

**Disclaimer:**

This excerpt is provided to help draw your attention to specific portions of the Graduate Handbook.

It is not a complete representation of the policies of the Van Andel Graduate School of Statesmanship.

The most recent version of the complete Graduate Handbook is available at [gradschool.hillsdale.edu](http://gradschool.hillsdale.edu) or by emailing [gradschool@hillsdale.edu](mailto:gradschool@hillsdale.edu).

## Degree Requirements

- 72 credit hours.
- Minimum of 18 hours in each of the two tracks.
- Maximum of 12 hours in advanced undergraduate courses cross-listed for graduate credit (only courses designated at the 500 level). This maximum may be raised in individual cases of compelling need at the discretion of the Graduate Dean, and the Dean will determine on a case-by-case basis which track (political philosophy or American politics), if any, will be credited for each 500-level course.
- POL 601-605, POL 621-625, POL 810, POL 865, 866, 870, 880.
- Completion of 3 hours of Doctoral Humanities Seminar (included in the 72-hour requirement, above). Third-year doctoral students interested in careers in college teaching may substitute POL 831 for the final year of the Doctoral Humanities Seminar, with the permission of the Graduate Dean.
- **Reading competence in two foreign languages, one classical and one modern.**
- Successful completion of the Doctoral Qualifying Evaluation, made by the Graduate Committee during the third semester of full-time coursework or its credit equivalent, consisting of a written and oral examination as one part of a broader assessment by the faculty of the student's suitability for continuing in the program.
- Successful completion of a Doctoral Comprehensive Examination (consisting of written and oral components), to be administered upon the completion of all coursework, based upon a set of core texts (see above).
- Successful completion and defense of a doctoral dissertation.

## Regulations

### Required Courses

Doctoral student coursework will consist of required elements and electives. Required 3-hour courses are POL 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, and 810. The requirement for one or more of these courses may be waived by the Graduate Dean if the student demonstrates that he or she has taken graduate coursework dealing substantially with the same text(s) as the required course for which a waiver is sought. Also required are courses pertinent to the dissertation process: POL 865, 866, 870, and 880.

### Independent Study

One independent study (up to three credit hours) may be counted toward the required credit hours for the Ph.D. Independent studies count toward elective credit only and cannot be substituted for core courses. Independent studies must be on topics that are not covered by the regular course offerings of the Graduate School of Statesmanship. All independent studies require the approval of the Graduate Dean, application for which must be submitted to the Graduate Dean's office at least one week prior to the beginning of the semester in which the independent study is to be taken. Upon approval, the Graduate Dean will assign an appropriate course number in consultation with the Registrar, and will determine whether the course will apply to the political philosophy track or the American politics track.

### Doctoral Humanities Seminar Requirement

All doctoral students are required to take 3 hours of Doctoral Humanities Seminar (POL 801, 802, 803), though POL 831 may be substituted for one of these, as noted above. The Doctoral Humanities Seminars are year-long, 1-credit courses that address the broad themes of the humanities and draw upon the breadth of the Western tradition. The purpose of these seminars is to emphasize to students the place of the study of politics within the humanities and liberal arts as a whole, and to help prepare them for teaching positions which will often be found at liberal arts institutions. The texts studied will be drawn from the great books of the Western canon. The seminar will meet 5 times per academic year, and each session will be guided by a different Hillsdale College faculty member. Disciplines to be drawn from will most likely include, but are not limited to: Classics, English, History, Philosophy, and Politics. Sessions will normally be scheduled for 3 hours in the evening, and will consist of a faculty lecture followed by questions and discussions with the doctoral students led by the faculty member. Students will write a paper for each year of the seminar, based upon a particular session from that year, under the direction of the faculty member who conducted the session. Session themes and faculty will be organized by the Graduate Dean.

### Foreign Language Competence

The requirement is for reading competence, demonstrated either by passing a written translation examination on material from a critical text in the Western political tradition in the relevant language, or by taking relevant coursework. Determination of relevant coursework or of the text and the faculty member who is competent to administer the examination is made by the Graduate Dean, who makes the final decision as to whether or not a student has demonstrated foreign language competence. Students should consult Appendix A to this handbook for further information. Competence in one ancient language is required (Latin or ancient Greek), in addition to competence in one modern language (normally French, Italian, German, or Spanish). In those cases where a student's doctoral research would benefit most from specialized language competence, the Graduate Dean has the discretion to permit the student to qualify in two ancient languages or two modern languages, instead of one of each. No coursework that students may take in preparation for a language exam is counted toward the 72-hour degree requirement.

### Doctoral Qualifying Evaluations

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine students' suitability for continuing in the doctoral program. Grade achievement in individual courses is not sufficient to establish a student's suitability for continuing. The Qualifying Evaluation will normally occur during a student's third semester of coursework (or its credit equivalent); the timing may vary for master's students who transfer to the doctoral program.

During the relevant semester the Graduate Committee will meet and consider the following criteria for students at the qualifying stage:

- 1) the student's record of academic achievement in graduate coursework;
- 2) the faculty's assessment of the student's overall intellectual development in the

## Appendix A: Guidelines for Foreign Language Qualification

As a requirement for the Ph.D., doctoral students must demonstrate reading competence in two foreign languages before they are permitted to sit for comprehensive examinations. Reading competence must be demonstrated in one ancient language (Latin or ancient Greek) and one modern language (normally French, German, Italian, or Spanish). In those cases where a student's doctoral research would benefit most from specialized language competence, the Graduate Dean has the discretion to permit the student to qualify in two ancient languages or two modern languages, instead of one of each. Students interested in qualifying in languages other than those named above need a research-related justification and the permission of the Graduate Dean. No coursework that students may take in preparation for a language exam is counted toward the 72-hour degree requirement.

What is reading competence? "Reading competence" does not mean fluency, and especially not fluency in speaking the language. It means, instead, that the student possesses the ability to work with a text in the particular original language in the course of research. Advanced doctoral-level research means that the reader of a text should not need to rely entirely upon a translator's rendering of it, since this rendering can often affect how a text is interpreted. Developing reading competence is not an end in itself, nor is it a purpose of our program, strictly speaking, to teach foreign languages; rather, foreign-language competence is one important means to the end of our program, which is the understanding of the first principles of politics and of the greatest works where these principles are explored. In demonstrating reading competence, the use of a dictionary or lexicon is permitted, but only when coupled with the kind of competence in the language that makes such use efficient as opposed to cumbersome.

When should reading competence be demonstrated? The Graduate Handbook gives a deadline (qualification for both languages must be completed prior to the comprehensive examinations – normally, just after the conclusion of all doctoral coursework), but it does not specify a particular time within the long period prior to that deadline when students should qualify. The timing is up to the student, who may choose to qualify at any time during the course of the program. Students may qualify for their two languages at two different times (this will, in fact, be the usual practice). Students are advised to complete language qualification at the earliest possible stage of their time in the program. If students come into the program with sufficient knowledge in one or both languages, they should qualify as soon as possible. Students are strongly advised not to leave their language study and qualifying to the end of their coursework.

How is reading competence demonstrated? The reading-competence requirement can be fulfilled in one of two ways:

- 1) The completion of a certain level of coursework. Students choosing this option do not take a reading-competence examination; they simply complete the final course in the sequence with a "B-" or better and are thus automatically qualified. Coursework options are as follows:

For Ancient Languages, one of the following:

- a) Completion of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester of Greek or Latin in the undergraduate curriculum of Hillsdale College
- b) Completion of one of the intensive summer courses at Hillsdale College (POL 805 or 806)
- c) Completion of an equivalent summer intensive at another institution – only if the Hillsdale summer course is not offered during the student’s time in the program. The Graduate Dean must pre-approve any proposed coursework of this nature to ensure equivalency. (NB: student convenience or travel/work plans do not constitute a legitimate reason for taking this coursework elsewhere, if it is available at the College).\*

For Modern Languages, one of the following:

- a) Completion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester of a modern language in the undergraduate curriculum of Hillsdale College
- b) Completion of the modern language for reading knowledge course at Hillsdale College (POL 807)
- c) Completion of an equivalent summer course at another institution - only if the Hillsdale summer course is not offered during the student’s time in the program. The Graduate Dean must pre-approve any proposed coursework of this nature to ensure equivalency. (NB: student convenience or travel/work plans do not constitute a legitimate reason for taking this coursework elsewhere, if it is available at the College).\*
- d) For native speakers whose country of origin corresponds with one of the required modern languages, this requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Graduate Dean

Language courses taken at the College are for credit and will appear on the student’s transcript; the credits do not count, however, toward the 72-hour requirement for the Ph.D., nor are they calculated into the determination of GPA for scholarship and academic status purposes.

In those cases where students have taken language coursework at the post-secondary level prior to their entry into the Graduate School of Statesmanship, those classes may, at the Dean’s discretion, satisfy one of the language requirements. In most circumstances, this requires at least 11 credit hours of work in a single language, completed within the 2 years prior to entry in the Graduate School of Statesmanship. Intensive language study completed at other graduate institutions prior to matriculation at Hillsdale may also be accepted in satisfaction of language requirements, at the discretion of the Graduate Dean.

\* Scholarship or other financial support does not extend to any coursework, including language coursework, taken at institutions other than Hillsdale College.

2) Passing a reading-competence examination administered by the designee of the Graduate Dean. Such an exam normally consists in translating an excerpt of text in the specified language within a limited amount of time. Specifics will vary with the language in question, so students should consult the Dean's office and will need to file a request with the Dean's office requesting a reading-competence examination.

How students prepare for a reading-competence examination is up to them. Some will come into the program with extensive knowledge in a language and may need little or no preparation. Others will have more modest knowledge, and may want to spend some time either in self-study or in coursework. Still others will need to start fresh, and again may do so either through self-study or in coursework.

Limit: Students are limited to one attempt per semester at passing a reading-competence examination for a particular language.