

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS GRADUATE PROGRAM  
HANDBOOK**

**M.A. IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES  
PH.D. IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS  
AT  
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**

# GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK

## DEPARTMENT OF POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

### OVERVIEW

The Department of Politics and International Relations is comprised of roughly 33 permanent faculty members, 1,800 undergraduate majors, and close to 120 graduate students. It offers a variety of degree programs including four graduate degrees: a Master of Arts degree in International Studies, a Doctor of Philosophy degree in International Relations, a Master of Arts in Political Science, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Political Science. It also offers joint M.A.-Ph.D. programs in cooperation with the Asian Studies, the Africa and African Diaspora Studies, Latin America and Caribbean Studies, and Religious Studies programs. This Handbook provides information about the M.A. in International Studies and the Ph.D. in International Relations (including the joint programs involving the International Relations Ph.D.).

The M.A. in International Studies and the Ph.D. in International Relations give students the opportunity to take an interdisciplinary approach to contemporary and historical problems of global affairs. We prepare students to be effective researchers, teachers and analysts of international relations in the U.S. and around the world. The Department's graduate program is one of the largest in the Steven J. Green School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA) at FIU. It is nationally recognized for producing well-trained graduates in many different areas of international studies. We have a high placement rate for graduating students seeking jobs as university professors or as research associates in institutes with a political science focus. The Department's parent school, the Green School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA), is an affiliate member of the Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs (APSIA).

### LIFE AS A GRADUATE STUDENT

Students should be aware that, while there are many sources of guidance and support at FIU, the university is a large bureaucracy, and it behaves like one. There are rules, deadlines to be met, and forms to be filed at every step. While the Department makes every effort to remind students about the necessary procedures, all students are ultimately responsible for making themselves aware of the graduation requirements of the Department, SIPA, the Graduate School, and the University. Students are *strongly* advised to read carefully the Graduate School's *Graduate Policies and Procedures Manual*, its *Regulations for Thesis/Dissertation Preparation Manual*, and the other materials that are available on the Graduate School web site ([gradschool.fiu.edu](http://gradschool.fiu.edu)). Students are also urged to attend to the requirements described in this *Handbook*.

The following text incorporates policies and procedures of the State University System, Florida International University, the University Graduate School, the School of International and Public Affairs, and the Department itself. We make every effort to provide accurate information. In the event that the following text conflicts with the rules and regulations of a superceding body (such

as those listed above), however, students should assume that the regulations of those bodies take precedence over Departmental rules.

## **ADMISSION TO THE GRADUATE PROGRAM**

All applicants for graduate study must have B.A. or B.S. degree, or its equivalent, from a recognized institution of higher education before matriculating in the program. Applicants to the M.A. program must have a grade point average of 3.0, or its equivalent, in the last two years of degree work. Applicants to the Ph.D. program must have a minimum undergraduate grade point average of 3.2, or its equivalent, a minimum grade point average of 3.5 for all combined graduate work. All applicants must submit GRE scores and transcripts of all undergraduate and previous graduate coursework. For applicants who are not native speakers of English, a minimum score of 550 (or 80 internet-based) on the TOEFL is required for the M.A. program, and 575 (or 90 internet-based) for the Ph.D. program. The Department's admission committee may make an exception to these admission requirements, when it is persuaded that a particular case warrants doing so, but it will not waive the requirement that all necessary scores and transcripts be submitted for evaluation.

A background in the social sciences, or in certain relevant fields of the humanities, is desirable but not required for admission to the graduate program. Prospective students with little or no relevant background may wish to enroll as non-degree seeking students in the Department's undergraduate and graduate courses before applying for admission. Please note, however, that undergraduate credit cannot be used for the fulfillment of graduate requirements.

If admitted to the graduate program, students may transfer up to 12 graduate credits earned in non-degree seeking status at FIU and up to 6 graduate credits earned at other recognized institutions of graduate education, provided a grade B or better was awarded. The only exception to this limit on transfer of credits is that students who are admitted to the Ph.D. program, and who have previously completed an M.A. degree in a field relevant to their doctoral studies, may transfer up to a maximum of 36 credits. Transfer credit is subject to other graduate school regulations, and it is never determined in advance of acceptance into the program. Ordinarily, matriculated students should meet with the graduate director at the conclusion of their first year in the program to determine what transfer credit will be awarded.

M.A. students may matriculate in either the fall or the spring semester. Ph.D. students matriculate only in the fall semester.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURES**

Students applying for graduate study at FIU must submit application materials to *two* different offices: to the Graduate Application Office, and to the Department of Politics and International Relations. FIU uses a common, online institutional application form for all graduate programs. This form is available from the Graduate School's website (<https://admissions.fiu.edu/how-to-apply/graduate-applicant/steps-to-apply/index.html>). The completed form is submitted online. The following additional materials must be submitted directly to the Graduate School Application Office:

- 1) Non-refundable application fee (currently \$30.00)
- 2) *Official* transcripts of all university coursework
- 3) *Official* copy of the GRE scores
- 4) *Official* copy of the TOEFL (if applicable)

In addition to these materials, students must also submit the following application materials directly to the Department of Politics and International Relations. These materials include:

- 1) Unofficial photocopies of all of the above documents
- 2) Letters of recommendation from university teachers and professors who have knowledge of the applicant's academic qualifications. Each letter should be accompanied by a copy of the Department's Letter of Recommendation form (available from the PIR website: [pir.fiu.edu/graduate-programs/how-to-apply/](http://pir.fiu.edu/graduate-programs/how-to-apply/) ). Two letters are required for applications to the M.A. program; three letters are required for the Ph.D. program.
- 3) A personal statement of approximately 3 pages, double-spaced, explaining the candidate's interest in pursuing a graduate degree and describing the expected focus of the candidate's graduate research.
- 4) A Writing sample. This should be a short essay (5 to 7 pages long) in English on a topic related to world politics.
- 5) Your Curriculum Vitae or resume and any academic publications.
- 6) The Department's supplemental application form (available from the PIR website: [pir.fiu.edu/graduate-programs/how-to-apply/](http://pir.fiu.edu/graduate-programs/how-to-apply/) ).

Applicants for fall semester admission and consideration for financial assistance (including all applicants to the Ph.D. program) must submit all necessary materials to the University Admissions Office and the Department of Politics and International Relations by **January 15**, or by **February 15** if financial assistance in the form of a teaching assistantship is not requested. For applicants to the M.A. program, the deadline is **September 1** for spring semester admission and **March 15** for fall semester admission.

The Graduate School Admissions Office formally notifies applicants once the Admissions Committee has made its recommendations and the Office of the Dean of the School of International and Public Affairs has approved. The Director or Secretary may contact applicants informally about the status of their applications, but official notice of admission status can come only from the Graduate School. Once admitted, applicants may defer matriculation, by written request to the Director, for no more than one year. Financial assistance in the form of a teaching assistantship cannot be deferred.

### **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

The Department has a limited number of teaching assistantships that carry a stipend and that cover tuition and some (but not all) fees for 9 credits of coursework in the fall and spring semesters (10 credits in the semester a student registers for the required, 1-credit Graduate Pedagogy course), and 6 credits during the summer semester. Stipends are paid in the fall, spring and summer semesters. Teaching Assistants are required to register for the maximum

number of credits covered by the assistantship in all semesters (9 credits in the fall and spring; 6 credits in the summer). Applicants to the Department's graduate programs who meet the appropriate deadlines and requirements are automatically considered for a teaching assistantship; continuing students may also apply for teaching assistantships by writing a letter to the Graduate Director requesting consideration. Non-US citizens who are receiving assistantships will need a social security number in order to receive their stipends. Non-US citizens should consult the Office of International Student Scholar Services for other policies and regulations pertaining to immigration and visa status. Students who are U.S. citizens or resident aliens, but not legal residents of Florida, are strongly encouraged to meet requirements for Florida residency as soon as possible. Eligible students should begin this process *before* they begin their first semester of study in the program.

Graduate students receiving an assistantship are assigned to faculty members, by the Graduate Director, for 20 hours per week as teaching assistants. Teaching assistants are otherwise expected to be full-time students and may not accept other forms of employment. Assistantships are renewable, subject to satisfactory academic progress, but renewal is not guaranteed. Students receiving financial assistance should not carry incomplete grades for more than one semester. More information of teaching assistantships can be found in the Department's *Graduate Assistant Policies and Procedures* statement.

Graduate students, and doctoral students in particular, are encouraged to seek outside funding for their research. Students should discuss fellowship opportunities with their faculty advisors, and may also wish to consult the Financial Aid Office at FIU for student loan and other relevant information.

## **ADVISING**

New students should meet with the Graduate Program Director at the beginning of the semester of matriculation to plan their programs of study. The Department also conducts a graduate student orientation early in the Fall, and all students should attend this orientation at least once, ordinarily at the beginning of their first semester in the program. The Director will make every effort to advise students on degree requirements throughout their programs of study. Nevertheless it is essential that all students take personal responsibility for being aware of the relevant degree requirements. Students are responsible for developing good working relations with members of the Department faculty who share their interests. All students should select a primary faculty advisor *by the end of the second semester in residence*. Students must select a primary advisor before submitting the Annual Student Evaluation and Mentoring Plan for the first time (this annual evaluation form must be submitted to the Graduate School every Spring). Students planning to write an M.A. thesis or Ph.D. dissertation should also familiarize themselves with the deadlines for choosing a thesis/dissertation supervisor and advisory committee.

## **ENROLLMENT AND ACTIVE STATUS**

Students are encouraged to take courses on a full-time basis (9 credits per semester in the fall and spring; 6 credits in the summer). While some courses are offered after regular working hours, not all courses can be offered in this fashion. Students should not assume that the Department's

degree requirements can be completed by taking only courses offered at night or on the weekends.

Lapses in enrollment for three or more consecutive semesters will result in automatic dismissal from the program, with no assurance of reinstatement, unless the student has been granted a leave of absence. Students may apply in writing for a leave of absence not to exceed two years. The Graduate Program Director, the Dean of SIPA, and the Dean of Graduate Studies must approve leave requests. To maintain active status in the graduate program, M.A. students must register for at least 3 credits per semester until they have earned 36 credits. Thereafter, they must register for at least 1 credit per semester to maintain active status. Ph.D. students must register for 3 credits per semester (fall and spring) to maintain active status until they been admitted to candidacy (approved D-2 form). Thereafter, they must register for at least 3 dissertation credits every semester (including summers) until graduation. Students must be registered for at least 3 credits in any semester in which an M-form or D-form is submitted to the Graduate School (see <http://gradschool.fiu.edu/student-forms.shtml>). *All students must be registered for credit, and apply for graduation, in the semester in which their degree is awarded.*

All M.A. students must complete degree requirements within six years of matriculation in the program. All Ph.D. students must complete degree requirements within nine years of matriculation in the program.

## **MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL STUDIES**

The M.A. program is designed to prepare students for careers in government, the business sector, non-governmental organizations, or international agencies, or for doctoral work in the social sciences and humanities. The M.A. degree program draws on the curricular resources of many different University departments. Members of the Department of Politics and International Relations itself also represent a variety of disciplines and perspectives. Faculty interests range from the traditional concerns of foreign policy and national security to contemporary global issues such as democratization, globalization, the environment, human rights, refugees, and social movements.

The School offers a variety of graduate certificate programs -- in fields such as African and African Diaspora Studies, Asian Studies, Conflict Resolution, European Studies, Latin American and Caribbean Studies, National Security Studies, Transnational and Comparative Studies -- and students may supplement their degree by earning such certificates. The Department encourages its students to pursue regional or topical certification in conjunction with their work in the M.A. program.

The M.A. degree program requires a minimum of 36 semester hours of credit at the graduate level. Students failing to maintain a 3.0 grade point average will be dismissed from the program. Undergraduate courses taken to satisfy prerequisites for graduate courses, or as a condition of admission, do not count toward the 36-hour minimum requirement.

### *Core Requirements*

All M.A. students must complete a core sequence of five courses (15 credits), each of which is offered annually. Only in exceptional circumstances will courses for which credit is transferred replace core courses.

The M.A. program's five core courses are:

INR 5615	Research Design in International Relations
INR 5017	Approaches to Area Studies
GEO 6473	Space, Place and Identity
INR 5609	Contemporary Dynamics of International Relations
INR 6706	Political Economy of International Relations

### *Field Requirements*

M.A. students also must select a major field of study in either (1) Global Institutions and Issues, or (2) International Relations and Foreign Policy, by taking three courses (9 credits) from an extensive list of approved courses in the social sciences. Students must take at least two courses offered by the Department of Politics and International Relations to satisfy the field requirement.

### *Elective Credits*

To satisfy the program's elective requirement, students may take two additional courses (6 credits) from the M.A. field lists. Students wishing to elect other graduate-level courses offered by the University may do so with the permission of the Graduate Program Director.

### *Exit Options*

To complete degree requirements, M.A. students have the option of (a) writing a thesis; or (b) taking a comprehensive examination. Before electing either of these options, students must demonstrate competence in the use of a foreign language other than English. They are strongly encouraged to fulfill the language requirement as soon as possible. Examinations for reading competency are arranged by the Graduate Program Director, with the assistance of the Department of Modern Languages.

### *Thesis Exit Option*

Any student electing (a) to write a thesis will normally take 6 credit hours of thesis supervision and prepare a thesis proposal, subject to the approval of *three* members of the University graduate faculty. A graduate faculty member of the Department of Politics and International Relations must chair any thesis committee thus constituted. Students preparing a thesis must obtain the proper forms from the Graduate School and be aware of relevant deadlines.

An M.A. thesis is normally about 60 to 80 double-spaced pages, and it must conform to accepted standards of scholarship. It must also meet all of the Graduate School's formatting requirements (consult the online thesis preparation manual carefully). Students are encouraged to remain in

close contact with members of their thesis committee. Students can expect considerable assistance on substantive, organizational and stylistic problems that they encounter. Nevertheless, it is their responsibility to write in clear, error-free English. Students submitting poorly written draft materials may be advised to secure the assistance of a professional editor at their own expense.

M.A. students should consult extensively with their principal faculty advisors before submitting the M-2 form and embarking on an M.A. thesis. There is no approved procedure for shifting to the comprehensive exam exit option once a student has begun registering for thesis credits. Before submitting the M-2 form, all M.A. students must complete online training in the Responsible Conduct of Research (see <http://gradschool.fiu.edu/RCR.html>) and submit the necessary certification form. Students whose research will involve human subjects must also submit certification of either IRB (Institutional Review Board) review or exemption with their M-2 form (see <http://research.fiu.edu/irb/obtaining-approval/>). Note that the IRB review process requires that both students and their thesis advisors complete and document the necessary IRB training.

No thesis may be approved until all three thesis committee members indicate that the student may defend it in a public examination. The thesis defense is a public event. Any member of the University community may attend, and the candidate may invite guests. After the candidate makes a brief presentation of findings, members of the thesis committee will ask questions as they see fit. The candidate and guests will then leave the examining room, and committee members may decide to accept the thesis, to specify revisions as a condition of acceptance, or to reject the thesis. In the last case, committee members will specify conditions under which they will participate in another defense. All such decisions are made by consensus.

If the thesis committee requires any changes in the thesis, the committee chair normally takes responsibility for insuring that the student makes them as required. All members of the committee, however, must sign an appropriately prepared first page of the final version of the thesis to indicate their approval.

In preparing theses for submission to the University Library, students must follow the University's *Regulations for Thesis/Dissertation Preparation*. This is not a task to be taken lightly, and students are advised to bear these guidelines in mind from the beginning of the drafting process. The School of International and Public Affairs and the Graduate School review all theses to assure that appropriate standards are met.

One final, approved copy of the thesis must be delivered to the Graduate Program Director.

### *Comprehensive Examination Exit Option*

Any student electing to take a written comprehensive examination must take six credit hours of course work in preparation for the exam (usually in the form of "Comps Prep" credits). The comprehensive examination should provide evidence of students' command of the field and its literature. It should not be thought of as a recital of bare facts or as an opportunity simply to summarize reading list materials. Students should be prepared to synthesize and evaluate a broad range of scholarship. Accordingly, the examination tests students' general training and

intellectual maturity. Students should begin to prepare at least one full semester before scheduling the comprehensive examination. **The make up of the examining committee will be approved by the Graduate Program Director in consultation with the student.**

In consultation with the examination committee members, students should prepare focused but comprehensive reading lists covering material presented in the program's core courses and their major fields.

The comprehensive examination is six hours long (one day). Students must make specific arrangements to take the exam with the Graduate Secretary. The written exams are administered in a take-home, open-book, open-note format. Students may consult any and all resources available in their written responses as long as they are appropriately cited and referenced.

One part of the examination will cover the core sequence of courses, and the other part will cover the student's major field. In consultation with the Graduate Program Director, the student will select two examiners, one for each part. Each examiner will prepare two questions for their part of the exam. Students will answer three out of the four questions. Both examiners will grade all three questions with Distinction, Pass and Fail as possible grades. In case of a tie, the Graduate Program Director appoints a third assessor as tie-braker.

Students must pass at least one question from core and field to pass the examination. Students failing both parts of their comprehensive examination may take the entire examination again. If they fail either part of the second examination, they will be dismissed from the program. Students failing one part may take that part again and, if they fail again, they have one last opportunity to pass that part. Students must retake any failed part of the examination at the next scheduled opportunity to do so.

Students in the Ph.D. program who who have satisfied all other requirements for the M.A. degree apart from the exit requirement are also eligible to receive an M.A. degree under the non-thesis (comprehensive exam) exit option. Passing the doctoral comprehensive examinations serves as equivalent to the M.A. comprehensive examination. Ph.D. students who have satisfied these requirements should consult with the Graduate Program Director about the necessary paperwork and procedures to receive the M.A. degree in the course of their Ph.D. studies.

## **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

The International Relations doctoral program offers a rigorous, interdisciplinary approach to the study of continuity and change in global affairs. Doctoral students have entered this program from many countries around the world, including Albania, Argentina, Barbados, Belarus, Brazil, China, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ethiopia, France, Germany, Ghana, Haiti, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Mexico, Nepal, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Oman, Peru, Russia, Republic of Georgia, Spain, Thailand, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, South Korea, and Venezuela. Members of the faculty represent a variety of disciplines and perspectives, including international relations, political science, geography, history, and economics. The research interests of faculty range from the traditional concerns of foreign policy and national security to contemporary global issues such as democratization, globalization, the environment, gender equality, human rights, refugees,

and social movements. Faculty also have regional interests that range across Africa, Central Asia, East Asia, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Russia.

The School of International and Public Affairs offers a variety of graduate certificate programs -- in fields such as African and African Diaspora Studies, Asian Studies, Conflict Resolution, European Studies, Latin American and Caribbean Studies, National Security Studies, Transnational and Comparative Studies -- and students may supplement their degree by earning such certificates. The Department encourages its students to pursue regional or topical certification in conjunction with their work in the Ph.D. program.

The Ph.D. program requires a minimum of 75 semester hours of credit at the graduate level, including a minimum of 15 credits of dissertation supervision (pass/fail). Students failing to maintain a 3.0 grade point average will be dismissed from the program. Undergraduate courses taken to satisfy prerequisites for graduate courses, or as a condition of admission, will not count toward graduate requirements.

### **Core Sequence (15 credits)**

All students must complete a core sequence of five courses (15 credits). Only in exceptional circumstances will courses for which credit is transferred replace core courses.

The Ph.D. program's six core courses are:

INR 5615	Research Design in International Relations
INR 6604	International Relations Theory I
INR 6608	Contemporary International Relations Theory
INR 5609	Contemporary Dynamics of International Relations

These required courses are generally offered once each year. Students should take the core courses as soon as possible, when they are offered, but should also seize the opportunity to take specialized courses relevant to their research programs and that may be offered less frequently.

\*Doctoral students on Teaching Assistantship are required to take an additional one-credit teaching course POS5702 Teaching Political Science or INR5945 Graduate Pedagogy in the Fall semester when they start the graduate program.

Second methods course from the following list (or another methods course approved by the Graduate Program Director):

INR 5616	Qualitative and Interpretive Methods in International Relations
POS 5706	Graduate Seminar in Political Science Research Methods
ECO 7424	Econometric Methods 1
ANG 6480	Ethnohistorical Research Methods
ANG 6497	Qualitative Research Methods

GIS 5935 Topics in GIS  
PAD 7705 Applied Quantitative Analysis I  
PAD 7707 Applied Quantitative Analysis II  
PAD 7703C Empirical Methods in Public Administration

**Fields selection:**

- a. Global Political Economy and Development
- b. Comparative Area Studies
- c. Foreign Policy and Security Studies
- d. Global Governance, International Law and International Ethics

**Gateway courses (9 credits)**

Each field has one or two gateway courses. Students take three gateway courses out of four fields.

- Global Political Economy and Development: INR 6706 Political Economy of IR
- Comparative Area Studies: INR 5017 Approaches to Area Studies
- Foreign Policy and Security Studies: INR 6338 Strategic Studies
- Global Governance, International Law and International Ethics

INR 5409 Int'l Law I

**OR**

INR 5507 Int'l Organizations

**Major and Minor Fields (15 credits)**

Students must select a major field of study in (1) Global Political Economy and Development (2) Comparative Area Studies (3) Foreign Policy and Security Studies, or (4) International Law by taking three courses (9 credits) from a list of approved courses. Students must also select a minor field of study consisting of at least two courses (6 credits), (a) by choosing a second field from the above list, (b) by taking a Ph.D. field in some other teaching unit of the University, or (c) by creating a field in consultation with the Graduate Program Director and three members of the University faculty.

**Electives (15 credits)**

To satisfy the Ph.D. program's elective requirement, students must take 15 credits of additional course work, including independent study courses. Students wishing to elect a course or courses offered elsewhere in the University may do so with permission of the Graduate Program Director.

### *Yearly Evaluations of Doctoral Students*

The University requires an evaluation of all doctoral students in the program on a yearly basis. At the pre-dissertation stage, students are evaluated by their advisors or by the Graduate Director in a face-to-face consultation. At the dissertation stage, students must be evaluated by their entire dissertation committee in a formal meeting to discuss and review dissertation progress. These meetings are supplemented with an electronic annual evaluation of the student's accomplishments and progress in the program. The electronic evaluation process is *student initiated* and requires the approval of many faculty and administrators. As a result, please begin this process in early April to ensure it is completed before faculty leave for summer. A late annual evaluation can create problems (registration holds, petitions, etc.), so please be vigilant in checking up on the approvals process (and feel free to contact the Graduate Director if there are any problems).

### *Foreign Language Proficiency*

Students must show a level of proficiency in one language other than English that is sufficient for the conduct of scholarly research in regions where that language is spoken. Students can provide proofs of proficiency in a foreign language (e.g., certificates, courses taken in a foreign language, etc.). Alternatively, the Graduate Director will arrange foreign language proficiency exams for them. Students are strongly encouraged to fulfill the language requirement as soon as possible, and in any case before taking their comprehensive examinations.

### **PhD Comprehensive Examinations (6 credits)**

All Ph.D. students must meet the foreign language requirement before taking written comprehensive examinations. Within 6 months of completing the foreign language requirement and 54 hours of course work with a minimum 3.0 grade point average, students must sit for written comprehensive examinations on the core sequence and in their major and minor fields. Students may sit for comprehensive examinations during the term in which they complete these requirements.

Students should begin to prepare for comprehensive examinations at least one full semester before scheduling them. In consultation with the Graduate Program Director and likely committee members, students should prepare focused but comprehensive reading lists for the three areas that they are to be tested on. One of these areas covers materials presented in the program's core courses. The other two areas should reflect students' particular interests in their major and minor fields.

Comprehensive examinations should provide evidence of students' command of the field and its literature. It should not be thought of as a recital of bare facts or as an opportunity simply to summarize reading list materials. Students should be prepared to synthesize and evaluate a broad range of scholarship. Accordingly, examinations test students' general training, intellectual maturity and overall readiness to undertake a dissertation.

Comprehensive examinations consist of three written examinations corresponding to the three areas (core, major field, and minor field) for which students have prepared. Each examination is graded separately, with Distinction, Pass and Fail as possible grades. Students will normally take the written examinations on two separate days one week apart, six hours each day. The written exams are administered in a take-home, open-book, open-note format. Students may consult with any and all resources available in their written responses as long as they are appropriately cited and referenced

In consultation with the Graduate Program Director, the student will select five examiners, two for the core exam, two for major field exam, and one for minor field exam. The student needs to fill out a comprehensive examination scheduling form (obtained from the Graduate Secretary), and submit the form with the signatures of all examiners for the Graduate Director's approval at least four weeks prior to the first scheduled examination date.

The first day of the examination will consist of questions covering material presented in the core courses. Each of the two selected examiner for the core exam will prepare two questions, and the student will answer three out of four questions in the six hours allotted. Both examiners will grade the entire examination. If both examiners award a grade of Pass or above, the first day examination is awarded a passing grade. If one examiner gives the core examination a grade of Fail and the other examiner gives a grade of Pass, the Graduate Director will appoint a third reader.

The second day will consist of two examinations covering students' major and minor fields. The three selected examiners (two for the major field exam and one for the minor field exam) will write two questions each. Students will answer two questions for the major field and one for the minor field. Examiners will grade all answers on the part of the examination for which they have written questions. If both examiners give the major field examination a grade of Pass or above, that part is awarded a passing grade. If one major field examiner gives the major field examination a grade of Fail and the other examiner gives a grade of Pass, the Graduate Director will appoint a third reader. If both major field examiners give the major field examination a grade of Fail, that part is awarded a Fail grade. If the minor field examiner gives the minor field examination a grade of Pass or above, that part is awarded a passing grade. If the minor field examiner gives the minor field examination a grade of Fail, that part is awarded a Fail grade.

If a student fails an exam, he or she will have one opportunity to retake the exam before being dismissed from the program.

On successful completion of the examination process, students should submit the necessary paperwork to the Graduate Director for advancement to candidacy. Students may take "Dissertation" credits only after the D-2 form is approved and they have advanced to candidacy. Students who have passed their doctoral comprehensive examinations, and who have met the requirements for the M.A. in International Studies, are eligible to apply for an M.A. degree in the course of their Ph.D. studies. Students who wish to apply for an M.A. degree while continuing to pursue their Ph.D. should consult the Graduate Director about the necessary procedures and paperwork.

### *Dissertation Proposal*

Within three months of passing comprehensive examinations, students should publicly present a dissertation proposal of roughly 20-30 pages. Dissertation proposals should clearly identify a research question and explain why it is important, they should discuss the literature relevant to that question, they should spell out the student's own tentative answer to the research question, and they should formulate a convincing research plan and methodology for defending that answer.

Each dissertation proposal must be acceptable to a committee of at least four qualified scholars who agree to serve as members of that student's dissertation committee. Students are responsible for forming a dissertation committee, with assistance from and approval of the Graduate Director. Students must provide their dissertation committee members ample time to review the proposal before the scheduled proposal defense.

The committee chair, who is primarily responsible for detailed supervision of the student's work, must be a regular member of the Department of Politics and International Relations graduate faculty and must have "dissertation advisor status." Two other members of the committee must also be drawn from the graduate faculty of the Department. A fourth member of the committee must be a member of the graduate faculty at FIU, but *not* a member of the Department of Politics and International Relations. In some circumstances, an appropriately qualified scholar or specialist not affiliated with FIU may be approved as fifth member of the committee, but students should keep in mind that the committee will be required to meet *in person* on several occasions.

Circumstances may require changes in the membership of dissertation committees. Students may request changes in committee membership, after consulting with the Graduate Director, by submitting the necessary paperwork to the Graduate School.

Once the dissertation proposal has been successfully defended, students must prepare a "short-form" version of the proposal in accordance with Graduate School regulations to be submitted to the Graduate School along with form D-3. Students whose research will involve human subjects must also submit certification of either IRB (Institutional Review Board) review or exemption with their D-3 form (see <http://research.fiu.edu/irb/obtaining-approval/> ). Note that the IRB review process requires that both students and their dissertation advisors complete and document

the necessary IRB training. Students should familiarize themselves in detail with the relevant deadlines and format for the D-3 form.

### *The Dissertation*

Many dissertations in international relations involve research away from the University. Candidates may work on their dissertations wherever they choose, but they must register for 3 Dissertation credits in each semester (including the summer) from the time they advance to candidacy until (and including) the semester in which they receive their degree.

Dissertations in International Relations average 200-300 double-spaced pages (this is the equivalent of a 130-180 page book). Students are encouraged to remain in close contact with members of their dissertation committee. At the end of each Spring term, they are required to meet with their dissertation committee and complete their annual evaluation. Students can expect considerable assistance on substantive, organizational and stylistic problems that they encounter. Nevertheless, it is their responsibility to write in clear, error-free English. Students submitting poorly written draft materials may be advised to secure the assistance of a professional editor at their own expense.

All dissertations must follow the University's *Regulations for Thesis/Dissertation Preparation*. This is not a task to be taken lightly. Students are strongly advised to familiarize themselves with these guidelines before they begin writing and to follow them scrupulously at every stage. The School of International and Public Affairs and the Graduate School reviews all dissertations to assure that appropriate standards are met.

### *Dissertation Defense*

A completed draft of a dissertation is ready to defend only after it has been approved for defense by the dissertation committee chair and all other committee members. At that time, candidates will submit to the Graduate School an application for a dissertation defense which dissertation committee members must sign. The application must be filed by the appropriate deadline, which can be found on the Graduate School website ([gradschool.fiu.edu/calendar-deadlines/](http://gradschool.fiu.edu/calendar-deadlines/)). When considering the deadlines and scheduling, please keep in mind that the SIPA Dean's Office will need at least a week to review the D-5 form and the complete dissertation before it is forwarded to the Graduate School. The Graduate School will publish notice of the defense in a monthly calendar distributed to the University community.

The dissertation defense is a public event. Any member of the University community may attend, and the candidate may invite guests. After the candidate makes a brief presentation of findings, members of the dissertation committee will ask questions as they see fit. The candidate and guests will then leave the examining room, and committee members may decide to accept the dissertation, to specify revisions as a condition of acceptance, or to reject the dissertation. In the last case, committee members will specify conditions under which they will participate in another defense. All such decisions are made by consensus.

If the dissertation committee requires any changes, the dissertation committee chair normally takes responsibility for insuring that the student makes them as required. All members of the committee must, however, sign an appropriately prepared first page of the final version of the dissertation to indicate their approval.

One final, approved copy of the dissertation must be delivered to the Graduate Program Director. The University library must also receive two copies, one for shelving and the other to be microfilmed. The dissertation may also be submitted to the University electronically (please consult the Graduate School for more information).