

Graduate Student Mentoring and Degree Timeline

Pairing Students with Mentors

A successful mentoring program depends upon the quality of the mentor-student pairing. In order to maximize the probability of a successful pairing, the mentor and mentoring team selection process will be as follows:

1. Designation of the student's primary field of study—Students must indicate a “field of specialization” on their application for admission to the graduate program, so in most cases designation of a student's primary field will be based on self-identification. In those instances where students indicate a field of specialization that is not an identifiable field—some simply put “government and politics”—the Admissions committee will identify a primary field based on the student's statement of purpose.
2. Mentor selection—The Director of Graduate Studies (hereafter, DGS) will select—in consultation with the relevant field coordinator—one mentor for each incoming student from the student's primary field. Whenever possible, the DGS will accommodate (1) faculty requests to advise a specific student and (2) student requests to work with a particular faculty mentor. If at any point during the student's matriculation either the faculty member *or* the student wishes to end the mentoring relationship, the DGS—in consultation with the student and the relevant field coordinator—will select a replacement mentor. Given the limitations inherent in the initial selection, some turnover is to be expected.

Timeline of Activities

1. First year
 - a. In advance of initial matriculation:
 - i. Meet with mentor to discuss research interests and course offerings.
 - ii. Develop a tentative schedule for completing departmental and major and minor field requirements.
 - b. First semester
 - i. Complete one or more departmental requirements.
 - ii. Complete one field core.
 - c. Second semester
 - i. Complete one or more departmental requirements
 - ii. Complete second field core
 - iii. Take one (or more) upper level courses in major/minor field.
 - iv. Identify second mentorship committee member. If student is planning to complete a self-designed secondary field, this second member must be from the self-designed field.

2. Second year

a. First semester

- i. By the start of classes students will submit to their mentorship committee a CV and unofficial transcript. Before October 1 students will meet with the mentorship committee to discuss their progress, research interests, and how those interests fit with current faculty expertise. Within two weeks after the meeting the mentor will submit to the Director of Graduate Studies a one to two page evaluative report of student progress with suggestions for improvement (when necessary). Ideally, meetings should include all members of the mentorship committee but if that is not possible the student will meet with the committee members individually; the regular committee members will then submit notes from their discussion with the student to the mentor for possible inclusion in the evaluative report. The evaluative report should include assessments of the student's performance in classes, research interest fit with GVPT faculty, ability to conduct research, and scholarly potential.
- ii. Complete core requirements for both primary and secondary fields (if not already done).
- iii. Complete departmental requirements (if not already done).
- iv. Take one (or more) upper level courses in major/minor field.

b. Second semester

- i. Complete any remaining departmental or field core requirements.
- ii. Take two upper level courses in major/minor field.
- iii. Choose a third member for the mentorship committee (either from student's primary or secondary field—depending upon the field of the second member of the mentorship committee).
- iv. Begin discussions with mentor regarding topics for the paper requirement and begin work on the paper.

3. Summer immediately prior to the beginning of the third year

- a. Continue working on the paper requirement project.
- b. Pass comprehensive exam in one field.

4. Third Year

a. First semester

- i. By the start of classes students will submit to their mentorship committee a CV and unofficial transcript. Before October 1 students will meet with the mentorship committee to discuss their progress, research interests, and how those interests fit with current faculty expertise. Within two weeks after the meeting the mentor will submit to the Director of Graduate Studies a one to two page evaluative report of student progress with suggestions for improvement (when necessary). Ideally, meetings should include all members of the mentorship committee but if that is not possible the student will meet with the committee members individually; the regular committee members will then submit notes from their discussion with the student to the mentor for possible inclusion in the evaluative report. The evaluative report

should include assessments of the student's performance in classes, research interest fit with GVPT faculty, ability to conduct research, and scholarly potential.

- ii. Complete primary or secondary field course requirements.
- iii. Take an elective course. This might be a methods course.
- iv. If passed primary field exam during previous summer, hold pre-proposal meeting.
- v. Finish and submit paper requirement.
- vi. If appropriate, prepare fellowship/funding applications for fieldwork.

b. January—Pass comprehensive exam in additional field.

c. Second semester

- i. Complete any remaining course requirements.
- ii. Take an elective course. This might be a methods course.
- iii. Complete paper requirement, if not already done, or revise and resubmit paper requirement.
- iv. Defend dissertation prospectus.
- v. Discuss progress with mentorship committee.

5. Summer immediately prior to the beginning of the fourth year

- a. Revise and resubmit paper requirement (if not already passed)
- b. Pass remaining comprehensive exam (if not already passed).

6. Fourth year*

a. First semester

- i. Defend prospectus (if not already done).
- ii. Work on dissertation.

b. Second semester

- i. Work on dissertation

7. Fifth year

a. First semester

- i. Work on dissertation
- ii. Conduct job search

b. Second semester

- i. Defend dissertation
- ii. Get job.

* For students on funded fieldwork, the program clock will stop. So, if a student has a fellowship for a year of fieldwork in what would normally be that student's fourth year in the program, the student will be expected to complete the fourth-year milestones during the fifth year and so on. Students may defer departmental funding commitments for the semester or year during which they are completing externally-funded fieldwork.