

PhD Requirements by Year

See <https://polisci.columbia.edu/content/phd-requirements> for requirements in detail.

Year	Registration	Course Requirements	Other Academic Requirements	Teaching Requirements	Key Requirements for Good Standing*
1	1 Residence Unit (RU) each semester	Usually 8, selected to meet MA and MPhil course requirements (courses taken for the MA also fulfill MPhil course requirements); course distribution requirements here: https://polisci.columbia.edu/content/phd-requirements	Apply for transfer credit as appropriate (form available in "Graduate Forms Library" on department website)	None	Cumulative GPA at least 3.0 in all courses; no more than 1 mark of Incomplete; timely satisfactory progress toward all degree requirements, including those in the "Other Academic Requirements" column. Apply for MA degree on SSOL (MA must be conferred by May of second year)
2	1 Residence Unit (RU) each semester	Remaining 4 or more as needed to meet MPhil course requirements and to prepare for exams and the dissertation; course distribution requirements here: https://polisci.columbia.edu/content/phd-requirements	Special Minor declarations due end of fall semester (form available in "Graduate Forms Library" on department website)	2 semesters	Cumulative GPA at least 3.0 in all courses; no more than 1 mark of Incomplete; Cumulative GPA in Political Science courses of at least 3.5 and no more than one mark of Incomplete required to take comprehensive exams in third year; timely satisfactory progress toward all degree requirements, including those in the "Other Academic Requirements" column; conferral of MA no later than May of the fourth semester (Apply for degree on SSOL). Note: To receive the degree, students in all MA programs are required to hold a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0, and to complete all coursework and receive letter grades replacing all marks of Incomplete (IN) or Credit Pending (CP), whether or not the course is required for the degree.
3	1 Residence Unit (RU) each semester unless a prior MA has been awarded (see Graduate Program Coordinator with questions)	2 semesters of Dissertation Seminar. Additional courses as needed to meet degree requirements and support dissertation research and writing	Comprehensive exams; Mini-APSA; complete special minor; defend dissertation proposal	2 semesters	Cumulative GPA at least 3.0 in all courses; no more than 1 mark of Incomplete; timely satisfactory progress toward all degree requirements, including those in the "Other Academic Requirements" column; apply to Graduate Program Coordinator for MPhil degree (MPhil must be conferred by May of fourth year)
4	ER or MF	Not usually	Defend dissertation proposal by May 31 if not defended in Year 3; present work at student-organized seminar	Usually 2 semesters**	Cumulative GPA at least 3.0 in all courses; timely satisfactory progress toward all degree requirements, including those in the "Other Academic Requirements" column; conferral of MPhil no later than May of the eighth semester (apply to Graduate Program Coordinator) Note: Students are required to complete all work and receive grades for all courses with the mark of Incomplete (IN) or Credit Pending (CP) before receiving the MPhil, whether or not the course is a requirement for the degree.
5	ER or MF	Not usually	Dissertation research, writing, defense, and deposit	Not usually**	Timely satisfactory progress toward the PhD
6-7	ER or MF	Not usually	Dissertation research, writing, defense, and deposit	Students are eligible for institutional financial aid, including teaching fellowships.	Timely satisfactory progress toward the PhD
8-9	MF	Not usually	Dissertation research, writing, defense, and deposit	Students are not eligible for institutional financial aid	Satisfactory progress toward defense and deposit of the dissertation; students are allowed nine years of continuous registration (not including official leaves of absence) to satisfy all requirements for the doctoral degree. After their seventh year of registration in a PhD program, GSAS students in the Arts and Sciences are not eligible for housing or for funding from GSAS or the Arts and Sciences Division.

*This chart presents key requirements for maintaining good standing. Students are expected to be familiar with ALL requirements announced on the department and GSAS websites.

<https://polisci.columbia.edu/content/phd-requirements>

<https://gsas.columbia.edu/student-guide/policy-handbook/degree-requirements>

**Students on multi-year GSAS fellowship who have obtained the MPhil and approval of the dissertation proposal are entitled to two semesters of Dissertation Fellowship with approval of the DGS and GSAS.

Usually, eligible students take Dissertation Fellowship in the fifth year.