

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE
FACULTY SENATE

Senate Document Number 2320S
Date of Senate Approval 03/05/20

Statement of Faculty Senate Action:

APC Document 23 (POLS): **Amend the prerequisite listing in the following course descriptions: POLS 320, 321, 325, 326, 327, 351, 354, 359, 363, 365, 368, 383, 387, and 389.**

Effective Date: Fall 2020

1. **Remove:** On pages 268-271, the prerequisite information indicated below:

Course	Prerequisite Information to be Removed
POLS 320	Recommended prerequisite: POLS 220.
POLS 321	Prerequisite: POLS 220.
POLS 325	Recommended prerequisite: POLS 220.
POLS 326	Recommended prerequisite: POLS 220.
POLS 327	Recommended prerequisite: POLS 220.
POLS 351	Prerequisite: POLS 220.
POLS 354	Recommended prerequisite: POLS 220.
POLS 359	Prerequisite: POLS 220.
POLS 363	Prerequisite: POLS 281 or permission of instructor.
POLS 365	Recommended prerequisite: POLS 281 or permission of instructor.
POLS 368	Recommended prerequisite: POLS 281.
POLS 383	Prerequisite: POLS 281.
POLS 387	Prerequisite: POLS 281 or permission of instructor.
POLS 389	Recommended prerequisite: POLS 281 or permission of instructor.

2. **Add:** On pages 268-271, in place of the deleted entries in the descriptions for the courses listed above:

Recommended prerequisite: Any 200-level Political Science course.

Impact Statement: The expected impact of these changes on departmental resources and staffing is minimal. No new courses are being added, nor are there more demands on faculty and staff. All faculty in the department have agreed to these changes and believe that changing the prerequisite structure will not have a major effect on how they prepare their courses, the material they cover, or student performance in the courses. Instead, removing required prerequisites and replacing them with recommended ones would

have the effect of helping Political Science majors and minors, as well as students outside the department who are interested in taking Political Science courses. In particular, these changes should facilitate students in Political Science being able to meet departmental requirements more easily and being able to enroll in courses that meet their interests more readily. The change should also help with enrollment in 300-level electives in Political Science, as enrollment was likely unintentionally depressed due to these previous barriers.

Rationale: These changes are meant to give students, both inside the major and minor and outside, greater access to Political Science electives and more discretion to choose the ones that interest them. Requiring students to take particular introductory level courses in order to gain access to more advanced electives is a relic of past curricular limitations. When the department only offered two introductory level courses and both were required, majors would automatically meet the prerequisites for the upper division electives. Students outside the major could appeal to waive the prerequisites but many probably just looked elsewhere. As our faculty has changed and student interest has expanded, we have added new introductory level classes representing all major subfields in the discipline. We now allow students to meet the introductory level requirement by choosing any two of the five options and trust that any of them will prepare students for all 300-level electives. We believe that removing the required (and course-specific) prerequisites will allow majors to explore more widely across subfields and will remove barriers for non-majors. As our department becomes increasingly involved in interdisciplinary programs and minors (for example, the Legal Studies and Human rights minors), we realize that the required prerequisites limit access of our courses to non-Political Science students pursuing these programs and put an additional burden on them. Removing these barriers should help them complete the programs in a timely manner. We have, however, chosen to maintain recommended prerequisites of any 200-level Political Science course on these 300-level electives to signal that these courses cover more advanced material and have higher workloads and that a foundational basis at the introductory level may be helpful. We believe these recommendations should serve to temper enrollment for those who may not be prepared for the coursework. In particular, we hope the recommended prerequisites will signal to advising staff not to put first semester, first-year students in 300-level classes without good cause. Further, we have chosen only to maintain required prerequisites on our research methods and senior capstone courses, as these courses cover material that directly builds upon that covered in earlier research courses.