

Dear students in political philosophy/theory,

Following some discussion among ourselves about what we can do to help you prepare for examinations, complete your dissertation in a timely manner, and find a desirable job, we thought it best to share the following thoughts about the way we view the formal aspects of the political philosophy/theory field with you.

At present, students are expected to take 6 courses before sitting for the comprehensive examination in this field. Those courses are to include GVPT 741, 742, and 743, plus 3 other courses.

Questions for the exam are based on a list of books available from the Director of Graduate Studies.

The examination itself consists of 9 questions distributed in three sections (ancient and medieval, modern and contemporary, and particular to each faculty member). There are three questions in each section, and students must answer one question from each.

Still, such course and book requirements are merely guides to learning. Our goal is to prepare students to become scholars and teachers with a broad grasp of the field as a whole and of the different approaches scholars take in their pursuit of it.

Thus, we also expect students to take courses with each of the professors teaching in the field in order to learn first-hand about the variety of approaches among us as faculty members.

Similarly, we urge students to have at least two faculty from the field on dissertation committees. We assure you that we will be willing to stretch so as to accommodate your interests, because it seems important to us that your exposure to political philosophy/theory be broad.

Please feel free to see us concerning any questions you might have about this statement.

Fred Alford
James Glass
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