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

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

Pre-candidacy Requirements for 1st Field International Relations Students

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

1. Complete the IR course sequence (PS 410A, 410B, 410C and 400C) with grades of B+ or better.

The course sequence has three main objectives:

- To give students a brief introduction to the large academic literature on international politics, with a view to helping them to prepare for the synthesis and analysis they will be required to carry out in the IR field exam. This is done primarily in PS 410A, 410B and 410C, a three-course sequence that covers IR theory, international security, and international political economy.

- To introduce students to a variety of frontier research problems that animate current work in the field, so that they can see and evaluate examples of how empirical research is actually conducted rather than just commenting on “the classics” or reading pure theory. Thus course syllabi typically mix “classics” and recent articles/books that illustrate the concerns, problems, and potential of current research in IR.

- To help students initiate one or more of their own empirical research projects, to gain practical experience in elaborating a theoretical argument, drawing out testable implications, assembling and analyzing relevant evidence, and presenting the work in stages before colleagues. In PS 400C, students develop an original research project, generally culminating in a full-length paper.

Students who take all four courses but fall short of the minimum grade will retake the course(s) in which they earned less than a B+.

2. Pass the IR comprehensive exam

Students who designate IR as their first field should plan to take the comprehensive exam during spring quarter of their second year. We recommend that students planning to take the exam meet with the Field Convenor to ask for advice about how to prepare and what a strong exam looks like.

We expect that students taking the IR field exam will have read extensively in the literatures of IR theory, security studies, and international political economy beyond the specific materials assigned in 410A, 410B and 410C. To assist with this task the syllabi for these courses will provide suggestions of recommended extra
reading that IR students should most likely be familiar with prior to taking the comprehensive exam. Students will not be tested on the material covered in 400C.

3. Write a field paper

Field papers are due in Spring quarter of year 2. The core sequence (PS 410A, 410B, 410C, and 400C) and IR workshop provide structure, guidance, and multiple sources of feedback for students writing IR field papers. Field papers are assessed by two faculty readers, usually in the student’s major field. In December or January of the student’s 2nd year, the student consults with faculty to determine which two faculty will read the paper. The two readers will be reported to the Graduate Administrator by the end of January of year 2 using the Field Paper Readers Form. By the end of Spring Quarter the faculty readers must indicate their approval of the paper by again signing the Field Paper Approval Form. Students then return the signed approval form and a copy of the approved paper to the Graduate Administrator. See section 2.4 of the Program Guide for additional details on the field paper requirement.

Pre-candidacy Requirements for 2nd Field International Relations Students

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

1. Complete the IR course sequence (PS 410A, 410B, 410C and 400C*) with grades of B+ or better.
   *Students designating International Relations as their second subfield do not need to take PS 400C as part of their IR field requirements if they will take it as part of their Comparative Politics or American Politics subfield requirements. PS 400C should be taken only once.

Students who take all four courses but fall short of the minimum grade will have two options: retake the course(s) in which they earned less than a B+, or take an exam to demonstrate that they know the material even though they got a low grade in the course(s).

Pre-candidacy Requirements for 3rd Field International Relations Students

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

1. Complete two Political Science department courses in International Relations 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 International Relations field.

Additional Learning Opportunities

Students interested in taking International Relations (IR) as one of their two major fields should also avail themselves of other IR learning and research opportunities. Beyond the core sequence, the department sometimes offers specialized seminars on selected topics in international relations. There are numerous opportunities in a range of workshops, inside the department and also in Stanford research centers, for students to present their own research and to hear presentations by outside speakers. Of particular importance is the Workshop in International Relations (PS 411A, 411B). This workshop features presentations by students, Stanford faculty, and faculty from other leading institutions and is an important forum for students to engage with new and exciting IR research. The workshop offers students an opportunity to further integrate themselves into a professional community comprised of Stanford faculty, scholars from other institutions, and most importantly, student peers at all stages of doctoral work. IR students are strongly encouraged to enroll in and attend the IR Workshop regularly.