

# Ph.D. Program Handbook



School of International Service  
American University

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## **Introduction**

### **Purpose of this Handbook**

This publication serves as a comprehensive source for students and faculty delineating the procedures of the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) program in International Relations at the School of International Service (SIS) of American University (AU).

Ph.D. students and faculty should refer to this Handbook for answers to questions they might have regarding Ph.D. degree requirements and for information regarding other Ph.D. Program procedures and practices.

*American University Academic Regulations* and the *American University Catalogue* establish the framework for this Handbook. American University regulations take precedence over the SIS Ph.D. Program Handbook.

This information is subject to change. If *American University Academic Regulations*, the *American University Catalogue*, or other American University documents and procedures change in ways that affect the SIS Ph.D. Program Handbook, the University documents and procedures immediately supercede this Handbook. If the SIS PhD Committee, SIS Council or SIS Dean change the SIS Ph.D. program, the Handbook will be changed to reflect the new procedures. The Director of Doctoral Studies also reserves the right to make minor changes the Handbook in order to make the description of existing procedures and practices clearer or to eliminate errors in the Handbook text.

Only the most recent version of the Handbook is valid. The SIS Ph.D. web site always has the most recent version of the SIS Ph.D. Program Handbook. If you have a paper copy of the SIS PhD Program Handbook, it is advisable to check SIS Ph.D. program web site to see if you have the latest version <<http://www.american.edu/sis/academics/phd/index.html>>.

Please refer any questions, comments, or suggestions to the Director of Doctoral Studies.

## **Courses & Credit Requirements**

### **Credit Requirements**

Students are required to earn a total of 72 credits in order to satisfy the program's course requirements. Credits fall into two categories, coursework credits and dissertation supervision credits. Students must complete:

- 60 coursework credits
- 12 dissertation supervision credits

Each student is encouraged to schedule a meeting with the Ph.D. Academic Adviser early on in the first year to develop a plan for completing the credit requirements of the Ph.D. program. Subsequently, each student should meet with the Ph.D. Academic Adviser at least once a year to insure that the student is making good progress toward completing the required credits.

### **Transfer Credits**

Students entering with graduate coursework may transfer up to 30 credits taken from an accredited university (the Ph.D. Academic Adviser will consider and articulate transfer credits from universities outside of North America, subject to American University and SIS regulations, established practice and the review of the Director of Doctoral Studies). Each full course is worth three credits. Only those credits earned through coursework may be transferred. These transfer credits will be directly applied to the 60 credit requirement for coursework.

One official copy of the student graduate transcript must be sent to the Ph.D. Academic Adviser, so that it may be included in the student's official records. Each student wishing to transfer credits must schedule a meeting with the Ph.D. Academic Adviser to determine the number of credits that can be applied to the SIS requirements.

### **Students with No Transfer Credits**

Students entering the program with only a Bachelor's degree should be in close contact with the Ph.D. Academic Adviser to develop a plan for satisfying the credit requirements for the program in a mutually satisfactory fashion to expedite good progress in the program. Options available include taking elective courses for four credits and/or studying during a summer session.

## Core Courses

The SIS Ph.D. program has developed a set of core courses intended to provide students with a broad understanding of the debates within international relations scholarship and to provide students with the foundations for acquiring the methodological skills needed to assess and produce advanced scholarship. These courses, which are taken during the first three semesters, are:

Comparative and Regional Studies Proseminar  
International Relations Proseminar  
Quantitative Analysis in International Affairs  
Social Theory in Comparative and International Relations  
Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations  
Seminar in Advanced Research Design

Each of the courses is worth four credits. The student will register for the three credits that are available in the course catalog. Each student will then be registered for SIS-790 to cover the additional credit for the course (e.g. in the first semester, students will register for three required classes for a subtotal of nine credits, and then will also be registered for three credits of SIS-790, totaling 12 credits).

## Fourth Credit Option

For all non-core graduate courses offered in SIS, students have the option of taking an additional credit. This system is designed to aid the student in expediting the completion of coursework, if so chosen. The student will need to discuss with the faculty member teaching the class the additional assignments required to earn a fourth credit for the course. Once the student and the instructor have agreed on the additional work, the student will need to register for one credit of SIS-790.

The following are possible schedules when a student fully utilizes the fourth credit option:

With a Masters: transfer credits (30) + six core courses (24) + two additional classes (6)  
Without a Masters: six core courses (24) + nine additional classes (36)

## Dissertation Credits

Students should plan to register for dissertation credits prior to the end of their third year. This should be done so that the student will have to pay for as few credits as possible once the fellowship ends after the completion of the third year.

## **Examinations**

American University requires that each Ph.D. student pass four comprehensive examinations, two of which must be written. Ph.D. students at the School of International Service fulfill this requirement by taking two written comprehensive examinations, an oral defense of the dissertation prospectus (which is delineated in the “Dissertation” section of this handbook) and an oral qualifying examination taken at the end of the first year. A student reaches the “All But Dissertation “(ABD) stage when he or she completes all course work, the language requirement (see the “Miscellaneous” section of this handbook) and all four comprehensive exams.

### **Oral Qualifying Exam (OQE)**

At the end of the first year, students will normally take the Oral Qualifying Exam (OQE). This is an oral exam intended to ensure that each student has made good progress toward understanding the major debates in the field of international relations, broadly defined. In other words, the OQE is designed so that the student can demonstrate a good grasp of the material covered in the core courses from the first year.

The Director of Doctoral Studies and two other members of the faculty who taught a PhD core course to the cohort of students taking the OQE serve as examiners. If for some reason an insufficient number of these instructors are available, the Director of Doctoral Studies will endeavor to secure a faculty member who has taught a core PhD course in a previous year to serve as an examiner. Any SIS faculty member is eligible to serve as an examiner, however.

The exam tests a student’s substantive knowledge of four core courses taken in the first year: Comparative and Regional Studies Proseminar (SIS-700), International Relations Proseminar (SIS-701), Social Theory (SIS-705) and Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations (SIS-714). The exam is divided into four 20-minute segments. In each segment, the student has up to five minutes to make a presentation on a literature and/or method from a core course, explaining the essence of the discussions surrounding the selected body of work and why the student finds it interesting and/or useful in her/his scholarly pursuits. The three examiners will then have 5 minutes each to pose questions to the student. Each of the four student presentations must come from a different core course. The student has discretion over the order of the presentations. Students are to submit their proposed examination topics to the Director of Doctoral Studies for approval well before the OQE in order to ensure that they are of appropriate focus and scope.

Since the examination is based on material learned in the first-year core courses, questions may only be based on the required readings listed on the syllabi of the four core courses listed above, plus any additional literature that the student introduces during the

examination itself. The Director of Doctoral Studies will distribute the core-course syllabi to the examiners prior to the OQE, so that the examiners will be aware of the scope of the examination. The examination will last 1 hour and twenty minutes.

At the conclusion of the OQE, the student will be asked to leave the room. The faculty panel will then take no longer than 30 minutes to deliberate on the student's performance on the exam as a whole. The result will be determined through a deliberative process whereby the panel will come to a consensus conclusion about the outcome. The student will be brought back into the room and told the results. The possible outcomes are pass or fail.

To pass the examination, the student must demonstrate mastery of the material covered in the examination that is commensurate with what would be expected of a first-year PhD student.

The examining panel will give a student who fails the exam a detailed rationale for this decision. The student should leave the OQE knowing the specific areas that need to be addressed prior to the rescheduling of the OQE. A student who has failed the OQE will be given a second opportunity to take the exam. The Director of Doctoral Studies and the student will determine when a student is ready to make a second attempt. Failures will not appear in any way on the student's transcript.

Normally, a student will be permitted no more than two opportunities to pass the OQE. A student who fails to pass the OQE after a second attempt will be given an opportunity to obtain a terminal Master's degree at SIS.

A student may not postpone a scheduled OQE with less than seven days notice. Failure to appear at an examination will still result in the use of an opportunity to take the OQE unless the student subsequently produces a note from an M.D. or another health professional that accounts for the student's absence, or documentation of a severe family emergency.

Upon completion of the exam, the student's transcript will reflect the following entry: Oral Qualifying Exam - Satisfactory.

### **Written Comprehensive Examinations**

Each student is required to pass two written comprehensive examinations. All of the established SIS fields listed below are required to offer an examination two times a year.

Comparative and Regional Studies  
Global Environmental Policy

International Communication  
International Development  
International Economic Policy  
International Peace and Conflict Resolution  
International Politics  
US Foreign Policy

There is a set examination schedule. In both the Fall and Spring semesters, the exams will be offered some time in the second week of classes. For the Fall examination students must inform the Ph.D. Academic Adviser by June 15. The notification date for the Spring examination is November 15. Individual Field Coordinators are required to have prepared comprehensive examinations at the start of the Fall and Spring semesters whenever at least one student makes a timely request to take the examination. An individual Field Coordinator also has the discretion, but no obligation, to offer comprehensive examinations at additional times, if the Field Coordinator so wishes. The Ph.D. Academic Adviser will inform the director of the individual fields the number of students who will be taking the exam. Each field director will supply to the Ph.D. Academic Adviser a copy of the exam questions one week prior to the date of the examination.

Each field has a certain amount of discretion in the construction of their exams. However, exams are generally structured in the following way: students will have four to six hours to select and answer three or four questions from a larger list of questions on the exam.

Students normally write comprehensive examinations on computers in a designated AU computer laboratory. Students are permitted to write the exam by hand; the Ph.D. Academic Adviser should be notified prior to the exam if this is the intent of the student.

At the conclusion of the exam, students using a computer will print a copy of their answers with the assigned exam code included in the header (each student will be assigned an ID number; this is done to maintain the anonymity of the student during grading). The following business day, the Ph.D. Academic Adviser will distribute the exams to the readers from each field.

Initially, there will be two readers for each exam. These readers are determined by the appropriate Field Coordinator. The first two readers will be given four weeks to read and grade the exams. If both readers agree on the results, the Ph.D. Academic Adviser will inform the student once the paperwork has been completed. If there is disagreement on the results, a third reader will be given two weeks to grade the exam. In this case, the majority decision will be the final result, and the student will be informed once the paperwork has been completed. Ultimately, the student should receive their results within six weeks of the completion of the exam.

The possible results are: “pass” with distinction, “pass” or “fail”. Failures will not appear in any way on the student’s transcript.

Normally, a student will be permitted no more than two opportunities to pass a written Ph.D. comprehensive examination. A student who fails to pass after a second attempt may take comprehensive examinations in the remaining fields or write a self-constructed examination. A student who is unable to pass two written Ph.D. examinations will be given an opportunity to obtain a terminal Master’s degree at SIS.

### **Self-Constructed Examination**

Instead of taking a written comprehensive examination in one of the established SIS fields, a student has the option of constructing one written exam that is tailored to a student’s particular interests. Many students have availed themselves of this option, but one should know at the outset that there is a significant amount of work involved. The student must find three faculty members willing to develop, write and read the exam.

The three faculty members involved determine the format for the construction and administration of a self-constructed exam in consultation with the student. The exam must be written and conform to American University and SIS procedures and regulations for comprehensive examinations.

In order for a self-constructed exam to be approved, the student must submit to the Director of Doctoral Studies the following information in the format of a memorandum:

- 1) The title of the examination field
- 2) Intellectual rationale for the independent field of study (written in prose and not to exceed one page, single spaced)
- 3) A list of relevant courses associated with the subject matter of the exam
- 4) A comprehensive list of literatures associated with the subject matter of the exam
- 5) A statement outlining the format for administering the exam, in particular
  - a. Is the format to be sit down or take-home? (If the exam is to have a sit-down format, the Ph.D. Academic Adviser needs three weeks notice to schedule a room and proctoring)
  - b. What are the means and media of submission (e.g., is e-mail submission an option)?
  - c. The order of readers (i.e., who are the two initial readers and who is the third reader?)
- 6) A signature page listing participating faculty members, including the Director of Doctoral studies. The faculty signatures indicate that the faculty member has

agreed to serve both in the preparation of the student for the examination and the grading of the examination.

Normally, the student first works with three faculty members to develop the exam and then provides the Director of Doctoral Studies with a completed draft. The Director of Doctoral Studies either approves it or sends it back for revisions. A student may wish to consult with the Director of Doctoral Studies at the outset to receive a preliminary assessment whether the scope and content of the proposed field is appropriate.

In the case of self-constructed exams, the student is not bound by the August and January examination dates. However, the student, faculty readers and the Ph.D. Academic Adviser must all agree on an appropriate time for the administering of a sit-down exam. Upon completion of the exam, the reading and grading processes will be the same as the standard field exams.

## **Dissertation**

The writing of a dissertation is the central piece of the doctoral program. There are three phases of this process: assembling a dissertation committee, the prospectus defense, and the dissertation defense. The student is responsible for coordinating and completing each phase.

### **Assembling a Dissertation Committee**

Each student is responsible for initiating the construction of her/his dissertation committee. This permits each student to shape the process to meet specific needs. Constructing a committee must conform to the following requirements:

- All committee members must have received a doctoral degree from an accredited university.
- A committee must consist of between three and five members.
- The committee chair must be a faculty member in the School of International Service.
- Two of the committee members must be from American University.

It is often advantageous for a student to have one or more committee members from outside the university. If a student chooses to have a committee member from outside the university, the student is solely responsible for obtaining comments on the dissertation as it progresses, and making arrangements for the external members to be present for the prospectus and dissertation defenses, or to participate via speakerphone.

The Ph.D. Academic Adviser will provide a form to be completed by the student containing the members of the committee. The student will inform the Director of Doctoral Studies of the composition of the committee by submitting the completed committee-member form. The Director of Doctoral Studies and the Dean of SIS must approve the committee.

A student may change the composition of a dissertation committee at any time. The student is obliged to inform the Director of Doctoral Studies in writing of any change immediately. The Director of Doctoral Studies and the Dean of SIS must approve a change in the composition of a dissertation committee for it to be official.

### **Writing the Dissertation Prospectus**

The dissertation prospectus is intended to articulate the planned approach for the writing of the dissertation. The body of the text of the prospectus should not exceed 3,000 words, and should address the following questions:

- What is the question the dissertation is to address?
- What do we know about this issue now (i.e., the state of the literature)?
- How am I going to investigate it (i.e., methodology)?
- What is my dissertation going to contribute?

The prospectus should also contain the following:

- An appendix that includes a timeline detailing a schedule for completion of the dissertation.
- A bibliography that contains *relevant* works.

Faculty members will ensure that the prospectus meets these guidelines in terms of length, content and format.

### **The Prospectus Defense**

The prospectus defense is one of the four comprehensive exams that the University requires of all Ph.D. students (see the “Examinations” section of this Handbook for a description of the other three). The purpose of the prospectus defense is two-fold. It is an assessment of student’s readiness to proceed with the research portion of the dissertation. It is also an opportunity for the dissertation committee and the Director of Doctoral Studies to provide the student with the constructive advice in a collective format regarding the project.

The dissertation committee and the Director of Doctoral Studies must approve the prospectus. The student will submit a copy of the prospectus to the committee and the Director of Doctoral Studies four weeks prior to the proposed date of the prospectus defense. The committee and the Director of Doctoral Studies will have one week to read the prospectus. Within two weeks of the initial submission, the Director of Doctoral Studies will consult with the committee chair to determine if the student is ready to move forward with the defense.

If it is determined that the prospectus needs further revisions, the committee chair and Director of Doctoral Studies will discuss with the student what issues must be addressed. At this time, the committee chair and the Director of Doctoral Studies, in consultation with the student, will also determine a course of action for moving forward. A new two-week period of reading and consultation as described above will commence when the student submits a revised draft of the prospectus.

Upon receiving approval to proceed with the defense, the student will find a time during which the examiners can all attend and a room for the defense. The rooms most frequently used are the International Relations Conference Room in Clark Hall, room 130 (to reserve the room, call ext. 2496), Bender Library Archive Reading Room (ext. 3255) and SIS 14 (ext. 1603). Once the time and place have been determined, the student must inform the Ph.D. Academic Adviser so that an announcement can go out to the academic community.

The prospectus examination committee consists of the student's dissertation committee and the Director of Doctoral Studies. The Director of Doctoral Studies is the Chair of the prospectus examination committee.

The prospectus defense is open to the academic community at large. Students are welcome to invite individuals to attend. If the student has selected one or more committee member from outside American University, the student must arrange for that person to attend, or to be present via conference call. The student should inform all of the members of the prospectus examination committee when such measures are necessary and take this into account when selecting a room for the defense.

The prospectus defense and evaluation takes approximately two hours.

The format of the prospectus defense will be as follows:

1. The student will be given 15 minutes to present a brief summary of the prospectus.
2. The student should construct the presentation based on the knowledge that the committee has already read the prospectus.
3. Each member of the prospectus examination committee will be given 15 minutes to question the student about the proposed research (other committee members may ask questions during another member's time if it is a question or answer clarification or specifically relevant to the issue at hand).
4. A final 10 minutes will be given for questions from other members of the academic community in attendance.
5. The student and others in attendance will be asked to leave the room while the members of the prospectus examination committee discuss the merits of the prospectus defense.
6. Within 30 minutes, the student will be asked to return to the room so that the Director of Doctoral Studies can inform the student of the outcome of the defense.
7. A consensus decision determines the result of the defense.

The possible outcomes are as follows:

- **Pass** – the student may go forward with the proposed research.

- **Provisional Pass** – the student will be given specific areas of the prospectus that must be addressed before the research can proceed. The examining committee also determines to whom the revisions are to be submitted in order for the results of the defense to be changed to “Pass.”
- **Fail** – the student will be informed of the specific deficiencies of the prospectus so that they may move forward with developing another draft, and the process can be initiated again.

No entry will be made in a student’s record until the student receives a “Pass” from the committee; provisional passes and failures will not appear on the student’s transcript at anytime.

A student is expected to update her/his dissertation design as the project evolves as a result of research. Under most circumstances, the student should simply keep the dissertation committee informed of these developments. No other action is required. A dissertation Chair has the discretion to ask for a new proposal if the research *question, method* or *subject matter* changes substantially enough to warrant it. There will be no new prospectus defense in such instances, however. The dissertation committee has the responsibility to ensure that the content, scope and method of the new proposal are appropriate for a Ph.D. dissertation.

### **Human Subjects Research**

Students who will be doing research that involves human subjects, must have their research program cleared by the American University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB). Information about guidelines and procedures can be found at the IRB’s website: [www.american.edu/academic.depts/provost/osp/IRB.htm](http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/provost/osp/IRB.htm).

### **Dissertation Format and Submission Requirements**

The University has detailed set of requirements for formatting and submitting a dissertation. Many aspects of it are to meet the specifications set out by the organization that indexes and disseminates all dissertations in the United States in a variety of formats. The University **only** accepts dissertations that conform to its requirements and that are submitted in conformance with its timetable. As a result, it is important for you to familiarize yourself with these early on in the process of writing your dissertation. The American University library maintains a website to help you: [www.american.edu/academic.depts/provost/2/guidelines/index.htm](http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/provost/2/guidelines/index.htm). It includes a very useful “Checklist for AU/Dissertation Completion.”

### **The Dissertation Defense**

Once the student has completed the research and written the dissertation, it must be submitted to the committee for review. The format of the final product must adhere to American University guidelines, which can be found at the Library website: [www.library.american.edu/about/services/dissertations.html](http://www.library.american.edu/about/services/dissertations.html).

The final draft of the dissertation must be submitted for review to the dissertation committee members four weeks prior to the date of the proposed defense. The committee will have two weeks to read the dissertation. Within that two week period, the committee will inform the student if the dissertation is ready to move forward to the defense. If revisions need to be made, the student will be provided with details of what items need to be addressed. If the committee believes that the student may move forward, the date for the defense can be set.

The student will find a time when the dissertation committee members are all available and to arrange a room for the defense of the dissertation. All committee members will participate in the defense, including members from outside American University, either in person or via a conference call. It will be the student's responsibility to insure that all members are in attendance. If the student has selected one or more committee member from outside American University, the student must arrange for that person to attend or be present via conference call.

A public notification of the defense must be published two weeks prior to the scheduled date.

The procedure of the dissertation defense will be as follows:

1. The student will be given 20 minutes to present a brief summary of the dissertation findings.
2. Each committee member will be given 15 minutes to question the student about the dissertation (other committee members may ask questions during another member's time if it is specifically relevant to the issue at hand).
3. A final 10 minutes will be given for questions from other members of the academic community in attendance.
4. The student and others in attendance will be asked to leave the room while the committee members debate the merits of the dissertation.
5. Within 30 minutes, the student will be asked to return to the room so that the committee chair can inform the student of the outcome of the defense.
6. A consensus decision determines the result of the defense.

The possible outcomes are as follows:

- **Pass** – the dissertation is forwarded to the SIS Dean for a final review.

- **Pass with Distinction** – the dissertation is forwarded to the SIS Dean for a final review.
- **Provisional Pass** – the student will be given specific areas of the dissertation that must be addressed before the dissertation is passed. Revisions may have to be submitted to the entire committee or only to the committee chair. The student will be informed of the follow-up process at the time of the defense.
- **Fail** – the student will be informed of the specific deficiencies of the dissertation so that they may move forward with addressing the issues so that the defense process can be initiated again.

No entry will be made on the student's transcript until they receive at least a "Pass" from the committee; provisional passes and failures will not appear on the student's transcript at anytime.

All approved dissertations are forwarded to the SIS Dean for a final review. The Dean meets with each student to discuss the dissertation and decides whether or not to ratify the committee's recommendation shortly thereafter. When the Dean approves a dissertation, the student has fulfilled the requirements for completing the Ph.D. program.

Once the Dean of SIS has approved the dissertation, the student will submit all necessary paperwork to the Ph.D. Academic Adviser for processing. It is the student's responsibility to format the dissertation to meet all American University requirements [insert website] for the submission of the final draft of the dissertation to the University Library. In order to graduate, the student must complete all graduation paperwork at the University Registrar's Office and arrange for the deposit of the correctly formatted dissertation with the University library.

## **Funding**

Students admitted to the program will have a number of means to receive funding throughout the course of their studies.

### **Dean's Fellowship**

All those admitted to the SIS Ph.D. program *as full-time students* and who maintain good progress toward completing the degree are granted a Dean's Fellowship in each of the first three years of study, unless a student opts to waive financial aid. There are two components to the award.

First, the School of International Service provides full tuition remission for graduate course work to meet the requirements of the Ph.D. program. The fellowship can extend to courses taken in summer sessions during the first three years of study. Students interested in taking classes during the summer should make arrangements directly with the Ph.D. Academic Adviser.

The second component of the Dean's Fellowship is a stipend. The stipend is paid to the student in eight monthly installments beginning in September and ending in April.

### **Faculty Assistant Program**

The Faculty Assistant Program (FAP) provides an additional opportunity for Ph.D. students receiving a Dean's Fellowship to earn additional income in support of their graduate study. Under this program, students work directly with a member of the SIS faculty as a Faculty Assistant (FA) at an hourly wage-rate for 12 hours per week, during the fall and spring semesters (14 weeks per semester; 28 weeks for the year).

The Director of Doctoral Studies recommends to the Dean of SIS for approval FA assignments of incoming students to faculty. The Director endeavors to assign each student to a faculty member whose work is close as possible to that of the student.

If there is mutual consent, second and third-year students continue working for the faculty member with whom they worked in the previous year. Students may ask for a change of work assignment. Students changing assignments must discuss this with the Director of Doctoral Studies, the faculty member for whom the student would like to work in the following year and the current faculty supervisor. The Director of Doctoral Studies will recommend whenever possible changes that have the support of both the current and proposed future faculty supervisor. Faculty members may also request a change of Faculty Assistant.

The scope of a research assistant's duties consists of aiding the faculty supervisor with research and teaching that are a direct result of obligations arising from a faculty member's employment at the School of International Service. Both the student and the faculty supervisor are expected to keep track of hours worked.

If a student finds that an issue arises regarding the nature of an assignment, working conditions, or the working relationship that needs to be addressed, the student is strongly encouraged to speak with the Director of Doctoral Studies as soon as possible.

### **Summer Funding**

In special circumstances, faculty members occasionally employ Ph.D. students as research assistants during the summer. This funding is based on the needs of faculty members. Students interested in pursuing this funding should contact the Ph.D. Academic Adviser at the beginning of the spring semester.

### **Dissertation Fellowship**

Each year the School of International Service awards up to four fellowships to Ph.D. students who are working on their dissertations. A student may only receive this award once. To be eligible for the Dissertation fellowship, a student must have achieved ABD status by the application deadline, which is May 15.

A student must submit a proposal to the Chair of the SIS Ph.D. committee. The proposal consists of: a current curriculum vitae, a proposed work plan for the academic year (not to exceed two pages), a copy of the approved dissertation prospectus and two letters of recommendation, including one from the Chair of student's dissertation committee.

A committee of faculty members will assess the applications and make recommendations to the Dean of SIS. The Dean makes all final decisions. Students will be informed of the results by June 15.

Students will receive tuition remission to cover one credit of dissertation supervision per semester. In addition, the student will receive a stipend of \$8,500.

### **Post-Doctoral Fellowship**

The School of International Service awards one post-doctoral fellowship to a student who has completed the Ph.D. during the previous academic year. The purpose of the post-

doctoral fellowship is to give its recipient the opportunity to revise the dissertation for publication, to produce scholarly articles based on the dissertation and to gain some teaching experience. A post-doctoral fellow teaches one course in the spring and fall semesters. An applicant should submit a current curriculum vitae, a proposed work plan for the fellowship year (not to exceed two pages), a copy of the dissertation, and two letters of recommendation, including one from the Chair of the applicant's dissertation committee, to the Chair of the SIS Ph.D. committee by May 15. The criterion of assessment is the likelihood that a year's worth of work on a completed dissertation will produce a revised manuscript that is likely to be accepted for publication by a scholarly press. A committee of faculty members will assess the applications and make a recommendation to the Dean of SIS. The Dean makes the award. The award will be granted by June 15.

### **Travel Grants**

Each academic year SIS provides the Ph.D. program with funds to be used to defray some of the costs doctoral students incur when traveling to conferences to present scholarly papers. This money is equally divided among all students who meet the eligibility. Students are only reimbursed for actual travel expenses that they can document with receipts. Disbursements are only made for conferences occurring from May 1 to April 30 of the relevant academic year.

To be eligible, the student must have had a paper accepted for presentation at an academic conference or workshop. The Director of Doctoral Studies will solicit requests from the Ph.D. student body in late October. Those interested in receiving travel funds should indicate to the Director of Doctoral Studies the following information for each conference that they will be attending:

- The conference that they will be attending (or have attended in the ongoing academic year), including the location and dates of the conference.
- The title and abstract of the paper that they will be presenting.
- Confirmation that the student has been accepted to present at the conference.
- A proposed budget for conference attendance.

Once all applications have been received, the Director of Doctoral Studies will determine who shall receive funds, calculate how much each student receives, and notify all applicants via e-mail of the results by December 1.

Students awarded funding will obtain an American University travel reimbursement form from the SIS budget coordinator. Students must complete the form and return it along with *original receipts* amounting to at least the sum of the award to the SIS budget coordinator.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Language Requirement**

Each Ph.D. student is required to have reading knowledge of a foreign language in order to satisfy degree requirements. There are three ways in which this requirement can be met.

1. **Demonstration of Language Proficiency:** Students can demonstrate proficiency with a university transcript displaying a grade of B or better in a graduate-level intermediate language class. Students who are nationals of a country where English is not the native language can meet this requirement by presenting a valid passport to the Ph.D. Academic Adviser.
2. **Language Proficiency Examination:** Students can meet the language requirement by passing a language proficiency examination offered by the American University Language Resource Center. For details regarding the languages for which students may take examinations, as well as schedules of exams can be obtained at the Language Resource Center's website: <http://www.american.edu/academic.depts/cas/lfs/index2.html>
3. **Pass an intermediate university-level language class:** Students receiving a grade of B or better in any foreign language class offered by an accredited institution will satisfy the language requirement. Please note that the US Department of Agriculture offers language classes that meet this requirement and have very low tuition. Information about the USDA Graduate School can be obtained from their website: <http://www.grad.usda.gov/index.html/aip=78b480w3M6Z,00U5D,wkNBSyIjx-e,uwSfRq>. (N.B., the university course credits for Ph.D. students that are a part of the standard financial aid package are for graduate-level courses only. Language classes at American University are classified as undergraduate courses. As a result, a Ph.D. student taking a language course at American University would have to pay for the tuition out of pocket. AU's tuition is significantly higher than the USDA's. As a result, most students who decide to fulfill the language requirement by taking a course do so at the USDA.)

### **Teaching**

Students who have an interest in pursuing academic careers upon completion of the program are encouraged to seek opportunities to allow them to gain classroom experience. Students who have achieved ABD status are automatically eligible to request a teaching assignment. The PhD Academic Adviser will provide the Associate Dean with a list of ABD students and the written qualifying exams they have passed. Students should also notify the Director of Doctoral Studies of their interest.

Students who have achieved ABD status will be given preference for all open assignments.

Once the Associate Dean of SIS identifies a teaching opening, the Associate Dean will inform the Director of Doctoral Studies. The Director of Doctoral Studies will notify all ABD students of the opportunity and of a deadline for expressing interest. If more than one student expresses an interest, the Associate Dean will make a selection in consultation with the Director of Doctoral Studies and the students' dissertation committee Chairs.

Students interested in pursuing teaching opportunities are encouraged to attend a seminar offered by the American University Center for Teaching Excellence.

Students who have not yet achieved ABD status are only granted permission to teach when an exceptional circumstance arises, specifically, if a special teaching need is identified by SIS that would be best filled by a particular Ph.D. student and no ABD student is able to meet the need. In such a case, if it is determined that no ABD student is able or willing to fill a teaching opening, the Associate Dean will solicit suggestions from the faculty directly involved in filling the teaching slot. In other words, for students who have not reached ABD status, a faculty member must nominate them to teach for them to come into consideration. In most instances, this would be the Division Director, Field Coordinator or a faculty member responsible for filling a large number of sections. If a student who is not yet ABD is suggested, the name is forwarded to the Director of Doctoral Studies and to the student's dissertation Chair. If the student does not yet have a dissertation Chair, the student's faculty supervisor for her/his research assistantship may serve as a substitute. Permission to teach is only granted when the Director of Doctoral Studies and the student's dissertation committee Chair both are of the opinion that the teaching assignment will not interfere with the student's progress toward completing the degree.

### **Dissertation Fieldwork/Study Abroad**

Students are encouraged to carry out dissertation fieldwork in whatever site is appropriate and safe for the completion of the dissertation.

American University has a graduate research center in Trento, Italy. This center may be appropriate, depending on the student's dissertation topic. Students interested in learning more about this program are encouraged to visit the Research center's website: <http://www.american.edu/sis/trento/>.

### **Maintaining Good Progress**

Each student is expected to maintain good progress toward completion of the Ph.D. degree. This is determined by the Director of Doctoral Studies, who assesses the progress of all active students on a regular basis using the criteria spelled out in the academic regulations of American University. The Director of Doctoral Studies will inform any student who is not making good progress of that finding, so that the issues concerning the student's progress can be addressed. Persistent failure to maintain good progress toward completing the degree is sufficient grounds for termination from the program. The Director of Doctoral Studies will consult with the Chair of the SIS Ph.D. Committee, the Dean of SIS and other relevant faculty before making such a recommendation. The Dean of SIS makes the final decision regarding termination.

### **Maintaining Matriculation**

Students must continue to enroll in classes until they have defended their dissertation. This can be achieved by registering for one credit of dissertation supervision in both the fall and spring semesters. Students who no longer have tuition assistance must pay for the credit out of pocket to maintain matriculation.

Students may be granted a leave of absence, which suspends the need to maintain matriculation. Requests for a leave of absence must be submitted to the Director of Doctoral Studies and approved by the Dean of SIS. The combined total duration of officially designated leaves of absence for any student may not exceed one year. No University facilities may be used nor faculty consulted during a leave of absence.

### **Statute of Limitations**

American University's Academic Regulations provide that all work for the doctorate must be completed within five years from the date of first enrollment as doctoral student (seven years if the student entered a doctoral program with a bachelor's degree). Prior to the expiration of the time limit specified (or to the expiration of approved extensions) a student may petition for an extension of candidacy. Extensions are approved by the Dean of the School of International Service, upon recommendation of the Ph.D. Academic Adviser and the Director of Doctoral Studies. In any event, the combined total of extensions will normally not exceed three years beyond the applicable duration of five or seven years.