

# Political Science (POLS)

## Advancement to Candidacy for Ph.D.

1

### Complete Coursework & Program Requirements

- Declare major track by the end of year 1.
- Complete all core and elective requirements with satisfactory GPA.

2

### Fulfill Special Requirements

- Serve as a TA for at least 2 semesters
- Pass the First-Year Exam by the end of Spring in Year 1 (typically April).

3

### Qualifying Examination (QE)

- Take exam in early Spring of Year 3 (typically February).
- Submit Application to Graduate Division ([gradservices@ucmerced.edu](mailto:gradservices@ucmerced.edu)) with your SSHA Graduate Coordinator CC'ed.
- Submit Qualifying Exam Report (QER) to Graduate Division at [gradservices@ucmerced.edu](mailto:gradservices@ucmerced.edu) with your SSHA Graduate Services Coordinator CC'ed. **QER form must be submitted regardless of examination results.**

4

### Master's Along the Way (MAW) (Optional)

- Elect to receive an M.A. en route.
- Submit Master's Advancement to Candidacy (ATC) webform.
- After approval, file Graduation Application and complete Graduate Division requirements: [Graduate Division - Graduation](#).

5

### Dissertation Proposal & Advancement to Candidacy (Ph.D.)

- Form a Candidacy Committee (CC) immediately after Qualification exam (QE).
- Draft Dissertation Proposal (DP) with CC.
- Provide final copy to CC at least 7 days before Proposal Defense Meeting (PDM).
- Schedule and complete PDM at the beginning of Fall in Year 4.
- File Ph.D. ATC form prior to PDM: finalize after successful PDM.
- Advance to candidacy before the end of Fall in Year 4.



**GRADUATE SERVICES**  
School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts