

Carleton

POLITICAL SCIENCE & INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Guidelines for Integrative Exercise “Comps” Department of Political Science

To meet the college requirement for the senior integrative exercise (“COMPS”) in the Department of Political Science, a research paper from an already-completed advanced seminar is revised or used as an anchor to write the comps, with approval and guidance from the instructor, who becomes your comps adviser. You also must prepare a poster based on your comps paper for presentation in a group forum.

The Seminar and POSC 400

If you have already taken an advanced seminar, approach your professor as soon as possible to discuss your plan for comps. Prior approval from the instructor is required for revising the seminar paper for comps credit or writing a new separate paper with the agreement from the advisor. If you have not yet taken a course that could be used for comps, you need to take an advanced seminar during your junior year or early in your senior year, followed by the paper revision.

Faculty members have the discretion to occasionally approve a non-designated course (e.g., a 200-level course) as the source of the comps paper, but not replacing the major requirement for two 300-level seminars. Under no circumstance is POSC300 allowed to be used as a comps seminar. Faculty members may also decline a student’s request to use a particular seminar paper for the comps project. Please note that some faculty may set prerequisites, including POSC 230 Methods of Political Research or other lower-level courses, for a seminar in order for it to be considered as your comps paper course. Thus, it is very important to discuss your comps plans with the instructor early and well in advance of its due date. After securing instructor approval:

- Notify the department assistant of your plans using the Comps Plans form.
- Register for a total of 6 credits of POSC 400 (followed by section number of your comps adviser). These credits may be taken all in one term, or divided between terms, during which you will work on your comps paper under supervision of your comps adviser. When you select POSC 400 to register, choose the number of credits you want.

The Comps Paper and Poster

The amount of revision necessary and final length of the paper will be determined in consultation with your comps adviser. The text of the final version must be no less than 30 pages (not including may not exceed 35 pages excluding references, figures, and maps, unless the adviser recommends a longer paper for the topic. The text should have page numbers, be clearly organized, and divided into subsections through the use of titles and subtitles. Both scientific and literary forms of citation are acceptable. A bibliography is also required. Discuss style with your adviser; you may wish to consult the

APSA Style Guide. Please use the Comps Paper Cover/Permission Sheet. It gives the department permission to copy your paper for educational purposes, while you retain copyright.

Copies of past papers that have received Distinction are on file in the department and may be reviewed in the second floor lounge/library in Hasenstab Hall.

The **due date for your comps paper** (the term during which you do revisions) will be determined in consultation with your comps adviser, but must be **no later than the Wednesday of Week 5**.

One group poster presentation is scheduled in Week 6 of each term. Consult with your comps adviser in deciding when to prepare and present your poster. The **final date for poster presentation** for the academic year is **no later than Thursday of Week 6** each term.

The Grade

Your transcript will show POSC 400 followed by "CI" (Continuing Integrative) until the department submits all comps grades after midterm of Spring term. The grade (Satisfactory, No Credit, or Distinction) will then be entered for all 6 credits. To receive a passing grade, a PDF of the final paper and a digital file of your PowerPoint poster should be emailed as an attachment to the department administrative assistant as soon as they are completed and no later than the Wednesday of Week 5 for the paper and Thursday of Week 6 for the poster.

The Comps Paper Cover/Permission Sheet (found at carleton.edu/political-science/major/comps/) must be submitted along with the comps paper.

Once a comps paper has been submitted for a grade, that paper becomes the paper of record for the purpose of evaluation for departmental distinction. No further substantive revisions will be accepted.

Checklist for completing comps in the Political Science Department:

- Take seminar (with instructor approval to use as basis for comps) preferably junior year or early in senior year.
- Complete on-line Comps Plans Form and submit it to the department administrative assistant.
- Register for 6 credits of POSC 400 during senior year (in one term or split between terms). When you select POSC 400 to register, choose the number of credits you want.
- Paper due date: Discuss with your adviser as soon as you start POSC400.
- Email PDF of your completed comps paper, including bibliography and the signed Comps Paper Permission Cover Sheet to the department administrative assistant.
- Prepare a poster describing your comps project (24"x36" PowerPoint or Canva).
- Submit pdf file to Print Services no less than 3 working days prior to Poster Presentation. The department administrative assistant provides additional information leading up to Poster Presentation events.
- Poster Presentation Week 6
- Pick up the printed rolled poster (POSC department pays for the cost of printing) and deliver it to the Poster Presentation location (usually Great Hall).

- Attend Poster Presentation (a 1.5-hour event) and explain your project to faculty, students and staff who attend.
- E-mail poster file to department administrative assistant.

After you are notified that you have passed comps, the Gould Library requests that you submit your comps paper to the Library Digital Archiving site and complete the Submission Form. The Archive is meant to be open only to faculty but we cannot guarantee that your work will not be accessed by others.

If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact the department administrative assistant. For questions regarding your comps paper or poster, please contact your comps advisor.

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