WHY DO YOU WANT TO BE A POLITICAL SCIENTIST?

- Our goal: To train you to be an accomplished researcher and teacher in political science
VANDERBILT POLITICAL SCIENCE: WHO WE ARE

- Five subfields
  - American, Comparative, IR, Theory, Methods

- Research centers
  - CSDI
  - LAPOP
  - RIPS
MAJOR PARTS OF YOUR TRAINING

- Coursework (2-3 years)
- RA/TA work
- Dissertation
- Faculty-student collaborations
### Ideal timeline for our PhD Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Work for faculty member, review coursework, acquire additional training</td>
<td>Study for comprehensive exams. Do independent work.</td>
<td>Complete and defend prospectus. Write dissertation</td>
<td>Complete two chapters of dissertation. Prepare job market packet.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHAT COURSES SHOULD I TAKE?

- 48 didactic hours, or 16 courses in 3 years
  + 24 Independent research hours (years 4 & 5)
  = 72 total credit hours for the PhD

- Methods: Research Design + Stats I (required)
- First field: core course + 2 electives
- Second field: core course + 2 electives
- Third field: core course + 1 elective, except
  - Methods: the 3 courses taken in the first year don’t count towards this
## Year 1

### Coursework in Substantive fields, Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2011 4 courses &amp; service-free</th>
<th>Spring 2012 3 courses + work as RA/TA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>Stats II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stats I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose 2 from:</td>
<td>Choose 2 from:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American (Wiseman)</td>
<td>American (Oppenheimer, Bartels, Lyle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative (Hiskey, Seligson)</td>
<td>Comparative (Zechmeister)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IR (Mattes)</td>
<td>IR (Ray)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theory (Ackerly)</td>
<td>Theory (Ackerly, Nacol)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Summer

Work for faculty, seek additional training
WHAT DO I DO AS AN RA/TA?

- 20 hours/week
- Assigned to a faculty member

- TA: attend class, grade, meet with students
- RA: perform various tasks to assist in faculty member’s research

- Faculty evaluations
### YEAR 2

#### Fall 2012
- 3 courses + work as RA/TA
  - Stats III (MLE)
  - Choose 2 more courses

#### Spring 2013
- 3 courses + work as RA/TA
  - Choose 3 courses
  - End of the year: 2nd year review & Plan of Study

#### Summer
- Study for comps.
- Fieldwork.
- Additional training.
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS

- August or January of the 3\textsuperscript{rd} year
- 1\textsuperscript{st} field: Written exam + Oral exam
- 2\textsuperscript{nd} field: Written exam + Oral exam if needed

- 24-hour, open-book/open-notes
- 3 questions, 10-double spaced pages each
### Year 3

**Fall 2013**
- 2 courses + work as RA/TA

- **Prospectus course I**
- Choose 1 or 2 more courses

**Spring 2014**
- 1 course + work as RA/TA

- **Prospectus course II**
- Pre-candidate dissertation credits (no more coursework!)

- Present work at conferences
- Apply for grants to fund your work
- Select your dissertation committee

### Summer

- Defend prospectus!
### Year 4

Write dissertation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2014</th>
<th>Spring 2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation + work as RA/TA</td>
<td>Dissertation + work as RA/TA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD candidate dissertation credits (9 hours)</td>
<td>PhD candidate dissertation credits (9 hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present work at conferences</td>
<td>Apply for grants to fund your work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summer**

Prepare for job market.
Teach a course.
2 chapters of the dissertation
3 letters of recommendation
Research statement
Teaching statement
Publications with faculty
Solo-work under review
### Year 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall 2015</th>
<th>Spring 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dissertation + service free</td>
<td>Dissertation + work as RA/TA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD candidate dissertation credits (min. hours)</td>
<td>PhD candidate dissertation credits (min. hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present work at conferences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Defend dissertation!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Move to your new job!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RULES, REGULATIONS, ETC.

- Department website
  - http://www.vanderbilt.edu/political-science/

- Department’s Graduate Study Handbook

- The Graduate School Catalog
  - http://www.vanderbilt.edu/catalogs/grad/Grado1.html
RESOURCES TO HELP YOU ALONG THE WAY

- The Writing Studio
  - http://www.vanderbilt.edu/writing/
- Center for Teaching
  - http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/
MORE RESOURCES TO HELP YOU ALONG THE WAY

- Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)
  - Brownbag series on professionalization
- Faculty: Mentors/Advisors
- Senior graduate students
- Staff
- And you can help each other!

- Psychological and Counseling Center (it’s free!)
  - http://www.vanderbilt.edu/pcc/