These guidelines present degree requirements to be placed in the USC Catalogue (Part 1) and supplementary information to help students and faculty navigate through the program. The catalogue should be consulted first; the supplementary sections do not repeat those provisions. Finally a simple check-list summarizes key steps and deadlines.

PART 1. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

USC Graduate School Requirements

The PhD degree is awarded to students who have demonstrated in-depth knowledge of the disciplines of political science and international relations and the ability to make an original research contribution. The degree requirements are fulfilled by successfully completing a minimum of 70 units beyond the B.A., the PhD screening process, three fields of concentration, a substantive paper, a foreign language requirement (if applicable), qualifying examinations, a dissertation proposal, and a written dissertation and its oral defense.

Admission

The faculty of the Department of Political Science and the School of International Relations welcome talented candidates from a variety of academic backgrounds. Although a prior degree in political science or international relations is not necessary, it is strongly recommended that applicants have completed at least some course work in related fields, including political theory, statistics and social science research methods.

Admission decisions are based on consideration of applicants' prior academic performance, as reflected in course grades, the results of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), letters of recommendation, and a statement of intent that demonstrates a seriousness of purpose, a high level of motivation and a desire to benefit from our faculty's areas of expertise or interest. Applicants are also required to submit a sample of their written work in English, preferably a research-oriented paper. Business, government and other practical experiences may also be taken into account. Applicants whose native language is not English must take either the TOEFL or IELTS examination.
Screening Process

Before completion of 24 units, students will be reviewed by a screening committee made up of the Program Director, and the faculty who taught the program’s core courses. This committee will review the student's progress, including grades and written faculty evaluations of course work.

The committee will be responsible for deciding, at an early stage in the student's career, whether the student is likely to finish the PhD program. After reviewing the student's record, the committee may decide to (1) continue the student, (2) not continue the student and admit the student into a terminal M.A. degree program, or (3) fail the student's performance in the screening process, i.e., not continue the student in either the M.A. or PhD programs.

Course Requirements

All doctoral candidates must complete an approved sequence of four courses in core theory and methodology, including a classics-oriented course in political theory, a multivariate statistics course, a philosophies/methodologies of social inquiry course, and a course in advanced research methods.

The selection of additional courses should be guided by the distribution requirements of the PhD program. The student will choose three fields of concentration. The first two fields of concentration require the completion of a comprehensive written and oral exam and at least four graduate level courses with an average grade consistent with university and program requirements. The non-examined third field requires the completion of at least three graduate level courses with an average grade consistent with university and program requirements. Additional courses necessary to complete the 70 units required by the Graduate School should be taken in consultation with faculty advisors and the Guidelines for Doctoral Study in Political Science and International Relations.

Fields of Concentration

The standing fields of concentration include American Politics (AP); Comparative Politics (CP); International Political Economy (IPE); and International Security and Foreign Policy (ISFP). The candidate must satisfy two of these four standing fields by completing four courses in each of the two selected fields and passing a written and oral qualifying examination. The student may satisfy the third field by completing three courses in one of the four fields, or may propose another customized field of study to be approved by the relevant faculty and the PhD Program Director and Steering Committee. For example, students can design a third field that cuts across disciplinary boundaries or focuses on specific areas of political science and international relations beyond the standing fields. The Guidelines and Program Director can provide illustrations of this type of third field.
Foreign Language

The student is required to demonstrate intermediate proficiency in a language other than English if the student’s primary field requires it. Students should consult the Guidelines and the Program Director.

Substantive Paper

To show evidence of the capacity to conduct original research and before taking the qualifying exam, each student will submit a substantive paper. The student will submit the draft of his or her substantive paper to the chair of the guidance committee one month prior to the qualifying examinations. After consultation with the chair and necessary revisions, the student is to distribute the paper to all member of the Guidance Committee at least 14 days prior to the oral defense. The substantive paper should be presented and defended in the oral component of the qualifying examination as a viable journal submission to a peer-reviewed professional journal. It is expected that the paper should be submitted to a professional journal approved of by the student’s advisor within one year of the defense.

Qualifying Examinations

Students will be examined in two of their three fields of concentration. In order to be eligible to take their qualifying exams, students must have completed a minimum of 24 units, and have completed at least three of the four required courses in each of the examined fields, including all of the core courses for each examined field. The fourth required course for each examined field can be completed after the student’s qualifying exam. Ordinarily, students will take the qualifying exams no later than the fifth semester in the PhD program. Students must complete the written and oral portions of the qualifying exams within a maximum of 60 days from the date of the first written exam. Requests for time extensions require the approval of the Vice Dean of Graduate Programs.

The written examinations are closed book and will be administered over two days at least once per academic year. Examination questions will be written by a committee of the tenure track faculty in each field. The Director of POIR Graduate Studies (Program Director), in consultation with the Chair of the Department of Political Science and the Director of the School of International Relations, will appoint one faculty member from each field to coordinate the writing of the relevant field exam. The field exam coordinators will then seek assistance from other faculty in their field, including those with whom the student has studied, to compose the written examination questions. The guidance committee will evaluate the quality of these two written exams as evidence of the capacity to define and complete a PhD dissertation.
The oral portion of the student's qualifying examination will be administered by his or her guidance committee. The oral examination will be based on the student's two written field exams and the substantive paper.

The guidance committee will be made up of five members; in consultation with his or her principal advisor, the student will select a chair, two members (one from each standing field he or she will be examined), an outside member and an additional member of the guidance committee. Final approval of the guidance committee requires the signature of the Program Director and the Vice Dean of Graduate Programs.

Students will pass the qualifying examinations if no more than one member of the guidance committee dissents after reviewing the student's record at USC and performance on the written and oral parts of the qualifying exams. At the discretion of the guidance committee, students who do not pass the exams may be allowed to retake the qualifying exams the next time they are offered. Students are admitted to candidacy for the PhD when they have completed the university residency requirement, passed the written and oral portions of the PhD qualifying examinations, and defended his or her dissertation proposal.

**Dissertation**

Upon completion of the qualifying examinations, the student, in consultation with the principal advisor, selects a dissertation committee in accordance with the university rules. Within six months of completing the qualifying examinations, students should have a formal defense of the dissertation proposal before their dissertation committee. The PhD is earned upon the submission of the written dissertation and its successful public defense before the dissertation committee.

Consult the Requirements for Graduation section and the Graduate School section of the catalogue regarding time limitations for completion of the degree and other Graduate School requirements.

All graduate students considering an academic career should generally have research, teaching and advisement experiences as part of their program of study.

**Courses of Instruction**

**POIR 590 Directed Research (1-12)** Research leading to the master’s degree. Maximum units which may be applied to the degree to be determined by the department. Graded CR/NC.

**POIR 594abz Master’s Thesis (2-2-0)** Credit on acceptance of thesis. Graded IP/CR/NC.

**POIR 599 Special Topics (2, 4, 8, max 8, FaSpSm)** Subjects in one or more fields in Political Science and International Relations.
POIR 600 Political Theory (4) Survey of literature; examination of approaches, concepts, and issues in the field of political theory.

POIR 610 Methods of Political Science (4) Empirical political research: social science logic; theory construction; measurement; research design; sampling; data generation; secondary analysis; report and proposal writing; research ethics. Social Science and Historical Research Methods: Introduction to Research Design Introduction to problems in philosophy of science, epistemology, historical and historiographical inquiry, leading to development of elementary research design capabilities.

POIR 611 Seminar in Advanced Research Methods (4) Multivariate analysis of data, computer applications, and research report preparation; multiple regression; analysis of variance; factor analysis and related techniques; time series analysis. Prerequisite: POIR 610. Multivariate Analysis Causal inference and modeling in international relations and political science; assumptions and problems of multivariate regression analysis in both cross-sectional and time series cases.

POIR 612 Qualitative Research Design (4) A practical seminar in which to develop a dissertation proposal. Covers casual inference and comparative case study designs; single-case designs; selecting cases; interviewing; combining quantitative and qualitative methods. Recommended preparation: POIR 610, one course in statistics, and enough substantive study to identify a likely dissertation topic.

POIR 613 Topics in Quantitative Analysis (4) This course introduces statistical models beyond the standard linear regression model. Topics include maximum likelihood estimation, generalized linear models, and advanced methods.

POIR 614 Experimental Political Science (4) This course will introduce students to experimental techniques and applications of experiments in political science. We will address both the advantages and disadvantages of experiments.


POIR 621 American Politics and Policy Processes: Advanced Topics and Paradigms (4) Theoretical and methodological problems in American politics with emphasis on emerging research paradigms.

POIR 640 Comparative Politics (4) Survey of literature; examination of approaches, concepts, and issues in the field of comparative politics.

POIR 660 International Relations Theory (4) Development of organized knowledge of international relations. Main currents of thought and varieties of current literature.
POIR 661 International Relations Theory: Advanced (4) Examines the specialized nomenclature of international relations and the varied interpretations of basic concepts of international theory; conceptual analysis and criticism.

POIR 662 Norms in International Relations (4) Norms structure international relations in political, security, and economic domains. This seminar assesses major theoretical perspectives and empirical research on international norms.

POIR 670 International Political Economy (4) The course examines the behavior of markets, states and other domestic and international institutions, and their interactions from theoretical perspectives.

POIR 680 International Security and Foreign Policy (4) Against the background of 20th century history this course introduces the major literatures on the causes, strategy, practice, and future possibilities of war and peace.

POIR 790 Research (1-12) Research leading to the doctorate. Maximum units which may be applied to the degree to be determined by the department. Graded CR/NC.


PART 2. STANDING FIELD FACULTY, REQUIREMENTS, AND COURSES

CORE REQUIREMENTS (Theory and Methodology)

All incoming POIR students, regardless of their research interests or fields of concentration are required to take a set of four core courses: one on political theory and three on methods. We recommend that all students take the political theory course (POIR 600) and two of the methods courses (POIR 610, and POIR 611) in their first year. The advanced methods course can be taken in the student’s third year.

Theory
The core theory course (POIR 600) serves as an advanced introduction to political theory as seen through an examination of some of the major texts and thinkers of the Western political tradition. This course also serves as an intensive training in interpretation – focusing on close textual readings, developing arguments and engaging with dueling interpretations and approaches. There are three learning objectives for this class: 1. Thorough familiarity with “classic” readings in political philosophy; 2. Broad understanding of the philosophical foundations of political science; 3. Strong faculty for analysis and writing about fundamental questions in political science.
Political theory coursework is required of all students enrolled in the POIR program. In addition to content and skill development, it also provides them with experience developing lesson plans and leading discussions that will prepare them for leading discussion sections as teaching fellows and ultimately better prepare them for teaching.

Methods
Methods, or more broadly, research design and methods courses, are courses that are primarily methodological rather than substantive in nature, and that help graduate students in the POIR program become familiar with a range of issues regarding research design and methods relying for the most part on methodological texts and articles. Methods are understood to include standard options used in experimental, quantitative and qualitative research, including matters related to data collection and field research, as well as formal methods of theorizing.

Advanced courses in methods beyond POIR 610 and POIR 611 can be taken with POIR faculty or in other departments. Petitions to have a course counted as an “advanced course in methods” must be approved by the field coordinators in consultation with the faculty members of the theory and methodology field and ideally the petition should occur before a student takes the course. In general, the criterion used to decide whether a course qualifies as a methods course is whether the course is explicitly focused on methodological issues and introduces students to the methodological literature and debates on these issues. Methods courses regularly rely on applications to illustrate methods. But courses that are primarily substantive in nature (e.g. on democratization) and that address methodological issues in the context of the discussion of substantive questions will be considered as substantive and not methodological.

Core Faculty
Lee Epstein
Benjamin Graham
Christian Grose
Patrick James
Jane Junn
Ange-Marie Hancock
Mathew McCubbins
Gerry Munck *
Diana O’Brien
John Odell
Mary Sarotte
Nick Weller *

* Field Coordinators AY 2013-14

Courses in Theory

POIR 600: Political Theory (Required)
Courses in Methods

POIR 610: Research Design (Required)
POIR 611: Introduction to Regression Analysis (Required)
POIR 613: Topics in Quantitative Analysis
POIR 614: Experimental Political Science
IR 516: Text, Talks and Context
IR 517: International Policy Analysis
IR 519: Field Research Methods in Comparative Politics and International Studies

AMERICAN POLITICS (AP)

Field Description

The POIR Program features a distinguished faculty in the field of American politics, whose work covers a broad range of topics in the study of political behavior, political institutions, and other topics. Faculty research specialties include congressional and legislative politics; electoral behavior; judicial politics; political communication; political institutions; political psychology; public law and courts; public opinion; race, ethnicity, and politics; rationality and politics; and voting behavior.

The graduate course work in American politics includes two core courses that provide an overview of the field and its theoretical and empirical debates, as well as electives on such topics as attitudes and behavior; courts and judicial politics; legislative and executive politics; public law; race and ethnicity in U.S. politics; voting behavior; and other topics.

The American politics faculty have published in the top peer-reviewed journals in the discipline, such as the American Political Science Review, the American Journal of Political Science, the Journal of Politics, and Perspectives on Politics. The American politics faculty have also published in the most prestigious academic presses, including Cambridge University Press, Duke University Press, Georgetown University Press, Harvard University Press, New York University Press, Oxford University Press, the University of Chicago Press, Stanford University Press, and Yale University Press. In recognition of their contributions to the field, they have won numerous prizes from the American Political Science Association, including the Woodrow Wilson Foundation Award for the best book in political science; the Pritchett Award for best book in public law; the Swanson Prize for contributions in the field of political communication; the Race and Ethnicity’s Section’s award for best first book; the best book on race, representation, and politics; and the Goodnow Award for lifetime achievement.

The intellectual hallmark of faculty in the American field is investigating political phenomena at the intersection of political institutions and ordinary people. Neither strictly behavioral nor institutionalist, the faculty address research questions that cross the traditional subfields of American politics and political science. While diverse in substance and approach, the research is
informed and enriched by broad concerns within democratic theory. In terms of methodology, no single approach predominates and scholars in the American field use experimental methods, in-depth field interviews, observational data, qualitative methods, quantitative methods, and survey research methods. Given the nature of their work and their substantive interests, the faculty seek creative and intellectually diverse students. The faculty help students develop analytic tools needed to produce rigorous scholarship.

**Core Faculty:**

Jeb Barnes  
Dennis Chong  
Ann Crigler  
Lee Epstein  
Christian Grose*  
Ange-Marie Hancock  
Jane Junn  
Mathew McCubbins  
Alison Dundes Renteln  
Jeffery Sellers  
Nicholas Weller

* Field Coordinator

**Field Requirements**

**Overview.**

Students are required to complete four courses in the field prior to taking the qualifying examination. All students must take a core sequence that consists of POIR 620 and 621, which are designed to reflect the faculty’s commitment to rigorous and thorough training of its students and to place their interests within the broader context of theoretical questions and recurring empirical puzzles in American politics.

Students must also minimally take two other courses in the field consisting of either (a) a graduate seminar in the field of American politics or (b) a directed research seminar developed in consultation with the student’s advisor and approved under the Program’s rules. It should be stressed that these are the *minimum* requirements needed for students to take the qualifying examination. Students are strongly encouraged to take further courses in American politics, work with faculty to generate reading lists in their areas of interest, and develop a research design or substantive paper that can be presented to the core faculty in American Politics prior to their fifth semester.

Students are strongly encouraged to develop the relevant methodological skills needed to read the literature critically, prepare for the qualifying examination, and conduct original research in the field. Students should consider taking the core methods sequence prior to the field exam.
Core Field Sequence

Every student in American politics will be required to take a core sequence that consists of two seminars. The first semester will provide students an overview of key substantive areas of American politics, such as voting behavior, public opinion, Congress, the Presidency, the courts, the bureaucracy, political parties, interest groups, the media and mass movements. The primary goals of this course is to introduce the students to classic works in the field, situate the classics relative to important contemporary works, and provide an overview of approaches to the study of American politics.

The second seminar builds upon the first semester by presenting students with various theoretical approaches to the study of American politics, such as rational choice, political psychology, behavioralism, and new institutionalism. It will then look at enduring problems and questions in American politics, such as representation, collective action, delegation, coordination problems, moral hazard, and institutional stability and change.

Drafting and Grading of Qualifying Exams. Prior to the POIR Program’s examination dates, the field coordinator will solicit questions from members of the student’s guidance committee and other faculty in the American field. Exams will be graded by the student’s guidance committee in accordance with university rules.

Reading List

The faculty will maintain a reading list to help students prepare for the qualifying exam. The field coordinator has the responsibility of maintaining and regularly updating the reading list in consultation with the field faculty.

Courses in American Politics Field

POIR 620: American Politics and Policy Processes (Required)
PS 540: Law and Public Policy.
PS 545: Critical Issues in Politics and Policy.
PS 546: Seminar in Environmental Policy.
PS 610: Seminar in Party Politics.
PS 611: Seminar in Executive and Legislative Processes.
PS 612: Seminar in Urban Politics.
PS 618: Seminar in Problems of American Politics
PS 619: Seminar in Supreme Court Politics.
PS 621: Seminar in Public Law.
PS 622: Seminar in Political Attitudes and Behavior.
PS 623: Seminar in American Constitutional Development.
PS 624: Seminar in American Constitutional Law and Theory.
Language Requirement

There is no language requirement in the American politics field. If necessary for their research interests, students are encouraged to develop language expertise but it is not required. If American Politics is not the student’s primary field and language is required in the student’s primary examination field, the student must satisfy the relevant language requirement in the primary field before taking the qualifying examinations.

COMPARATIVE POLITICS (CP)

Field Description

“Comparative politics is the focus of research of seventeen POIR faculty. Their interests include democratization, political economy, law, subnational politics, state-society relations and women in development. These faculty have regional expertise in North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, East Asia, Europe, Russia, the Middle East and Africa. Their publications include a large number of articles in top political science journals (Comparative Political Studies, Comparative Politics, World Politics, International Organization, International Security, International Studies Quarterly), premier policy journals (Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy, Governance), and leading university presses (Cambridge, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, Michigan, Oxford, Princeton, Stanford).”

Core Faculty

Laurie Brand
Mai’a Cross
Robert English
Patrick James
David Kang
Saori N. Katada
Daniel Lynch
Gerardo Munck*
Diana O’Brien
Alison Renteln
Stan Rosen
Eliz Sanasarian
Wayne Sandholtz
Mary Sarotte
Jeffrey Sellers*
Nick Weller
Carol Wise
Field Requirements

Students concentrating in Comparative Politics are required to take one core seminar (POIR 640) and three or four elective courses (from the list of courses provided by the field coordinator/s) depending on whether or not comparative politics is an examined field; to earn credit, a grade of B or better is needed on each course. A field examination is required except for students who take comparative politics as a third field. Proficiency in a language other than English is strongly recommended.

Catalogue description of core seminar:  POIR 640 Comparative Politics (4 units) Survey of literature; examination of approaches, concepts, and issues in the field of comparative politics. (NOTE: The seminar is designed in coordination with the field reading list, and is intended to provide an overview of the field and preparation for the field examination.)

Courses in Comparative Politics
The list of courses that have been considered as comparative politics courses are:

- POIR 640: Comparative Politics (Required)
- PS 525: Cities, Regions & Global Society
- PS 535: Seminar in No. African & Middle Eastern Politics
- PS 539: Political Economy and Public Policy
- PS 554: Women in Global Perspective
- PS 610: Seminar in Political Parties
- PS 611: Seminar in Executive & Legislative Processes
- PS 630: Seminar in European Politics
- PS 632: Seminar in Latin American Politics
- PS 633: Seminar in East Asian Politics
- PS 634: Seminar in Southeast Asian Politics
- PS 636: Seminar in African Politics
- PS 637: Seminar in Chinese Politics
- PS 640: Seminar in Problems of Comparative Politics
- PS 641: Seminar in Comparative Judicial Policies, Processes & Behavior
- PS 648: International Human Rights Law & Policy
- PS 670: Seminar in International Law
- PS 695: Social Science Theory
- IR 526: Migration and Diaspora
- IR 540: Religion and Conflict
- IR 555: Democracy and Democratization
- IR 599: Advanced Field Research Methods in Comparative Politics & IR

In addition, courses in religion and conflict, democratization, and human rights, have been considered comparative courses.
Beginning in 2011-2012, any course that will be counted toward the Comparative Politics field requirement must focus predominantly on the comparative explanation of politics within countries. Faculty members are encouraged to request that courses they teach be included in the field. In order for a course to be included, the syllabus for the course must be approved by the field coordinators in consultation with the relevant faculty member. Faculty may appeal the decisions of the coordinators to the full Comparative Politics faculty.

The core seminar in Comparative Politics will be a POIR course. In addition, we consider that many new comparative courses at the PhD level should be introduced under POIR prefix.

An annual meeting will be held to coordinate the offerings in comparative politics. The timing of this meeting would be just ahead of the time when the unit heads decide on the courses to be taught.

**Field Reading List**

A recommended reading list for the field exam is maintained by the field co-coordinators and updated periodically. As new areas of scholarship evolve, these will be included in the reading list. However, addition to the list should be balanced through the removal of some items.

The qualifying exam is designed to test mastery of a broad coverage of research programs and areas within the field, along with overarching concepts, themes and approaches. It is compiled for each administration by the field coordinators in collaboration with faculty teaching in the field.

**Language Requirement**

Language training is strongly encouraged but not required. To ensure language competence, prospective students are encouraged to begin development of language skills for their area of specialization before entering the program. Faculty advisors may encourage individual students to acquire additional language or methodological skills for specific research programs.

**INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY (IPE)**

**Field Description**

International Political Economy (IPE) analyzes the interaction between politics and economics within a global context. Together, the POIR course offerings for this field provide an overview of those conceptual approaches, critical turning points, and key issues that have characterized the international political economy since the first wave of globalization in the 19th century. Candidates master the most influential bodies of theory in international relations and in IPE. Other key points of analysis include, but are not limited to, major IPE issue areas such as finance or trade, international institutions such as the World Bank or World Trade Organization (WTO),
and the manner in which a given issue or institution has affected specific countries or sub-regions of the global economy.

The IPE field requires students to take two core courses. One course is POIR 660, which is the common core course for two IR fields. The other core course is the IPE gateway course (POIR 670) that includes: a comparison of the two waves of globalization in the 19th and 20th centuries; study of the inter-war years and the effect of this period in shaping the design and content of the Bretton Woods order; a detailed analysis of the post-World War II Bretton Woods era and beyond, including the design of formal rules and institutions to oversee heightened flows of international trade and finance; and, a review of those main themes and burning issues that have dominated late 20th and early 21st century academic and policy debates. The latter covers, for example, the proliferation of regional integration agreements, the eruption of numerous financial crises, the changing profile of multinational corporations and foreign direct investment, those political economic challenges related to the rise of China, India and other emerging market countries within the IPE, and the most pressing collective action dilemmas that have slowed recent efforts to deepen the globalization process.

IPE faculty are engaged in research on a number of these topics. Apart from the gateway course, POIR faculty offer seminars in special topics like Economic Bargaining in Theory and Practice, IPE of the Pacific Rim, IPE and Development, and Foreign Economic Policies of Advanced Industrial States. Students who wish to combine IPE with a regional or specific country focus have access to a rich array of courses offered in the field of Comparative Politics. Candidates can deepen their expertise in Economics and their competitiveness in the job market by presenting a special third field in Economics (see Part 3).

Core Faculty

Jonathan Aronson
Joshua Aizenman
Andrew Coe
Benjamin Graham
Saori N. Katada
John Odell
Wayne Sandholtz
Nicholas Weller
Carol Wise *

* Field Coordinator

Field Requirements

To complete this field, the student must take POIR 660, POIR 670, and at least two elective courses in the field of IPE listed below.

Courses in International Political Economy
POIR 660: Introduction to International Relations Theory (Required)
POIR 670: Politics of the World Economy (Required)
POIR 661: International Relations Theory: Advanced
POIR 662: Norms in International Relations
IR 525: State and Society in International Relations
IR 526: Migration and Diaspora
IR 541: Politics of the World Economy
IR 542: Foreign Economic Policies of Industrial Capitalist States
IR 543: Politics of International Money and Trade Relations
IR 545: International Political Economy of Development
IR 547: The Political Economy of Global Space and Environment
IR 550: Economic Bargaining Theory and Practice
IR 551: International Political Economy of the Pacific Rim
IR 581: International Relations of the Middle East

Field Reading List

A recommended reading list for the field exam is maintained by the field coordinator. Each year the IPE coordinator will consult with the other IPE faculty in updating the reading list, adding new items and deleting others.

Language Requirement

IPE students must satisfy the language requirement as defined in these guidelines. The student may petition to waive this language requirement on the grounds that he or she does not plan to write a dissertation in this field.

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN POLICY (ISFP)

Field Description

The POIR Program features a distinguished faculty in the fields of International Security and Foreign Policy (ISFP). Collectively they research a wide variety of issues pertaining to security broadly defined and focus on various security actors including both state and non-state actors. Our faculty’s interests reflect the growing interaction between security studies and foreign policy analysis as well as the broader intersection between international relations and comparative politics more generally.

We define security broadly, as economic and environmental as well as political/military, and as threats to individuals as well as to states. Our faculty employ a range of theoretical approaches for explaining these various security issues, including realism, liberalism and critical security studies. In addition to materialist, power-based explanations, some faculty explore the role of psychology culture, gender, ethnicity and religion as forces contributing to security and
insecurity. To this end our faculty use a variety of methodologies including archival and field research, quantitative analysis, case studies, foreign policy analysis, and diplomacy studies. Faculty publications appear in leading peer-reviewed journals.

Given the multi-disciplinary nature of their research, the ISFP faculty stands ready to work with a wide range of students. Our faculty are aware of the changing nature of the International Relations discipline in light of globalization, the role of non-state actors, the importance of international law and norms, regional integration and transnational interactions. These factors impact foreign policy choices and national and international security policies in new and challenging ways.

Core Faculty

Laurie Brand
Mai’a Cross
Robert English
Jacques Hymans
Patrick James *
David Kang
Saori N. Katada
Steve Lamy
Dan Lynch
Brian Rathbun
Wayne Sandholz
Mary Sarotte
Ann Tickner

*Field Coordinator

Field Requirements

Three to four courses are required for the ISFP field, depending on whether or not it is an examined field. The first is the graduate seminar in IR Theory (POIR 660). Students then may take the basic seminar in foreign policy and international security (POIR 680). The third and fourth courses may be either the other of the two preceding seminars (i.e., foreign policy, if the student took international security, or vice versa) or another seminar from the approved list.

Courses in International Security and Foreign Policy (See Appendix table for the last time each course was taught)

POIR 660: Introduction to International Relations Theory (Required)
POIR 661: Advance Theory
POIR 662: Norms in International Relations
POIR 680: International Security and Foreign Policy (Required)
IR 502: International Security
IR 503: Theories of Diplomacy
IR 508: Conflict Analysis and Peace Research
IR 509: Culture, Gender & Global Society
IR 521: Foreign Policy Analysis
IR 522: United States Diplomacy since 1945: Issues and Decisions
IR 524: Formulation of U.S. Foreign Policy
IR 525: State and Society in International Relations
IR 531: Strategy and Arms Control
IR 534: East Asian Security Issues
IR 539: Seminar in International Politics – Conflict Processes
IR 540: Seminar in International Politics – Religion and Conflict
IR 556: Latin America and American Foreign Policy
IR 557: Africa and US Foreign Policy
IR 558: European Foreign Security Policy
IR 561: Japanese Foreign Policy and International Relations of East Asia
IR 563: Chinese Foreign Policy
IR 581: International Relations of the Middle East
IR 599: International Politics and Security in Historical Perspectives

**Field Qualifying Exam and Reading List**
There will be no field reading list. Instead, each student will be examined on the basis of the reading material assigned in seminars from this field.

**Language Requirement**
This is at the discretion of the student’s advisor in consultation with the Program Director and other members of the field. The key criterion is the anticipated methodological profile of the dissertation.

**PART 3. A CUSTOMIZED THIRD FIELD**

A POIR student can choose to propose a customized third field, which is not an examined field. These customized fields should be created to help each student deepen his/her knowledge of a particular topic that cannot be acquired through the standing fields. We list below examples of customized fields, but other possibilities could also be imagined.

**Culture, Gender and Global Society (CGGS)**
**Human Rights**
**International Economics**
**Law and Public Policy**
**Political Communication**
**American Political History**
PART 4. OTHER RULES AND PROCEDURES

Transferring credits from other institutions

Students who have completed graduate-level courses at other institutions prior to entering the program may petition to have such work counted toward their USC degrees. With approval from the Program Director and the respective field coordinators, the student may transfer up to 24 units from outside POIR’s offerings. Students must complete at least nine four-unit USC courses (known as “courses in residence”) within the POIR program. Students wishing to receive credit for courses taken at other universities should consult with the Program Director regarding submission of materials, particularly syllabi and transcripts. The field coordinator evaluates a course transfer based on the literature covered in the outside course as well as the correspondence between the course and similar courses at USC POIR. Each transfer course with the corresponding credit must be applied to one of the three fields chosen by the student.

The Guidance Committee

Each USC doctoral student is guided prior to the qualifying examination by a five-member faculty guidance committee. At least three of the members must be tenured or tenure-track faculty members, and at least two members should be from each of the two examined fields of concentration. The student must also select an outside member, unless the student has compelling justification for selecting the fifth member from the POIR faculty, which requires the approval of the Vice Dean for Graduate Programs. The chair of the committee is normally the student’s faculty advisor. The committee will be assigned by the Program Director in consultation with the student and the faculty no later than one semester prior to the planned qualifying examinations, so there will be time to implement their guidance about course selection and exam preparation. All guidance committee members will grade the written exams in two fields, evaluate the student’s substantive paper, and participate in the oral defense of the exams. Students must have their committees approved no later than one year prior to the qualifying exams. Changes in a guidance committee may be made according to Graduate School rules published in the USC Catalogue.

The dissertation committee

As soon as possible after the qualifying exam has been passed but no later than within 60 days, the student should ask three professors to join the dissertation committee. The chair of this committee must be a tenured or tenure-track member of the POIR faculty; a second and third members can be two members of the POIR faculty, or one from POIR program and the other from a faculty member from outside the program. A committee may consist of more than three members. For the candidates to be in good standing, this committee must approve a dissertation proposal within six months of passing the qualifying exam. Thereafter, once every 12 months this committee must report to the Program Director based on the student’s self-evaluation whether the candidate had made sufficient progress toward degree completion in the past year, and to report any problems.
Satisfying the foreign language requirement

If the primary field of concentration has the foreign language requirement, this requirement can be met by two years (four semesters) of college-level foreign language training (with minimum average grade of a B), by examination, or by establishing native-speaker status. Course work from any accredited institutions will be considered. Course units covered by POIR-funded fellowships, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships may be used for the language study required to develop proficiency. Language courses are not counted towards the PhD total course requirement.

Good Standing

The student is expected to remain in good standing, which includes making sufficient regular progress toward completing the degree every year toward a PhD. Students must accomplish the following in order to maintain good standing:

Good standing benchmarks

- Before completing the 70 unit course requirement, students are expected to take three courses per semester when on fellowship and at least two courses while working as a TA or RA.
- Maintain a GPA of 3.0 to meet graduate school requirements and 3.5 to meet expectations of the POIR program.
- Submit the first annual report to take part in the screening process by March of the first spring semester.
- Take qualifying exams by the 5th semester in the program.
- Prepare one’s substantive paper before the qualifying exam, and submit the paper to an academic journal approved by the chair of one’s dissertation committee within one year from the exam.
- Defend the dissertation proposal successfully within 6 months (and preferably 3 months) of passing the qualifying exams.
- Perform satisfactorily as a TA or an RA.
- Master the necessary foreign language sufficiently to conduct the dissertation research which normally starts by the end of one’s third year of the program.
- Submit an annual report to the dissertation committee and the Program Director detailing the progress toward completion of the degree.
- Participate in seminars, job talks, professional conferences and professionalization workshops.

If a student does not follow the good standing practices, the Program Director and faculty advisors will meet the student to provide guidance. If improvement is not observed, sanctions may be imposed, the maximum of which is dismissal from the program. Students may request the Program Director for waiver from the guided progress.
Failure to meet any of the good standing benchmarks could also lead to (a) lower priority for assistantship assignment and/or departmental funding, or (b) suspension or termination of funding for those who are beyond the 5th year in the program.

PART 5. CHECKLIST

Years 1-2: Completing the Core and Methodology Sequence (3 courses) & Course Requirements for Two Examined Fields (6 courses)

- 3 course theory and methodology sequence (12 units)
- 3 courses (including each field’s core course requirements) in 2 examined fields (24 units)
- POIR 593 (2 units)
- Language Requirement (if necessary)
- Fourth courses in two examined fields and/or electives (optional)

By April of 1st Year

- Screening Committee reviews students’ academic performance
- Students identify the two fields in which they will test

End of First semester of 2nd Year

- Appoint Guidance Committee and submit paperwork to approve committee
- Submit the form to request to take PhD Qualifying Exam 30 days prior to exam date

Summer before the 3rd Year

- One month before the qualifying exam (July), submit a draft of the substantive paper to the chair of the guidance committee
- 14 days before the oral defense, distribute the revised substantive paper to the Guidance Committee for review and approval

Year 3

- Take two written exams of the Qualifying Exam (August)
- Take the oral exam within 60 days from the first written exam (October)
- Ensure paperwork certifying your passing of the exams is submitted to the Graduate School
- After passing your qualifying exams, constitute the student’s Dissertation Committee
- Within six months from the oral defense of your qualifying exams, defend the dissertation proposal
Apply for external funding for either dissertation field research or dissertation write-up
Complete fourth course requirements in two examined fields (8 units)
3 courses from the third field (12 units)
Register in POIR 794a (2 units) in spring of the 3rd year (only after successfully passing qualifying exams).
1 advanced method course (4 units)

Years 4 & 5 (ABD years)

Dissertation field research if needed and write up the dissertation by registering 794 Doctoral Dissertation (one unit course up to 4 units)
Attend a professional conference annually and present one’s research approved by the dissertation chair
Try to publish at least one paper (such as a substantive paper or a chapter of the dissertation) in a peer-reviewed journal
Finally, schedule an oral defense of the dissertation
Formally upload the dissertation to the USC Libraries
Placement activities typically start in early fall of one’s 5th year
Register in the POIR 794 (total of 6 units) sequence each semester until degree is completed. Even though POIR 794 is only 0-2 units for each course, registration in the course will grant you full-time status.

PART 6. GOVERNANCE

The POIR faculty

Faculty who wish to teach and supervise doctoral students in this program write a letter of application. The criteria for selection of faculty members will include: knowledge of POIR requirements; teaching of graduate courses in the program; participation in seminars and professionalization events for grad students; active participation in field related work e.g., working on reading lists, writing of questions for relevant field exams; providing timely feedback on grad student work; commitment to mentor and help place students. Selection decisions are reviewed every three years by a committee of 3 full professors including the Chair of Political Science and the Director of International Relations. The chair of POSC and the director of SIR will consult with each full professor and appoint one full professor who has widespread support as the third member of the selection committee. The committee’s decision to reject a professor from membership in the POIR program may be appealed by writing first to the POIR Steering Committee.

The program director and the steering committee
The USC College Dean appoints the Program Director. The Director of School of International Relations and Chair of Political Science Department jointly name four additional POIR faculty members to serve with the director as a five-member steering committee. Normally each of the other four members represents one of the four core fields. The steering committee is responsible for overseeing the program in accord with the agreed rules, calling on the assistance of the POSC chair and SIR director as needed. The committee’s top priority is the welfare of the joint program as a whole, not only the respective specialties.

**Recruiting and admitting new students**

The responsibility for recruiting talented applicants rests on the whole POIR faculty. The steering committee coordinates this recruitment process and makes admission decisions, considering advice from their colleagues. The primary criterion for ranking applicants is applicants’ merit. After producing this merit rank order, the committee may depart from it modestly if necessary to correct an imbalance across subjects of study that has appeared during the past two or three years. We also strive to recruit an outstanding group with diverse backgrounds and interests, and students whose stated interests find a match in our faculty. The committee does not use fixed quotas by department, field, or subject in choosing admits, except as required by donor restrictions on fellowship accounts. Admission decisions are reviewed by the Political Science chair and International Relations director.