

## Doctoral School of International Relations and Political Science Program Plan

**Valid:** For students who have started their studies in the Fall semester of the academic year 2025/2026

**Persons responsible for the program:**

- a) Prof. Dr. István Benczes, Head of the Doctoral School
- b) Dr. Géza Salamin, Director of the Geopolitics and Sustainable Development Program
- c) Dr. Péter Marton, Director of the International and Security Studies Program
- d) Dr. Róbert Csehi, Director of the Political Science Program
- e) Prof. Dr. Sándor Gyula Nagy, Director of the World Economy program

**Place of the program:** Budapest

**Training schedule:** full-time

**Language of the program:** English

**Fields:** Political Science and Economics

**Duration:** 8 semesters

**Number of credits to be completed:** 240 credits

### 1. Program objectives and professional competences

Individuals with a doctoral (PhD) degree **are expected to acquire:**

A deep knowledge of the generalities and specificities, the major directions and well-defined boundaries, the agreed upon and contested contexts of international relations, world economics, geopolitics and political science.

A creative understanding of the contexts, theories and the conceptual systems and terminology that underpin the discipline or field of study.

The ability to identify areas and topics requiring research and to formulate research problems.

The knowledge of research methodology necessary for independent research in their chosen field, and are able to apply and further develop the specific methods of knowledge acquisition and problem-solving in the field of their specialisation.

The ability to carry out creative and in-depth analyses of the field, to formulate synthetic and new approaches to broad and specific issues and to evaluate and critique them.

The ability to design and implement new projects, to conduct research in a given discipline, to develop new techniques and approaches.

The ability to identify unforeseen professional problems and to explore the detailed theoretical and practical background at the level of research needed to solve them.

The ability to develop and initiate new areas of knowledge and to initiate new practices with creative autonomy.

An interest and learning capacity to identify and solve unforeseen research problems in the field.

A strong professional commitment, a persistent dedication to the search for new paths, and an acceptance of the need for perseverance.

The ability to take a leadership role and to engage in a high level of collaboration in the formulation of theoretical and practical questions.

The ability to assume an equal role as a discussion partner with professionals in the field.

The ability to take responsibility for raising and responding to new ethical issues in relation to the theory and practice of their profession.

## 2. Credits to be acquired during the training

Credit Type	Semester								Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Study credit	16	10	17	11	--	--	--	--	54
Research credit	15	15	15	15	25	25	25	25	160
Other credits:	6				20				26
- Teaching credits & Teaching-related activities and service credits	6				20				26
- Additional research credit					20				20
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>				<b>120</b>				<b>240</b>

**Study credits** are awarded for the completion of courses included in the curriculum. The syllabus can be found on the last page of this document. In addition, the student may earn additional study credits by completing the courses of other Doctoral Programs of the University.

**Research credits** can be obtained according to the following rules:

- a) Submission of work plan for the given semester upon consultation with the supervisor, within 30 days of the commencement of the study period. The work plan should include the following: research activity planned for the semester (along with the schedule); any problems arising during research, support expected from the supervisor, expected results of the research (e.g. publication, conference presentation),
- b) Submission of the progress report two (2) weeks before the end of the examination period. The progress report covers the following: description of the research activity carried out during the semester, progress in doctoral research, research and publication achievements (e.g. participation in conference, publications), teaching activity carried out, assessment of working relationship with the supervisor, any personal or material problems and any assistance required to address them,
- c) favourable assessment from the supervisor. A supervisory assessment is deemed favourable if the supervisor confirms regular consultations and progress made by the student,
- d) presentation held at the research forum (only if in that semester it has been organized),
- e) participation in a thesis proposal discussion or a public defence at least once every semester.

**Teaching credits, teaching-related activities and service credits** can be awarded for the following activities: teaching a full or partial course in a BA/MA program, thesis or TDK paper supervision, thesis review, mentoring, teaching assistance (e.g. correcting home assignments, exam papers, developing teaching materials, compiling exam questions), participation in committee work (e.g. admission, TDK, final exams), assistance in conference organisation, and any further teaching-related and/or service activity as agreed upon with the Program Director.

**Additional research credit** (20 credits) may be awarded once for the doctoral student's research-related performance above the expected level, for any of the following:

- a) a journal article with a Q1-Q3 rating in the discipline-specific Scimago list;
- b) a journal article that has a domestic A-B rating in the list of journals of the IX. Section of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, or
- c) a book chapter published by a publisher listed in the Annex 4 of the Rules of Operation of the Doctoral School of International Relations and Political Science;
- d) Successful thesis proposal discussion in the last active semester of the research and dissertation phase.

### 3. The comprehensive exam

The comprehensive exam ends the four-semester-long study and research phase. The possible outcomes are “passed” or “fail”. In the event of “fail”, the exam can be re-taken once more at the end of the same semester.

During the comprehensive exam students need to provide evidence for the following:

- a) Awareness of the scientific problems, theories, results and methodological dilemmas and solutions related to their research field,
- b) Ability to formulate relevant research questions based on the theoretical, methodological and research background related to their research field,
- c) Thorough consideration of the schedule, procedure and feasibility of the doctoral research,
- d) Capability of publishing and presenting their research in the form of a dissertation.

The comprehensive exam has two parts: a) theoretical-methodological part; and b) dissertation part.

In the theoretical-methodological part of the comprehensive examination, doctoral students are assessed for their theoretical and methodological competence in writing and/or orally, as related to their research topic.

For the theoretical-methodological part the questions are based on the most important obligatory literature of the compulsory or compulsory elective courses of the specific programs, which are the following:

#### ***Geopolitics and Sustainable Development Program***

Courses:

- Governance at Different Spatial Scales
- Territorial, Urban Governance and Planning
- Sustainable, Territorial and Urban Development

Literature:

- Kelly, P. (2016) *Classical Geopolitics – A New Analytical Model*, Stanford University Press, Stanford.
- Flint, C. & Taylor, P.J. (2018) *Political Geography: World-Economy, Nation-State and Locality* (7th ed.). Routledge.
- Evers, D. et al. (2024) *Urbanization in Europe: Past Developments and Pathways to a Sustainable Future*. Palgrave-Macmillan.
- Nordhaus, W.D. (2021) *The Spirit of Green The Economics of Collisions and Contagions in a Crowded World* Princeton University Press
- Kerekes, S. (2021) *Chasing the Impossible. Sustainable Development Is a Wicked Problem, but It Can Be and Should Be Tamed!* *World Futures*, Volume 79, Issue 3
- Rakonczi, J. (2018) *Global and Geopolitical Environmental Challenges*. Budapest: Budapesti Corvinus Egyetem.

#### ***International and Security Studies Program***

Courses:

- Theories of International Relations
- Comparative History of Civilizations

Literature:

- Smith, S. - Hadfield, A. & Dunne, T. eds. (2016) *Foreign Policy: Theories, Actors, Cases*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, (several available editions).
- Baylis, J. - Owens, P. - Smith, S. eds. (1997) *The Globalization of World Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, - (several available editions).
- Williams, P.D. & McDonald, M. eds. (2023) *An Introduction to Security Studies*. London: Routledge.

- Mello, P.A. & Ostermann, F. eds. (2023) Routledge Handbook of Foreign Policy Analysis Methods. London: Routledge.

### ***Political Science Program***

Courses:

- Theories of politics, philosophy and economics
- Institutional analysis of governance
- Electoral systems: engineering political competition

Literature:

- Goodin, R. – Moran, M. & Rein, M. eds. (2008) The Oxford Handbook of Public Policy. Oxford University Press <https://academic.oup.com/edited-volume/28180>
- Levi-Faur, D. ed. (2012) The Oxford Handbook of Governance. Oxford University Press.
- Dryzek, J.S. ed. (2009) The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory. Oxford University Press.
- Rhodes, R.A.W. & 't Hart, P eds. (2014) The Oxford Handbook of Political Leadership. Oxford University Press.
- Andeweg, R.B. - Elgie, R, & Helms, L. et al. (eds) (2020) The Oxford Handbook of Political Executives. Oxford University Press.

### ***World Economy program***

Courses:

- World Economics Theories
- Comparative Economics
- International economic relations

Literature:

- Szentes, T. (2002): World Economics 1, Comparative theories and methods of international and development economics: A historical and critical survey. Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó
- Szentes, T. (2003): World Economics 2, The Political Economy of Development, Globalization and System Transformation, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó
- Nissanke, M. & Ocampo, J. A. eds. (2019): The Palgrave Handbook of Development Economics. Critical Reflections on Globalisation and Development. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan
- Ravenhill, J. ed. (2020): Global Political Economy. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Dallago, B. & Casagrande, S. eds. (2023): The Routledge Handbook of Comparative Economic Systems. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

In the dissertation part, students present and defend their research plan: the objectives and the relevance of their research, the research questions and potential hypotheses, the planned research methodology and the workplan.

The comprehensive exam hinges upon the research proposal. The research proposal should cover the following:

- a) description and justification of the research topic, research questions/purposes and potential hypotheses,
- b) scientific relevance of the research questions/purposes and novelty of research as based on the relevant academic literature,
- c) a review and summary synthesis of the relevant literature, theoretical and research background,
- d) detailed presentation and justification of the research methods to be used in the research, arguments for choosing the method in question, any ethical dilemmas, manner of handling research ethics issues,
- e) expected results, significance and implications of research, limitations of the research,
- f) workplan,
- g) publication strategy.

Length: min. 55,000 and max. 75,000 characters with spaces, not including title page, table of contents, references, appendix and any figures or graphs.

#### 4. Publication requirements for the degree

At the time of submission of the dissertation, the doctoral candidate must fulfil the publication criteria of the Doctoral School:

- a) a single-authored or two-authored paper/study/chapter in an international journal of at least:
  - o category C according to the international list of any Section/Scientific Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, or
  - o ranked Q3 by Scimago, or
  - o in a book published in English or German by a prestigious scientific publisher (listed in Annex 5. of the Rules of Operation of the Doctoral School of International Relations and Political Science, OR
- b) at least one paper in category A plus one in a category C according to the domestic (Hungarian) list of any Section/Scientific Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, OR
- c) at least one paper published in a category B plus two more in a category C according to the domestic (Hungarian) list of any Section/Scientific Committee of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
- d) In cases b) and c), at least one of the papers shall be single-authored.

#### 5. The thesis proposal and the dissertation

The submission of the doctoral dissertation is preceded by the discussion of the thesis proposal, which is the first version of the dissertation. The objective of this discussion is to provide valuable feedback before the submission of the dissertation. The thesis proposal must conform to all the formal requirements of the doctoral dissertation, which are the following:

- a) The dissertation defines clear research goal(s) and seeks to answer well-formulated and testable research questions. The theoretical (and eventual societal or practical) relevance of the research is justified with reference to relevant academic literature. The eventual hypotheses are clear and testable.
- b) The dissertation includes a focused and comprehensive review of the relevant theories, research findings and methodological issues. The literature review is structured along the research questions and gives an own novel synthesis and conceptualisation which allows the development of a new perspective.
- c) With regard to research methodology, the dissertation justifies the choice of the research approach and specific methods, presents a detailed description of the procedures employed and discusses the limitations. The concepts used in the dissertation are clearly defined.
- d) The dissertation presents the research findings in a detailed and structured manner.
- e) The dissertation presents the contributions to the research field highlighting the new scientific results and any open questions that need further investigation.

The dissertation may take the form of a monograph or a series of papers/articles (and/or book chapters) – the latter is called a portfolio. As regards its format, both the dissertation and the thesis proposal must comply with the requirements of the specific field of study. Expected length of the thesis proposal and the dissertation: 45-55 thousand words (without title page, ToC, figures, graphs, tables, appendix, references).

## 6. The doctoral degree

The doctoral degree is awarded on the condition of the following:

- a) the absolutorium;
- b) publication requirements are met (see above)
- c) successful defence of the dissertation
- d) proof of payment of financial obligations (comprehensive exam fee, defence fee, etc.),
- e) no outstanding payment obligations exist towards the University.

## 7. The grade of the doctoral degree

The doctoral defence (the doctoral dissertation and the responses to questions during the public defence) is evaluated by the Doctoral Committee. Members of the Committee grade the defence independently on a four-grade scale (*Summa cum laude*, *Cum laude*, *Rite*, *Insufficiente*).

The grade of the defence is

- a) *summa cum laude*, if all votes are at least *cum laude* and the majority of votes (at least 2 votes in the case of 4 votes) are *summa cum laude*
- b) *cum laude* if no more than one vote is *rite*, all other votes are at least *cum laude*
- c) *insufficiente* (inadmissible) if at least two members of the committee grade it as *insufficiente*
- d) *rite* in all other cases

The decision on awarding the degree on the proposal of the Doctoral Committee is made by the University Doctoral Council. .

## 8. Curriculum (courses and credits in the first four semesters)

Subject name	Responsible prof.	N of seminars per week	Fall semester 2025/2026	Spring semester 2025/2026	Fall semester 2026/2027	Spring semester 2026/2027
<b>Core (obligatory) courses for all programs</b>			<b>6</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>
Research Design	Györfy Dóra	4	6			
Prospectus Seminar I.	Benczes István	4			6	
Prospectus Seminar II.	Nagy Sándor Gyula	4				6
<b>Methodological block (2 courses are obligatory to choose)</b>			<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Quantitative Methods in Social Sciences	Denis Ivanov	2		5		5
Research Design in Comparative Studies	Medve-Bálint Gergő	2		5		5
Qualitative Methods I: Process Tracing	Marton Péter	2		5		5
Methods of spatial socio-economic analysis	Lengyel Balázs	2		5		5
Academic Writing (Tudományos szövegírás)	Sejla Almadi	2	5		5	
Discourse Analysis	Mendly Dorottya	2	5		5	
Advanced qualitative research methodologies through case studies	Kocsis János Balázs	2		5		5
Case Study Methods in Political Science	Bartha Attila	2				5
<b>Area studies courses (1 courses are obligatory to choose)</b>			<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Africa and Urbanisation of the Global South	Salamin Géza	2	5		5	
Middle East and North Africa studies	Paragi Bea	2		5		5
The Americas: Economic, Political and Social challenges	Lehoczki Bernadett	2		5		5
The Western Balkans: Post-crisis and EU accession	Endrődi-Kovács Viktória	2		5		5
Central Europe in a Global Context	Kollai István	2		5		5
Political and Economic Transitions in Asia	Szunomár Ágnes	2	5		5	
Contemporary debates about the EU	Csehi Róbert	2	5		5	

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<b>Program-specific compulsory and compulsory elective courses (3 courses are obligatory to choose)</b>			<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
<b><i>Geopolitics and Sustainable Development Program</i></b>						
Governance at Different Spatial Scales (compulsory)	Hajnal György	2	5			
Territorial, Urban Governance and Planning (compulsory)	Salamin Géza	2			5	
Sustainable, territorial and urban development	Marjainé Szerényi Zsuzsanna	2		5		
Geographical Information Systems	Jeneyné Varga Ágnes	2				5
<b><i>International and Security Studies Program</i></b>						
Grounded Theory in IR	Vassillis Petsinis	2	5		5	
Theories of International Relations	Szűcs Anita	2	5		5	
Comparative History of Civilizations	Békés Csaba	2		5		5
International Law	Komanovics Adrienne	2		5		5
<b><i>Political Science Program</i></b>						
Multi-level governance	Csehi Róbert	2		5		
Theories of Politics, Philosophy and Economics	Balázs Zoltán	2	5		5	
Electoral systems: engineering political competition	Matthew E. Bergman	2	5			
Parties and party systems	Dúró József	2				5
Institutional Analysis in Governance	Molnár Gábor Tamás	2			5	
<b><i>World Economy program</i></b>						
World Economic Theories (Heterodox Approaches) (compulsory)	Ricz Judit	2	5			
Global Development Studies	Benczes István	2		5		5
Comparative Economics	Csaba László	2			5	
Economics of Regional Integration	Nagy Sándor Gyula	2	5		5	
International economic relations	Vigvári Gábor	2		5		5
<b>Free elective course* (1 course is obligatory to be taken during the 2 years, freely at <u>any</u> semester)</b>					<b>6</b>	
<b>Total credits:</b>			<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>

\* Subjects offered by other doctoral schools of the University can also be taken up and count as elective subjects.