

**Preliminary Research Track
School of Political Sciences**

Overview

1. Preliminary research refers to the assortment of academic requirements needed by candidates who wish to enroll in a doctoral program but have not completed their MA thesis in political sciences.

Admission Requirements

2. Eligible candidates for this track include:
 - a) Recipients of an MA degree in political sciences who graduated with a final grade of at least 90, yet who did not write a thesis. These students will be required to submit a thesis for which they receive a score of 90 or higher, and to complete two research workshops (qualitative and quantitative) before they can apply to the doctoral program.
 - b) Recipients of an MA degree in a field other than political science who graduated with a final grade of at least 90, and who wrote a thesis that received a score of at least 90. These students will be required to complete the following political science courses and receive a weighted grade average of at least 85. Courses include: Introduction to Government and Politics, Theories and Approaches in Political Science, Research Methods Seminar A, Research Seminar B (qualitative and quantitative), and additional supplementary courses depending on the division that the student intends to join (international relations, public administration and policy, or government and political theory).
 - c) Recipients of an MA degree in a field other than political science who graduated with a final grade of at least 90, and who did not write a thesis. These students will be required to complete the core political science coursework (as listed above), and write a thesis for which they must receive a grade of at least 90 before they can submit their candidacy to the doctoral program.

Application Process

3. Applications to enroll in the preliminary research track shall be submitted to the department secretary and are to include the following documents:
 - a. Certificate of completion for BA / MA degrees, including grade transcripts.
 - b. A supervisory agreement: It is the responsibility of the candidate to identify a prospective supervisor and have them sign a supervisory agreement form (that they can receive from the department secretary). The School of Political Sciences limits the number of mentees that faculty members may supervise. Candidates should therefore consult with the department secretary regarding the eligibility of faculty members to act as their supervisor.
 - c. A statement of intent (up to 350 words in English, or up to 200 words in Hebrew). Statements that exceed these quotas will be returned to the student and will not be forwarded to the Graduate Studies Committee.

- d. Statements must include the following elements:
 - a. A description of the research topic.
 - b. The central research question.
 - c. The methods and techniques through which the student intends to analyze the research question.
 - d. The potential contribution that this research will make to the field.
- e. A statement by the prospective supervisor approving the statement of intent.
 Note: The supervision of the student is contingent upon the supervisor's approval of the statement intent, which is to be submitted via the relevant department secretary.

Study Framework

4. Holders of an MA degree in a field other than political science, and with a grade average of at least 90, will be required to complete a series of political science courses as listed above in section 2 under the heading of admission requirements.
5. Department seminars – Each student in this track is required to attend no less than 80% of the seminars given in each academic year.
6. Students who are required to write a thesis as part of this track will be required to submit a research proposal to their supervisor prior to the beginning of the second semester of the academic year.
7. Once the research proposal is approved by their supervisor, the department secretary will forward the proposal for external review by a single reviewer at the recommendation of the supervisor. The reviewer will not be from within the School of Political Science. The reviewer may be from another department within the University of Haifa, or from another university.
8. The proposal will incorporate all of the above listed elements that were included in the statement of intent, but will expand upon each of the components, and will abide by the following structure:
 - a) Introduction.
 - b) Research question and an explanation of its importance.
 - c) Literature Review and Theoretical Framework: An up-to-date literature review that maps the current state of theoretical and empirical research relating to the research topic. The literature review will form the basis of the theoretical and conceptual framework of the research, and will in turn generate the research hypotheses that are to be tested.
 - d) Research Methods and Analytical Strategy: A description of the proposed techniques and research methods that the student intends to use to test the research hypotheses (qualitative or quantitative). This section will include the following components:
 - Variables (nominal and operational definitions).
 - Data collection strategy, the research sample and population, and a description of how the sample will be approached.
 - Research technique: a description of the proposed study tools (surveys, experiments, observational techniques, analyses of secondary source material, simulations, etc.)

- e) Conclusion: The potential contribution of the research and anticipated obstacles.
- 9. The length of the research proposal shall not exceed 6,000 words in Hebrew (double spaced) or 7,500 words in English (double spaced). This figure does not include the bibliography, which is to be submitted as an appendix to the proposal.
- 10. Only after the thesis proposal has been approved by the external reviewer will the student be permitted to begin writing the thesis.

Duration of studies

- 11. The Preliminary Research Track runs for one year, during which time students must complete the course requirements.
- 12. There are four phases to this research track, each of which requires documentation to confirm its completion. (1) Registration for thesis supervision – including the completion and approval of the supervision form; (2) Submission and approval of the statement of intent; (3) Submission and approval of the research proposal; (4) Submission, external evaluation and approval of the thesis itself. In the case that a student is required to complete supplementary coursework, an additional step of completing the required courses will be added. This step does not involve filling out any documentation.
- 13. Only students who meet the supplementary coursework requirements will be able to submit their candidacy for doctoral studies and have their application reviewed by the Graduate Studies Committee.