

**PHD PROGRAMME IN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCE**  
**UNIVERSITY POMPEU FABRA**

(As approved by the Official Postgraduate Programme Commission on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008)

The Department of Political and Social Science at the UPF is an academic community composed of professors, research assistants, teaching assistants and research students engaged in research and teaching activities within the disciplinary fields of Political Science and Public Administration, Sociology and Social Psychology. Its international outlook, its dynamic research and interdisciplinary teaching, the quality of its postgraduate programme and the support it gives to the mobility of its students are features that make the Department stand out. Its staff is varied, composed by a balanced mixture of permanent professors, researchers with ICREA and Ramon y Cajal contracts, visiting professors from foreign universities and public administration professionals who, as associates, contribute to the Department's teaching with their experience.

The PhD programme in Political and Social Science is fully adapted to the European Higher Education Area and has adopted the Salzburg Principles on PhD programmes. These are reproduced at the end of this document. In this context, it is considered that:

- The training of future Doctors is a collective task that requires the simultaneous engagement between the department, the PhD students and their tutors or directors. Hence it is important to encourage collective training activities and forums where students in the programme meet.
- Student's involvement, dedication and effort in their own training are crucial elements to meet the programme's objectives. This is facilitated by full time student dedication.
- Continued feedback and monitoring of research students' work is the best guarantee that students advance in the realisation of their thesis.
- General transversal competences acquired through the research process are as important as the results of the research itself. These equip researchers with skills that increase their future opportunities, be it in the labour market or in academia.
- Internationalization is positive and constitutes to the added value of the programme. This recognition guides decisions on admission, the assignation of teachers, research stays and possible co direction of thesis requests.

### **Objectives**

- The formation and training of high quality Political and Social Science researchers and analysts.
- Formation of specialists in the areas of knowledge and research of the Department. That is, Political Science, Public administration and Sociology.
- Developing innovative research in the Department's different research areas.
- Developing general competences that increase the occupational opportunities of future doctors.

## **Competences**

Once the programme has been completed, the future doctor must have demonstrated:

- Systematic comprehension in one of the areas of Political or Social Science and a thorough knowledge in Research Methods and acquisition of the skills associated with this area.
- Ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt an academic research project.
- Ability to critically analyse, self-evaluate and capacity to synthesise complex ideas.
- Ability to communicate effectively with other colleagues, the academic community and the wider society on topics and areas he or she is expert in.
- The possibility of bringing social and cultural advances related to information based societies into the academic and professional field.
- Capacity to pose and resolve applied, theoretical and methodological problems.

The title of Doctor will be awarded to students who have demonstrated acquisition of the competences above and that have:

- Made a personal contribution that widens the frontiers of knowledge through an original piece of research capable of being diffused by a recognised, high quality, academic publication.

## **Admission prerequisites**

- Completion of the Official Research Master programme in Political and Social Science of the UPF or completion of postgraduate studies in another prestigious university or research institute with a value of at least 60 ECTS credits or 600 hours of dedication. In the latter case, the candidate must prove he or she has a level of methodological and subject specific knowledge in the research area chosen for the thesis equivalent to our Official Masters.
- Presentation of a Research Proposal in one of the four research areas of our Department positively evaluated by the Department members working in that area.
- Accredited knowledge of the English Language equal to, at least, level C1 in the Common European Framework Reference (CEFR), which is equivalent to:
  - Advanced Certificate in English (CAE), awarded by the University of Cambridge.
  - Score of 7 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).
  - 220 points in the Computer-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL CBT).
  - Level 7 in the Programa d'Ensenyament d'Idiomes (PEI) of the UPF.

When Candidates are not in possession of one of the above certificates, the selection commission will decide whether the candidate meets the required knowledge of English based on the evidence presented by the candidate.

**Number of places:** 12 yearly

## Research Areas

The department has 4 main research areas, focusing mainly on the following:

Research Area	Research topics
Citizens and political behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Political culture and public opinion</li><li>• Political participation</li><li>• Electoral studies</li></ul>
Democracy, plurinational societies, federalism and immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Legitimacy and political governability in plurinational democracies</li><li>• Federal systems: political theory and in comparative perspective</li><li>• Political theory on immigration and the management of diversity.</li></ul>
Public policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analysis and study of the Welfare State: Social political policies</li><li>• Regulative institutions and policies</li><li>• Government and the information society</li><li>• Public management and administration</li></ul>
Sociodemography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social demography</li><li>• Social and economic inequalities</li><li>• Family sociology</li><li>• Study of the labour market and employment.</li></ul>

## Selection criteria

Candidates who meet the admission prerequisites will be admitted according to the following criteria:

- Submission of a personal motivation statement of no more than two pages (40%).
- Transcript of academic results (40%).
- Two academic letters of recommendation (20%).

## Academic regulations

Once students have completed the Oficial Masters Programme, which represents a taught training period, access to the PhD programme represents the start of the research period that culminates with the reading of the thesis.

During the first year of research, the student is expected to prepare a detailed and sound thesis project and defend it before an evaluation commission. This way, from the second year onwards, the student can advance in his or her research having a clear topic, hypothesis and methodology to follow. The requirement to define the research project in the first year should permit completion of the Thesis during the subsequent 3 years, hence it is expected that students invest a total of four years (one to prepare the project and 3 to complete it).

In order to meet these objectives, students have at their disposal a training programme to reinforce their skills and the methodological tools at their disposal. Students also have the opportunity to take advanced courses to improve their knowledge in the disciplinary field they wish to realise their Doctoral Thesis in.

According to the University's Student Permanence Regulations, for credits that make up the compulsory training as well as the defense of the Thesis Project, students have one examination session per academic year. In the case of not achieving the required standard, students have the opportunity to resit or resubmit their work in the examination session the following year. In order to continue enrolled after their first year, students are required to have passed at least 50% of the first year credits.

Students must have passed the compulsory seminars by the time their Thesis Project is presented. The Department offers the possibility to resit any one of these seminars during the third term, before the date set for the thesis project presentation.

The Thesis Project must be approved by the end of the second academic year in the PhD Programme. The Doctoral Thesis itself must be read before the end of the third academic year following acceptance of the Thesis Project on a full time basis, and before the end of the sixth academic year if registered part time.

As a general rule, full time student dedication is expected. In exceptional and justified cases, students can request the Postgraduate Commission (Commission of Third Cycle Studies) to accept petitions for part time dedication.

## **Training Programme**

The research training programme consists of a set of formative activities; some are specifically aimed at first year research students while the rest are directed to all research students. These are:

- Tutorials
- Research Tools seminars
- Research Design seminars
- Equalising courses
- Advanced courses
- Thesis seminars
- Research forums
- Other training activities

### Tutorials

#### *a) Tutorials during the first year*

All students admitted to the programme must meet with the Postgraduate Coordinator and the Director responsible for the research area he or she wishes to develop their Thesis. In this initial meeting the Director of the relevant research area, in accordance with the student's research interest, will evaluate whether to tutorise the student during

his first year or nominate another person from within the department to become the students tutor. If applicable, the relevant professor will be consulted with regards to his availability. Students can request to be tutored by a given professor in advance and all such requests will be considered.

As a general rule, no professor will tutor more than two students.

Once a tutor has been assigned, he or she will evaluate the training requirements of the student and together they will draw up an initial schedule of activities for the first academic year. The tutor assigned and the personalised schedule of activities will be formalised in a document that must be signed by the student, the Tutor and the Postgraduate Coordinator.

The frequency and length of meetings between tutor and student should be decided between them. The aim should be to ensure the student advances appropriately in the preparation of his thesis project. As a rule, tutorial sessions must take place at least every four weeks for full time students and eight weeks for part time students.

*b) Tutorial sessions from the second year onwards*

Once the thesis project has been approved, the Postgraduate Commission will nominate a thesis director taking into account the students' prior written proposition. The Director of Thesis may be the same person who acted as the student's tutor in his or her first year. When a different person is proposed as Director, it must be accepted and agreed by both the Tutor and the future Director.

Doctoral thesis directors must be Doctors and teachers in the Department with an accredited research experience. In exceptional cases, and following a request from a student, a Doctor who does not belong to the Department may be accepted as director of his or her thesis. In such cases, the Postgraduate Commission will name a Thesis Tutor from within the Department's staff.

Co direction between members of the Department and academics from other national or international institutions will be accepted if applicable, and when the topic and research design justify it.

In order to ensure professors are able to dedicate enough time to each research student, professors are discouraged from directing more than four doctoral theses at any one time.

During the three year period established to complete the research project, the Thesis Director and the student will establish the rhythm and structure of tutorial sessions that is most appropriate. However there must be at least 5 tutorials per year. These can be face to face, by email or telephone.

Every academic year, the Thesis Director will write a report detailing the activities undertaken, progress on the research project and the future prospects and expectations for his or her students.

Before the start of each academic year, the Postgraduate Coordinator will present a report to the relevant University Commission, detailing the progress of each research student during the preceding year. This will include information on his or her assistance and participation in the Thesis Seminars and Research Forums of the Department.

#### Research Tools Seminar

During the first term of each academic year there will be a Basic Research Tools Seminar compulsory for all first year research students.

Participation in the seminar will be evaluated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Students who are classed as unsatisfactory are able to resit once.

#### Research Design Seminar

All first year research students must attend a compulsory Research Design Seminar that will take place in the first or second term. The programme offers two such seminars with complementary contents in order to cover the requirements of the different types of research the Department is involved in. Each research student must decide with his Tutor which seminar is most appropriate in relation to his or her research proposal. Students are able to assist to both if it is considered suitable or appropriate.

Participation in the seminar will be evaluated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory. Students who are classed as unsatisfactory are able to resit once.

#### Equalising Courses

In cases where students are admitted to the programme without having first completed the UPF's Official Masters in Political and Social Science and that have been found to lack the required prior training the Postgraduate Commission will decide, taking into consideration the Tutors' evaluation, which equalising courses the student must take in his or her first year. These courses will be taken from the range of compulsory and optional courses offered in the official masters.

#### Advanced Courses

Research students can take, on a voluntary basis, any of the courses offered in the Official Master's programmes to deepen their knowledge in a specific field.

#### Thesis Seminar

The Department organises a Thesis Seminar where all research students who have already registered their Thesis Project present, on an annual basis, the state of their research to members of the Department.

Depending on the progress of their research, students may centre their presentation on the theoretical framework, the methodological aspects, or on the completed parts of the Thesis.

The seminar is coordinated by a departmental professor who, at the beginning of each academic year, will elaborate and publish a schedule of the presentations after consultation, and in agreement with, the students and their directors.

The schedule must aim to maximise the number of departmental staff able to assist and make the speakers' Thesis Director or Tutor's assistance possible.

Students must deliver in advance the paper they will present to the coordinator in order to allow time for it to be distributed and read by other attendees before the seminar.

The coordinator will elaborate a summary of the main comments made, points discussed and recommendations made during the session which will be forwarded to the relevant research student and his or her Thesis Director. This document will constitute an important tool for the student to improve his or her research.

The coordinator will also produce a written evaluation of each presentation that will be forwarded to the Department Director and the Postgraduate Coordinator. This will form part of the Department's annual evaluation on the progress of each of its research students.

The Thesis Seminar is compulsory for all research students.

### Research Forums

Every fortnight the department organises Research Forums that consist of conferences or seminars by UPF professors and researchers, visiting professors or specially invited renowned academics. In these Research forums, innovative lines in research, project results, research reports or new methodologies applied to specific research fields are presented.

Research student's assistance is compulsory. It is an opportunity for students to engage in up to date information on current research, meet renowned academics and for students to network. It is also an opportunity to discuss and comment with the speaker aspects that might be related to one's own research.

At the start of each academic year, the Research Forum coordinators will meet with the students to discuss the topics which most interest them based on their research, and will then draw up a list of possible speakers.

### Other training activities

Each Director of Thesis will assess and decide with the research student on the realisation of other training activities throughout his or her research period. Amongst these are:

- The analysis of the student's background once he or she has been admitted to the programme to identify areas where complimentary training might be require, such as statistical techniques, languages, interpersonal skills or basic content in the discipline.

- Research and information gathering on institutions that provide activities that the student could attend to gain the complementary training needed, these could include summer schools, specialised courses or international conferences.
- The design of a calendar of conferences and seminars the student could attend.
- The choosing of possible journals to publish specific aspects of the student's research.
- Advice on research visits to international institutions.

## **Thesis Project**

Students admitted to the PhD programme must prepare during their first year a Thesis Project. At the end of this first year, the thesis project must be defended publicly before a tribunal.

It must consist of no more than 30 pages (excluding bibliography) and must include the following sections:

- a) The topic chosen, the research question or questions and the thesis objectives.
- b) A justification for the topic selected and an explication of the main contributions to knowledge the thesis could make.
- c) A state of the question and a bibliographical revision on the subject.
- d) An outline establishing the different sections of the thesis or relation between possible articles.
- e) The methodology.
- f) The resources.
- g) A schedule or calendar.

The postgraduate commission will fix each year, and in advance, the specific dates in which Thesis Project presentations take place. This will be between the 15th of May and the 15th of June.

The tribunal will be composed of three members, at least one of which will be from the Department. The same tribunal will qualify all thesis projects presented that year. The Thesis Project will be qualified as satisfactory or unsatisfactory.

If qualified as satisfactory, the project will be inscribed in the Department. If the project presented is considered unsatisfactory, the student is able to present the project the following year, if it is again considered to be unsatisfactory, the student will be excluded from the programme.

## **Doctoral Thesis**

The department accepts two thesis formats that are considered and valued equally by the Postgraduate Commission and by the tribunal. These are:

- a) Monograph
- b) Compilation of a minimum of three pieces of research work, with an overall introduction providing coherence and some global conclusions.

Neither Thesis format must exceed 300 pages including bibliography (excluding annexes), based on a layout of approximately 35 lines per page and 70 characters per line.

Once the Thesis has been inscribed, it must be completed within a maximum of three years for full time students and within six years for part time students.

The Director of Thesis, or Tutor, will present to the Postgraduate Commission at the start of each academic year a written report on the research student's activities and the current state of the student's research.

The Postgraduate Commission will evaluate annually the compliance of each student with the training activities and his or her research progress.

When the research student, in accordance with his or her Director or Tutor, considers he or she is prepared to officially defend the Doctoral Thesis the Postgraduate Commission should be notified. The Commission will then seek two external evaluations from renowned academics. Once these evaluations have been received, the Commission will endorse or not the presentation of the thesis taking into consideration these evaluations and the Director of Thesis or Tutor's report.

For the Postgraduate Commission to authorise the reading of the Thesis, it must reach the minimum level of quality required for it to be published by a good publishing house if it is in a monograph format, or if it is a compilation of articles, these should be publishable by a good quality academic journal.

If the presentation of the thesis is not endorsed, the reasons and academic aspects that need revising will be laid out. Thesis can then be resubmitted to the Commission for evaluation once the relevant modifications have been made.

Theses which are based on a compilation (not a monograph) must attend to the following norms:

- a) Each component section must have the format of an article or of a book chapter.
- b) The introduction and conclusions must establish and detail the scientific coherence between the component parts. The introduction must introduce the different pieces of work and justify their thematic unity while the conclusions must establish a summary of the results obtained globally, a discussion of the results and the final conclusions.
- c) Only one of the component articles can be co-authored. In such cases, a report must be presented where the authors explains which fundamental part of the article the research student has produced. In exceptional cases the Commission may accept a second co-authored article.
- d) No piece of work can form part of more than one Thesis. If articles are co-authored with researchers who are not doctors, the co-author must renounce, in writing, to presenting the piece of work as part of his or her Doctoral Thesis.
- e) The pieces of work must be dated after the student's admission to the PhD programme and must include the author's affiliation to the UPF.

Once the presentation of the thesis has been endorsed, the Postgraduate Commission will propose the appointment of members to constitute the tribunal that evaluates it. The two external evaluators will form part of the tribunal unless there are expressed circumstances that advise against this.

In cases where one of the members of the tribunal is co-author of one of the articles of the Thesis being evaluated an explicit agreement by the Postgraduate Commission is required.

### **Doctorate with a European Mention**

Where students have manifested their intention to be awarded the title of “European Doctor” and meet the requirements for obtaining it, the Department will facilitate the compliance with the established requisites.

To this end, the Postgraduate Commission will:

- Seek two professors from foreign institutions within the EU to provide the Thesis evaluations required.
- Will include a professor from an international institution within the EU to be part of the evaluating tribunal in addition to the two external evaluators.

## Salzburg principles

Conclusions and recommendations of the “Bologna seminar on “Doctoral programmes for the European knowledge society”

From the discussions in Salzburg a consensus emerged on **a set o ten basic principles** as follows:

1. **The core component of doctoral training is the advancement of knowledge through original research.** At the same time it is recognised that doctoral training must increasingly meet the needs of an employment market that is wider than academia.
2. **Embedding in institutional strategies and policies:** universities as institutions need to assume responsibility for ensuring that the doctoral programmes and research training they offer are designed to meet new challenges and include appropriate professional career development opportunities.
3. **The importance of diversity:** the rich diversity of doctoral programmes Europe - including joint doctorates - is a strength which has to be underpinned by quality and sound practice.
4. **Doctoral candidates as early stage researchers:** should be recognized as professionals – with commensurate rights - who make a key contribution to the creation of new knowledge.
5. **The crucial role of supervision and assessment:** in respect of individual doctoral candidates, arrangements for supervision and assessment should be based on a transparent contractual framework of shared responsibilities between doctoral candidates, supervisors and the institution (and where appropriate including other partners).
6. **Achieving critical mass:** Doctoral programmes should seek to achieve critical mass and should draw on different types of innovative practice being introduced in universities across Europe, bearing in mind that different solutions may be appropriate to different contexts and in particular across larger and smaller European countries. These range from graduate schools in major universities to international, national and regional collaboration between universities.
7. **Duration:** doctoral programmes should operate within an appropriate time duration (three to four years full-time as a rule).
8. **The promotion of innovative structures:** to meet the challenge of interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills
9. **Increasing mobility:** Doctoral programmes should seek to offer geographical as well as interdisciplinary and intersectoral mobility and international collaboration within an integrated framework of cooperation between universities and other partners.
10. **Ensuring appropriate funding:** the development of quality doctoral programmes and the successful completion by doctoral candidates requires appropriate and sustainable funding.

Salzburg, 3-5 February 2005