



Department of Political Science 2013 Assessment Report

Undergraduate Program, B.A/B.S. in Political Science

On the basis of several department internal and external evaluations, the department adopted a set of new major requirements in 2011 that was submitted by the department and approved by the L&S Curriculum Committee in fall 2012. The new requirements will go into effect in fall 2013. A comparison of the old political science undergraduate major requirements and the new undergraduate curriculum is summarized in Appendix 1.

The changes to the major were based on multiple factors. In a review of peer institutions, we found that at least six Big Ten institutions (Indiana, Michigan State, Northwestern, Purdue, Iowa, and Ohio State) require that their undergraduate majors fulfill a methods requirement. Other peer institutions like UC Berkeley, UC Los Angeles, the University of Washington, Stanford University, MIT, and Princeton University also require a course in research analysis for their undergraduate majors. Past departmental surveys of majors, degree recipients, and alumni have indicated that they missed having opportunities in the major to conduct research using appropriate analytical techniques. A review of the University's 2011-12 post-graduation plans survey showed that political science enter and exit the university with higher reported levels of research skills than comparable social science majors in economics, psychology, and sociology (see Table 1 below). We are, of course, pleased that our students leave UW-Madison with strong self-assessments of their research skills, but we are hopeful we can make the exit assessments even higher on the 5-point scale. Based on these data, the department believes that the addition of a research methods requirement will build on this strong base, further strengthening our students' skills in that area. Finally, the Department is also mindful of the current employment downturn for recent graduates. Recent articles indicating the demand for data analysis skills have shown that not only are these skills marketable, but they are skills that can be, and are, acquired in political science.

Thus, the new major requirements are based on several assessments of the major. The primary focus of the new requirements is to provide our majors with a key skill: development of the ability to conduct research, analyze data, and communicate the results. We expect that the new major requirements will:

1. Provide an improved understanding of how research and political inquiry are conducted. This understanding will enable majors to better comprehend, critically analyze, and engage in research and enhance students' skills in communicating the results of their research efforts.
2. Facilitate the development of fundamental analytical skills that will better prepare our majors for a range of careers not only for politics and law, but also for positions in government, public

Department of Political Science

University of Wisconsin-Madison 1050 Bascom Mall Madison, Wisconsin 53706
608/263-2414 Fax: 608/265-2663 www.polisci.wisc.edu

policy, public health, marketing, communications, nonprofit organizations, education, finance, and other professions where training in social science research methods is increasingly essential.

3. Provide strong preparation for further study. We expect that the new requirements will enhance students' experiences in substantive, upper level political science classes. By taking research methods courses early in the major, our students will gain more from their intermediate and upper-level classes and from the major.

4. Enhance the development of citizenship skills. Critical reasoning abilities, analytic skills, and a sophisticated understanding of research results are increasingly essential for effective democratic participation locally, nationally, and globally. Learning about methods of political science research will enhance students' skills as citizens, providing lifelong benefits by improving their ability to critically assess and evaluate the ways in which information is produced and presented and the strengths and weaknesses of political arguments.

One other innovation in the major is the creation of a new track in Political Analysis and Research (PAR). This track will enable students to receive more intensive training in the analysis and application of research methods and analytical tools (Requirements for the new track are outlined in Appendix 1). The track is a direct response to those students who have expressed a desire to be engaged in research careers and/or who wish to pursue graduate training in political science, public policy, or an allied field.

Given the recent implementation of the new requirements, the department will conduct a series of evaluations to gauge the effectiveness of the new curriculum in achieving its intended goals.

Assessment metrics for new major requirements:

- Review of the Post-Graduation Plans Survey Learning outcomes items to gauge improvements in understanding methods of analysis in the major.
- Review of student preparation for the honors thesis as reported by faculty who teach our honors thesis seminars.
- Incorporation of questions in upper level course evaluations to gauge student perceptions of the utility of research skills gained through the new requirement.
- Surveys of recent alumni asking about the value of research and analytical skills to their careers; these questions will include questions about ability to secure a first job and a measure of starting salary.
- Survey of faculty in upper level courses to gauge perception of student performance.
- Measuring interest in the new PAR track through number of majors who choose to pursue the track, something the department has already begun to implement through modifications to the major declaration form that have been discussed and approved through the Registrar's Office.
- Monitoring of the progress of students in the track to determine whether they are able to make timely progress towards degree completion.
- Exit surveys for those who opt for the PAR track to determine perceptions of the value of the track to post-graduation plans.

Another key area of concern is career development. The department is strongly committed that political science majors develop marketable skills as they complete the major. Tables 2a and 2b summarize data from the Post-graduation Plans Survey of 2011-2012. This survey indicates that political science majors

compare favorably to majors in economics, sociology and psychology in terms of employment. 67% of political science graduates plan to work either full or part-time, compared to 74.1% of graduates in economics, 56.4% of graduates in psychology, and 68.3% of graduates in sociology. Of those students who report employment as their primary activity after graduation, 60% of political science graduates reported that they had either taken a position or were considering one or more offers; this compares to 71.1% of economics majors, 52.4% of psychology majors, and 35.1% of sociology majors in the same categories. We suspect that higher percentages are linked in part to the level of confidence various majors have in the marketability upon graduation of the skills and knowledge they have acquired in the major. This confidence is likely enhanced by having dedicated career advising, something economics majors have had for the past several years and that political science students have had for the past year. Political science majors have done well in terms of readiness for the job market, but we believe that we can do better by our majors in terms of providing information about career paths in the major and resources for the development of career skills.

The department's interest in student employment outcomes culminated in 2012 with the hire of a Career/Intern Coordinator for the Social Sciences, a position that was supported by MIU funds. This position provides support to majors in international studies and sociology along with political science majors by developing internships, providing career information and advice, and organizing career development events. David Nelson, the current incumbent, has been successful in those areas. He reports over 1000 student contacts over the past year, along with improving the recruitment processes for the DC Summer Internship Program (political science) and the DC Fall International Internship Program (international studies/Division of International Studies). He has developed a mentorship program in political science which he will extend to the other departments during the coming year. Finally, he and the department undergraduate program director, Liane Kosaki, developed a career course for political science majors. The course was offered for the first time this past spring semester and was co-taught by Nelson and Kosaki. The evaluations for the course were quite positive, and the department plans to offer the course for both semesters this coming academic year. Comments from the student evaluations are included in Table 3.

Assessment metrics for career services:

- Student use of career advising services
- Survey of recent alumni who took the careers course to ask about the value of the course to their job search efforts
- Monitoring of student employment success for those seeking employment upon graduation, as detailed in the Post-graduation Plans Survey, allowing for expected year-to-year variation due to survey samples, economic conditions, and other external factors

Table 1: Responses to Questions on Learning Outcomes from the Post-graduation Plans Survey 2011-2012

<u>How were/are you able to</u>	<u>Economics</u>			<u>Political Science</u>			<u>Psychology</u>			<u>Sociology</u>		
	Ent.	Grad.	Chg.	Ent.	Grad.	Chg.	Ent.	Grad.	Chg.	Ent.	Grad.	Chg.
Apply skills and knowledge of your chosen major(s)	2.38	4.34	1.96	2.66	4.47	1.81	2.46	4.39	1.93	2.68	4.38	1.70
Find, organize, and evaluate information from multiple sources	3.11	4.31	1.20	3.25	4.53	1.27	3.01	4.44	1.43	3.20	4.52	1.32
Draw conclusions after weighing evidence, facts, and ideas	3.33	4.43	1.09	3.52	4.53	1.01	3.21	4.44	1.22	3.36	4.37	1.01

Table 2a: Responses to Questions on Employment Plans from the Post-graduation Plans Survey 2011-2012

	Economics	Political Science	Psychology	Sociology
Work Full-Time	70.7%	57.3%	41.9%	58.3%
Graduate School Full-Time	19.0%	21.4%	35.5%	23.3%
Work Part-Time	3.4%	9.7%	14.5%	10.0%
Graduate School Part-Time	0.6%	0.9%	1.2%	
Additional Coursework		0.5%		
Serve in the Military	2.3%	3.4%	0.6%	
Volunteer	1.7%	3.4%	2.3%	
Other	2.3%	3.4%	4.1%	8.3%
Total # of Responses	174	206	172	60

Table 2b: Responses to Questions on Employment Plans from the Post-graduation Plans Survey 2011-2012

	Economics	Political Science	Psychology	Sociology
Considering one or more offers	12.0%	6.7%	4.8%	5.4%
Currently searching for a position	19.4%	34.2%	27.4%	54.0%
Have accepted a position	59.2%	53.3%	47.6%	29.7%
Will begin searching for a position after graduation	9.3%	5.8%	20.2%	10.8%
Total # of responses	108	120	84	37

Table 3: Comments from student evaluations for Careers in Political Science Course:

Wonderful class! Helped me so much!

I feel that there was so much more that I could have learned had this course been longer. It was very well taught by both Liane and David. Couldn't have picked a better set of instructors for this course. There was always much to learn. Prior to taking this course, I did not realize how poorly written my resume and cover letter was. Since taking the class, I feel much more confident in my ability to land a job because of it as well as the skills learned for interview techniques. Loved this class. I do think the class should only be for Soph-Seniors however.

Best class I have ever taken in my academic career. Readings were always interesting and engaging. Made me think frequently. Please continue this course. I can see how this benefited me in just 6 weeks. I can only imagine the benefits of it for a full semester. With that being said, I would make it a Seminar so the classes are small. I think there is much to get from a class of smaller size where you're able to talk to your peers one on one and connect with them.

Awesome course. So glad I took it.

(10 students completed online evaluations; 14 students were enrolled in the course.)

Appendix 1: Current and New Requirements for the Political Science Major, Effective Fall 2013

CURRENT MAJOR REQUIREMENTS	NEW MAJOR REQUIREMENTS	Pol Analysis & Research (PAR) TRACK REQUIREMENTS
<p>1. At least one course in each of the four subfields:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Government • Comparative Politics • International Relations • Political Theory and Methods <p>[Total credits: 15-16]</p> <p>2. 15 credits of upper level work in the major (courses numbered 300 or above)</p> <p>Minimum total credits required: 30</p>	<p>1. At least one course in three of these subfields:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Government • Comparative Politics • International Relations • Political Theory <p>2. at least one research methods course, chosen from the following list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PS 200* Research Methods in Political Science • PS 218 Understanding Political Numbers • PS 274 Political Choice and Strategy • PS 551 Introduction to Statistical Inference for Political Science Research • PS 552 Multivariable Statistical Inference for Political Science Research <p>[Total credits: 15-16]</p> <p>3. 15 credits of upper level work in the major (courses numbered 300 or above)</p> <p>Minimum total credits required: 30</p>	<p>Pol Analysis & Research (PAR) TRACK REQUIREMENTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One intro course in three of the four subfields (11-12cr) 2. Political Analysis and Inquiry (PAI) course (3cr): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PS 200* Research Methods in Political Science 3. One introductory level quantitative analysis course (3cr) chosen from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PS 218 Understanding Political Numbers - PS 274 Political Choice and Strategy 4. One statistical inference course (3cr) chosen from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PS 551 Introduction to Statistical Inference for Political Research - equivalent in another department 5. One data presentation/analysis course (3-4cr) chosen from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PS 544 Introduction to Survey Research - PS 552 Multivariable Statistical Inference for Political Research - other substantive course in data presentation/analysis skills as identified by the Undergraduate Committee 6. One upper level quantitative research course (3-4cr). This should be a Political Science course numbered 300 or above that allows the option of conducting quantitative research to fulfill course requirements; the PAR student must work with the instructor to select and fulfill the requirements for this option. 7. Capstone Project (3-6cr) chosen from:¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PS 696* Research in Practice (RP) proseminar - a senior thesis or independent study that utilizes the ability to apply research skills appropriately 8. Additional electives, chosen to develop depth in a research area, at the 300+ level. <p>* New course</p> <p>Minimum total credits required: 36</p>

¹ Students in the PAR Track must take the PAI course, 218 or 274, and 551 before their capstone experience to ensure that they have the analytical skills necessary to complete their projects. PAR students will be required to present their capstone research orally, either in presentations in the course, or at the UW-Madison Undergraduate Symposium or similar event (e.g., Senior Honors Research Symposium, professional conference poster session, etc.).

Graduate program, Ph.D. in Political Science

Graduate program assessment is based largely on external indicators, including the ability of our doctoral students to land interviews and positions at academic institutions and in other significant non-academic positions, and recognition of our students’ work through measures such as dissertation awards and major grants.

Assessment metrics

Prizes/Awards/Honors

- Rank in top 5 political science programs for “best dissertation” prizes from the American Political Science Association over the past 6 years
- NSF dissertation improvement grants, etc.
- See Appendix 2 for AY 2010-11 through 2012-13

Conference presentations

- Varies annually, but about 35-50% of our students present at academic conferences annually

Publications

- Varies annually, but about 1/3 to 2/3 of our students go on the job market with publications

Placements

<u>Sample of placements over past five years:</u>	<u>Sample of interviews over past five years:</u>
Amherst College	American University
Boston University	Arizona State University
George Washington University	Boston College
Georgetown University	Brown University
Grinnell College	Dartmouth College
Haverford College	Indiana University
Macalaster College	Johns Hopkins
Marquette University (2)	New York University
North Carolina State University	Ohio State University
Princeton University	Smith College
University of Colorado at Boulder	Stanford University
University of Connecticut	Syracuse University
University of Denver	Texas Christian University
University of Kentucky	University of Connecticut
University of Massachusetts-Amherst	University of Michigan
University of Nebraska-Lincoln (2)	University of Missouri
University of Oklahoma	University of Notre Dame
University of Pittsburgh	University of Oregon
Villanova University	University of Pennsylvania
Wake Forest University (2)	University of Southern California
	University of Toronto (2)
	University of Virginia
	Yale University (2)

Historical Data for Ph.D. Students on Placement

	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
On Market*	19	15	14	12	15	15	15	12	15	14
On Market First Time	10	5	6	8	12	11	8	6	10	9
Tenure Track	7	8	7	6	8	7	7	6	8	6
One or Two-Year	8	6	4	4	4	3	3	2	2	1
Postdoc	0	0	2	2	1	4	3	2	1	0
Non-Academic	0	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	0
University Administration	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0
Unplaced	4	1	0	0	1	0	2	1	4	7
% Tenure Track**	37%	53%	64%	58%	47%	47%	47%	50%	53%	43%
% One or Two Year	42%	40%	29%	33%	32%	20%	20%	17%	13%	7%
% Postdoc	0%	0%	14%	17%	7%	27%	20%	17%	0	0
Univ. Admin.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8%	7%	0
% Non-Academic	0%	0%	7%	0%	7%	0%	0	0%	0	0
% Unplaced	21%	7%	0%	0%	7%	0%	13%	8%	27%	50%

*For recent years the term "on market" refers specifically to students who used the Department's placement service.

**Includes those who have accepted tenure-track positions effective upon completion of a postdoctoral fellowship.

Data current as of May 22, 2013

Appendix 2: Doctoral student award winners, AY 2010-11 through 2012-13

Ethan Alexander-Davey

- International Studies Institute, Western Civilization Fellowship 2011-2012
- International Dissertation Research Fellowship, Social Science Research Council

Adam Auerbach

- Social Science Research Council Fellowship

Nicholas Barnes

- International Dissertation Research Fellowship, Social Science Research Council
- Drugs, Security, and Democracy in Latin America Fellowship, Social Science Research Council

Leticia Bode

- Best dissertation in information technology and politics from the Information Technology and Politics section of the American Political Science Association, for a dissertation completed in 2012, *Political Information 2.0: A Study in Political Learning Via Social Media*
- Top Three Faculty Paper, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, 2010. For "The Correspondent, the Combatant, and the Comic: How Moderator Style and Guest Civility Shape News Credibility."
- Midwest Association for Public Opinion Research Fellows Student Paper Award 2010, for "Filmed in Front of a Live Studio Audience: Using Laughter to Offset Aggression in Political Entertainment Programming"

Deven Carlson

- American Educational Research Association Dissertation Grant, National Science Foundation

Amnon Cavari

- George C. Edwards III Dissertation Award, American Political Science Association Presidency Research Group (2011), "The Party Politics of Presidential Rhetoric"
- APSA Presidency Research Group's Founders Award, for the best graduate student paper in 2009-10: "Presidential Rhetoric and the Economic Policy Image of the Parties."

Barry Driscoll

- National Science Foundation, Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant
- Social Science Research Council, International Dissertation Research Fellowship, 2011

Casey Ehrlich

- Social Science Research Council, Drugs, Security, and Democracy Fellowship

Evgeny Finkel

- Program on Order, Conflict, and Violence Residential Research Fellowships, Yale University
- Best doctoral student paper, Russia/Ukraine/Caucasus category, Association for the Study of Nationalities 2012 Annual Conference, for "Victims' Politics: Jewish Behavior During the Holocaust"

Brian Robert Gingerich

- Mercatus Center Adam Smith Fellowship 2013-14
- Weaver Fellowship 2013, Intercollegiate Studies Institute

Kyle Hanniman

- National Science Foundation, Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant

Valerie Hennings

- Best Dissertation Honorable Mention, American Political Science Association, Women and Politics Research Section, "Civic Selves: Gender, Candidate Training Programs, and Envisioning Political Participation"

Courtney Hillebrecht

- 2010 Steven C. Poe Graduate Student Paper Award, Human Rights Section, International Studies Association, for "When Talk is Cheap: Understanding Compliance with International Human Rights Tribunals."

Dacil Q. Keo

- United States Institute for Peace Jennings Randolph Fellowship Program Peace Scholar

Katelyn Jones

- Institute for Humane Studies Fellowship, 2013-14

Kathleen Klaus

- National Science Foundation, Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant
- International Dissertation Research Fellowship, Social Science Research Council
- Jennings Randolph Peace Scholarship 2013-14, United States Institute of Peace

Brendon Kendhammer

- Aaron Wildavsky Dissertation Award, American Political Science Association Religion and Politics Section (2011), "Muslims Talking Politics: Framing Islam and Democracy in Northern Nigeria"

Brandon Lamson

- Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship

Dalton Lin

- 2011 Taiwan Ministry of Education Scholarship for Study Abroad

Jinjie Liu

- Institute for Humane Studies Fellowship, 2013-14

Kyle Marquardt

- Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship

Lauren McCarthy

- Edward S. Corwin Award for the best dissertation completed in this or the previous year in the field of public law, American Political Science Association, "Trafficking (In)Justice: Russian Law Enforcement's Response to Human Trafficking"

Jeremy Menchik

- Fellow at the Center for the Study of Democracy, Religion and Toleration, Columbia University

Clarence Moore

- National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship

Peter Nasuti

- IREX Individual Advanced Research Opportunities Grant for research in Georgia, 2011-2012

Jeffrey Paller

- Social Science Research Council, International Dissertation Research Fellowship, 2011

Michael Pisapia

- William Anderson Award, American Political Science Association, for the best doctoral dissertation in the field of federalism, intergovernmental relations, state, or local politics (2011), "Public Education and the Role of Women in American Political Development, 1852-1979"

Taylor Price

- Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant, "Uneasy Alliances: Traditional Leaders and the Promotion of Women's Rights," National Science Foundation

Ryan Powers

- National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship, 2011

Brianne Walsh

- Mercatus Center Adam Smith Fellowship 2013-14

Amber Wichowsky

- Carl Albert Dissertation Award, American Political Science Association Legislative Studies Section (2011), "The Competition Cure? The Consequences of Competitive Congressional Elections"

Graduate program, International Politics and Practice Capstone Certificate

This program begins in fall 2013.

Assessment metrics

The goals of the program are to teach knowledge of international politics, along with problem-solving and analytical skills to explore international politics. We require:

- A strong familiarity with the history of international relations. In particular, the key events that continue to shape modern international politics between nation-states.
- A strong familiarity with current literature on international relations issues and topics.
- Advanced capacity to think and write critically on global international relations issues that face the United States today and in the near future. These issues include, but are not limited to, globalization and development, global governance, international security and terrorism, and foreign policy formulation and execution.
- Advanced ability to interrogate, research, and analyze international relations, then to present findings and recommendations in a compelling manner.

Assessment occurs in two ways. First, each course will evaluate learning outcomes. This course-based assessment will include, but will not be limited to:

- Course-based applied learning exercises. All classes will contain at least one significant writing exercise that asks students to serve in an advisory role to a major decision-maker concerning an issue in international politics. For example, in PS 701, students must write a 5-7 page memo addressed to the U.S. National Security Advisor evaluating the Chinese military threat to islands claimed by Japan. Students must draw on historical and contemporary materials concerning the region and also knowledge of defense issues taught in the course.
- Course-based simulations. Some of the courses will use simulations to engage problem-solving and analytical skills. Both the international organizations/international law (PS 703) and international security (PS 704) courses contain small simulations. In the Organizations course, students must make decisions regarding the application of the laws of war to various conflict scenarios. In the Security course, students participate in a mock Non-Proliferation Treaty renewal conference by writing memos, exchanging position statements, and negotiating.
- Final exams will evaluate overall knowledge accumulation for each course. For previously offered courses, final exams have asked the post-baccalaureate students to apply multiple concepts to a modern case of political or economic crises to better understand their causes and effects.

Every two years, the faculty teaching in the program will meet to discuss the achievement of learning goals. This will be done by examining a breakdown of the various scores on written assignments to assess whether patterns are emerging from student scores. For example, if students are averaging lower scores on assignments that draw heavily from theoretical concepts, we would need to reconsider our pedagogy behind teaching the theoretical material. Periodic learning assessment based on student assignments will be an important tool in determining whether students are indeed achieving these learning goals.

Second, the Program Manager will survey all IPPCC program alumni one year after certificate completion to help evaluate the program's effectiveness in assisting students in achieving their career goals. Such a survey can also help fine-tune each IPPCC course in order to improve course materials. Every two years, the Program Manager will interview a random sample of graduates to gauge the program's success in meeting these expectations.

Students enrolled in the IPPCC must maintain an overall GPA of 3.2 with no course failures to remain in good standing.

The academic program will be reviewed following standard campus and L&S program review processes and criteria. This would mean an initial review after five years, with subsequent reviews becoming part of regular departmental reviews.