



**Add:** On page 262, in place of deleted entry:

At least 18 hours in POLS including two courses from 220, 235, 240, 261 or 281. A minimum of 8 hours must be at the 300 level or above.

**Impact Statement:** The main impact of the above change comes in terms of added flexibility for both students and the department. Students will be able to choose freely among five options and can pursue their interests without the imposition of arbitrary constraints. As POLS 220, 235, 240, 261, or 281 will serve as optional courses, the department will no longer be required to offer one course from POLS 220 or 240 and one course from POLS 261 or 281 in each semester, but can more flexibly commit to offering two or three out of the five. The old requirement made it difficult to offer the required classes as promised in the catalog when faculty became unavailable due to PDL, FML, course releases, etc. As all courses are already taught regularly none of the above changes will encumber or require additional resources.

**Rationale:** POLS 220, 240, 261, and 281 have served as the department's gateway courses to the major. They closely match the recognized subfields of the discipline in terms of content and coverage. The current requirement forces students to complete a largely arbitrary combination of courses. Students are required to take a course in either American Politics or Political Theory, and then a course in International Relations or Comparative Politics. It is currently not advisable for a student to take both the introduction to International Relations and Comparative Politics courses, despite their possible interest in doing so, as they would still have to complete either the American Politics or Political Theory course. As at least 20 out of 34 hours of course work must be completed at the 300-400 level, and as POLS 290 is required of majors, taking a third or fourth gateway course will not help students progress toward graduation since after the third 200-level course, students only need hours at the 300-400 level.

This change will allow students to navigate their interests more readily and receive credit for doing so. In addition to eliminating the arbitrary combination of gateway courses allowing students to choose any two out of the four, we propose to add POLS 235 (Introduction to Law) to the list of gateway courses, giving students the option to choose two out of five. The reasoning behind this change is similar to what is outlined above. At present, POLS 235 does not meet any political science requirement, and, as it is not offered as a 300-level course, it does not help students progress toward completing the major. In other words, POLS 235 only helps students accumulate hours to reach the 120-hour degree requirement. By adding POLS 235 to our gateway courses, POLS 235 will shed its orphan status.