

University of Detroit Mercy

College of Liberal Arts and Education

Department of Political Science

Minor in Political Science

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PROPOSAL FOR A MINOR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Submitted by: The Department of Political Science

A. Executive Summary

Political Science, the systematic study of politics and government, is distinctive in that it provides for the study of theory and practice without which complex social and economic problems cannot be effectively addressed. The University of Detroit Mercy (UDM) Mission refers to an excellent education in an urban context, seeking to integrate the intellectual, spiritual, ethical and social development of students. The UDM description includes the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas' long history of service to the sick and needy, and the Jesuit promotion of ethical values and justice with a religious dimension.

The definition of politics is the system by which goods, values, and services are authoritatively allocated in society. Similar concerns and the need for citizen participation and attention to government have been pointed out forcefully by numerous scholars since Socrates and Plato. These concerns have a special relevance in an urban university where the inculcation of a broad concern for Christian ethics and values is given such emphasis; these ethics and values must not only be understood but also implemented if we are serious about carrying out UDM's mission. The institution's significant enrollment in and commitment to pre-law and teacher training programs requires the blending of the theoretical, philosophical and, significantly, practical aspects of understanding and confronting political and economic complexities and disputes that arise there from. The minor will benefit business and economics majors who will be better prepared to represent the interests of the institution in which they are employed. Similarly, criminal justice and sociology/social work students will benefit from such a program.

Immersion in and understanding of Jesuit/Mercy values does not necessarily bring about effective change. UDM graduates will encounter problems of urban/central city decay and complexity; racial, economic and geographic divisiveness; globalization; multi-lateral as opposed to bi-lateral world power centers; changing societal values as reflected in the mass media and policy-making bodies and the increasing income gap between the needy and the wealthy.

The proposed Political Science minor requires a total of eighteen (18) credits, or six courses. One course, or three hours, POL 100, Introduction to Politics, is presently required of majors, as well as the Pre-Law and Pre-Teacher Education programs, and is encouraged in several other majors or programs. A second course, POL 210, American Politics, is not required but will be encouraged in departmental advising. The remaining 12 or 15 hours of electives will be restricted only by the limitation that no more than two can come from any subfield, i.e., American, Comparative, Theory, Law, International Relations; or Judicial Politics.

Assessment of the minor will be conducted annually as with the major. In addition to the traditional methods of assessment, the student who minor in political science will be assessed using the undergraduate comprehensive exam. This exam is discussed below.

B: Description of the Minor

The Political Science Minor will require 18 credits/6 courses. One of these 6 courses – POL 100 – will be required. A minimum of 3 of the remaining 5 courses must be at the upper-division (i.e., 300 or 400) level. Of the 5 elective courses, no more than 2 can come from any single sub-field; the sub-fields and courses are described below.

B1: Narrative Descriptions

The 18 credit minor in political science provides students with a flexible program that will allow a broad understanding of the various aspects of the discipline. The program will provide the basic foundation in the introductory class followed by a sampling of the subfields. The minimum of 3 upper-division courses will provide the student with a more in-depth understanding of at least two subfields in which the student has the greatest interests.

American Politics:

POL 210: American Politics
 POL 310: Women and Politics
 POL 322: Public Policy Analysis
 POL 323: Personnel Management and Labor Relations
 POL 339: Issue in Public Policy
 POL 342: American Constitution and Public Law
 POL 346: Civil Liberties and Equality
 POL 386: Politics and the Media

Comparative and International Relations:

POL 251: International Relations
 POL 252: Foreign Policy of the United States
 POL 260: Intro to Comparative Politics
 POL 325: Comparative Administrative Systems
 POL 454: International Law

Political Theory:

POL 380: Elements of Political Thought
 POL 205: Political Fiction

Judicial politics:

POL 201: Introduction to Law and the Judiciary
 POL 202: Criminal Law and Procedure
 POL 203: Topics in Legal Issues

POL 204: Tort Law
POL 280: Legal Research

Senior Seminar (topic varies): POL 499

B2: All courses in the Curriculum:

All courses are currently offered as part of the political science major. All classes listed are 3 credit classes.

POL 201 Introduction to Law and the Judiciary (Pre-requisite: None)

Surveys the American legal system. Provides an understanding of the strengths and weakness of law and the role law plays in a complex modern society. The course is a blend of theory and case analysis in areas such as constitutional interpretation, due process, criminal law, civil law, torts, contracts, and property.

POL 202 Criminal Law and Procedure (Pre-requisite: None)

A study of criminal law and procedure that focuses on the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution. A survey of the process from the arrest stages through sentencing and appeals. Included in the survey is search and seizure, right to an attorney, and the exclusionary rule.

POL 203 Topics in Legal Issues (Pre-requisite: None)

Provides students with an opportunity to fully investigate a legal issue from all aspects of the political arena and at all levels. Topics may include: civil, criminal, civil rights, gender rights, right to privacy, or sexuality.

POL 204 Tort Law (Pre-requisite: None)

A study of the law pertaining to personal injury and property damage cases. Students will learn about the different area of tort law including intentional torts, negligence and strict liability.

POL 205 Political Fiction (Pre-requisite: None)

Exploration of the premise that significant insight into politics can be gained through the medium of political fiction. The class, by reading fictional accounts of politics from a variety of historical eras and settings, attempts to define political fiction and discern political meaning from these fictional artifacts.

POL 210 American Politics (Pre-requisite: None)

An introduction to the study of American politics. Familiarizes students with the basic concepts of the American political system: its foundations (or roots), its primary institutions and their interaction with one another, its primary actors and their political behavior, and its public policy-making process.

POL 251 International Relations (Pre-requisite: None)

An examination of the various approaches to the study of international relations, the evolution of world politics, the forces that motivate nation-states behavior toward one

another, and the sources and instruments of both conflict and cooperation in international politics.

POL 252 Foreign Policy of the U.S. (Pre-requisite: None)

A study of the substantive issues and specialized procedures in American foreign policy. The constitutional provisions, historical traditions, and political values affecting the foreign relations of the United States. Relations with major powers.

POL 260 Intro to Comparative Politics (Pre-requisite: None)

Through the use of political system types and representative country studies, this course explores the historical and cultural sources of politics in contemporary nation-states. Topics include the institutional and behavioral dimensions of politics, the making of public policy, and the challenge of change in a variety of settings.

POL 310 Women and Politics (Pre-requisite: None)

An examination of the role of women in American political life; the suffrage movement; gender differences in attitudes and voting; and employment and economic status. The approach will be both historical and contemporary.

POL 322 Public Policy Analysis (Pre-requisite: None)

An examination of the basic concepts of and methods for analyzing public policy making in the United States. Identification of the important factors at every step, including interested public and private groups, governmental decision-makers, bureaucrats, and program evaluators. Examination of selected policy issues facing our political system.

POL 323 Personnel Management and Labor Relations (Pre-requisite: None)

Basic labor relations, personnel management, and collective bargaining practices and developments are examined, emphasizing the political nature of the public and quasi-public organization. Subjects include motivation and morale, evaluation of employee performance, equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, dispute resolution, employee organizations and collective bargaining. The instructor, a public sector labor arbitrator and fact-finder, places special emphasis on labor relations and dispute resolution.

POL 325 Comparative Administrative Systems (Pre-requisite: None)

A study of the structures, forms, control and/or level of citizen participation of public and quasi-public agencies primarily in western representative democracies, with some comparisons with developing systems. Bureaucracy and its forms of cultural adaptation. Comparisons of the relationship between political and economic systems.

POL 339 Issues in Public Policy (Pre-requisite: None)

Focuses on United States domestic policy. Topics may include civil rights, energy, housing, the environment and transportation, health and welfare. These topics are examined within the framework of policy analysis. See the course schedule for the topic focus in any one semester.

POL 342 American Constitution and Public Law (Pre-requisite: None)

A case law course on the American constitutional system. Topics include: presidential and congressional powers; impeachment; federal-state relations; major state powers; commerce and general welfare clauses.

POL 346 Civil Liberties and Rights (Pre-requisite: None)

case law course examines the recent developments and court decisions on the frontiers of civil rights and liberties. Recent cases such as abortion, homosexuality, right-to-die, the limits of protected speech and artistic expression, and the conflict of religious values and state authority are discussed as is the evolving multi-tiered standards of equality under current interpretations of the 14th Amendment.

POL 351 International Law (Pre-requisite: None)

Examines the substantive rules of international law and the international procedures for the peaceful settlement of conflicts of claims. Explores the relevance and essence of international law, as well as possible ways and means to make it more equitable and binding in the resolution of conflicts involving nations of varying sizes and strengths. Topics include: sovereignty, territory, diplomatic relations, treaties, peaceful means for settlement of conflicts, protection of human rights, and law of the sea.

POL 380 Elements of Political Thought (Pre-requisite: None)

Traces the development of political ideologies most relevant to contemporary politics. Examines themes germane to the study of political theory: political obligation (the relationship between the individual and the state), justice, freedom, equality, democracy, and the tension between individual rights and social responsibilities.

POL 386 Politics and the Media (Pre-requisite: None)

The development of the media as an agency of political change, i.e., as a force in shaping our view of reality. Also examined are image creation, the development of public relations, the shaping of policy and candidates, capital intensive electronic high technology and its impact on elections, the weakening of political parties and reduced attention to issues as opposed to the election, and media relations practices of regulated industries and foreign firms. Differences in press-government relations in the U.S. and Canada are also examined. Research paper, field trip.

POL 499 Senior Seminar (Senior Standing or approval of instructor)

Designed to provide the student with an opportunity to integrate a specific problem with the total field of Political Science. Intensive research and/or reading of a particular theme or topic. Course content varies from term to term.

B3: Delivery Format

Staffing constraints require that the delivery format for the minor will be traditional daytime classes at present.

B4 Academic Integrity and Intellectual Merit

The proposed Political Science minor reflects both academic integrity and intellectual merit. The faculty members presenting the subject matter have the highest academic credentials and, significantly, apply their knowledge in ways beneficial to the broader community, e.g., training students in polling, dispute resolution in the public sector, and advising government. Public sector practitioners meet with specialized classes on rather frequent occasions, enhancing the intellectual merit of the program and melding the guest's professionalism and practical experience with academic and intellectual perspectives.

In POL 100, Introduction to Politics, students are required to master significant concepts including politics in an era of globalization, ideology, culture, the individual's role in politics, group politics, parties, international politics, lawmaking or the role of legislative bodies and the executive, bureaucracy or the working of government, public policy, justice, levels and types of government, international and regional governments, and political and economic globalization.

B5 Unique Features

As indicated in the executive summary above, there are several unique features of our minor:

- All students would have a good foundation in the discipline by taking POL 100 which also serves to survey most sub-fields within Political Science
- Students are required to obtain a better understand in at least two subfields within Political Science.
- Minors, as majors, will still have a broad, yet flexible, understanding of the discipline by choosing among tracks or concentrations. However, they well are required, as mentioned above, to be exposed to at least 2 tracks/concentrations.

B6 Effects on related departments or fields of concentration.

The largest effect that we anticipate is among the pre-law students who are not currently political science majors. Political science is a critical knowledge area for pre-law majors and should attract many students who may not want to major, but instead minor in the field. Another target group includes education students who may prefer a minor in political science as part of their elementary or secondary certification program. Other fields fit well with political science by supplementing a major in fields such as philosophy, criminal justice, history, and economics. These fields are clearly part of the socio-political environment and a minor in political science seems a natural fit.

C. Mission

The proposed political science minor contributes to both the Mission Statement of the University as well as that of the College of Liberal Arts and Education. Political Science offers a path to the integration of the intellectual, ethical, and social development of our students by examining what it means to be a citizen within the nation and the world. The Service Learning requirement in POL 100 provides a pragmatic, personalized experience in applying the mission.

D. Objectives, Outcomes, and Assessment

- Students should understand the components of the political process and their interaction, while gaining the ability to have an impact on these factors which would be likely to bring about a just outcome.
- Students should comprehend the significance of ethics and values in the practice of politics, which is defined as the authoritative allocation of goods, values and services in society.
- Students should understand the complexity of lawmaking and the often disparate ways in which statutes, even the same statute, is interpreted and applied, particularly in representative democracies.
- Students should appreciate the great variation in political cultures, and the differences among and between parliamentary systems, presidential-parliamentary systems, and separation of power forms of lawmaking.
- Students should understand the variation and complexity of bureaucratic systems as they are shaped and utilized by the differing structures of government and political cultures.
- Students should understand the significance of basic governmental documents, e.g., constitutions; written documentation of historic and therefore accepted governmental precedent, as in the United Kingdom; judicial decisions, etc., primarily their role in limiting government and protecting individual rights.

Assessment of the Minor will include, among typical assessment methods, an undergraduate comprehensive exam. This exam is currently administered to all students majoring in political science and will be adjusted to accommodate students that minor. The exam is currently administered in the capstone course. Other arrangements will be made for students that minor but do not take the capstone course. The exam is a multiple-choice 50 question exam covering basic political science concepts learned in the introductory courses. The exam is not counted toward any course grade and will not affect the student's ability to graduate. The exam is only for assessment purposes. This exam has been a valuable assessment tool for approximately 17 years. Its origin is based on assessment research supported by the North Central Association. It is strongly recommended that the exam is used for only assessment purposes and is not linked to a course grade.

E. New Resources

The offerings required for a minor in Political Science do not require any additional resources. The current enrollment numbers will allow for additional students in each section without requiring additional sections.