Department of Political Science and International Relations

Program Type:\* 

Degree Type:\* 

Doctor of Philosophy

Political Science and International Relations

Provide a brief summary of the proposed program changes and describe the rationale for the change(s):

Our department is seeking to broaden the scope of our Political Science and International Relations PhD and Master’s degree programs. Given resource and faculty limitations, in the early 2000s, our department made the decision to focus on a niche within our broader discipline. The previous focus on Global Governance enabled the department to focus chiefly on developing our PhD program with the available faculty. Now, however, we would like to reflect changes in the discipline and in our faculty to reflect four of the major subfields within our discipline, American Politics, International Relations, Comparative Politics, and Political Theory. The expansion of the focus will incorporate more faculty members into the graduate program, diversify the intellectual focus of applicants to our graduate program, and improve the placement of our graduate students.  After a program review suggesting this broadening of our focus our department developed and approved a plan to change the scope of our program and offer specializations in the expanded set of subfields.  In addition to moving to a four-subfield program, our plan includes increasing and improving the methodological training provided to students and adding courses in the four subfields including introductory courses and specific courses reflecting faculty strengths.

List new courses required for the revised curriculum. How do they support the overall program objectives of the major/ minor/ concentrations)?

The following courses are currently in process in curriculog and are a part of our proposed graduate curriculum:

1.  POSC801: Scope and Methods in Political Science (1 credit):  An introductory course providing an overview of the discipline of Political Science and the faculty in the department including an overview of the major subfields and different methodological approaches utilized in the discipline.  This course would be required of all first-semester graduate students.

2.  POSC817: Statistical Methods in Political Science II (3 credits): This course would be a follow-up  to our current Introduction to Statistical Methods (POSC815) course, giving students planning on doing quantiative research more in-depth training in statistical methods.  Students would be required to take this course or a Qualitative Methods course prior to their Master's essay (for MA students) or their dissertation proposal defense (for PhD students).  This course is intended to provide students with the necessary methodological skills to complete independent research.

3.  POSC819: Qualitative Methods in Political Science (3 credits): Students would have the option of taking this course (or a second quantiative methods course) as a part of their training in political science methodology. Students would be introduced to common qualitative methods used in the discipline including archival research, interviewing, ethnography, and process tracing. Students would be required to take their additional methods training after taking POSC815. Students would be required to take this course or a second quantitative methods course prior to their Master's essay (for MA students) or their dissertation proposal defense (for PhD students).  This course is intended to provide students with necessary skills for the completion of independent research.

4. POSC803: Proseminar in American Politics:  This course is an introductory course to the major areas of focus within the subfield of American politics, providing an overview of the field and the primary debates that have shaped the study of American Politics.  The course provides a foundation for students seeking to specialize in this subfield.

5.  POSC810: Proseminar in International Relations:  This course is an introductory course to the major areas of focus within the subfield of International Relations, providing an overview of the field and the primary debates that have shaped the study of IR.  The course provides a foundation for students seeking to specialize in this subfield.

6.  POSC809: Proseminar in Comparative Politics:  This course is an introductory course to the major areas of focus within the subfield of Comparative Politics, providing an overview of the field and the primary debates that have shaped the study of Comparative Politics.  The course provides a foundation for students seeking to specialize in this subfield.

7. POSC814: Proseminar in Political Theory:  This course is an introductory course to the major areas of focus within the subfield of Political Theory, providing an overview of the field and the primary debates that have shaped the study of Political Theory.  The course provides a foundation for students seeking to specialize in this subfield.

8.  POSC831: Critical Approaches in International Relations: This course has been offered as an experimental course and examines some of the most cutting edge theoretical approaches in International Relations, particularly postcolonial, feminist, critical race, and critical approaches. The course, a bridge between Political Theory and International Relations, expands on some of the material from the theory and IR proseminars and allows students to develop their own theory-oriented projects.

9. POSC823: Topics in American Politics (3 credits): Our other three subfields currently have Topics courses and this addition would supplement the offerings in the American Politics track, allowing faculty to teach specialized courses in areas related to their research interests.  The course will provide depth and breadth in the field of American Politics as well as allowing flexibility in terms of offerings.

We are not removing any courses from our curriculum and these changes will not affect other departments.

Requirements for the MA degree

Description

Each student will complete a minimum of 38 credits.

1. Methods Sequence (10 credits)

Description

All students must complete ten credits of methods training.

Courses

POSC 801 Scope and Methods in Political Science

POSC 815 Introduction to Statistical Analysis for Political Science (3cr.)

POSC 816 Philosophy of Science and Research Design (3cr.)

And one of the following courses:

POSC 817 Statistical Methods for Political Science II

POSC 819 Qualitative Methods in Political Science

2. Additional Requirements (3-6 credits)

Description

All students must complete a skills requirement: POSC814 Proseminar in Political theory (if not taken to fulfill another requirement), an additional methods course (not used to fulfill the required methods sequence), or pass a language competency exam.  Students must also complete a proseminar in a field other than their primary field.

3. Primary Track Requirements (15 credits)

Description

All students must select a primary track from the four subfields offered (International Relations, American Politics, Comparative Politics, Political Theory). Students must complete the proseminar for their primary track in addition to four elective courses from the track electives.

International Relations Track

Description

Students completing the track in International Relations must take the proseminar and four additional track electives.

Courses

POSC 810 Proseminar in International Relations

Track electives

POSC 812 Topics in Internationl Relations (3cr.)

POSC 813 Seminar: American Foreign Policy (3cr.)

POSC 814 Proseminar in Political Theory

POSC 828 Feminist International Relations Theory (3cr.)

POSC 830 Seminar: International Relations Theory (3cr.)

POSC 831 Frontiers in Critical International Relations Theory

POSC 840 International Political Economy (3cr.)

POSC 842 International Organization (3cr.)

POSC 843 Global Governance: Theory and Cases (3cr.)

POSC 845 Human Rights and Global Governance (3cr.)

POSC 826 Islam in Global Affairs (3cr.)

POSC 844 International Security (3cr.)

American Politics Track

Description

Students completing the track in American Politics must take the proseminar and four additional track electives.

Courses

POSC 803 Proseminar in American Politics

Elective courses in American Politics

POSC 805 Topics in Law and Politics (3cr.)

POSC 807 American Political Behavior (3cr.)

POSC 808 American Political Institutions (3cr.)

POSC 813 Seminar: American Foreign Policy (3cr.)

POSC 818 Environmental Politics and Policy (3cr.)

POSC 823 Topics in American Politics

Comparative Politics Track

Description

Students completing the track in Comparative Politics must take the proseminar and four additional track electives.

Courses

POSC 809 Proseminar in Comparative Politics

Elective Courses in Comparative Politics

POSC 802 Seminar: Comparative Politics of the Global South (3cr.)

POSC 804 Seminar: Comparative Politics of Post-Industrial Polities (3cr.)

POSC 818 Environmental Politics and Policy (3cr.)

POSC 824 Comparative Political Economy (3cr.)

POSC 811 Topics in Comparative Politics (3cr.)

Political Theory Track

Description

Students completing the track in Political Theory must take the proseminar and four additional track electives.

Courses

POSC 814 Proseminar in Political Theory

Electives

POSC 805 Topics in Law and Politics (3cr.)

POSC 822 Topics In Political Theory (3cr.)

POSC 831 Frontiers in Critical International Relations Theory

POSC 836 Democratic Theory (3cr.)

POSC 806 Global Ethics and Normative Issues

4. CRISP, Elective Courses, and other courses (10-13 credits)

Description

Students must take Current Research In the Study of Politics (CRISP – POSC 850) for one credit each spring of their first two years. In addition, students must take elective courses (two or three, depending on the means by which the skills requirement is fulfilled) to bring their total credits to 38.

5. M.A. Writing Requirement

Description

Students not moving further into the PhD program will prepare a major research paper, usually one written for one of their graduate seminars.  Students will register for POSC 899 MA Long Paper Course (0 credits) in the spring of their second year to facilitate completion of this requirement.

Additional Requirements for the Ph.D.

Description

All the requirements for the M.A. (other than the writing requirement) plus 24 additional credits to total 62.

6. Secondary Track Requirement (9 credits)

Description

All students will choose a secondary track in the fall semester of their third year.   For this secondary track students may choose one of the four main tracks (IR, American, Comparative or Political Theory) or may construct a field in consultation with a selected faculty supervisor and upon approval by the Director of Graduate Studies.

7. Research Seminar Requirement (3 credits)

Description

Courses

POSC 850 Current Research in Society and Politics

8. Additional Research/Candidacy (credits vary)

Description

Students will enroll in 6 credits of POSC964 (Pre-candidacy study) comprehensive exams in their sixth semester and 6-9 credits during their seventh semester. Students working on their dissertation will enroll in 6-9 credits of POSC969 (Doctoral Dissertation.) The total number of credits taken for the degree must total 62.

9. Additional Requirements for the degree.

Description

Students pursuing their PhD. are also expected to complete the following:  Long Paper Defense (fourth semester), third-year field exams (sixth semester), dissertation proposal defense (sixth or seventh semester).

POSC - 801 - Scope and Methods in Political Science

POSC - 802 - Seminar: Comparative Politics of the Global South (3cr.)

POSC - 802 - Seminar: Comparative Politics of the Global South (3cr.)

POSC - 803 - Proseminar in American Politics

POSC - 804 - Seminar: Comparative Politics of Post-Industrial Polities (3cr.)

POSC - 804 - Seminar: Comparative Politics of Post-Industrial Polities (3cr.)

POSC - 804 - Seminar: Comparative Politics of Post-Industrial Polities (3cr.)

POSC - 805 - Topics in Law and Politics (3cr.)

POSC - 805 - Topics in Law and Politics (3cr.)

POSC - 806 - Global Ethics and Normative Issues

POSC - 806 - Normative Issues in Global Governance (3cr.)

POSC - 806 - Normative Issues in Global Governance (3cr.)

POSC - 807 - American Political Behavior (3cr.)

POSC - 807 - American Political Behavior (3cr.)

POSC - 807 - American Political Behavior (3cr.)

POSC - 808 - American Political Institutions (3cr.)

POSC - 808 - American Political Institutions (3cr.)

POSC - 808 - American Political Institutions (3cr.)

POSC - 809 - Proseminar in Comparative Politics

POSC - 810 - Proseminar in International Relations

POSC - 811 - Topics in Comparative Politics (3cr.)

POSC - 811 - Topics in Comparative Politics (3cr.)

POSC - 811 - Topics in Comparative Politics (3cr.)

POSC - 812 - Topics in Internationl Relations (3cr.)

POSC - 812 - Topics in Internationl Relations (3cr.)

POSC - 812 - Topics in Internationl Relations (3cr.)

POSC - 813 - Seminar: American Foreign Policy (3cr.)

POSC - 813 - Seminar: American Foreign Policy (3cr.)

POSC - 813 - Seminar: American Foreign Policy (3cr.)

POSC - 814 - Political Economy of the Environment (3cr.)

POSC - 814 - Proseminar in Political Theory

POSC - 815 - Introduction to Statistical Analysis for Political Science (3cr.)

POSC - 815 - Introduction to Statistical Analysis for Political Science (3cr.)

POSC - 816 - Philosophy of Science and Research Design (3cr.)

POSC - 817 - Statistical Methods for Political Science II

POSC - 818 - Environmental Politics and Policy (3cr.)

POSC - 818 - Environmental Politics and Policy (3cr.)

POSC - 819 - Qualitative Methods in Political Science

POSC - 822 - Topics In Political Theory (3cr.)

POSC - 822 - Topics In Political Theory (3cr.)

POSC - 822 - Topics In Political Theory (3cr.)

POSC - 823 - Topics in American Politics

POSC - 824 - Comparative Political Economy (3cr.)

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POSC - 826 - Islam in Global Affairs (3cr.)

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POSC - 828 - Feminist International Relations Theory (3cr.)

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POSC - 830 - Seminar: International Relations Theory (3cr.)

POSC - 830 - Seminar: International Relations Theory (3cr.)

POSC - 830 - Seminar: International Relations Theory (3cr.)

POSC - 831 - Frontiers in Critical International Relations Theory

POSC - 836 - Democratic Theory (3cr.)

POSC - 836 - Democratic Theory (3cr.)

POSC - 840 - International Political Economy (3cr.)

POSC - 840 - International Political Economy (3cr.)

POSC - 842 - International Organization (3cr.)

POSC - 842 - International Organization (3cr.)

POSC - 843 - Global Governance: Theory and Cases (3cr.)

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POSC - 844 - International Security (3cr.)

POSC - 844 - International Security (3cr.)

POSC - 845 - Human Rights and Global Governance (3cr.)

POSC - 845 - Human Rights and Global Governance (3cr.)

POSC - 845 - Human Rights and Global Governance (3cr.)

POSC - 850 - Colloquium on Global Governance and Society (1 to 3cr.)

POSC - 850 - Current Research in Society and Politics

POSC - 866 - SPECIAL PROBLEM (1 to 12cr.)

POSC - 867 - SEMINAR (1 to 12cr.)

POSC - 868 - Research (3cr.)

POSC - 869 - Master's Thesis (1 to 6cr.)

POSC - 899 - Research Paper for Master of Arts (0cr.)

POSC - 964 - Pre-Candidacy Study (3 to 12cr.)

POSC - 969 - Doctoral Dissertation (1 to 12cr.)

Learning Outcomes and Measures

1. Students will understand and appreciate the discipline of political science and be well-versed in its subfields dimensions. Measures: required core courses and field examinations.

2. Students will master the academic scholarly enterprise, including an ability to review, analyze and critique existing literatures and make original and insightful contributions to them. Measures: research papers for core and track classes and dissertation proposal.

3. Students will be able to design innovative, interesting and important research projects and utilize appropriate research methods to pursue them. Measures: Long Papers and dissertation proposals.

4. Students will be able to write high quality, article-length manuscripts of publishable quality, on topics of import to our discipline. Measures: Long Papers and peer reviewed journal articles.

5. Students will be able to make effective oral presentations of their work. Measures: Long Paper, dissertation proposal and dissertation defenses and scholarly conference presentations.

6. Students will gain experience in the classroom and possess the ability to be effective teachers at the graduate and undergraduate levels. Measures: student course evaluations and job placements.