

Political Science, PhD

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Mentored Experience Implementation Plan

As part of their degree requirements, PhD students must complete a program-defined Mentored Experience Requirement (MER) as per these guidelines. The Mentored Experience Implementation Plan (MEIP) is the written articulation of a program-defined degree requirement for PhD students to engage in mentored teaching activities and/or mentored professional activities, collectively referred to as *MERs*.

Mentored Experience Requirements (MERs)

Philosophy of Teaching

Our discipline is composed of the following subfields: American politics, comparative politics, formal theory, international relations, methodology and normative political theory. In both teaching focused institutions and research universities, professors are generally hired in one of these fields and are expected to teach courses in their respective fields.

The discipline is diverse with respect to teaching expectations and the desired balance of teaching and research. Our model PhD accepts a job at a research-centered university. The typical expectation at these jobs is that faculty teach one or two courses per semester and spend a significant amount of time doing research. The initial selection process for these jobs is primarily research oriented. We also place PhD graduates at liberal arts colleges and regional universities, where the teaching expectations are more significant (two or three courses a semester) and the initial selection process is more significantly teaching oriented. Finally, some of our PhD students take jobs in the private sector, positions which typically rely primarily on the research-oriented aspects of our training, but where teaching training will equip our PhD students with the skills of distilling complex topics and communicating them to target audiences. In summation, there is no one-size-fits-all solution to graduate mentorship.

Students applying to academic jobs are typically expected to submit teaching statements and sometimes evidence of teaching effectiveness alongside their research materials (job market paper, research statements, and so on).

Preparatory Engagement

Preparatory Engagement activities are those that represent an introduction to the foundational skills associated with teaching or communication. Pedagogical preparation engagement activities are normally completed before students are permitted to engage in assisting or teaching in a classroom.

Since students do not engage in any mentored experiences in the first year, all students will have attended these workshops prior to their first mentored experience.

1. Attend a monthly professionalization workshop, which covers teaching-related issues in addition to research and other professional topics.
2. Attend the teaching workshop, which also meets monthly, and focuses completely on pedagogy and teaching. In addition to prepared monthly topics, the teaching workshop offers a space for PhD students to discuss experiences relevant to their MTE assignment with faculty who specialize in pedagogy.
3. Students must enroll in the Center for Teaching and Learning Teaching Orientation prior to their first MTE.

Mentored Teaching Experiences (MTEs)

Assistant in Instruction (AI)

An Assistant in Instruction (AI) is a PhD student who is directly engaged in the organization, instruction, and/or support of a semester-long course *primarily taught by a faculty member*. An AI receives mentorship from a faculty member related to best practices in classroom engagement, instruction in the field, interpersonal engagement, and other relevant skills. Students and mentors complete a mentorship plan prior to the start of each AI experience. To complete each AI assignment and to ensure that it applies toward their degree requirements, students must register for the appropriate course number for each semester of engagement. Refer to the "Required Pathways for Completion" section below for course numbers and details.

Political Science requires five or six AI engagements at 10 MER units for a total of 50 to 60 MTE. The number of AI engagements is dependent upon if students opt to take an MIT engagement.

Mentored Independent Teaching (MIT)

MIT is a semester-long experience for PhD students who engage as the primary instructor or co-instructor of a course *under the mentorship of a faculty member* as part of the MER. Students and mentors complete a mentorship plan prior to the start of each MIT experience. To complete each MIT assignment and to ensure that it applies toward their degree requirements, students must register for the appropriate course number (ASGS 8020) for each semester of engagement. Refer to the "Required Pathways for Completion" section below for more details.

MIT is not required. Students may opt to take one MIT engagement at 20 MER units as part of their MTE requirements.

Required Pathways for Completion

Students work with their faculty mentor and their Director of Graduate Studies to plan how and when they will complete their MERs. Students register during the normal registration period for courses in accordance with one of these approved pathways.

A total of 60 to 70 MTE units is required via one of these pathways.

Pathway #1

ASGS 8010	Take six times
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Pathway #2

ASGS 8010	Take five times
ASGS 8020	Take one time