A hallmark of the study of American Politics is diversity of subject, approach, and method. The subject matter comprises, among other things, analysis of Congress, the bureaucracy, interest groups, the Presidency, voting, public opinion and participation, race and ethnicity; the conceptual approaches include, among other perspectives, rational choice, historical, and behavioral perspectives; and the field encompasses, among other methods, quantitative analysis of aggregate data, qualitative fieldwork, survey research and randomized experiments. No single department can represent fully this diversity. But the department faculty in American Politics (together with colleagues in the Graduate School of Business) comes remarkably close.

Refer to Chapter 2 of the Program Guide for additional important information on the department’s requirements for advancing to candidacy.

The following requirements apply to students who entered the PhD program in 2016-17 and after.

Pre-candidacy Requirements for 1st Field American Politics Students

In order to be eligible to advance to candidacy with American politics as a first field, students must:

1. Complete 420A, 420B and 400C with grades of B+ or higher. Students whose course performance is deemed insufficient (i.e., at least one AP grade of B or lower) should speak to the field convener about their options. The core graduate sequence in American Politics – PS 420A, B, and 400C –introduces students to the gallery of both faculty and research in American Politics. PS 420A focuses on analysis of political institutions, PS 420B addresses the analysis of individual behavior while PS 400C focuses on research design and practice.

2. Complete two elective courses with grades of B+ or higher. The electives are to be 3xx or 4xx courses offered by a member of the American Politics field. See options on page 2 of this document.

3. Comprehensive Exam: Complete and pass a Comprehensive Exam in spring quarter of their second year. The exam in American Politics requires students to demonstrate knowledge of concepts and research findings on major political phenomena at the level of individuals and institutions.

4. Field Paper: Students taking AP as a first field will, in addition, write a field paper in AP. See section 2.4 of the Program Guide for additional details on the field paper requirement.

Pre-candidacy Requirements for 2nd Field American Politics Students

In order to be eligible to advance to candidacy with American politics as a second field, students must:

1. Complete 420A, 420B and 400C with grades of B+ or higher. Students whose course performance is deemed insufficient (i.e., at least one AP grade of B or lower) should speak to the field convener about their options. The core graduate sequence in American Politics – PS 420A, B, and 400C –introduces...
students to the gallery of both faculty and research in American Politics. PS 420A focuses on analysis of political institutions, PS 420B addresses the analysis of individual behavior while PS 400C focuses on research design and practice.

2. Complete two elective courses with grades of B+ or higher. The electives are to be 3xx or 4xx courses offered by a member of the American Politics field. See elective options list below.

3. Students declaring American Politics as a second subfield are subject to coursework review by the AP field convener. Students with sufficient course performance—defined as earning at least a B+ in all five courses that are required for the AP field (420A, 420B, 400C, and two electives)—are exempt from taking the comprehensive exam. Students whose course performance is deemed insufficient (i.e., at least one AP grade of B or lower) are required to take the full AP comprehensive exam.

**Pre-candidacy Requirements for 3rd Field American Politics Students**

In order to be eligible to advance to candidacy with American politics as a third field, students must:

1. Complete two Political Science department courses in American politics with grades of B or better. These classes must be taken for at least three units each. The courses are to be 3xx or 4xx courses offered by a member of the American Politics field.

**2017-18 Elective Course Options in American Politics**

**Fall:**
- PS 320R: The Presidency (Moe)
- PS 421R: American Political Development (Nall)
- PS 421K: Questionnaire Design for Surveys and Lab Experiments (Krosnick)

**Winter**
- PS 344: Politics and Geography (Rodden/Nall)
- PS 422F: Electoral Change in Western Democracies (Fiorina/Brady)

**Spring**
- PS 358: Data Driven Politics (Bonica)
- PS 424A: Democratic Elections (Hall)

**Workshop**

The American Politics Workshop (PS 422) is an important forum for students to engage with new and exciting American Politics research. It also offers students an opportunity to further integrate themselves into a professional community comprised of Stanford faculty, scholars from other institutions, and most importantly, of student peers at all stages of doctoral work. All American Politics students are strongly encouraged to attend the Workshop regularly.