

# **POLITICAL SCIENCE**

## **DOCTORAL PROGRAMME IN POLITICAL SCIENCE**

Educational and scientific degree: DOCTOR PhD

Professional qualification: RESEARCHER

Duration of study: 3/three/ or 4 /four/ academic years

Mode of study: full-time, part-time, individual

## **QUALIFICATION CHARACTERISTICS**

### **I. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME**

The dynamic changes occurring across all spheres of public life created a clear need for specialists who understand the political system and processes, as well as their growing influence on the broader social structure. The PhD programme in *Political Science* responds to this demand by preparing highly qualified experts capable of actively engaging in various areas of public life. Graduates are expected to demonstrate professionalism, creativity, and a strong sense of civic responsibility, applying their knowledge, skills, and competencies to the analysis and forecasting of political processes.

The PhD programme in *Political Science* is accredited in three modes of study: full-time, part-time, and individual, and is offered in both Bulgarian and English. The programme's academic documentation is aligned with the core principles of modern higher education.

In the course of doctoral training, the Department of Philosophical and Political Sciences provides opportunities for:

- the application of contemporary teaching methods;
- the acquisition of knowledge and skills for research activity;
- effective scholarly communication between faculty and doctoral students;
- the development of teamwork and collaboration skills;
- adherence to established academic and ethical values;
- participation in research projects and scientific research;
- active involvement in academic forums and conferences;
- involvement in the Department's affairs and the broader professional political science network.

Doctoral education is carried out based on an *Individual Study Plan*, developed for each PhD student. This plan outlines the responsibilities of both the doctoral candidate and the university, including mandatory examinations, the key components of the dissertation, teaching duties, and administrative activities. Each PhD student's curriculum also includes foreign language training, which is delivered through self-study as well as participation in courses and workshops. The Individual Study Plans are jointly prepared by the doctoral students and their academic supervisors, reviewed by the Department of Philosophical and Political Sciences, and formally approved by the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Philosophy.

### **II. OBJECTIVES OF THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME**

The PhD programme in *Political Science* aims to prepare specialists with the professional qualifications necessary to carry out analytical, research, teaching, expert,

administrative, and other specialized activities related to both the theory and practice of politics and political science.

### **III. GENERAL QUALIFICATION AND SPECIALIZATION OF THE DOCTORAL PROGRAMME**

The doctoral programme emphasizes deep disciplinary knowledge and the development of skills for independent, critical application of that knowledge. Students are trained to conduct professional analyses, draw comparisons, and provide expert assessments and recommendations in key political decision-making processes. Special attention is also given to cultivating advanced language proficiency and communication skills, reflecting both the regional context of SWU “Neofit Rilski” and Bulgaria’s evolving role within the globalized European Union.

### **IV. KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND COMPETENCES ACQUIRED, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK**

#### **4.1. Knowledge (Theoretical and/or Factual)**

- PhD holders in Political Science possess comprehensive theoretical and factual knowledge in key areas of political science;
- Demonstrate a strong command of the conceptual framework of the discipline;
- Are well-versed in various methodological approaches for analyzing political facts, processes, and trends; making political decisions; and forecasting the development of political and social phenomena;
- Have a solid understanding of the international relations system and global political processes.

#### **4.2. Skills (Cognitive and/or Practical)**

- Apply their knowledge comprehensively and effectively in their professional activities;
- Identify, synthesize and critically evaluate information from a variety of sources;
- Analyze public opinion, attitudes, and the behavior of social groups and individuals;
- Work effectively with diverse communities and communicate with institutional representatives at various levels.

#### **4.3. Independence and Responsibility**

- Adapt to and respond promptly to complex social challenges;
- Analyze problematic situations with insight, propose informed solutions, and formulate realistic forecasts;
- Develop theoretical studies on specific topics, drawing well-founded conclusions and recommendations;
- Articulate expert opinions on trends in both Bulgarian and global socio-political contexts;
- Deliver comprehensive evaluations and recommendations to support decision-making processes related to societal development at international, national, and regional levels.

#### **4.4. Learning Competence**

- A clear understanding of and commitment to lifelong learning;
- Openness to academic and professional mobility, as well as the ability to acquire knowledge and skills in unfamiliar or complex situations;
- Proficiency in foreign languages and adaptability to diverse learning methods.

#### **4.5. Communicative and Social Competences**

- Take responsibility in professional contexts and demonstrate independent critical thinking;
- Social and communicative competences – teamwork skills;
- Collaborate effectively within teams and exhibit strong social and communication skills;
- Identify problems and propose appropriate, well-reasoned solutions;
- Express their views clearly, while showing empathy, understanding, and solidarity toward others involved in the process.

#### 4.6. Professional Competences

- **Design and conduct** theoretical and empirical research on topics related to social and political realities;
- **Utilize** advanced information-processing software and analytical tools;
- **Analyze** empirical and theoretical data from diverse sources and facilitate critical discussions on potential social processes and trends;
- **Provide** expert assessments of the condition of political phenomena, communities, and institutions;
- **Organize and lead** academic forums or workshops to debate specific issues;
- **Develop** theoretical models, methodologies, and instruments for investigating emerging or long-standing social and institutional challenges;
- Capable of participating in the organization and conduct of research on various aspects of social reality
- **Interpret** research findings and articulate their social and policy implications.

### V. AREAS OF PROFESSIONAL REALIZATION

The educational and scientific degree of *Doctor* in the *Political Science* doctoral programme (professional field 3.3 Political Sciences) offers opportunities for successful professional realization across a wide range of public sectors, including politics, academia, education, media and communications, governance, and business. PhD holders in Political Science may pursue careers in international institutions and organizations, non-governmental organizations, local self-government and administrative bodies, as well as national government institutions.

### CONTENTS OF THE CURRICULUM

№	ACTIVITIES	Form preparation and implementation			Form of recognition
		CREDITS	TEACHING HOURS	lectures, seminars, laboratory exercises, non-contact hours (self-study), consultations, participation, other	exam, current grade discussion, certificate, report, minutes, other
I.	EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY				
1.	Main problem fields in Political Science	3.0	90	30 l.	exam

				(30 contact hours/ 60 non-contact hours)	
2.	Exam based on the field of education of the PhD student	4.0	120	30 l. / 15 sem. (45 contact hours/ 75 non-contact hours)	exam
3.	Project preparation and project management	3.0	90	30 l. / 60 non- contact hours	exam
4.	English language	4.0	120	15 l. / 15 sem. (30 contact hours/ 90 non-contact hours)	exam
5.	Elective course of Group one	3.0	90	15 l. / 15 sem. (30 contact hours/ 60 non-contact hours)	exam
6.	Elective course of Group one	3.0	90	15 l. / 15 sem. (30 contact hours/ 60 non-contact hours)	exam
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>600</b>		
<b>II. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ACTIVITY</b>					
1.	Development of a dissertation project	10.0	300	consultations/ non-contact hours	discussion
2.	Literature research and referencing	10.0	300	non-contact hours	discussion
3.	Writing of the dissertation	50.0	1500	consultations/ non-contact hours	discussion
4.	Publication of articles (peer-reviewed and indexed academic research databases or non-refereed peer-reviewed publications)	20.0	600	non-contact hours/ consultations	publication
5.	Participation in scientific forums (conferences, round tables, workshops, symposiums, webinars)	10.0	300	participation	certificate/ agenda
6.	Participation in a research project	20.0	600	participation	certificate
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>120.0</b>	<b>3600</b>		
<b>III. PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITY</b>					
1.	Consultations of students	5.0	150	consultations	report
2.	Evaluation of students' written works	5.0	150	non-contact hours	report
3.	Bachelor's and Master's theses reviews	5.0	150	non-contact hours	minutes
4.	Participation in seminars and provision of support for the incumbent lecturer	5.0	150	non-contact hours	discussion
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>600</b>		
<b>IV. OTHERS</b>					
1.	Participation in department meetings	5.0	150	participation	minutes
2.	Participation in working groups and committees for development of documentation supporting educational and administrative activities (including audit, accreditation, post-accreditation control, etc.)	10.0	300	participation	minutes
3.	Participation in organizing and conducting scientific forums	5.0	150	participation	certificate

	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>600</b>		
	<b>TOTAL:</b> (For the full duration of the training)	<b>180</b>	<b>5400</b>		
<b>ELECTIVE COURSES</b>					
	<b>Elective course of Group one</b> /One course only shall be selected /				
1.	A course aligned with the topic of the dissertation	3.0	90	15l. / 15 sem. (30 contact hours/ 60 non-contact hours)	exam
2.	A course aligned with the topic of the dissertation	3.0	90	15 l. / 15 sem. (30 contact hours/ 60 non-contact hours)	exam
	<b>Elective course of Group two</b> /One course only shall be selected/				
1.	A course aligned with the topic of the dissertation	3.0	90	15l. / 15 sem. (30 contact hours / 60 non-contact hours)	exam
2.	A course aligned with the topic of the dissertation	3.0	90	15 l. / 15 sem. (30 contact hours / 60 non-contact hours)	exam

## ANNOTATIONS OF COURSES

### COMPULSORY COURSES

#### MAIN PROBLEM FIELDS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

**ECTS credits:** 3

**Hours:** 30 lectures

**Assessment:** exam

**Type of exam:** written

**Methodical guide:**

**Department of Philosophical and Political Sciences**

Faculty of Philosophy

**Lecturer:** Prof. Boris Manov PhD, Department of Philosophical and Political Sciences

E-mail: [bmanov@swu.bg](mailto:bmanov@swu.bg)

#### **Annotation:**

The main goal of the course is to present the most important directions of development of the political life. Having completed the course, the doctoral students shall be able to recognize and analyze trends in the development of the political life, both from a social and managerial point of view, as well as from an ideological perspective.

#### **Content of the course:**

The course comprises analyses of the following: trends in the development of the party system and electoral systems; political ideologies; trends in the development of political regimes; the relationship between globalization and the nation-state; the main international

political entities; social policy and the degradation of the “welfare state”; leadership in contemporary environment and circumstances; new technologies and their impact on political life; trends in the development of the civil society.

**Teaching and assessment method:**

The training is carried out by means of traditional and contemporary interactive teaching methods and approaches. The final grade is formed on the basis of a written exam covering the study material and the syllabus. The final grade is formed in compliance with the ECTS requirements.

## **PROJECT PREPARATION AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

**ECTS credits:** 3

**Hours:** 30 lectures + 60 seminars

**Assessment:** exam

**Type of exam:** written

**Methodical guide:**

SWU “Neofit Rilski”

**Annotation:**

This course presents the main parameters and methodology of project planning and development, and the implementation of project activities. Emphasis is also placed on the various aspects and mechanisms of application, structure of the project proposal and project management from the time of submission of documents to the implementation of the project activities, the types of entities eligible to apply, as well as the application method for the various funds and programs.

**Content of the course:**

The specifics of the project activity are presented, according to the chronological stages of the emergence of the project idea, the preparation of a project proposal, the specific components necessary for the realization of the project, subjects and objects in this process. The doctoral students shall become familiar with the technology of the creation and management of project as well as of its implementation and expected results.

**Teaching and assessment method:**

The training is carried out by means of traditional and contemporary interactive teaching methods and approaches. The final grade is formed on the basis of a written exam. The final grade is formed in compliance with the ECTS requirements.

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE**

**ECTS credits:** 4

**Hours:** 15 lectures + 15 seminars

**Assessment:** exam

**Type of exam:** written, oral

**Methodical guide:**

Faculty of Philosophy

**Annotation:**

The structure and content of the course are aimed at developing knowledge and skills in English for listening, speaking, reading and writing. The training aims for consistent and methodical introduction and development of grammatical and lexical characteristics. The course also emphasizes on the study of specialized lexical units and work with specialized literature related to the profile of the doctoral programme.

**Content of the course:**

Grammatical and lexical norms and constructions. Practical grammar exercises. Study of lexical units necessary for independent use of the language in the thematic areas provided for in the programme. Current idiomatic expressions. Specialized texts. Specialized terminology.

**Teaching and assessment method:**

The training is carried out by means of traditional and contemporary interactive teaching methods and approaches. The final grade is formed on the basis of a written exam. The final grade is formed in compliance with the ECTS requirements.

## **ELECTIVE COURSES**

### **FIRST ELECTIVE COURSE**

**ECTS credits:** 3**Hours:** 15 lectures + 15 seminars**Assessment:** exam**Type of exam:** written**Methodical guide:****Department of Philosophical and Political Sciences**

Faculty of Philosophy

**Annotation:**

The elective course is required to be aligned with the topic of the dissertation. The course is required to be related to the specialization in the relevant scientific field and problem researched.

**Content of the course:**

The content of the elective course included in each PhD student individual study plan, shall correspond to the main topics included in similar lecture courses. Certain topical and important features of the course shall be also analyzed.

**Teaching and assessment method:**

The training is carried out by means of traditional and contemporary interactive teaching methods and approaches. The final grade is formed on the basis of a written exam covering the study material and the syllabus. The final grade is formed in compliance with the ECTS requirements.

### **SECOND ELECTIVE COURSE**

**ECTS credits:** 3**Hours:** 15 lectures + 15 seminars**Assessment:** exam**Type of exam:** written**Methodical guide:****Department of Philosophical and Political Sciences**

Faculty of Philosophy

**Annotation:**

The elective course is required to be aligned with the topic of the dissertation. The course is required to be related to the specialization in the relevant scientific field and problem researched.

**Content of the course:**

The content of the elective course included in each PhD student individual study plan, shall correspond to the main topics included in similar lecture courses. Certain topical and important features of the course shall be also analyzed.

**Teaching and assessment method:**

The training is carried out by means of traditional and contemporary interactive teaching methods and approaches. The final grade is formed on the basis of a written exam covering the study material and the syllabus. The final grade is formed in compliance with the ECTS requirements.