

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE  
FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number 2613S

Date of Senate Approval 01/24/13

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Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

**APC Document 21:** **Change requirements for the major in Political Science**

**Effective Date: Fall 2013**

**1. Delete:** On page 250, under Major in Political Science, items I and III:

- I. Required courses in the major—at least 34 hours including: POLS 220, 281, 450, 460. Additional hours must include one of the following options: a) POLS 401 and at least 2 hours in POLS 400; or b) both POLS 390 and 490.
- III. Other departmental requirements—Senior competency is demonstrated by satisfactory completion of POLS 450, 460; and either 400 or both 390 and 490. Computer competency and oral competency are satisfied by POLS 460.

**Add:** On page 250, in place of deleted entry:

- I. Required courses in the major—at least 34 hours including: POLS 220, 281, 290, 460, and 490.
- III. Other departmental requirements —Senior Competency is demonstrated by satisfactory completion of POLS 460 and 490. Oral Competency is satisfied by POLS 460. Computer competency is satisfied by POLS 290.

**2. Delete:** On page 250, under Political Science with Teacher Licensure, items I and III:

- I. Required courses in the major—at least 34 hours including: POLS 220, 281, 450, 460. Additional hours must include one of the following options: a) POLS 401 and at least 2 hours in POLS 400; or b) both POLS 390 and 490.
- III. Other departmental requirements—Senior competency is demonstrated by satisfactory completion of POLS 450, 460; and either 400 or both 390 and 490. Computer competency and oral competency are satisfied by POLS 460.

**Add:** On page 250, in place of deleted entry:

- I. Required courses in the major—at least 34 hours including: POLS 220, 281, 290, 460, and 490.
- III. Other departmental requirements —Senior Competency is demonstrated by satisfactory completion of POLS 460 and 490. Oral Competency is satisfied by POLS 460. Computer competency is satisfied by POLS 290.

**Impact:** These changes strengthen and simplify our competency requirements while supporting undergraduate research, with little resource impact for the department.

- 1) Senior competency will be satisfied by 460 and 490 instead of the current series of courses. We will need to offer more sections of POLS 490 to accommodate the increased number of students taking it, but the additional POLS 490s will simply replace classes that are being eliminated in the satisfaction of senior competency (POLS 400, 401, and POLS 450).
- 2) Adding POLS 290 as a major requirement will have little impact on departmental resources because it will simply replace POLS 390, which is already offered each fall. The additional required class for students will be offset by the elimination of POLS 450 as a requirement.

**Rationale:** The number of Political Science majors has increased more than 50% over the last 10 years, rendering our senior-level required courses less effective at achieving the pedagogical goals they were designed to meet while simultaneously straining scarce faculty resources.

- 1) Simplifying and standardizing the requirements for meeting senior competency will allow us to offer more and smaller research-oriented classes that better support our student learning objectives. Students can get the personalized instruction they value highly (based on senior exit interviews) and the responsibility for senior research instruction can be distributed more broadly and equitably across the faculty.
- 2) As noted previously, assessment and senior exit interviews have highlighted the need for more explicit instruction in basic rules of political inquiry and the need for it earlier in students' course of study. Requiring students to take POLS 290 is designed to fill this need and help prepare students to perform better in their 300-level classes as well as prepare them better for senior-level research.