves or they may ask for the DGS's assistance. Such conversations will be kept confidential. Once the change in advisers is completed, students should alert the Departmental Graduate Registrar so that our records can be updated.

e. Second-Year Research Paper: Students should identify a topic and an adviser for their second-year paper, to be developed in RW. We encourage students to begin a conversation with potential advisers no later than the Spring of the first year. Often, students choose to develop a research paper completed in the context of a seminar taken in the first year. Some students choose to use RW to start writing dissertation chapters and others write standalone papers. Starting this conversation then would allow students to explore research ideas during the summer recess, when they do not have a full course schedule. At the beginning of the second year, students and their adviser should agree on a schedule of writing deadlines for the completion of the project. Meeting every two or three weeks would be good starting point.

f. Research Assistantships: One way for students to learn about how to conduct research, and continue learning during the summer recess, is to take a position as a Research Assistant (RA) to a faculty member in the department. The summer recess is a good time to take such a position, when students do not have a full course schedule and the university sets a higher cap on the number of hours of RA work. Students can inquire about such positions directly with faculty members in the Spring. For more information on available positions and hourly rates, see the Student Employment Office website [here](#). For more information on Yale regulations see [here](#). If you are an international student, please first consult the Office of International Students and Scholars ([OISS](#)) regarding your eligibility for employment while in the United States. In any collaboration, students and faculty members should clearly communicate with each other on the nature of the student's expected contribution, whether it lies the level of RA work (to be paid) or co-authorship. RA work could later transform into co-authorship, but it is important for the relevant terms to be discussed between the student and the faculty member.

1.4 Student Resources

a. Mentoring Groups: Every incoming student will have access to peer-to-peer advising. Students in years 1-3 are randomly assigned to a group, and students in years 4 and above may volunteer to join a group. Members of a mentoring group are encouraged to introduce themselves to each other at the beginning of the year, when first-year students arrive on campus.

b. Writing Groups: Students may join a writing group in the department. Each writing group is composed of a handful of students. Students should see this writing group as an opportunity to set short-term writing goals and receive feedback on their work. First-year students could present a seminar paper, second-year students could present their second-year research paper. Participation in the writing group is done on a voluntary basis. Groups may set their own schedule to touch base with each other; they may begin by planning to meet every month.

c. Student Representatives: All students are represented by the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA), an elected body which aims to identify the needs and concerns of graduate students and represent them in conversation with the Graduate School. The GSA representatives meet regularly with the DGS. Your Political Science GSA representatives in 2023-2024 are Isabelle Aboaf, Jessica Hickle, and Kim Moxley.

2. THE THESIS WRITING YEARS

After the second year, students turn their main focus to the development of their dissertation. This can be a challenging transition, as the students' schedule loses some of the structure of the first two years. At the same time, students are expected to teach as a condition of their funding package, and there is an inevitable learning curve in preparing for sections.

2.1 Program Requirements and Expectations

a. Prospectus: In the third year, students develop their prospectus. The prospectus presents the initial version of a dissertation idea, as well as a timeline for completion of the dissertation. A prospectus should move beyond the description of a topic of interest and present a specific argument and contribution, even if tentative, explaining its importance, a method and plan of inquiry, an outline for the dissertation and a timeline for completion. Students are advised by a committee, typically composed of three faculty members in the department. The committee sets its own standard for a prospectus. Typically, they have been about thirty pages in length, including the timeline and bibliography. The prospectus must be submitted by May 1st, and approved by the committee by May 15th. If necessary, students may get an extension until the end of the summer. Once it is approved, the prospectus should be sent via email to the DGS, and the Departmental Graduate Registrar, cc'ing members of the committee, who will each indicate their approval of the prospectus. Approval of the prospectus is the final requirement for advancement to candidacy.

b. Prospectus Fair: Third-year students are expected to present their prospectus in a fair some time in the Spring. The presentation and discussion of the prospectus would take about one hour. This presentation is expected to be attended by the student's committee, and it is open to the whole department. It is understood that the prospectus is a preliminary plan for further research, not the examination of a finished product. Students should expect the committee to ask for revisions before the May 15th deadline.

c. Annual Presentation: Students are expected to present their work regularly from the third year onward, so as to receive feedback on their work from a wider set of faculty members

and students in their field. In the third year, students are expected to present in the prospectus fair. Starting in the fourth year, students are expected to present once a year in a main departmental workshop. Given the limited availability of slots, priority is given to students up to their sixth year in the program. Workshop coordinators will reach out to students, at some point in the Spring, to schedule such talks.

d. Teaching Requirement: Students are required to teach for two years between years three and five, as part of the funding package offered by the university. To receive a teaching stipend, students need to complete a TF20 assignment or its equivalent. During the other year, students take a University Fellowship (UF) and are exempt from teaching. If students make satisfactory progress on their dissertation, they receive a sixth year of funding, during which they are required to teach. If students receive outside funding, they may substitute it for any Yale funding. No Yale funding may be delayed beyond the sixth year. More information about Yale's combined award policy may be found [here](#).

e. TF Allocation Process: Students are assigned their TF position as follows. Ahead of each semester, students and faculty members list their preferred assignment. The DGS takes the students' preferences into account when determining their assignment, giving priority to students in their first two years of teaching. Various constraints affect the assignment process. The number of TF positions depends on student demand for courses, so that the distribution of positions may not match the distribution of field expertise among graduate students. If students are assigned a TF position outside of their area of expertise, they would not be expected to acquire additional knowledge on their own. The instructor of the course is responsible for ensuring that all TFs are prepared to fulfill their responsibilities. More information about the TF allocation process can be found [here](#).

f. TF and Instructor Responsibilities: TFs typically need to attend all lectures, do the readings, lead a weekly discussion section, meet weekly with the instructors and any other TFs, devise assignments or exams with the instructor, grade and comment on these assignments and exams, and calculate and submit final grades. TFs may also teach part of a lecture under the supervision of the instructor, but they should not lead a lecture by themselves. TFs should not be asked to write assignments or exams on their own. For their part, instructors are responsible for determining the content of the course, including all assignments and deadlines, teach all lectures, and mentor TFs, meeting with them on a weekly basis, and assisting a section from each of the TFs, followed by a brainstorming session with suggestions for improvements. For more information on TF and instructor responsibilities, see [here](#). Students should reach out to the DGS if they are being asked to do things outside of their responsibilities.

g. Dissertation Progress Report: Students who have advanced to candidacy are required to submit an annual dissertation progress report (DPR), which is then reviewed by their committee chair and by the DGS. The DPR briefly describes what students have done in the past year, what they plan on doing in the coming year, and when they plan to complete their dissertation. Their committee chair and DGS then share their assessment of the student's progress and any suggestions for future work. The student's report is due on May 1, the adviser's report is due on June 1, and the DGS's report is due on July 1. Students may view the comments offered by the adviser and the DGS.

h. Completion of the Dissertation: Students are expected to complete their dissertation in five or six years. The initial funding package covers five years, and offers the possibility of an extension for a sixth year, conditional on satisfactory progress. There is no defense of the dissertation. Instead, the dissertation must be approved by a committee of readers and by the faculty as a whole. Dissertations may be submitted for December or May graduation. For December graduation, students need to notify the DGS and Departmental Graduate Registrar of their intention to submit the dissertation by September 1st, and submit their dissertation by October 1st. For May graduation, they need to send in a notice of their intention to graduate by February 15th, and submit the dissertation by March 15th. After students submit their dissertation, the DGS forms a committee of three faculty members who will read the dissertation and provide reader reports for the full faculty. Two of the three readers are members of the student's dissertation committee, and at least one of them is a faculty member in the department. If a faculty member begins advising a student and then moves to another institution, they would continue to be counted for this purpose as a faculty member "in the department." The third reader, the "external reader," is another faculty member in the department. Students should agree with their chair on the identity of the first two readers, and can offer suggestions on the identity of the third reader. The department typically does not ask emeritus faculty members to act as a reader. The strong norm of the department is that no more than one of three papers, or the equivalent in a book-format dissertation, is co-authored; and that no part of the dissertation is co-authored with a final reader of the dissertation. Dissertations may pass or fail, and they may receive departmental or university distinction. Students will have access to the reader reports after the faculty meeting.

i. Completion of the Dissertation (summer): Some students may not be ready to submit their dissertation for May graduation, but they are taking on a position beginning in the Fall, which requires a note that they have completed their degree. In such cases, students may submit their dissertation in the summer. They should verify with their committee that they are willing to review the dissertation. They should reserve thirty days for the completion of reader reports, and two more weeks for processing by the University Registrar's Office. A provisional letter may then be produced, with official graduation coming in December.

j. Professional Website: As students begin their thesis, they are encouraged to create a professional website, including their CV and a description of their research interest. Students may reach out to the [Student Technology Collaborative](#), or with Tom Hallihan, Communications and Information Systems support specialist in the department.

2.2 Departmental Resources

a. Prospectus Writing Workshop: The department offers a semester-long prospectus writing workshop in the third year, so as to assist in the process of writing the prospectus and transitioning to the thesis-writing years. Students will have access to sample prospectus copies, submitted in previous years. They will receive feedback on their prospectus and on their presentation for the prospectus fair from the course instructor and from classmates. All third-year students, whether or not they plan to take the prospectus writing workshop, are expected to

attend the first meeting, which serves as an information session on the process of writing the prospectus.

b. Director of Graduate Studies: As in the first two years, the DGS is available to meet with students to discuss their progress in the program. The DGS can assist the student in mediating differences with their advisers and any changes to the composition of the committee. If the student is not comfortable speaking with the DGS, they may reach out to the department chair. Such conversations will be kept confidential.

c. Sources of Funding: As in the first two years, students may continue to apply for various sources of funding. They may choose to participate in an exchange program during their UDF year. For more information, see [here](#).

d. Review of Students: Students in thesis-writing years are also reviewed by the department at the end of the academic year. (For more information, see point 1.2.d above).

e. Residence Requirement and Exchange Programs: Students must satisfy a residency requirement and can take advantage of some exchange programs (For more information, see point 1.2.3 above).

2.3 Faculty Advising

a. Forming the Prospectus Committee: Students should identify a prospectus committee, typically composed of three faculty members in the department, to advise them for the prospectus, and they should identify one faculty member to serve as chair of the committee. Occasionally, committees may be composed of more than three faculty members, depending on the student's interests and the configuration of faculty expertise (substantive, methodological or regional). At least two of the committee members, including the chair, must be faculty members in the department (see the definition of faculty members "in the department" in point 2.1.h. above). At most one committee member may come from another department at Yale or, with the permission of the DGS, from Political Science departments at other institutions. Students may consult with the DGS in forming their committee. They typically form a committee based on fit with their own research interests and their experience in coursework and workshops. Oftentimes, the adviser for the second-year research paper will be a member of the prospectus committee. Students should identify their prospectus committee chair no later than October 15th in the Fall of their third year and form their prospectus committee no later than December 1st in that same semester, and submit this information to the DGS and the Departmental Graduate Registrar over email, cc'ing the members of their committee.

b. Prospectus and Dissertation Advising: Every member of the committee is expected to assist students in developing the prospectus and regularly provide feedback. The chair is responsible for completing the annual Dissertation Progress Report. The chair also assists the student in setting a schedule of writing deadlines and determining the format and timeline for the committee's feedback. The particular format and timeline depend on faculty and student preferences. Some faculty members organize group meetings with all their advisees. Different students may prefer to meet or less frequently, and a given student may prefer to meet or less

frequently depending on the particular stage of their research project. While committee members may initially disagree in their recommendations to the student, it is important for them to converge on a menu of possible next steps. Students should practice translating their committee's comments in a to-do list, and sending revision memos to their committees, explaining how their latest draft addresses their previous comments, and where the appropriate revisions may be found. Sample documents will be discussed in the prospectus writing workshop. Beyond the academic research itself, advisers should help students set up a sustainable work-life balance.

c. Changing Advisers: Students may change the constitution of their committee at any time. Reasons for such changes include a change of direction for the dissertation, irreconcilable differences between the student and the adviser, movement of faculty. If the student and adviser have irreconcilable differences, the student should feel free to reach out to the DGS for assistance in mediating a change in committee, or the department chair whenever appropriate.

2.4 Student Resources

a. Mentoring Groups: Students in year 3 are randomly assigned to a mentoring group with students in years 1-2. Students in years 4 and above may volunteer to join a group. Members of a mentoring group are encouraged to introduce themselves to each other at the beginning of the year, when first-year students arrive on campus.

b. Writing Groups: Students may join a writing group in the department. Each writing group is composed of a handful of students. Students should see this writing group as an opportunity to set short-term writing goals and receive feedback on their work. Students in thesis writing years may present any research paper or chapter of their dissertation. Participation in the writing group is done on a voluntary basis. Groups may set their own schedule to touch base with each other; they may begin by planning to meet every month.

c. Student Representatives: Students should continue to communicate with their GSA representatives to relay any relevant concern to the Graduate School and DGS.

3. THE JOB MARKET AND BEYOND

3.1 Requirements and Expectations

a. Objectives: Students should discuss their aspirations with their committee as early as possible, and no later than the Spring before they enter the job market. The graduate program prepares students well for positions in academia or in the non-academic sector. Within the academic sector, students may prefer to pursue careers in research universities or liberal arts colleges. They may also have geographical preferences. The department supports all career objectives. The student's responsibility is to communicate their objectives and, whichever objective they wish to pursue, to incorporate the committee's feedback in producing the best possible dissertation.

b. Deadlines: In the middle of the Spring semester before their entry on the job market, students should alert their relevant workshop coordinators of their tentative interest to give a

practice job talk in the upcoming Fall semester. By June 1st, students should touch base with their committee on their interest to go on the market and the likelihood that they may complete the dissertation in the following year, sending them the latest draft of at least one of their dissertation chapters. By August 1st, students should send to their committee a draft of their job market packet, including a cover letter, CV, dissertation summary (no more than two pages), dissertation chapter(s), any other papers or publications, and research statement and teaching statements (each no more than two pages). By August 10th, students should provide to Tom Hallihan the necessary information for the department's job market candidate listing: (expected) graduation date, subfield, dissertation title and adviser(s), and summary of dissertation, research and awards (no more than 100 words). No later than two weeks before the first job deadline, students should send to their committee the list of all job postings which they will apply for. Students may find most of the job openings in the field on the American Political Science Association's ejobs webpage (see [here](#)).

b. Professional Website: Should have a well-crafted professional website by the time they decide to go on the job market (see 2.1.j for some useful resources).

3.2 Departmental Resources

a. Placement Directors: The department assigns one or two faculty members as placement directors. The placement directors convene a presentation, early in the Fall semester, on the job market. They may also convene job market roundtables in the course of the year.

b. Departmental Website: The department hosts a webpage listing all students on the job market (see [here](#)).

c. APSA Reception: Every year, the department hosts a reception in the Annual APSA Meeting. This is a good time for current students to connect with alumni.

3.3 Faculty Resources

a. Advisers: Faculty members are expected to offer their guidance on the job market process and expectations about job market outcomes. They should help students set up a sustainable work-life balance, especially in the stressful experience of the job market. They are expected to submit recommendation letters in a timely fashion. They are encouraged to continue providing advice after the student's graduation on publications, public engagements, career advancement and networking.

3.4 Student Resources

a. Alumni: Alumni of the program are encouraged to stay in touch with current students. The department hosts a webpage listing all our graduates' initial placement (see [here](#)). After you complete your job search, please enter the relevant information on our placement listing form (see [here](#)).

II. GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE ADVISING

A successful graduate experience inevitably relies on regular, transparent, and respectful communication between students and their advisers. It is important for all parties involved to understand their roles and responsibilities, build shared expectations the frequency of discussions on the dissertation, the content of feedback, and work-life balance. This section gives some general guidance on these questions, building on the Graduate School's "Program-Specific Advising Guidelines."

1. Responsibilities of the Student

a. Forming the Committee: Students can freely choose the set of faculty members who will form their committee. They are first admitted to the graduate program as a whole, not to the lab of a specific faculty member, as could be the case in the sciences. Faculty members choose whether to serve on a committee. In some cases, they may decline the invitation, for example if the fit is not optimal or if they are advising as many students as they can take on.

Students can expect advisers to assist them on many aspects of their research and writing: gaining substantive knowledge, refining methodological skills, developing productive writing habits, navigating the graduate program, networking with the broader field, and a maintaining healthy work-life balance. It may be that no single faculty member perfectly matches the student's substantive and methodological interests. Students should think of building a team of advisers who can collectively advise them on the above tasks. Before choosing their advisers, students may reflect on the following questions:

- What would they like to accomplish in the course of the PhD?
- What are their strengths?
- What areas of knowledge and methodological skills do they wish to develop?
- What type of career would they like to pursue after the PhD?

Students may identify potential advisers from their coursework, including ISP and later on RW, and from departmental workshops. They should also reflect on the identity of the chair of their committee, who will assume a leadership role in advising the student. When approaching potential advisers, they should be clear about whether they would like them to serve as committee members or chair of the committee. Discussing initial research ideas, and early drafts of their work, including seminar papers, is a good way to begin a conversation about an advising relationship. Critical, constructive feedback on their work is to be expected, it is essential for the improvement of the student's research, and does not necessarily signal a lack of interest in serving as an adviser.

b. Interacting with the Committee: Once students have formed their committee, they should foster healthy advising relationships by:

- identifying a research topic and ideas, in consultation with the advisers.

- arriving at shared expectations about the research output that the student is expected to produce, in a given year and over the course of the degree, and whether and how this output varies depending on whether the student is in a teaching year.

- arriving at shared expectations about a schedule of deadlines for written work and the frequency of meetings and other forms of communication, building toward a reasonable and realistic time to degree. The student may want to reach out first to the chair to discuss a preliminary schedule. Students may begin meeting with their advisers once a month, and at least once per semester.

- responding openly and positively to fair and constructive feedback on their work. Students are encouraged to share a revision memo after each round of comments, summarizing the previous feedback received by the advisers and pointing out where advisers may find revisions addressing their comments.

- giving advisers sufficient time to read and comment on their work and due notice for requests for letters of recommendation. Students should check in with their advisers to see how much time they would need to write a letter of recommendation. As a starting point, when students need a letter for recommendation, they should send all their application materials two weeks before the deadline.

- discussing with their advisers their professional goals and any opportunities that might affect their academic progress, including research or time to degree.

- recognizing that their success, and the success of their adviser, is contingent on everyone's mental and physical health. Students and advisers should be frank about what represents for them a healthy work-life balance. They should work together on a plan to maintain a healthy work-life and reach the student's objectives.

- consulting with the advisers to resolve any problems in their working relationships with their advisers or others, seeking advice from the DGS or staff as needed, and working towards a clear resolution.

Sample questions that students may pose to their advisers to achieve the above objectives are including in the Appendix.

c. Other Responsibilities: Students have the primary responsibility for understanding and fulfilling departmental and university-wide policies and requirements, available on the departmental website, the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences "Programs and Policies" bulletin, the official "Yale Policies & Procedures," the "Yale Teacher-Student Consensual Relations Policy," the "Yale Expectations for Faculty and Teaching Fellows," and Title IX regulations. They should seek any clarifications from faculty advisers, the DGS, Departmental Graduate Registrar, and Graduate School staff, and request necessary adjustments or accommodations well in advance, whenever possible.

Students should also maintain high ethical and professional standards by:

- behaving with integrity in completing course assignments, field exams, and other program requirements, and in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating their research.

- interacting with students, staff, and faculty in the department and the university as a whole in a professional manner to create a safe, inclusive, welcoming, and respectful workplace.

- actively participating in workshops and providing succinct, fair and constructive feedback.
- being attentive to their own biases and how they may impact their workplace interactions.

2. Responsibilities of the Advisers

a. Joining a Committee: Faculty members often join a committee because there is a good match between the faculty and the student's substantive or methodological research interests. Yet the match may not be perfect, and it is important to recognize that advising covers other professional considerations, such as the process of writing regularly and clearly, disseminating research effectively, navigating the program and networking in the field, and maintaining a good work-life balance. Before agreeing to advise students, faculty members should reflect on the following:

- What kind of advising did they receive?
- How frequently did they receive feedback on their work?
- How well did their adviser help them progress through their graduate program and prepare for their future career?
- What would they like to emulate in the advising they received and what would they like to do differently?
- Has the field changed since they were a graduate student and if so, how does it affect the ideal form of advising?

b. Serving on a Committee: All committee members are involved in the student's training, and responsible for healthy advising relationships by:

- helping the student developing their research ideas, substantive knowledge, methodological expertise, and professional skills.
- arriving at shared expectations about the research output that the student is expected to produce, in a given year and over the course of the degree, and whether and how this output varies depending on whether the student is in a teaching year.
- arriving at shared expectations about a schedule of deadlines for written work and the frequency of meetings and other forms of communication, building toward a reasonable and realistic time to degree. The chair may take a leadership role in discussing a preliminary schedule with the student. Advisers may begin meeting with the student once a month. They should meet with the student at least once per semester.
- providing fair and constructive feedback on the student's work and helping to draw a plan of action in light of the feedback from all committee members.
- reading and commenting on the student's work in a timely fashion.
- continue advising students while they are on leave, with the students understanding that responses may take longer during that period.
- discussing with the student their professional goals, their realistic assessment of career opportunities, and any opportunities that might affect their academic progress, including research or time to degree. Advisers should respect their students' desired or chosen career paths.

- writing recommendation letters in a timely fashion. Advisers should be clear about how much time they would need to write a letter of recommendation.

- helping students conduct human subject research, by serving as faculty Principal Investigators on IRB applications, keeping tabs on students who are in the field, especially in risky situations.

- recognizing that the student's success, and their success as well, is contingent on everyone's mental and physical health. Students and advisers should be frank about what represents for them a healthy work-life balance. They should work together on a plan to maintain a healthy work-life and reach the student's objectives.

- encouraging the student to be open about any problems in their work relationships, and working with the student and other advisers to resolve any problems, seeking advice from the DGS or staff as needed, maintaining confidentiality as much as possible and desired by the student, and working towards a clear resolution.

c. Other Responsibilities: Advisers should maintain up to date on the departmental and university policies and requirements and guide students in understanding and fulfilling them. Advisers should abide by the official "Yale Policies & Procedures," the "Yale Teacher-Student Consensual Relations Policy," the "Yale Expectations for Faculty and Teaching Fellows," and Title IX regulations.

Advisers should also maintain high ethical and professional standards by:

- maintaining and encouraging a dedication to integrity and high quality in teaching and research.

- interacting with students, staff, and faculty in the department and the university as a whole in a professional manner to create a safe, inclusive, welcoming, and respectful workplace.

- actively participating in workshops and providing succinct, fair and constructive feedback.

- refraining from asking students for inappropriate personal favors, and recognizing that academic hierarchies may make it difficult or uncomfortable for students to set boundaries for such requests.

- recognizing that students come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences, which may affect their time constraints, financial constraints, or levels of preparation for completing certain tasks, and making as few assumptions as possible about what they want, need, or know, being attentive to their own biases and how they may impact their workplace interactions, and identifying and de-mystifying the "hidden curriculum" for students.

- reporting any acts of discrimination or Title IX violations that come to their notice as advisers.

3. Responsibilities of the Department

The department plays a critical role in the student's development. The responsibilities of the DGS include:

- creating and maintaining a welcoming, inclusive, supportive, and respectful community where students, faculty, and staff can thrive in the pursuit of academic excellence.

- informing all students of departmental policies and responding to queries in a timely fashion.
- meeting with first-year students in small groups once per semester, at the beginning of the semester, to discuss their course selection and professional goals, and meeting with other students as a cohort once a year to discuss their progress.
- meeting with GSA representatives regularly.
- convening the prospectus writing workshop and the prospectus seminar.
- reviewing the student's Dissertation Progress Report and provide any relevant feedback on the student's progress.
- conducting an annual review of all students in the department, in consultation with the faculty, and relay any feedback to students.
- providing guidance to students in navigating possible conflicts with their advisers, in consultation with university offices whenever appropriate, and in implementing changes in the composition of their committee.
- recognizing that in some cases, due to personal relationships or commitments, they may not be the best person to support students facing a particular challenge, and ensuring that students are aware of other resources, including the Dean's Designees, the GSAS Administrative Dean, or the GSA representatives.
- coordinating the review of submitted dissertations, by designating third readers and collecting their comments, chairing the subsequent faculty meeting, informing students of the faculty's decision, and sharing reader reports.

III. RESOURCES BEYOND THE POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

If problems arise in the student's advising relationship, they may first reach out to the chair of the committee and, if things cannot be addressed within the committee, the DGS (or the chair if the DGS is a member of the committee). If the student prefers to seek support outside the department, the university offers the following resources:

Graduate School of Arts & Sciences (GSAS) Dean's Office
 1 Hillhouse Avenue; (203) 432-2733
<http://gsas.yale.edu/office-directory>

The Dean's Office is responsible for the administration of all graduate programs in the school, in consultation with DGSs. Pamela Schirmeister (pamela.schirmeister@yale.edu) is responsible for graduate student teaching and professional development. Allegra Di Bonaventura (allegra.dibonaventura@yale.edu) advises students on financial aid, registration issues including leaves of absence, and disciplinary procedures. Another useful resources is the [McDougal Graduate Student Life Center](#), which is responsible for student life, developing a range of social and cultural events. Important academic deadlines set by the Graduate School are included [here](#).

Office for Graduate Student Development & Diversity
 1 Hillhouse Avenue; (203) 436-1301
<http://gsas.yale.edu/diversity/office-graduate-student-development-diversity>

Michelle Nearon (michelle.nearon@yale.edu) is responsible for diversity strategic initiatives, and serves as Title IX coordinator for the Graduate School and Dean's Designee. Title IX offers protection from sex and gender discrimination in educational programs and activities. Dean's Designees receive student concerns and offer advice on concerns related to diversity and inclusion, discrimination and harassment, and equal opportunity. They may facilitate informal resolution of complaints, and are mandatory reporters under Title IX.

University-Wide Committee (UWC) on Sexual Misconduct
55 Whitney Avenue; (203) 432-4449
<https://uwc.yale.edu/>

The UWC is designed to address claims of sexual misconduct.

Office of Institutional Equity and Access
<https://oiea.yale.edu/>

Valarie Stanley (valarie.stanley@yale.edu) can investigate any situation concerning affirmative action, equal opportunity, sexual harassment, racial harassment, or fairness in admissions or employment at Yale, and help resolve it informally. The Office can also inform individuals about the availability of formal procedures. All inquiries are treated in a confidential manner.

Student Accessibility Services (SAS)
35 Broadway (rear), Room 222; (203)432-2324
<https://sas.yale.edu/>

SAS facilitates accommodations for all students with disabilities, guided by section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Sexual Harassment and Assault Response & Education (SHARE)
55 Lock Street, Lower Level; (203) 432-2000
<http://sharecenter.yale.edu/>

SHARE supports members of the Yale community dealing with sexual misconduct of any kind.

Mental Health & Counseling (MHC)
55 Lock Street, 3rd Floor;
203-432-0290 (Monday through Friday 8.30am-5pm), 203-432-0123 (after hours)
<http://yalehealth.yale.edu/mentalhealth>

MHC offers counseling sessions free of charge to all students enrolled at least half time in a Yale degree program.

Resources for Students to Address Discrimination and Harassment Concerns

<https://student-dhr.yale.edu/>

This website highlights all the resources in the university offering guidance for informal or formal complaint procedures against discrimination and harassment.

Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning
301 York Street; (203) 432-4765

<https://poorvucenter.yale.edu/GraduateStudents>

The Poorvu Center offers resources for teaching (through the Teaching Development Team) as well as research and writing (through the Graduate Writing Lab). The Teaching Development Team can assist with course design, offers individual consultations and teaching workshops. The Graduate Writing Lab offers individual consultations with writing tutors, workshops on academic writing, and facilitated peer writing groups.

Office of Career Strategy (OCS)
55 Whitney Ave., 3rd Floor; (203) 432

<https://ocs.yale.edu/channels/phds-postdocs/>

OCS assists students in their job search process, providing links to on- and off-campus professionalization resources. The Director of Graduate and Postdoctoral Career Services is Hyun Ja Shin (hyunja.shin@yale.edu).

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Kelsy, Karen. 2015. *The Professor Is In: The Essential Guide to Turning Your Ph.D. Into a Job*. New York: Three Rivers Press. See also her website <https://theprofessorisin.com>.

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APPENDIX

This appendix begins with some sample questions that students may pose to their advisers, to achieve the objectives for the advising relationship (II.1.b, pp. 11-12). Next, I include annual checklists that students may use to track their progress in the program.

Sample Questions

1. Is the student expected to complete his or her committee exclusively with faculty members in the department? How does the adviser suggest that the student proceed in reaching out to other potential committee members?
2. Does the adviser expect the student to publish a certain number of pieces before graduation? How does the adviser recommend that the student prioritize different projects (Research and Writing paper, potential job market paper, other parts of the dissertation) and outlets (specific journals, edited volumes, etc.)?
3. How does the student's research output vary depending on whether the student is in a teaching year or fulfilling other requirements (completing field exams, etc.)?
4. What is each party's expectation of the student's time to degree?
5. How often should the student submit written work to the adviser and the members of the committee?
6. What mode of communication does each party prefer (e.g. email, phone call, video chat, in-person meetings, etc.)?
7. How quickly does each party expect the other to respond to messages?
8. What are the student's professional goals? Does the adviser have any specific advice for pursuing these career goals (networking opportunities, writing and teaching programs at the Poorvu center, other sources of support, etc.)?
9. Are there particular conferences that the student should attend, according to the adviser, and if so, how early in the program should the student start attending them? Is a particular project ready to be presented at such a conference?
10. How does each party expect to achieve a work-life balance? Are there particular times of the day that a given party blocks off for his or her own research and writing? Are there particular days or times of the day when a party could not be reached?
11. What is the adviser's approach to authorship? What are the student's expectations for authorship? When the student collaborates on work with others, what is the adviser's expectation regarding the adviser's role in that work and subsequent authorship?
12. Does the adviser hold group sessions with his or her advisees? What are the adviser's expectations regarding the student's possible mentoring of junior students? What are the student's expectations for opportunities to mentor junior students?
13. What training (IRB, etc.) is the student required to take before beginning to work with the adviser or embarking on their own research?
14. Does the adviser want/expect the student to be a teaching fellow for them?

Name: _____

1st Year Checklist

Tasks (Things to do this year):

- Identify advisor: _____
- Select 3 fields: (1)_____, (2)_____, (3)_____ (2 must be substantive)
- Which field workshop(s) will you attend? _____
- Plan course schedule to accommodate field requirements and course prerequisites
 - Will you have sufficient courses to complete all of your fields?
 - Will you have at least one course in 3 substantive fields?
 - If you are planning to “course out” of a field, will you have the 3 courses necessary to do so?
 - How will you satisfy the language requirement: _____
 - Have you signed up for Introduction to the Study of Politics?
 - If you are planning to apply for transfer credit, submit necessary material to Colleen:
- (If necessary,) seek additional English language training, pass SPEAK test?
- (If possible,) complete one field exam by the end of your 1st year summer: _____
- (If possible,) become involved in conducting research, perhaps as an RA and/or co-author.

In the Spring and Summer:

- Identify Research and Writing advisor for 2nd year paper and begin work on project :

- Acquire additional language or research skills via summer program
(See dept. and grad school websites for details on deadlines for funding, including easy to miss deadlines.)
- Work as an RA and/or co-author with faculty member
- Prepare for and take field examination(s): _____

Trouble spots to avoid:

- Failing to plan out two years of course offerings to prepare for three fields and one course in each of three substantive fields
- Falling behind with incompletes/etc. (No more than 1 per semester, 2 overall)
- Not taking at least one exam after the first year
- Failing to regularly attend subfield workshop
- Not becoming involved with research in “spare” time

Looking ahead:

Think about how you are going to transition to scholar/researcher from student. What skills will you need to undertake research? What substantive knowledge will you need to engage the topics that interest you? How will you demonstrate competence on the academic job market?

(Continues on back)

Name: _____

Miscellaneous Advice:

1. This is a collaborative enterprise. View your fellow students and professors as future coauthors. Treat one another well.
2. Treat staff and faculty with respect, especially junior faculty and administrators. Bad reputations have consequences.
3. Don't be shy about taking (for a grade or auditing) undergraduate courses (e.g., linear algebra, microeconomics, languages, etc.) or courses outside of political science to fill necessary gaps.
4. No faculty member "owns" any subfield. Faculty disagree about what is worth doing and why. Figure it out for yourself.
5. You will feel pressure to begin conducting research, but you shouldn't do so if you are still learning and/or you aren't ready. Serving as an RA is a worthwhile way to learn how faculty go about their work.
6. Select topics for seminar papers that both fulfill class requirements and feed into your own research interests.

Name: _____

2nd Year Checklist

Background (Things you have already done/updates)

- Advisor: _____
- Which field workshop(s) do you attend? _____
- What is your certification status in each of your 3 fields? (2 must be substantive)
 - (1) _____ (Completed via Exam or Coursework)
 - (2) _____ (Completed via Exam or Coursework)
 - (3) _____ (Completed via Exam or Coursework)

Tasks:

- Complete certification (by exam or course) in three fields and all required coursework
 - Language requirement? , 16 courses? , 1 course in each of 3 substantive fields?
 - 2 Honors grades? , Introduction to the Study of Politics? , Research and Writing?
 - High Pass Average? (In Dept. courses: Overall:)
- Prepare Research and Writing paper suitable for publication
 - Research and Writing Advisor: _____
- Work as an RA and/or co-author with faculty member
- Pass SPEAK test if required to be eligible for 3rd year teaching

In the Spring and Summer:

- Prepare for and take final field examination
- Revise Research and Writing paper and send out for review
- Acquire additional language or research skills via summer program
(See dept. and grad school websites for details on deadlines for funding, including easy to miss deadlines.)
- Work as an RA and/or co-author with faculty member
- Begin prospectus research by thinking about committee and topic
- Fill out MA paperwork if wish to obtain degree
- Submit preferences for fall TF positions

Trouble spots to avoid:

- Failing to complete required courses and certification in three fields
- Failing to regularly attend subfield workshop

Looking ahead:

What topic are you thinking of working on for your dissertation? Who are you thinking of working with? Apart from your dissertation project idea, do you have a stand-alone piece of research that you can consider working on and submitting for publication? Are there funding applications for dissertation research that will require you to have material ready to submit in the fall of the 3rd year?

Name: _____

Name: _____

3rd Year Checklist

Background:

- Advisor: _____
- Which field workshop(s) do you attend? _____
- Completed all outstanding coursework requirements?
Language requirement? , 16 courses? , 1 course in each of 3 substantive fields?
2 Honors grades? , Introduction to the Study of Politics? , Research and Writing?
High Pass Average? (In Dept. courses: Overall:)
- Certified in 3 fields? (2 must be substantive)
(1) _____ (Completed via Exam or Coursework)
(2) _____ (Completed via Exam or Coursework)
(3) _____ (Completed via Exam or Coursework)
- Are there any additional courses you plan to take this year? _____
- Pass SPEAK test if required to be eligible for teaching?

Tasks:

- Identify 3-person Prospectus Committee by October 1:
(1) _____ (Dissertation Advisor)
(2) _____
(3) _____
- Draft short prospectus ideas memorandum and share with Committee by October 15
 - Hold group meeting with Prospectus Committee by November 1 to discuss ideas
- Draft full prospectus by January 15
 - Hold group meeting with Prospectus Committee to discuss draft by February 15
 - Submit revised draft no later than May 1
 - Once prospectus is approved, submit petition for candidacy by June 1
- Teach (For those without outside funding)
 - Attend Teaching @ Yale Day
 - Consider obtaining teaching certification through Graduate Teaching Center
- Consider presenting Research and Writing paper or other research project at appropriate conference
- Apply for funding for dissertation (field) research
- Complete additional MA degrees, if any

(Continues on back)

Name: _____

Trouble spots to avoid:

“Wasting” the 3rd year: Failure to structure the 3rd year so as to transition to active dissertation research is among the greatest impediments to timely PhD completion. You should view completion of the prospectus (and any outstanding program requirements) as your primary task beginning September 1. There are no immediate rewards for dissertation research at this time, but that will change as the project develops.

Reading forever: There is no limit to how much you can read before writing a prospectus. Your job is not to know everything, but to propose a project that contributes positively to the body of human knowledge. This will require focusing and making a decision that you know enough to proceed.

Overinvesting in teaching: Teaching is important, but if you find yourself spending 2 full days a week or more on teaching, you aren't spending enough time on your dissertation.

Looking ahead:

If you are planning to go to the field in your 4th year, you will need to arrange to delay teaching and register in absentia. This may also require you take your University Dissertation Fellowship in your 4th year.

Name: _____

4th and 5th Year Checklist

Background:

- Advanced to candidacy
 - Completed all outstanding coursework requirements?
 - Language requirement? , 16 courses? , 1 course in each of 3 substantive fields?
 - 2 Honors grades? , Introduction to the Study of Politics? , Research and Writing?
 - High Pass Average? (In Dept. courses: Overall:)
 - Certified in 3 fields? (2 must be substantive)
 - (1) _____ (Completed via Exam or Coursework)
 - (2) _____ (Completed via Exam or Coursework)
 - (3) _____ (Completed via Exam or Coursework)
 - Prospectus Completed and Approved
 - 3-person Dissertation Committee:
 - (1) _____ (chair)
 - (2) _____
 - (3) _____
- Which field workshop(s) do you attend? _____
- When are you taking your University Dissertation Fellowship? _____

Tasks:

- Make a website and a C.V.
- Conduct dissertation research
- Meet with entire dissertation committee at least once per semester (if in the field, are you providing regular dissertation progress updates to the entire committee?)
 - Fall
 - Spring
- Consider presenting dissertation research at in-house or outside conference
- Teach if not supported by dissertation fellowship or outside funding
 - Consider obtaining teaching certification through Graduate Teaching Center
- Consider participating in Academic Job Search Seminar run through Graduate Career Services

Trouble spots to avoid:

Are you meeting with your advisor and dissertation committee on a regular basis? If you aren't collecting data, are you writing?

(Continues on back)

Name: _____

Looking ahead:

If you are planning to go on the job market or have a good part of your dissertation ready, you should consider preparing a practice talk (paper or dissertation presentation) for the appropriate seminar series in Fall. Schedule this in the spring—the seminars book up early.

If you will be on the job market in the fall, consider working with Graduate Career Services to prepare and review CV/Cover letters and with the Graduate Teaching Center to prepare and review teaching statement/syllabi.

Job Market Checklist and Timeline

No later than June 1: Decide whether to go on the job market

- Submit one to three chapters of dissertation to advisor(s). Assess:
 - Do you have credible evidence of progress toward degree? (Degree in hand or completed chapters and statement of likelihood of completion from advisor.)
 - Are your advisor(s) and at least 2 other faculty members willing to write letters on your behalf?
- If you will be on the market, sign up to give a practice job talk in the early fall in the appropriate department workshop.
- If you will be on the market, sign up for the department's placement email list: XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

*No later than August 1: Produce **draft** job market packet to letter writers. A job market packet includes the following:*

- Cover letter, summarizing research and teaching interests
 - Note: This should be your "base" or "generic" cover letter, to which you may want to make customizations as necessary for specific positions
- CV with educational history, short dissertation summary and committee members, areas of research and teaching interests, publications, and list of references
- Research material
 - Statement of research interests, no more than 2 pages
 - Dissertation summary, no more than 2 pages
 - Dissertation chapter(s)
 - Stand alone research apart from dissertation, including any publications
- Statement of teaching interests, no more than 2 pages
 - Note: Certain jobs may also require a statement of teaching philosophy or sample syllabi
- Note: Some schools also ask for transcripts (undergraduate and graduate) and/or a diversity statement. If your transcripts are hard to read, you may wish to create a typed up version.

No later than August 10: Provide material for department "Hire a Yale PhD" website to XXXXX and the dgs (XXXXX). This material will be posted on August 15. (Details that are likely to change over time should instead appear on your personal website. Additionally, this information will be circulated to the faculty prior to APSA so they know who is on the market.)

- Your Name as you would like it listed on the department website
- If PhD degree in hand, date. If not, expected PhD date.
- Subfield(s)
- Link to personal webpage
- Dissertation Title and Advisor(s)
- 100 word dissertation, research, and awards summary. This should be written in the first person.

August 15: If interested in participating in interviews with schools interviewing at APSA, register for APSA placement service and contact those schools to arrange APSA interviews

No later than 2 weeks before first job deadline: Provide letter writers with complete list of jobs for which you are applying and means for sending letters. (Many of you will have letters written on your behalf submitted electronically, but you should still let your letter writers know about which jobs you are applying for.)

Note: If you are going on the market for a second year, make sure that you ask your letter writers produce a new letter.

In the fall: Make sure to consider also applying for post-doctoral and pre-doctoral positions. Most, but not all, of these application deadlines occur later in the semester.