

PROPOSAL FOR THE CREATION OF A FIVE-YEAR DUAL BA/MA DEGREE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE – October 2010

1) Overview

There has been a substantial growth in the number of five-year BA/MA degrees offered by US universities. Among those offering this option in political science are American University, Arizona State, Boston University, Columbia, Emory, George Washington, Loyola, the University of Florida, the University of Missouri–St. Louis, Vanderbilt, and Villanova. Many more such programs are offered in other disciplines, including Anthropology, Chemistry, Economics, Education, History, International Studies, Public Policy and Religious Studies.

The Department of Political Science at IUPUI proposes joining this group by creating a five-year BA/MA degree designed to help launch our most skilled undergraduates into their careers, or into graduate study. Our proposal makes use of existing courses and faculty, and is based on a structured set of core requirements in the first three years of their undergraduate study that will prepare students to undertake more advanced study in upper-division undergraduate and graduate courses during their final two years at IUPUI.

There are seven main arguments in favor of this proposal:

- It would provide students with advanced training that would better prepare them for their careers, whether they choose to go on to the Ph.D, or to law school, or to work in the private or government sectors.
- It would give students additional direction and motivation during their undergraduate years, and help the department identify and more closely mentor the most academically gifted of our students.
- It would help us keep those academically gifted students at IUPUI for one more year, and set higher standards for these students to achieve.
- It will increase the opportunities for students to enjoy close mentoring by faculty and to work with faculty on specialized research projects.
- It would reduce the time needed by students to complete an MA (by at least one year), as well as reducing the tuition costs incurred, giving academically gifted students a head start on their careers.
- It would offer students who might not have considered graduate school the option of experiencing the needs of—and opportunities offered by—graduate study.
- It would make better use of departmental resources by helping recruit more students to our MA program, increasing enrolments in our graduate courses, and giving additional justification to the transfer of faculty from teaching undergraduate to graduate courses.

This proposal is adapted from the requirements established in five-year BA/MA programs in political science at some of the universities listed on Page 1. The key features of our proposed new degree are as follows:

- It will be open only to the most academically gifted students.
- It will be open to political science majors only.
- No new courses or faculty positions are needed.
- It will allow students to finish their BA and their MA in five years instead of six, with three years of undergraduate coursework, a fourth year of combined undergraduate and graduate coursework, and a final year devoted exclusively to graduate work.
- It allows 9 semester hours of approved political science courses (3 undergraduate hours and 6 graduate hours) to be used as dual credit for both the BA and the MA, as well as up to 3 hours of an approved undergraduate research skill. All other established requirements for both the BA and the MA must be met.

2) Admission procedure

The program is open to students who have:

- Achieved junior status.
- A cumulative undergraduate GPA of at least 3.3, and a GPA in their major of at least 3.5.
- A minimum grade of B in *POLS Y205: Elements of Political Analysis*.
- Completed at least 60 of their undergraduate credit hours and at least 15 of their political science credit hours at IUPUI.
- Completed the 12 hours of introductory-level required undergraduate courses for political science, along with at least two 300-level political science electives.

Interested students may declare their interest in the program to the Director of Graduate Studies in Political Science as soon as they start at IUPUI, in which case particular efforts will be made to advise them in their choice of courses during their first three years, and students will be encouraged to engage themselves in the research activities of faculty, and to more actively develop mentoring relationships.

Eligible and interested students must apply for admission to the BA/MA program no later than April 1 of their junior year, submitting a personal statement of goals, abilities and reasons for pursuing the MA degree; a sample of academic writing (a term paper from a political science course is preferred); and three letters of recommendation, of which at least two must be written by full-time members of the political science faculty. (Seniors may not apply to the program, and students admitted to the two-year MA program will not be retroactively considered for the five-year BA/MA program.) Applications will be reviewed by the departmental graduate admissions committee.

During their senior year, students whose eligibility has been confirmed must:

- Take the GRE, and for final admission to the MA program must achieve average scores on the General Test of 550.
- Complete and pass *POLS Y490: Senior Seminar* (a course required of all political science undergraduate majors) the first time they enrol in the class with a grade of at least a B. This may then be double counted as an elective in the MA program.
- Complete and pass *POLS Y570: Introduction to the Study of Politics* and *POLS Y580: Research Methods in Political Science* (courses required of all political science MA students) with a grade of at least B- (the minimum required of students in the two-year MA). These may then be double counted as electives in the political science undergraduate major.

Upon meeting these three requirements, and upon completing all the requirements for their BA, students on the BA/MA track must apply for formal admission to the MA through the Graduate Admissions Office; they should do this no later than April 1 of their senior year. The establishment of eligibility for, and participation in, the BA/MA program does not automatically guarantee acceptance into the graduate program. BA/MA students admitted to the MA will take their remaining four graduate courses in their fifth year, as well as completing their thesis. The double counting of nine hours of undergraduate and graduate credit means that BA/MA students will only be required to take a total of 146 semester hours of coursework for their BA and their MA, rather than 155 (122 + 33).

When taking graduate courses in their senior year, students will be charged undergraduate tuition rates. After earning the BA degree, students formally admitted to the Graduate School will be charged graduate tuition rates for their coursework.

3) Degree requirements

Students on the BA/MA track must complete the following requirements:

- 1) The 89 hours of non-major credit currently required for a BA in the School of Liberal Arts, with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.3.
- 2) 30 of the 33 hours required for the political science major (excluding POLS Y490), with a minimum grade of C in each course and a cumulative GPA of 3.5.
- 3) 27 of the 33 hours required for a two-year MA in political science (excluding Y570 and Y580), with a minimum grade of B- in each course.
- 4) 9 hours of double-counted courses: *POLS Y490: Senior Seminar* (minimum grade of B), *POLS Y570: Introduction to the Study of Politics* and *POLS Y580: Research Methods in Political Science* (minimum grades of B-).

NOTE 1: Five-year BA/MA students will have the same thesis requirement as two-year MA students. In order to complete the thesis in time, students whose eligibility for the BA/MA track

is confirmed in their junior year must – during their senior year – work with the Director of Graduate Studies in political science to appoint a thesis advisor, and must then discuss a thesis topic with their thesis advisor, and must submit and have approved a research proposal for the thesis before April 1 of their senior year.

NOTE 2: The political science general track MA requires that all students complete a research skill, involving proof of abilities in a foreign language, in computing, or in advanced quantitative research methods. Such proof may be established by passing an advanced undergraduate course in a relevant field, opening the prospect of a BA/MA student being able to double count an additional 3 credit hours.

4) Summary outline schedule for the BA/MA degree

YEARS 1-3 Student completes core general education and major requirements for the BA in political science, including the following required political science courses:

- Y103: Introduction to American Politics
- Y205: Elements of Political Analysis
- Y215: Introduction to Political Theory
- Y217: Introduction to Comparative Politics **or** Y219: Introduction to International Relations

Student also completes at least 6 hours of upper-division political science courses.

Before April 1 of the junior year, student applies for admission to the BA/MA program.

YEAR 4 Student completes all remaining general education and major requirements for the BA in political science, and completes the following courses for dual credit:

- Y490: Senior Seminar
- Y570: Introduction to the Study of Politics
- Y580: Research Methods in Political Science

Before April 1 of the senior year, student applies for admission to the graduate program through the Graduate Admissions Office, and also completes a thesis research proposal.

YEAR 5 Student (now formally admitted as a graduate student) completes all remaining requirements for the MA.

Note: Authored by John McCormick, Political Science Director of Graduate Studies, and discussed and approved by the department.

PROPOSAL TO ADD A GENERAL TRACK TO THE MA IN POLITICAL SCIENCE – October 2010

1) Overview

The Department of Political Science has been offering an MA in State and Local Politics since the fall semester of 2006. It has had a modestly successful record, having so far enrolled 28 students – one has graduated and 8 are on track to graduate in academic year 2010-11.

While the focus on state and local politics (driven mainly by the expertise of several departmental faculty in this area) has been a useful start, we feel that there is now a need and an opportunity to also offer a general political science track. There are four main reasons for this:

- 1) While the focus on state and local politics is valuable, it is specialized and is not of interest to all potential students.
- 2) The focus on state and local politics does not use the faculty resources of the department to maximum effect.
- 3) The focus on state and local politics limits the number of courses of potential interest to students in other departments.
- 4) Introducing the option of a general political science track would make the MA of greater interest to those thinking of using our MA as a stepping-stone to a Ph.D in political science.

This, then, is a proposal to add a general political science track to our MA offerings. Before describing the requirements, it is important to make four main points:

- 1) The entry requirements to the program will be the same for either track, and the number of hours required (33) will be the same.
- 2) The general track is mainly a rearrangement of existing courses, with the removal of an internship requirement.
- 3) No new courses will be created for the general track. Instead, needed new courses will be adopted from those already listed in the IU graduate course inventory.
- 4) The minimum number of graduate courses offered per year by the department will increase from 5 to 6.

2) Requirements

Existing state and local requirements New general requirements

Required (12 hrs)

Y570 - Intro to the Study of Politics
Y580 - Research Methods in Political
 Science
Y620 - State Politics
Y622 - Urban Politics

Required (12 hrs)

Y570 - Intro to the Study of Politics
Y580 - Research Methods in Political
 Science
Y657 - Comparative Politics
or
Y669 - International Relations
Y661 - American Politics

(Y657 and Y669 will need to be adopted from the IU course inventory, and Y661 is already offered at IUPUI)

Internship and thesis (6-12 hrs)

Y881 - Internship in Political Science
Y880 - MA Thesis (6 hrs)

Thesis (6 hrs)

Internship replaced by research skill – see below
Y880 - MA Thesis (6 hrs)

Electives (9-12 hrs)

A choice of courses from a list that includes these courses created for the MA in State and Local Politics:

Y624 - Indiana Politics
Y630 - State Executive Politics
Y640 - State Parties and Interest Groups
Y642 - Comparative Federalism

... as well as courses offered under the general track...

... as well as these courses adopted from the existing IU course inventory:

Y581 - Political Data Analysis
Y661 - American Politics
Y680 - Readings in Political Science

Electives (12 hrs)

A choice of courses from among those already on offer in Political Science and in various departments and schools at IUPUI.

... and relevant courses offered by other departments and schools, such as:

SOC S612 - Political Sociology
SPEA V512 - Public Policy Process
SPEA V540 - Law and Public Affairs

Research skill (3 hrs)

Students will be required to complete a research skill, choosing from the following options:

1. Reading knowledge of a foreign language, to be indicated by completion of a second-year undergraduate equivalent course, or by testing out in an approved examination.
2. Proficiency in quantitative research skills, to be indicated by completion of an advanced research methods graduate course in political science or another approved discipline.

3) Course offering schedule

Existing (min. 5 courses per year)

Every fall

Y570 - Intro to the Study of Politics
Y620 - State Politics

Every spring

Y580 - Research Methods in Pol Science
Y622 - Urban Politics

Proposed (min. 6 courses per year)

Y570 - Intro to the Study of Politics
Y620 - State Politics
Y661- American Politics

Y580 - Research Methods in Pol Science
Y622 - Urban Politics
Y657 - Comparative Politics
or
Y669 - International Relations

Other. One of the following:

Y661 - American Politics

Y642 - Comparative Federalism
Y640 - State Parties and Interest Groups

Note: Authored by John McCormick, Political Science Director of Graduate Studies, and discussed and approved by the department.

APPENDIX: Political science courses currently in the IU inventory

Y567 - Public Opinion (IUPUI course)
Y573 – Formal Political Theory
Y593 – Teaching Political Science
Y657 - Comparative Politics
Y661 - American Politics
Y665 - Public Law and Policy (approved at IUPUI)
Y669 - International Relations
Y673 - Empirical Theory and Methodology
Y675 - Political Philosophy
Y681 - Readings in Comparative Politics
Y683 - Readings in American Politics
Y687 - Readings in International Relations
Y689 – Readings in Political Theory and Methodology
Y780 - Directed Research in Political Science