Political Science, PhD

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Degree Requirements

To earn a PhD at Washington University, a student must complete all courses required by their department; maintain satisfactory academic progress; pass certain examinations; complete all requirements for doctoral candidacy; fulfill residence and Mentored Experience Requirements; write, defend, and submit a dissertation; and apply for program completion (graduation) via Workday Student.

For the details of doctoral degree general requirements in Arts & Sciences, including an explanation of Satisfactory Academic Progress, students should review the Doctoral Degree Academic Information page of the Arts & Sciences *Bulletin.*

Program Requirements

- **Total Units Required:** 40 units
- **Degree Length:** Five years
  - First-year students take approximately four courses per semester. Second-year students typically take three courses. Third-year students take one required course in the fall semester and otherwise take courses relevant to their interests. All students enroll in research workshops for their subfields. Most apply for academic jobs in the fall of their fifth year and complete the dissertation by the summer of that year.
  - **Note:** Students must be enrolled in 9 graduate credits (5000-level courses) each semester to retain full-time status. As students complete their coursework, if enrolled in fewer than 9 graduate credits, they must enroll in a specific Arts & Sciences graduate course that will show 0 units but does count as full-time status. Students should connect with their department to ensure proper enrollment prior to Add/Drop.
  - Students who are completing a Mentored Teaching Experience (typically students in Years 2 through 4) need to enroll in the appropriate MTE course (consult the MTE Implementation Plan).
- **Grade Requirement:** A grade of B+ or greater is required for coursework to count toward the degree.

PhD in Political Science

Students in the PhD program are expected to acquire the following:

- A broad understanding of several fields of political science as a discipline
- Methodological competence sufficient to be productive professionals
- Specialized expertise in a particular field of concentration

The procedures and requirements described below are designed to facilitate the achievement of these objectives. In addition to the formal requirements stated here, we provide a list of recommendations that students should follow to succeed in the program. For a detailed year-to-year outline of requirements and recommendations, please refer to the section "Specific Requirements for Each Year in the Program" at the end of the *Guide to Graduate Studies*, located on the Graduate Program website.

Exceptions to any of these requirements must be approved by the director of graduate studies (DGS) in consultation with the Graduate Committee and, as needed, the respective Field Committee.

General Course Requirements

In general, all students must successfully complete the following core courses with a grade of B or better:

- Math Camp (offered during the August before the first semester)
- POLSCI 5080 Theories of Individual and Collective Choice I (first semester)
- POLSCI 5094 Mathematical Modeling in Political Science(first semester)
- POLSCI 5690 Quantitative Political Methodology I(second semester)
- POLSCI 5695 Quantitative Political Methodology II(third semester)
- POLSCI 5063 Causal Inference (fourth semester)
- POLSCI 5735 Research Workshop I(fifth semester)

According to the Probation and Dismissal Policy, if a student fails to obtain a B (3.0) in one of the required courses, they will be placed on academic probation and have the opportunity to retake the course the following year. Failure to obtain a B (3.0) after taking the course for the second time will result in dismissal from the program. Furthermore, failure to obtain a B (3.0) in another required course while on probation is considered extreme underperformance and will result in dismissal from the program.

In addition to required courses, students will be taking courses in different fields. Courses are mainly concentrated during the first two years. Students should plan to take four courses per semester during their first year and three courses per semester during their second year.

Fields

The department divides the discipline of political science into six fields:

- American politics
- Comparative politics
- Formal theory
- International politics
- Political and social theory
- Quantitative methods

Before writing the dissertation, students must pass a qualifying evaluation (refer to next section) and fulfill requirements for certification in one major and one minor field. The major and minor field certifications are intended to ensure that students possess broad familiarity with the literature and material in the fields presented.

Field requirements are met by completing the required courses with a grade of B+ or better. A major field requires completing four courses in that field with a grade of B+ or better; a minor field requires completing three courses in that field with a grade of B+ or better.

Students are expected to complete course requirements for the major and minor by the end of their fourth semester. Exceptions can be granted by the DGS on a case-by-case basis but are not possible beyond the student's sixth semester.

Field Requirements

American Politics

- *Major:* Students must satisfactorily complete (with a grade of B+ or better) at least four graduate-level seminars in American politics, including POLSCI 5210 American Political Institutionsand POLSCI 5595 American Political Behavior.
- *Minor:* Students must satisfactorily complete (with a grade of B + or better) at least three graduate-level seminars in American politics, including POLSCI 5210 American Political Institutionsand POLSCI 5595 American Political Behavior.

Comparative Politics

- *Major:* Students must satisfactorily complete (with a grade of B + or better) at least four graduate-level seminars in comparative politics, including POLSCI 5140 Approaches to Comparative Politics.
- *Minor:* Students must satisfactorily complete (with a grade of B+ or better) at least three graduate-level seminars in comparative politics, including POLSCI 5140 Approaches to Comparative Politics.

Formal Theory

- *Major:* Students must satisfactorily complete (with a grade of B+ or better) at least four graduate-level seminars in formal theory, including POLSCI 5080 Theories of Individual and Collective Choice I and three other 5000-level courses that require POLSCI 5080 Theories of Individual and Collective Choice Ias a prerequisite. With permission of the Formal Theory Field Committee, an appropriate 5000-level economics course may be substituted.
- *Minor:* Students must satisfactorily complete (with a grade of B+ or better) at least three graduate-level seminars in formal theory, including POLSCI 5080 Theories of Individual and Collective Choice Iand two other 5000-level courses that require POLSCI 5080 Theories of Individual and Collective Choice Ias a prerequisite. With permission of the Formal Theory Field Committee, an appropriate 5000-level economics course may be substituted.

International Politics

- *Major:* Students must satisfactorily complete (with a grade of B + or better) at least four graduate-level seminars in international politics. This requirement includes the 5000-level graduate sequence and 5000-level political science and economics courses authorized by the International Politics Committee.
- *Minor:* Students must satisfactorily complete (with a grade of B+ or better) at least three graduate-level seminars in international politics. The requirement includes the 5000-level graduate sequence and 5000-level political science and economics courses authorized by the International Politics Committee.

Political and Social Theory

- *Major:* Students must satisfactorily complete (with a grade of B+ or better) at least four graduate-level courses in political theory; the theory faculty recommends at least two of the History of Political Thought courses (POLSCI 5130 History of Political Thought I: Justice, Virtue, and the Soul, POLSCI 5133 History of Political Thought II: Legitimacy, Equality and the Social Contract, and POLSCI 5134 History of Political Thought III: Liberty, Democracy, and Revolutionand at least two seminars in political theory.
- *Minor:* Students must satisfactorily complete (with a grade of B+ or better) at least three graduate-level courses in political theory authorized by the Political Theory Committee.

Quantitative Methods*

- *Major:* Students must complete (with a grade of B+ or better) at least four methods courses. This includes the required quantitative methods sequence (POLSCI 5690 Quantitative Political Methodology I, POLSCI 5695 Quantitative Political Methodology II, and POLSCI 5063 Causal Inference) plus one additional elective methodology courses authorized by the Quantitative Methods Committee.
- *Minor:* Students must complete (with a grade of B+ or better) the quantitative methods sequence (POLSCI 5690 Quantitative Political Methodology I, POLSCI 5695 Quantitative Political Methodology II, and POLSCI 5063 Causal Inference).

Note: Mathematical Modeling for Political Science does not count toward either the quantitative methods major or minor.

If a student receives approval from the DGS and the Quantitative Methods Committee to course out of one or more required courses in the methods sequence (POLSCI 5690 Quantitative Political Methodology I, POLSCI 5695 Quantitative Political Methodology II, and POLSCI 5063 Causal Inference), the student interested in

a major or minor in Quantitative Methods must replace those courses with additional elective methodology courses approved by the Quantitative Methods Committee and the DGS. As part of the approval process to course out of a required course in the methods sequence, the student will need to pass an in-person placement exam administered before the beginning of the academic year in which the student is required to take the class.

According to the Probation and Dismissal Policy, if a student fails to meet field requirements as a result of grades or for other reasons by the end of their fourth semester, they will be placed on probation for one semester. Failure to meet the field requirements by the end of that probationary semester results in dismissal from the program.

Qualifying Evaluations

Each student will be evaluated at the end of each semester through their second year. These evaluations will take place at the end of their first and second semesters, the end of their first-year summer, and the end of their third and fourth semesters.

Evaluation criteria for the academic year include the following: regular classroom attendance (at least 90%), participation in departmental intellectual life (e.g., seminars, conferences, professionalization workshops), and grades (a grade of B or higher for all required courses). Grades will be particularly emphasized, and faculty of required courses will use grades as clear communication that students have mastered the course material. Each required course will include a cumulative final exam or another final assignment of a cumulative nature that will assess the student's broad mastery of relevant materials.

At the end of their first-year summer, students must submit the following: 1) evidence of research progress (which can consist of skill development, collaborative research, or individual research output); and 2) feedback from a faculty mentor.

The DGS will seek feedback regarding student performance and engagement. To remain in good standing, students must be doing the following: 1) be making good progress with respect to their coursework and mentored teaching experience assignments; 2) be advancing in terms of their research trajectory, as appropriate for their stage in the program; and 3) be maintaining professional comportment with faculty, peers, and staff.

If a student fails to successfully pass any of these evaluations, they will be placed on academic probation. If the student makes significant progress during the next evaluation period and satisfactorily addresses the terms of the probation, they will be removed from probation and return to good standing. Failing to make significant progress during the next evaluation period may result in dismissal from the program.

Third-Year Paper Requirement

During their second and third years, each student is required to produce a solo-authored research paper. The expectation is that this paper will be in the same field as the student's dissertation and at the level of quality for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.

Students need to identify a Research Advisory Committee, which will include two advisors (i.e., the research paper chair and a second reader) and one alternate advisor in case the chair or second reader are unexpectedly on leave. Students must submit a completed and signed RAC form by January of Year 2. In consultation with these advisors (i.e., the committee), they need to develop a research design (motivation, theory, design, data sources) by the last day of classes of the spring semester of their second year. By the end of the spring semester, the student needs to schedule a formal defense of the proposal with their committee and, after the defense, submit a form with the advisors' signatures to the departmental administrative assistant responsible for graduate affairs.

The third-year paper is due to the committee by the first day of classes of the third year. The committee will grade these submissions within the first two weeks of the semester. At this point, students will either receive a "revise and resubmit" or a "reject and resubmit" from their committee. A "reject and resubmit" is a judgment by the faculty that the paper does not reflect satisfactory progress toward the research paper. Students receiving this evaluation will be placed on academic probation, and a failure to significantly improve the project will result in dismissal from the program.

Students will enroll in Research Workshop during their third year. This fall workshop is devoted to helping students revise their papers for final submission.

The final papers are due to the DGS and both readers by the start of the sixth semester. Students are required to defend the paper publicly. The DGS will organize a public presentation for all research papers within the first three weeks of the spring semester.

The Third-Year Committee will evaluate the quality of the research paper and its potential for submission to and acceptance in a peer-reviewed journal. Students who received a "reject and resubmit" during the first round should anticipate stricter scrutiny from faculty at this stage. The paper can be graded as pass or fail. A failing grade in this defense by students who previously received a "reject and resubmit" will result in dismissal from the program. A failing grade without a prior "reject and resubmit" will result in the student being placed on probation until they resubmit and successfully pass the research paper requirement, which must occur before the end of the spring term. Failing to submit the revised paper and earn a passing grade by the end of the spring term will result in dismissal from the program.

In the event of disagreement between the chair and the reader, the DGS will select a third reader in consultation with the faculty in the student's area of study to evaluate the paper and make a decision about the final grade. The research paper chair and the reader(s) will inform the student and the DGS of the final grade, together with an explanation, within two weeks after the defenses have been completed.

Annual Review

In addition to the formal qualifying evaluations outlined above, each student will be evaluated by the faculty annually. The faculty will conduct a formal annual review of all graduate students. Early in the Spring term, the DGS will solicit evaluations from each faculty member about each graduate student. Those with no basis for comment can simply indicate as much. A faculty meeting will subsequently be scheduled where each student's progress will be discussed. These reviews serve as the basis for students' qualifying evaluations and will be a major factor in decisions concerning future financial support and students' standing in the program.

- Students in Year 1 and Year 2 will receive letters from the DGS reflecting their annual review as part of Qualifying Evaluation 2 (Year 1) and Qualifying Evaluation 5 (Year 2).
- Students in Year 3 will receive letters from the DGS reflecting their annual review as part of the Third Year Paper process. Faculty will evaluate each student in Year 3 based on their overall progress at this point in the program, which will include reviewing their documented progress in Qualifying Evaluations 1-5, an unofficial transcript, their final third year paper (written product), their third year paper presentation (oral presentation), and their Dissertation Committee Proposal Form. This is an opportunity for the faculty to evaluate student progress at a critical point in the program as they begin their dissertation research. Note that even if students pass their Third Year Paper (see below), they can still be placed on probation or be recommended for dismissal based on a poor evaluation during this review. After the meeting, the DGS and/or faculty advisor will convey to the students the combined faculty evaluation of their progress as well as recommendations for future steps. Students who receive strongly negative feedback may wish to consider leaving the program with a terminal MA.
- Students in Year 4 will be evaluated based on their overall research progress as they move toward defending their prospectus. Examples of making good research progress in Year 4 include (but are not limited to) successfully defending a dissertation prospectus, submitting an article (i.e., Third Year Paper, coauthored paper, dissertation chapter) for peer review, presenting a working paper (i.e., dissertation chapter, coauthored paper) at an academic conference, and completing MTE requirements. Students preparing for the academic job market should have a complete draft of their job market papers; students preparing for nonacademic career paths should be taking steps toward their job searches. After the meeting, the DGS and/or faculty advisor will convey to the students the combined faculty evaluation of their progress as well as recommendations for future steps. Students who receive strongly negative feedback may wish to consider leaving the program with a terminal MA.
- Students in Year 5 will be evaluated based on their overall research progress as they move toward defending their dissertations and entering a job market (academic or non-academic). Examples of making good research progress in Year 5 include (but are not limited to) successfully defending a dissertation, submitting an article (i.e., Third Year Paper, coauthored paper, dissertation chapter) for peer review, presenting a working paper (i.e., dissertation chapter, coauthored paper) at an academic conference, teaching a course as an Instructor of Record, applying for jobs, and completing necessary paperwork for graduation. If students are planning to take a sixth year, they should be making excellent progress toward completing their dissertations as evaluated by their committee members and chair. After the meeting, the DGS and/or faculty advisor will convey to the students the combined faculty evaluation of their progress as well as recommendations for future steps. Students who receive strongly negative feedback may wish to consider leaving the program with a terminal MA.
- Students in Year 6 will be evaluated based on their overall research progress as they move toward defending their dissertations and entering a job market (academic or non-academic). Students must graduate by May of their sixth year or will be placed on probation. The student then has a chance to finish their dissertation by the August of their seventh year. Failing that, they will be dismissed from the program. As such, students making good progress should have their dissertation defenses scheduled and a clear plan for finishing the work. After the meeting, the DGS and/or faculty advisor will convey to the students the combined faculty evaluation of their progress as well as recommendations for future steps. Students who receive strongly negative feedback may wish to consider leaving the program with a terminal MA.

Dissertation Committee and Prospectus Requirement

Students are required to form a preliminary Research Advisory Committee (RAC) by January of Year 2. This committee consists of at least three full-time Washington University faculty members. This preliminary committee will advise the student's Third Year Paper, with one committee member designated as the Chair (primary advisor) and another committee member designated as the second reader. The third committee member can take a less central role in advising the Third Year Paper and can instead be an alternate reader in the event that the chair or second reader is unexpectedly unavailable (i.e., on leave). Students may revise their RAC by submitting a new form when they develop their dissertation prospectus. The DGS will assist the student with making sure the composition of the committee meets the requirements of the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences.

Students will enroll in the Research Workshop during their third year. The spring semester of this workshop is devoted to helping students develop their dissertation prospectuses.

Students are required to have defended the dissertation prospectus by the end of the seventh semester (December of Year 4). Dissertation prospectus defenses will be announced in advance and will be open to the public. Students who fail to schedule a defense or who fail the defense will be put on probation and may re-defend their prospectus by May 1. Failing to schedule or failing the re-defense results in dismissal from the program.

Students are encouraged to apply for the National Science Foundation Dissertation Improvement Grant and to other outside funding agencies to pursue additional financial support for their dissertation research.

Summary Timeline

(Please refer to "Specific Expectations for Each Year in Program" in the *Guide to Graduate Studies* on the Our Resources page of the Department of Political Science website for more details.)

- End of first semester (December): Evaluation of class performance and general progress
- End of second semester (May):
  - Evaluation of class performance and general progress
  - Submit summer research proposal
- Beginning of third semester (August):
  - Submit summer research progress
  - Evaluation of summer research and general progress
- End of third semester (December): Evaluation of class performance and general progress
- Beginning of fourth semester (January):
  - Submit Research Advisory Committee Form
- End of fourth semester (May):
  - Major and minor field requirements completed
  - Required courses (with the exception of the Research Workshop) completed
  - Defend Third Year Paper prospectus
  - Evaluation of class performance and general progress
- Beginning of fifth semester (August): Submit third-year paper
- Beginning of sixth semester (January): Resubmit and defend third-year paper
- End of seventh semester (December):
  - Defend Dissertation Prospectus (resubmitted prospectus must be defended before the start of the eighth semester)
  - Submit Title, Scope, and Procedure Form
- Advance to Doctoral Candidacy

Dissertation and Defense

The requirements for the completion of the dissertation are described in the general degree requirements by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, which are applicable to all Washington University doctoral candidates.

Graduation

Students need to graduate by May of their fifth year. Failure to do so results in the student being placed on probation. The student then has a chance to finish their dissertation by August of that same year. Otherwise, they will be dismissed from the program. Rare exceptions may be made for students who have obtained a sixth year of funding and approval from the department and the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences.

Foreign Language Requirement

There is no uniform foreign language requirement set by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, or by the department. The extent and substance of foreign language competence required will be determined by the Graduate Committee in consultation with the student and their advisor.

Mentored Teaching Experience Responsibilities

Mentored Teaching Experiences (MTEs) are curricular in nature and require that students collaborate with a faculty member.

Mentored teaching responsibilities vary from course to course but, in all cases, consist of attending class and grading papers and assignments. Examples of other responsibilities include running discussion sections or reviews, disseminating course materials, and holding office hours.

Graduate students are expected to participate in the MTE for an average of 10 hours per week. During some weeks, the MTE will involve considerably fewer hours; during other weeks (usually around midterms and finals), it will involve considerably more hours.

Faculty are expected to set expectations for grading at the beginning of each semester, and graduate students should plan accordingly for weeks of heavier grading or other responsibilities.

According to the Probation and Dismissal Policy, poor performance in the fulfillment of mentored teaching responsibilities will result in the student being placed on probation. Lack of improvement while on probation will result in dismissal from the program.

Mentored Experience Requirement

All students need to meet the mentored experience requirement of the Department of Political Science and the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, by the time they graduate. This requirement includes the following:

- Participating in departmental intellectual life, which includes but is not limited to meeting with outside speakers, attending talks and in-house conferences, presenting their own research, assisting with graduate student recruitment, and helping to organize in-house conferences (e.g., CPAC)
- Participating in an MTE for a "core" course in the student's field of study; "core" courses include introductory courses, Quantitative Political Methods, and other courses considered "core" by the DGS
- Giving at least one supervised guest lecture or presentation
- Participating in the MTE or teaching a class that involves regular interaction with students

The Department of Political Science has its own unique Mentored Experience Requirement Implementation Plan that all students in this program should review. It can be accessed at the dedicated tab above.

MA in Statistics

Students pursuing a PhD in political science may apply for a tailored MA in statistics. The completion of this program should not add any more time to a student's time to degree. Students should refer to the Statistics and Data Science, MA, Statistics for Political Science PhD Students Concentration Bulletin page for specific details about this program. Students pursuing the Statistics and Data Science, MA, Statistics for Political Science PhD Students Concentration are expected to complete their coursework by the end of Semester 5. In rare cases, such as when required courses were not available, students may take courses in their sixth semester to complete this degree, but only with prior approval from the DGS, Department Chair, Methods Field Chair, and the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences.

Required Courses

Code	Title	Units
POLSCI 5024	Casual Inference	3
POLSCI 5080	Theories of Individual and Collective Choice I	3
POLSCI 5094	Mathematical Modeling in Political Science	3
POLSCI 5090	Quantitative Political Methodology I	3
POLSCI 5695	Quantitative Political Methodology II	3
POLSCI 5735	Research Workshop I	3

Qualifying Examinations

Progress toward the PhD is contingent upon the student passing examinations that are variously called *preliminary, qualifying, general, comprehensive,* or *major field exams.* The qualifying process varies according to the program. In some programs, it consists of a series of incremental, sequential, and cumulative exams over a considerable time. In others, the exams are held during a relatively short period of time. Exams may be replaced by one or more papers. The program, which determines the structure and schedule of the required examinations, is responsible for notifying the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, of the student's outcome, whether successful or unsuccessful.

Doctoral Candidacy

Candidacy marks the transition from coursework and initial study to independent research and dissertation writing. At this stage, the student is considered prepared to contribute to their field through independent scholarship.

The status of candidacy for WashU Arts & Sciences doctoral students indicates a student has, at minimum, completed and passed their qualifying exam/paper and pre-candidacy requirements. Pre-candidacy requirements are determined by each PhD program. Those requirements may include, for example, completion of required coursework; completion of required foreign language exams; completion of the Mentored Experience Requirement; successful submission of the Title, Scope and Procedure form; and completion of the oral presentation to propose the dissertation to their Research Advisory Committee.

The pre-candidacy requirements for the Political Science PhD are the completion of required coursework; the completion of Qualifying Evaluations 1 through 5; the completion of the third-year paper; the completion of the Title, Scope, and Procedure Form; and the completion of the prospectus defense. Completion refers to passing with appropriate grades as required for good standing. Students should advance to candidacy by the end of their seventh semester.

Mentored Experience Requirement

Doctoral students, MFA in Writing students, and MFA in Dance students at Washington University must complete a department-defined Mentored Experience Requirement. The Mentored Experience Requirement is a degree requirement that is notated on the student's transcript when complete. Each department has an established Mentored Experience Implementation Plan in which the number of units that a student must earn through Mentored Teaching Experience(s) and/or Mentored Professional Experience(s) is defined. Each Mentored Experience Implementation Plan outlines how doctoral students within the discipline will be mentored to achieve competencies in teaching at basic and advanced levels. Some departments may elect to include Mentored Professional Experiences as an avenue for completing some units of the Mentored Experience Requirement. Doctoral students will enroll in ASGS 8005 MTE - Assistant in Instruction Experience, ASGS 8010 MTE - Assistant in Instruction Experience, or ASGS 8015 MTE - Assistant in Instruction Experience; ASGS 8020 MTE - Mentored Independent Teaching Experience; or ASGS 8120 MTE - Mentored Professional Experience to signify their progression toward completing the overall Mentored Experience Requirement for the degree.

The Doctoral Dissertation

A Research Advisory Committee (RAC) must be created no later than the end of the student's second year; departments may set shorter timelines (e.g., by the end of the student's third semester) for this requirement. As evidence of the mastery of a specific field of knowledge and of the capacity for original scholarly work, each candidate must complete a dissertation that is approved by their RAC.

A Title, Scope, and Procedure form for the dissertation must be signed by the committee members and by the program chair. It must be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, at least one year before the degree is expected to be conferred or before beginning the eighth semester of full-time enrollment, whichever is earlier.

A Doctoral Dissertation Guide and a Dissertation Template that give instructions regarding the format of the dissertation are available on the website of the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences. Both should be read carefully at every stage of dissertation preparation.

The Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, requires each student to make the full text of the dissertation available to the committee members for their review at least one week before the defense. Most degree programs require two or more weeks for the review period; students should check with their faculty.

The Dissertation Defense

Approval of the written dissertation by the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) is strongly recommended before the student can orally defend the dissertation. The Doctoral Dissertation Committee that examines the student during the defense consists of at least five members. Normally, the members of the RAC also serve on the Doctoral Dissertation Committee. The dissertation committee is then additionally augmented to ensure that the following criteria are met:

1. Three of the five members (or a similar proportion of a larger committee) must be full-time Washington University in St. Louis faculty members or, for programs involving Washington University in St. Louis-affiliated partners, full-time members of a Washington University in St. Louis-affiliated partner institution. All members must be authorized to supervise PhD students and have appropriate expertise in the proposed field of study. One of these three members must be the PhD student's primary thesis advisor, and one may be a member of the emeritus faculty.
2. All other committee members must be active in research/scholarship and have appropriate expertise in the proposed field of study whether at Washington University in St. Louis, at another university, in government, or in industry.
3. At least one of the five members must bring expertise outside of the student's field of study to the committee, as judged by the relevant department/program and approved by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences.

The approval processes outlined in the RAC section of the Doctoral Council bylaws also apply to the Doctoral Dissertation Committee, including approval of each dissertation committee by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences.

The student is responsible for making the full text of the dissertation accessible to their committee members for their review in advance of the defense according to program rules. Washington University in St. Louis community members and guests of the student who are interested in the subject of the dissertation are normally welcome to attend all or part of the defense but may ask questions only at the discretion of the committee chair. Although there is some variation among degree programs, the defense ordinarily focuses on the dissertation itself and its relation to the student's field of expertise.

Attendance by a minimum of four members of the Doctoral Dissertation Committee, including the committee chair and an outside member, is required for the defense to take place. This provision is designed to permit the student's defense to proceed in case of a situation that unexpectedly prevents one of the five members from attending. Students should not plan in advance to only have four members in attendance. If four members cannot attend, the defense must be rescheduled. The absence of all outside members or of the committee chair also requires rescheduling the defense.

Students, with the support of their Doctoral Dissertation Committee chair, may opt to hold their dissertation defense in person or by utilizing a virtual or hybrid format.

Submission of the Dissertation

After the defense, the student must submit an electronic copy of the dissertation online to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences, by the established deadline for their graduation term. Dissertations must be submitted no later than three months after the oral defense of the dissertation. Petitions for an extension to the three-month limit may be submitted to the director of graduate studies for consideration and approval.

The submission website requires students to choose among publishing and copyrighting services offered by ProQuest's ETD Administrator. Students are asked to submit the Survey of Earned Doctorates separately. The degree program is responsible for delivering the final approval form, signed by the committee members at the defense and then by the program chair or director, to the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences. Students who defend their dissertations successfully have not yet completed their PhD requirements; they finish earning their degree only when their dissertation submission has been accepted by the Office of Graduate Studies, Arts & Sciences.