

STUDENT HANDBOOK

PhD Program in Public Policy

**Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs
The University of Texas at Austin**

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I. Purpose

In this document, the policies and procedures under which the PhD Program in Public Policy at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs shall be conducted are presented. Please note that the Office of Graduate Studies occasionally requires operational changes relating to the administration of the program, but this does not affect the substantive nature of the program upon which the student was admitted (number of hours or requirements to degree, for example). The PhD Program and these policies and procedures are intended to accomplish the following:

1. To promote a lively and sustainable intellectual environment for the interdisciplinary pursuit of knowledge,
2. To ensure the broad participation of the LBJ School faculty in the progress of each doctoral student while maintaining the autonomy of the supervising faculty members, and
3. To create a structure that enables and encourages students to complete a program in doctoral studies of the first class within a reasonable period of time.

II. Administrative Structure of the Program

a. The University Level

The Graduate School of the University of Texas at Austin is the overarching academic policy body responsible for over 100 graduate programs, of which the LBJ School's PhD Program in Public Policy is one. The Graduate School consists of the Office of Graduate Studies, headed by the University's Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies, his or her staff, and the University's approximately 90 Graduate Studies Committees (GSCs). Each department or program offering a graduate degree at the University of Texas has a GSC composed of all assistant, associate, and full professors actively involved in the graduate program in that area. Each GSC is officially responsible for setting policy and supervising its graduate program under the rules of the Graduate School. The legislative body of the UT Graduate School is the Graduate Assembly, currently comprising a group of approximately 30 faculty members who are also members of the University's GSCs, together with UT graduate student representation.

The regulations and procedures that affect graduate students in their pursuit of master's and doctoral degrees at the University of Texas are laid out in three key documents: (1) The Graduate School Guide or "Grad Guide" <http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/publications/gradguide/>; (2) the University's Graduate Catalog <http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/grad11-13/index.html>; and, (3) the University's overall Handbook of Operating Procedures, <http://www.utexas.edu/policies/hoppm/>. The section of the Graduate School Guide most relevant to PhD students is attached here as Appendix 2. Relevant forms and publications from the Graduate School can be found at the Graduate School's Publications page:

<http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/publications/> and in the Graduate's Schools Forms Library:
<http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/>

b. The Executive Level at the LBJ School

An LBJ School faculty member is elected every two years to serve as the Chair of the School's GSC and reports to the LBJ School Dean. In addition, one member of the GSC is elected to serve as the School's official representative at the Graduate Assembly. Currently the overall GSC serves as the body responsible for two of the three LBJ School programs (the Master's of Public Affairs, or MPAff, and the PhD in Public Policy). A second GSC – a subset of the full GSC – serves the relatively new Master's in Global Policy Studies. From the Graduate School's perspective, the formal executive authority for each of these programs is vested in a Graduate Adviser assisted administratively by a Graduate Coordinator. On the recommendation of the Dean of the LBJ School, the Dean of the Graduate School appoints one faculty member to serve as the LBJ School's Graduate Adviser to the PhD Program in Public Policy.

In practice, the LBJ School's GSC delegates authority for the PhD Program to the PhD Graduate Adviser and full operational authority to the LBJ School's PhD Executive Committee, chaired by the PhD Graduate Adviser. The PhD Graduate Adviser normally serves for a period of three-four years.

c. The PhD Executive Committee

The PhD Executive Committee is the primary operational arm of the LBJ School's PhD Program in Public Policy. The Dean of the LBJ School appoints the membership of the PhD Executive Committee and sub committees, just as he or she does for all standing committees at the School. Serving on the PhD Executive Committee are the PhD Graduate Adviser (Chair); the Chairs of the Admissions subcommittee and the Curriculum and Comprehensive Examinations subcommittee (see below); and a PhD student liaison representative (normally a PhD candidate elected annually by all current LBJ PhD students). The PhD Executive Committee is responsible for managing the PhD admissions process, supervising student advising up to the point of candidacy, administering financial aid for PhD students, designing and executing the comprehensive examinations, monitoring PhD student progress for the Graduate School, maintaining PhD student records, and coordinating the overall direction of the PhD Program for the LBJ School's GSC. The PhD student liaison representative is a full voting member of the PhD Executive Committee in matters relating to the overall direction of the Program, but does not participate in Committee deliberations on admissions, financial aid, comprehensive examinations, and the monitoring or evaluation of student progress.

The PhD Executive Committee has two subcommittees: one for Admissions, and the other for Curriculum and Comprehensive Examinations. Each subcommittee consists of three faculty members appointed by the Dean (one of whom is appointed as Chair). As noted above, the two

subcommittee chairs, together with the PhD Graduate Adviser and the PhD liaison representative, form the PhD Executive Committee.

The PhD Admissions Subcommittee is appointed by the Dean and consists of the PhD Adviser and three faculty members, one of whom serves as Chair. The committee manages the admissions process, its primary functions being to review student applications; solicit views of LBJ faculty members about the most promising applications in accordance with their respective research interests; and make final admissions decisions on the basis of each applicant's promise and match with faculty and Program priorities, as well as the level of financial support that is available. Normally a student will not be admitted to the Program unless one or more faculty members indicate a strong willingness: (1) to serve as that student's principal academic and research mentor at least in the first instance; and either (2a) to indicate a commitment of financial support for research during the third or fourth years of study, including an identification of the source of such support, or (2b) a commitment to work closely with the student to develop a secure source of financial support for the third and fourth years of study.

The PhD Curriculum and Comprehensive Examinations Subcommittee consists of the PhD Adviser and three faculty members (one of whom is appointed by the Dean to serve as Chair) and is charged with responsibility for overseeing curriculum development as well as for organizing the design, execution, and evaluation of the comprehensive examinations. The Subcommittee Chair is also free to draw on LBJ School faculty inside or outside the Executive Committee to assist in this effort. A minimum of five faculty members, including the PhD Curriculum and Comprehensive Examination Subcommittee, are normally required to be present at the oral integrative comprehensive examination. This usually consists of the four person committee plus core teaching faculty, as appropriate.

In practice the two sub-committees make their decisions by consensus or by majority vote, but in the event of unresolved disagreement the three-member Executive Committee constitutes the body of appeal and resolution.

III. Academic Advising

The PhD Program in Public Policy is an explicitly research-oriented doctorate that emphasizes rigorous grounding in scientific theory and methodologies, as well as in practical, action-oriented goals. Blending theoretical excellence with practical applications is one of the hallmarks of the LBJ School. In that spirit, the PhD Program strives to foster a practical and intellectual apprenticeship environment in which students work closely with faculty members actively engaged in policy research and who take a leadership role in exploring topics of mutual interest. The central feature of this environment is a sequence of academic advisory committees that supervise a PhD student's progress from the time of matriculation to the point the dissertation is successfully defended.

While the PhD Graduate Adviser and the PhD Executive Committee supervise student advising, it is the student's individual academic advisory committee that takes the lead in working with the student to develop a career in doctoral-level policy research. In the course of study leading to the PhD, each student works under the direct supervision of a sequence of three individually tailored academic advisory committees:

1. *The Temporary Advisory Committee.* Each student is assigned a Temporary Advisory Committee at the time of matriculation. Two members of the LBJ School's faculty, at least one of whom is a member of the LBJ School's GSC, make up the core of the Committee, and the PhD Graduate Adviser normally serves as a third member on all the Temporary Advisory Committees. The assignment of core faculty is made with an eye to matching student and faculty research interests. To the extent possible, it is also made in direct consultation with the in-coming student. The Temporary Advising Committee is responsible for assisting the student in identifying and selecting courses and in establishing a research trajectory (Appendix 1.1). This Committee officially dissolves at some point during the second semester of study. Before this juncture, the PhD Graduate Adviser formally asks each first-year PhD student to identify two or three Research Mentors who will formally mentor the student from there on and constitute the student's Research Mentoring Committee (formerly called the "Interim Doctoral Committee").¹ At the end of their first year, students must submit the Research Mentoring Committee form to the PhD Adviser (Appendix 1.2).
2. *Research Mentoring Committee.* Like the Temporary Advisory Committee, this body is composed of two members of the LBJ School's faculty, at least one of whom is a member of the LBJ School's GSC, plus the PhD Graduate Adviser. The Temporary Advisory Committee and the Research Mentoring Committee are frequently identical in membership, but obliging the Temporary Committee to expire permits the student to change the composition of his or her advisory body in line with evolving interests and without any prejudice whatsoever. The student is required to nominate one member of the Research Mentoring Committee to serve as Chair (Supervisor). The PhD student's Research Mentoring Committee is responsible for advising the student on course selection, on developing a coherent research agenda and Plan of Study, and to ensure that sometime in April an annual report is submitted to the PhD Executive Committee on student progress -- up to the point of PhD candidacy (Appendix 1.1). The Research Mentoring Committee remains the student's chief advisory body until successfully passing all of the comprehensive examinations and filing the LBJ School's "Doctoral Dissertation Committee Declaration" form. Until that time, and after appropriate consultation with the PhD Adviser and the faculty concerned, students may change (or add to) their Research Mentors at any time by re-filing their Research Mentoring Committee form (Appendix Item 1.2) with the PhD Graduate Adviser.

¹ This change of name was undertaken by the Executive Committee in November 2012.

3. *The Dissertation Committee.* After passing the comprehensive examinations, but **at least two weeks** before defending the dissertation proposal, every PhD student in the Public Policy Program wishing to move forward to candidacy must organize a Doctoral Dissertation Committee by submitting the LBJ School's "Doctoral Dissertation Committee Declaration Form" (1.3) to the PhD Graduate Adviser. The Dissertation Committee is usually, but not necessarily, a superset of the latest Research Mentoring Committee. The Dissertation Committee is responsible for evaluating the oral defense of the dissertation proposal, for advising the student on the research and writing of the dissertation, and for approving the final oral defense of the dissertation itself. The Dissertation Committee is also the primary vehicle for advising about PhD job placement upon graduation. From the University's perspective, the Dissertation Committee is officially appointed by the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies upon the recommendation of the PhD Graduate Adviser and the dissertation committee chair (supervisor) by means of a formal application for candidacy (see Section V, below, on PhD Candidacy). In accordance with Graduate School rules for candidacy, the Dissertation Committee normally consists of five members, at least three of whom (including the dissertation supervisor) must be members of the LBJ School's GSC, and at least one of whom must be a member of a UT Austin GSC outside of the LBJ School (see the relevant sections of the Graduate School Handbook for these and other details in Appendix 2). Changing the composition of the Dissertation Committee after it has been officially approved by the Graduate School can only be accomplished by special petition to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies with the approval of the LBJ School's PhD Graduate Adviser. Any such changes must be made well in advance (at least six weeks) of the dissertation defense.

IV. Overall Sequence of Events Leading to the PhD

The PhD Program in Public Policy consists of the following overall sequence of events:

1. *Matriculation and Development of a Plan of Study.* Within two months of matriculation, every entering PhD student must, in consultation with his or her Temporary Advising Committee, develop and file an initial Plan of Study with the PhD Graduate Adviser. The Plan of Study should identify the student's research goals, outline likely course plans for the next two academic years, and explain how the proposed coursework contributes to the achievement of PhD research goals. The purpose of the Plan of Study is to encourage each doctoral student to construct a coherent vision of his or her doctoral program, to identify any deficiencies needing attention, and design a timetable toward completion of all the doctoral program requirements.

In subsequent years (after matriculation) through until candidacy, all students are expected to complete the "Plan of Study" document (Appendix 1.1) sometimes towards

the end of the Spring semester. These annual reports will be reviewed by the PhD Executive Committee.

2. *Coursework.* All PhD students are normally expected to complete a minimum of 36 hours of coursework, including successful completion of the four core courses (details below, in Section V, Part a), as well as to register and participate in the PhD Colloquium. Students are also expected to enroll in additional graduate-level courses, approved by their faculty advisers, which are deemed relevant to their area of dissertation research. These typically include courses related to the substantive policy field of interest and courses in research methods. Although there is no minimum required number of courses before petitioning for PhD candidacy, it is strongly recommended that the student take three courses in his or her policy area; two courses in elective research methods; three courses in the relevant and applicable elective study area; as well as the required four core courses. Students are expected to take full advantage of other UT departments in selecting their courses. Students in pre-candidacy stage must seek approval from their committee chair and the PhD Graduate Adviser to take more than one conference course per semester. The typical course load during the first two years is nine credit hours (three courses) per semester, plus the zero-credit PhD Colloquium. From 2013-14 onwards, a 198T (one hour per week) Teaching Assistant (TA) training class will be offered by the LBJ School and will be required of all incoming PhD students as part of their academic training and in order to be appointed as TAs. Normally the 198T course will be taken in the Spring semester of the first or second year, but where necessary, it may be taken concurrently with a TAship. (Master's students wishing to TA will also be encouraged to take the 198T class, but it will not be required.) Students wishing to become AIs (Assistant Instructors) of undergraduates must take the three hour 398T **before** taking an AI appointment.
3. *PhD Candidacy.* This central milestone in a program of doctoral study is sometimes also referred to as the "All But Dissertation" (ABD) stage. The specific steps required to achieve PhD candidacy at the LBJ School, along with the associated deadlines, are detailed in Section V, below. Filing for candidacy requires that all requirements of the Program of Work be completed, and filing the Graduate School's "Application for Candidacy" form (<http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn>). Formal defense of the PhD proposal is conducted in public and is subject to the same norms as those for the final dissertation defense (see below). Students making normal progress through the Program achieve candidacy at some point during their 5th or 6th semester. Any student failing to attain candidacy by the end of the fourth year (8th semester) faces a hearing before the PhD Executive Committee. The Committee may terminate the student's participation in the PhD program at that time or may establish explicit expectations and deadlines for candidacy. Failure to meet these expectations and deadlines are grounds for immediate dismissal from the Program.

4. *Writing the Dissertation.* Once candidacy is achieved, PhD students must be continuously registered (minimum of three hours) in graduate-level coursework at the University of Texas at Austin for every long semester until the dissertation is defended. Note that nine hours is the requirement to be considered a full time student and is required for TA or RA employment. (Students registered for three hours who have financial aid will not be considered “full time” and may be liable to start repaying loans unless they are registered for the nine hours. Some external fellowships also require full time registration.) Registering for any number of graduate courses satisfies this requirement. Unless desiring additional substantive coursework, students usually first register for a one time only Dissertation Reading courses (PA 399R, 699R, or 999R) and thereafter, up through the semester of the dissertation defense, for any of the Dissertation Writing courses (PA 399W, 699W, or 999W). There is no distinction between the 399, 699, or 999 courses other than the number of associated credit hours (three, six or nine). As stated above, financial aid, fellowship, or student visa requirements and the number of additional courses being taken are factors that typically dictate the choice among the three dissertation credit-hour options.
5. *Filing for Graduation.* A student who is prepared to defend his or her dissertation must file for graduation with the Graduate School the semester of the defense. The deadline varies from year to year, but usually falls a few days after the 12th day of classes at the beginning of the semester. Each student is responsible for picking up his or her own copy of the latest “Graduation Packet for Doctoral Candidates” form from the Office of Graduate Studies (MAI 101), or downloading it from <http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/> and for following all the instructions outlined therein.
6. *Defending the Dissertation.* The Graduate School has strict rules for defending the dissertation. Among other things, the Graduate School requires that any dissertation defense be formally scheduled through the Office of Graduate Studies **at least two weeks** in advance by filing the “Request for Final Oral Examination” form (<http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/>). The LBJ School requires that any PhD student planning to defend the dissertation also notify the PhD Graduate Adviser at least two weeks in advance of the defense. (In addition, the date, time, place, title of dissertation and the composition of the committee should be publicized two weeks before the oral examination. The defense is considered to be a public examination and is open to all faculty, students and members of the public.) In accordance with the rules of the Graduate School, the PhD Executive Committee will pay special attention to the program and progress of students who are taking more than three years from the date of admission to PhD candidacy to complete the dissertation. The Committee is required to file an annual report to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies on the status of students who fall in this category. The Committee’s status report includes an outline of specific expectations and deadlines that the PhD Executive Committee has established with each candidate.

V. Specific Steps and Deadlines on the Path to Candidacy

Students in the doctoral Program at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs must fulfill the following requirements, at a minimum and in sequence, to be admitted to candidacy for the PhD in Public Policy:

- a) Complete 36 hours of coursework and successfully complete the four core courses;
- b) Pass the written comprehensive examinations;
- c) Pass the oral integrative comprehensive examination;
- d) Successfully defend a dissertation proposal; and,
- e) Submit the Graduate School's "Application for Candidacy" form (<http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn>)

Again, above and beyond the core course requirements, the LBJ School's GSC also expects every PhD student who petitions for candidacy to have successfully completed a reasonable number of additional graduate-level courses, approved by their faculty advisers, that are relevant to their area of dissertation research. Students must attain candidacy by the end of their fourth year (8th semester) or face a dismissal hearing before the PhD Executive Committee.

a. *Core Courses.*

Doctoral students must successfully complete the following four core PhD courses: Theory and Philosophy of Public Policy I and II; Advanced Research Methods of Public Policy; and Research Design. The LBJ School's PhD core courses are designed to establish a common intellectual foundation for appreciating the range of theoretical and methodological approaches to policy science. At the same time, they aim to provide a solid foundation for delving into the deep structure of the themes most relevant to each student's research interests. Students are expected to receive a grade of B or higher in each one of the core courses. If a student receives a B- or lower in any of the four core courses, he or she will have to re-take that course or courses. Students who do not have a B or higher in every one of the core courses will not be allowed to take the Comprehensive Examinations.

Up until candidacy students are also required to register for, and to attend, the PhD Colloquium. Once in candidacy students are encouraged to continue their participation in the Colloquium, and to make periodic contributions and presentations to it as their research permits. PhD students are normally expected to complete the core course sequence by the end of their fourth semester in the Program.

PhD Curriculum	
Year 1	
Fall Semester	Spring Semester
^a 1) Theory and Philosophy of Public Policy I ^b 2) Methods Course #1 3) Field Course or elective ^e 4) PhD Colloquium	^a 1) Theory and Philosophy of Public Policy II ^b 2) Advanced Research Methods 3) Field Course or elective ^e 4) PhD Colloquium 5) 198T Teaching Assistant training.
Year 2	
Fall Semester	Spring Semester
^c 1) Research Design 2) Field Course or elective 3) Elective ^e 4) PhD Colloquium	^d 1) Methods Course #2 2) Elective 3) Elective ^e 4) PhD Colloquium
^a Year-long course, divided in two parts, exploring the theoretical underpinnings of public policy. Includes political philosophy concepts and various theoretical approaches to the policy making process.	
^b Graduate course in quantitative or qualitative research methods identified in consultation with the student's advisers.	
^c A course that addresses a variety of topics in research methods with which all PhD students in public policy are expected to be familiar. The course includes discussion of broad controversies in social science methodology as well as specific topics not commonly covered elsewhere in first-year graduate courses.	
^d A course in research design that will provide a structured framework through which students can build on and apply their methods training and produce a quality research paper in their field of study.	
^e The PhD Colloquium is delineated as a zero credit course so that tuition fees are not incurred, but it is an integral and required part of the core coursework. All resident students (including those in candidacy) are expected to attend and to participate.	

b) The Comprehensive Examinations

bi. *The Written Comprehensive Examinations*

In order to be eligible to take the comprehensive examinations, the student must have obtained a minimum grade of B in every one of his or her core courses. PhD students are expected to take courses for a grade (i.e. not for credit/no credit), unless approved by their principal adviser and the graduate adviser, or unless the course is only offered on a credit/no credit basis.

Each PhD student must pass two written examinations that test his or her competency in both core areas of the LBJ School's doctoral policy studies at the end of the second year. The two written exams are offered once a year at the end of the summer sessions, and must be taken as a set. After the oral examination (below), if the student is deemed to have failed one of the written exams, then that exam is normally retaken during the following year's cycle.

When a student fails one of the written exams, or receives a Low Pass grade in one or both of the exams, the Exams Subcommittee makes a recommendation to the Executive Committee as to whether the student should continue in the program. This assessment takes into consideration not only the student's grade in the Comprehensive Exams, but also his or her overall performance (courses taken and grades obtained, reports from their faculty mentors, fulfillment of duties as a TA or GRA, and so on). The Comprehensive Exams Subcommittee will give individual feedback to every student who does not perform well in the exams. Depending on the student's overall performance, the Subcommittee will counsel a remediation plan; counsel the student as to whether he or she should continue in the PhD program; or counsel the student to pursue a terminal Master's degree.

Failing both written exams, or failing the same exam twice, is reported by the Comprehensive Exams Subcommittee to the PhD Executive Committee, usually with the recommendation that the student withdraw from the program.² If the Executive Committee concurs with this recommendation, then the case is referred to the GSC for action.

bii. *The Oral Integrative Comprehensive Examination*

The oral examination represents an opportunity to test the student's ability to think clearly and comprehensively about the design, execution, and evaluation of public policy research. It is also an opportunity for the student to discuss and improve upon the preliminary assessment of his or her performance in the written examination papers. Normally the oral exam is held no later than one week after the completion of the written comprehensive exams. Only after all candidates have completed the oral exam will the students be notified whether or not they have passed the comprehensive examinations (usually on the same day).

biii. *The Deadline for Completion of Comprehensive Examinations*

² As revised by the Executive Committee in November 2012, and again in March 2014.

PhD students making normal progress in the Program take the written exams following their fourth semester. As stated above, students are required to pass all the written comprehensive examinations by the end of their third year.

c. Preparation and Defense of the Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal defense is the keystone to PhD candidacy and marks the transfer of primary supervisory responsibility from the PhD Executive Committee to the student's own Dissertation Committee under the rules and regulations set by the Graduate School. A successful dissertation proposal is a signal from the LBJ School's GSC that the student in question is judged capable of conducting the level of research excellence required of a PhD dissertation.

After passing the comprehensive examinations, the prospective PhD candidate is required to formulate a research topic and a work plan to conduct the research leading to a PhD dissertation. The student must first form a Dissertation Committee supervised by a member of the Graduate Studies Committee of the LBJ School of Public Affairs (see Section III, Part 3, above, for details on the Dissertation Committee) and submit this information to the PhD Graduate Adviser by filing the LBJ School's "Doctoral Dissertation Committee Declaration Form" (Appendix Item 1.3) at least two weeks prior to the date of the defense. The timing of the proposal defense is determined by mutual agreement between the student and his or her Doctoral Committee. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that there has been adequate consultation with all committee members about the proposed research, and that they are willing to move to formal examination of the proposal. The Chair of the doctoral committee must provide the PhD Graduate Adviser with the specific date, time, and place of the proposal defense **at least two weeks** prior to the event and ensure that it is also advertised publicly. A student making steady and satisfactory progress normally defends the dissertation proposal at some point during the fifth or sixth semester of graduate study.

A student enrolled in the Doctoral Program at the LBJ School of Public Affairs must defend the dissertation proposal and apply to the Graduate School for candidacy before the end of the fourth year (eighth semester) of graduate study in the Program. Any student who fails to meet this deadline will be asked to defend his or her continued participation in the Program before the PhD Executive Committee (Section IV, Point 3 above).

As outlined above, the oral defense of the dissertation proposal is open to the LBJ School faculty, the Graduate Faculty of the University, students, and the public. The format of presentation will be determined by the student's Doctoral Committee, subject to the stipulations that it must allow sufficient time for questions and comments by the Committee as well as by the general audience. (These same rules apply to the final oral defense of the dissertation itself.)

While the official evaluation of the dissertation proposal and its defense are the prerogative of the Doctoral Committee, other members of the LBJ Faculty may take part in the process by

attending the defense and by providing comments to the student and to the Doctoral Committee. The Doctoral Committee makes final determination on the status of the proposal by declaring it: (1) accepted as is; (2) accepted with some modifications required; (3) unsatisfactory -- major modifications required; (4) rejected outright.

The student has successfully defended his or her proposal if the Dissertation Committee's determination falls in either of the first two categories described above. If the Committee deems a dissertation proposal to be unsatisfactory or rejects it, then the student will be required to develop a new proposal and defend it again, as outlined above. Although there is no limit on the number of times a student may present and defend a dissertation proposal, presenting a proposal which the Doctoral Committee rejects or judges to be unsatisfactory is cause for terminating the student's participation in the doctoral Program and triggers a hearing before the PhD Executive Committee. Any questions about the Dissertation Committee's actions or decisions can be brought before the PhD Executive Committee.

d. Submission of the Program of Work and the Application for Candidacy

To reach PhD candidacy, a successful proposal defense needs to be followed up by two rounds of paperwork. The first form, entitled "PhD in Public Policy Plan of Study/Program of Work," is internal to the LBJ School, but is required in order to forward the second round of paperwork, the "Application for Candidacy" form, to the Graduate School for official approval by the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies. Each student is personally responsible for initiating and processing all paperwork for PhD candidacy.

In the "LBJ School PhD Plan of Study/Program of Work" form, the student lists all courses approved by the LBJ School and by the University that have been taken toward the PhD degree. Any PA Conference Course taken for PhD credit must be taken with a faculty member of the LBJ School of Public Affairs. Conference courses must explicitly identify the name of the instructor and the course subject matter covered. To be complete, the "LBJ School PhD Program of Work" must be signed by: (1) the applicant; (2) the Supervisor of the Dissertation Committee; and (3) the PhD Graduate Adviser. The "PhD in Public Policy Plan of Study/Program of Work" form is attached as Appendix Item 1.1, but in practice this form will have been built incrementally each year by the student and reviewed by the PhD Executive Committee. The PhD Executive Committee will meet with the student if any problems emerge in the evaluation of an individual's Program of Work.

The second piece of paperwork, the Graduate School's "Application for Candidacy" form, is available from the Office of Graduate Studies web-site (<http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn>). It complements the "LBJ School PhD Program of Work" form and is the formal instrument that establishes the student's Dissertation Committee before the Graduate School. The Graduate School's rules governing the application are explained in the latest version of the instruction sheet accompanying the document itself. The form must be signed by: (1) the applicant; (2) the Supervisor of the Dissertation Committee; (3) the LBJ PhD Graduate Adviser after receiving a

copy of the completed “LBJ School PhD Program of Work” form; and, upon the Graduate School’s final approval, (4) the Dean of the Graduate School.

di) Revision. Effective starting in the 2012-13 academic year, the policy on extensions of doctoral candidacy is revised as follows: Candidacy extension will be required at the end of the second year after advancement, and annually thereafter. Extension requests will be based on the recommendation of the dissertation supervisor and a vote of the GSC.

e) Presentation and Defense of the Final Dissertation. See Appendix 2 for full details regarding the requirements for the preparation and defense of doctoral dissertations, associated fees, graduation ceremonies and convocations, etc. These rules and deadlines are set by the Office of Graduate Studies and **must be adhered to**. You are advised to study them carefully.

VI. Summary of Key Milestones and Deadlines

Students making normal progress through the LBJ School’s PhD Program in Public Policy are expected to complete their PhD in approximately eight semesters (four years). This includes at least four semesters (two years) of full-time coursework. Of course, some people will take less time to graduate, others more. The eight-semester schedule, nevertheless, provides a realistic guideline for the median student’s trajectory through the PhD Program in Public Policy. After two years in candidacy, each student’s progress is reviewed and candidacy continuation must be confirmed by a GSC vote. Figure 1 summarizes the key tasks or milestones on this path, along with their associated deadlines. Figure 2, in turn, summarizes task deadlines that must be met in order to avoid the PhD Executive Committee’s presumption that a student is making unsatisfactory progress in the Program.

Figure 1
Sequence of Key Events for a Student Making Normal Progress

Semester	Task or Milestone	Official Deadline
1	Submit Plan of Study	End of the second month
2	Convene Research Mentors (two faculty members and Graduate Adviser). (May be changed subsequently with the written agreement of the Graduate Adviser)	Sometime late during the second semester
3	Submit Revised Plan of Study	Beginning of the semester

4	Pass All Comprehensive Examinations	Since 2011, comprehensive exams have been held in August in the week before the beginning of the semester.
5	Form Dissertation Committee	
5/6 (by 8th semester latest)	(1) Defend dissertation proposal; (2) File for candidacy with the Graduate School	(1) Anytime, but with at least a two-week's notice; (2) Shortly after a successful proposal defense
6	Dissertation research and/or writing	
7	Dissertation research and/or writing	
7/8/+	GSC review of progress & vote	OGS rules require that every candidate be reviewed every year after the first two years completed in candidacy
9/9+	(1) File for graduation; (2) Finish and Defend dissertation	(1) Shortly after the 12 th class day; (2) Anytime, but with at least a two-week notice (more if there is a change in Committee membership)

Figure 2

Deadlines for Satisfactory Progress & Good Standing

Key Task or Milestone	Absolute Deadlines and Sanctions
Submit Plan/Statement of Study	Within two months of matriculation, and towards the end of the Spring semester of each academic year,

	until candidacy.
Form "Research Mentoring Committee" (formerly "Interim Doctoral Committee")	End of the second semester.
Pass All Comprehensive Examinations	End of sixth semester (third year).
Form Dissertation Committee	At least two weeks before the proposal defense. No exceptions.
Defend Dissertation Proposal	Normally in the fifth semester, but no later than the end of eighth semester (fourth year), or face hearing before the PhD Executive Committee.
File for candidacy with Graduate School	<p>LBJ Rule: End of eighth semester (fourth year) or face hearing before the PhD Executive Committee.</p> <p>Graduate School Rule: End of sixth year as first-year courses expire; any extensions require the (highly unlikely) approval of the LBJ School's GSC.</p> <p>Annual review of candidacy after two years since advancement. From 2012 onward, OGS requires that approval be by a GSC vote.</p>
File for Graduation	Shortly after the 12th class day of the semester of graduation, or risk being dropped from the graduation rolls.
Defend Dissertation	<p>PhD Executive Committee can impose absolutely final deadlines.</p> <p>Grad School Rules: Must be registered every semester; LBJ School GSC must submit annual report for students that have been more than two years in candidacy.</p>

APPENDIX 1
KEY LBJ SCHOOL FORMS

Appendix 1.1

PHD IN PUBLIC POLICY PLAN OF STUDY/PROGRAM OF WORK

**LBJ School of Public Affairs
University of Texas at Austin**

Student's Name: _____
UT EID: _____
Matriculation Year: _____
Date: _____

Likely course selections (beyond the core courses, in years 1 & 2) indicating where and how these relate to your research goals:

Approximate (Working) Title of Dissertation Topic Area:

Within two months of matriculation, and in April of each subsequent year, this form and its updates should be discussed with the faculty serving as Research Mentors and submitted to the PhD Graduate Adviser for review.

Signatures:

The Student: _____ Date: _____

The Faculty Mentor (name): _____

& Signature _____ Date: _____

The Faculty Mentor (name): _____

& Signature _____ Date: _____

PhD Graduate Adviser _____ Date: _____

Appendix 1.2

LBJ School of Public Affairs
University of Texas at Austin

Student's Name _____
EID _____
Date _____

RESEARCH MENTORING COMMITTEE DECLARATION FORM

Students in the PhD Program in Public Policy are assigned a Temporary Advisory Committee when they first enroll. The temporary committee formally ends sometime during the second semester. Students should use this form to declare two or three faculty members who have agreed to serve as their principal research mentors. The Research Mentoring Committee usually consists of two faculty members, at least one of whom is a member of the LBJ School's Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). The PhD Graduate Adviser sits on all Research Mentoring Committees in an ex officio capacity. The Research Mentoring Committee serves as the student's primary advisory body until the time comes to prepare the dissertation proposal. This form can also be used to change the membership of the Research Mentoring Committee any time up to the time the dissertation proposal is nearing completion.

Please list Research Mentors and obtain signatures (order is not important)

Name Signature

Name Signature

(3rd if desired – optional)

Name Signature

Please submit this form to the PhD Graduate Adviser

PhD Graduate Adviser Date

Appendix 1.3

**LBJ School of Public Affairs
University of Texas at Austin**

Student's Name _____

EID _____

Date _____

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION COMMITTEE DECLARATION FORM

After passing all the comprehensive examinations, but at least two weeks before defending the dissertation proposal, any PhD student in the Public Policy Program wishing to move forward to candidacy must organize a Doctoral Dissertation Committee by submitting this form. Students normally declare the membership of their doctoral dissertation committee when the dissertation proposal begins to take shape. The Doctoral Dissertation Committee is responsible for evaluating the oral defense of the dissertation proposal, for advising the student on the research and writing of the dissertation, and for approving the final oral defense of the dissertation itself. The Dissertation Committee normally consists of five members, at least three of whom (including the dissertation supervisor) must be members of the LBJ School's Graduate Studies Committee (GSC), and at least one of whom must be a member of a UT Austin GSC outside of the LBJ School.

After successfully defending the dissertation proposal, the student formally submits a petition for candidacy to the UT Graduate School. That petition includes a form for officially declaring the membership of the doctoral dissertation committee before the Graduate School. Changing the composition of the Dissertation Committee after it has been officially approved by the Graduate School can only be accomplished by special petition to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies with the approval of the LBJ School's PhD Graduate Adviser and dissertation committee chair (supervisor). Any such changes must be made well in advance (approximately 6 weeks) of the dissertation defense.

Name, Supervisor	Department	Rank	GSC status
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Name	Department	Rank	GSC status
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Name	Department	Rank	GSC status
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Name	Department	Rank	GSC status
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Name	Department	Rank	GSC status
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Please submit this form to the PhD Graduate Adviser

_____ PhD Graduate Adviser

Date

APPENDIX 2.

Additional Information about PhD Dissertations as Provided by the Office of Graduate Studies

The Dissertation Course

Students may not register for the dissertation course until they have been officially admitted to candidacy. The dissertation course 399R, 699R, or 999R may be taken only once; the -99W or -99 course must be taken at least once. A student may not receive advice and assistance from a member of the faculty in the preparation of the dissertation without being registered for the dissertation course (either -99R, -99W or -99). No grade should be submitted for -99R until the dissertation has been completed. At that time, a grade should be entered on the grade sheet for -99W or -99. The same letter grade is automatically entered for the -99R course as is entered for the -99W or -99. The dissertation course must be taken for a letter grade, not on a Credit/No Credit basis.

Dissertation

A dissertation, which must be an original contribution, to scholarship, is required of every candidate for the Ph.D. degrees. In the preparation and writing of the dissertation, the student should be aware of the following matters:

a. Dissertation to be in English

The dissertation will normally be written in English. Permission to write in a language other than English will be granted only if the following conditions are met: (1) it can be shown that the dissertation is likely to be published in that other language, (2) assurance can be given that faculty members competent both in the language and in the field are available and willing to serve on the dissertation committee, and (3) the waiver of the rule is sought at the time the student is admitted to candidacy.

Requests for a waiver of the rule must be submitted on the form, Petition to Write a Thesis, Report, Dissertation or Treatise in a Language Other than English, and bear the Graduate Adviser's signature. The form for request can be found here: http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/pdf/other_than_english.pdf

When permission has been granted to write the dissertation in a language other than English, an abstract and a substantial summary-and-conclusions section in English must be submitted simultaneously. The fact that most of the materials to be consulted by the student during the preparation of the dissertation are in another language is not a sufficient reason for writing in that other language, nor is an insufficient command of English an acceptable justification for an exception.

b. Publication of the Dissertation

All dissertations must be published. Normally, this is accomplished through electronic means. Information for publishing the dissertation in the accepted electronic format can be found at: <http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/etd/submit.html> . Currently, the electronic dissertation publication is handled through UMI Dissertation Publishing Service: <http://www.proquest.com/en-US/products/dissertations/>

c. Use of Copyrighted Material

Doctoral students may also seek copyright protection. Permission must be obtained for incorporation of copyrighted material in the dissertation (or thesis) beyond the "fair use" provision of copyright law.

Doctoral candidates are required to provide documentation of taking the university's Copyright Tutorial and passing the test at <http://www.lib.utsystem.edu/copyright/>.

The tutorial may be taken anytime before turning in the dissertation, but students are advised to take it early in candidacy, as it is designed to educate the student on the frequently confusing and changing copyright laws.

The tutorial site includes a test that provides a Certification of Completion via email after it has been taken and passed. A copy of this certification must be submitted by the time the dissertation is submitted or the dissertation may not be accepted and the student's graduation may be delayed or denied. Students may submit the certification at any time by printing a copy and delivering or mailing it to Doctoral Degree Evaluator, Office of Graduate Studies, Main 101, The University of Texas at Austin, Austin TX 78712 (campus mail code G0400).

d. Dissertation Format and Submission Instructions

Each semester, the Graduate School publishes instructions for Preparation of Doctoral Dissertations and Dissertation Abstracts. Dissertation formatting and submission guidelines are published in the general forms section of the Graduate School website: <http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/>.

The University of Texas Formatting Guidelines for Dissertation and Dissertation Abstracts can be found in the following document: <http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/pdf/dissformat.pdf>. Academic Computing and Instructional Technology Services (ACITS) offers a set of templates in MS Word 5 for the Macintosh and MS Word 6 for the Macintosh and for Windows that attend to the formatting tasks involved in producing a thesis or dissertation. For example, the Word templates have predefined styles for headings, captions, block-indented quotations, and body text, and they format all pages, manage all margins, and place page numbers properly. The template can be found at: <http://www.utexas.edu/its/tds/>.

Review of Final Draft of the Dissertation

A copy of the final draft of the dissertation reviewed for technical and grammatical correctness by the supervisor should be submitted to each member of the dissertation committee **not less than four weeks** before the date on which the student intends to defend the dissertation.

Final Oral - (Defense of the Dissertation)

A satisfactory final oral examination is required for the approval of a dissertation. A request to hold the final oral examination must be formally scheduled through the Office of Graduate Studies **at least two weeks in advance of the oral examination**. Exceptions to the two-week rule will seldom be approved because every member of the committee must have an ample opportunity to read the dissertation and the Office of Graduate Studies requires sufficient time to publicly post the oral exam and send official notification to committee members. Instructions and forms for filing for the oral exam can be found at the following link: http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/inst_final_oral.html.

Each member of the dissertation committee must indicate that the dissertation has been received and the committee member agrees to be present at the final oral examination (defense of dissertation). The OGS now requires that at least four members of the committee be physically present in the room (not on conference call or Skype hook-ups), and that at least three of the four examiners be members of the LBJ GSC. If for some reason three members cannot be present, then a senior alternate of the GSC may

participate as an observer. Where a committee member is unable to attend a defense, an explanation must be given on the back of the Request for Final Oral form and signed by the committee member, the chair, or the Graduate Adviser. The request signifies the acceptance of the doctoral dissertation for the purpose of giving the examination. The committee's decision to examine the student on the dissertation must be unanimous. At least **four** committee members including the supervisor must be present **in person** for the examination to be held (three of whom must be members of the LBJ GSC – see above).

The final oral examination will cover the dissertation and the general field of the dissertation, and such other parts of the program as the committee may determine. If all of the examiners are satisfied that the student has (1) completed a dissertation that is an independent investigation in the major field and itself constitutes a contribution of knowledge; (2) passed the final oral examination; and (3) submitted an abstract approved by the committee for publication by the University, they indicate approval on the Report of the Dissertation Defense. They also sign the dissertation and by doing so give it their official and scholarly imprimatur.

Every committee holding a final oral will be expected to report, through its chair, within two weeks after the examination. If the examination and the dissertation are found to be satisfactory, two weeks should be long enough for any final editorial changes the committee members may want to see before signing the report.

- Pass. The decision of the dissertation committee must be unanimous. When a student has only very minor revisions to make after defending the dissertation, the committee should feel free to sign the report and leave the overseeing of revisions to the supervisor.

The committee has three alternatives if it does not file a Pass report:

- Reconsideration. This decision indicates that extensive revision is necessary, but that the committee is willing to examine the rewriting without requiring another oral examination. When a committee asks for reconsideration, a letter from the supervisor explaining the situation should be sent to the Graduate School. The dissertation supervisor retains the gold form until the student satisfactorily completes the revision. If a committee member still has doubts after the rewriting, he or she may request another oral examination. The candidate has three months to complete requirements laid down by the committee after a report for reconsideration has been filed.
- Not Pass. This report indicates that the committee is not satisfied with the dissertation, but anticipates that it could be made satisfactory with rewriting. When such a decision is made, the committee returns the report unsigned, committee members submit their individual Report on Doctoral Dissertation indicating their dissatisfaction with the dissertation, and another oral is scheduled.
- Fail. This report and accompanying individual committee members' reports on the dissertation indicate that the committee has decided that the dissertation is unsatisfactory and the candidate may not rewrite. The dissent of a single member of the committee is usually considered enough to result in failure. In the event that a committee cannot agree upon a single decision, the matter is referred to the Graduate Dean for review. The results of the review are communicated to the student, the Graduate Adviser, the chair of the Graduate Studies Committee, the committee members, and the department chair.

Regardless of which decision is made, a report of the outcome must be made to the Graduate School within two weeks of the defense. The final oral examination should not be perfunctory; it should be treated as a formal occasion in which there is an opportunity for discussion and defense of the work the student has offered. The student has reached the summit of his or her graduate career, and the final oral offers the chance for a stimulating exchange that leaves all the participants richer as a result of the experience. Final oral examinations are open to other members of the faculty, and, with the committee's consent, to non-faculty. The Dean or the Associate Deans occasionally attend.

Submission of the Dissertation

The Dissertation will be submitted to the University Dissertation Publication Service, UMI. Instructions for submitting the dissertation online to UMI can be found at the UMI Dissertation Submission Site. Dissertation submission guidelines are published in the general forms section of the Graduate School website: <http://www.utexas.edu/ogs/pdn/>. When uploading the dissertation to UMI, students will be offered various publishing options. When considering these options, keep in mind that the Texas Digital Library provides Open Access to all dissertations produced at UT Austin free of charge. Students will be billed for the selected UMI publishing and copyright registration services: Traditional Publishing, \$65; Open Access Publishing, \$160; Registration of Copyright, \$65. Payment is required at the time of upload.

The dissertation is being published by UMI and by the Texas Digital Libraries. When UT delivers the dissertation to UMI for publication, a copy is also provided to the Texas Digital Libraries. Students should note that restrictions and embargos requested from UMI do not apply to the Texas Digital Libraries. A student may request permission from the Graduate Dean to delay making the dissertation available to the public through the Texas Digital Libraries for up to one year in order to protect patent or other rights. This request must be supported by a written recommendation from the dissertation supervisor and must be submitted and approved prior to your graduation. If no petition is made to the Dean, the dissertation will be searchable on the web and available free from UT.

Approval of the Degree

Upon approval by the dissertation committee of the dissertation and its defense, the Committee on Graduate Studies must then certify that all assigned work has been completed, including any internship or practicum, all examinations required by the graduate program have been passed, and the student is entitled to the award of the doctoral degree.

Graduation Fee

Candidates for the doctoral degree must submit a nonrefundable fee with the application for the degree. The fee covers the costs of certification of degree candidates. If a student does not graduate in the semester for which the fee was originally submitted, he or she must pay another application fee with any subsequent application to graduate.

Commencement and Graduate School Convocations

In May, two ceremonies honor master's and doctoral graduates. The master's and doctoral convocations are held on the same day. All graduates are individually recognized and hooded by the dean of their academic college. The Graduate School coordinates annual awards programs to honor outstanding individuals and these awards are presented at the Graduate School Convocation each spring. The Graduate School holds no graduation ceremony in the summer, though summer graduates are invited to participate in the May convocation following their summer graduation. Information is sent to summer and fall graduates in the middle of the spring semester following their graduation.

Many individual university colleges and departments hold graduation ceremonies for graduate and undergraduate students each semester, but only the Graduate School convocation is designated for students earning graduate degrees. For information on which colleges and departments offer graduation exercises review the commencement schedule.

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