

Honors Program Summary and Justification

The mission of the Political Science Honors Program is to provide our highest achieving majors in political science the opportunity to enhance their academic writing abilities and acquire research skills under the guidance of Political Science faculty. Specifically, Political Science Honors Program participants will develop the following skills: 1) How to identify a research puzzle and question; 2) The ability to critically analyze political science literature and write a literature review; 3) The skills necessary to make objective and theoretical arguments within their chosen subfield; and 4) The skills necessary to select and apply an appropriate hypothesis testing mechanism or tool of analysis to their research, which may include collecting and analyzing empirical data, conducting case studies, or critically analyzing political theory. Through writing and research-intensive coursework, as well as participation in an original research project, Political Science Honors students will have firsthand experience with all aspects of the research process--including working collaboratively with fellow students and faculty, writing and revising a journal article length paper, and presenting findings in a professional setting.

Entry Requirements

- a. Students may apply after completing a minimum of 9 credit hours in political science. After grades are processed, applications will be reviewed and admitted applicants will be contacted. No more than 10% of our majors will ever be admitted to the program.
- b. Minimum Criteria for application are:
 1. >3.2 cumulative grade point average.
 2. >3.6 grade point average in political science courses.
 3. Have at least two academic semesters left to complete the program requirements.
 4. Submission of a statement of purpose to the Department of Political Science.
 5. Submission to the Department of Political Science of a sponsor letter from a Political Science faculty member stating that he or she will supervise the student's honors research.
 6. Submit application to Dr. Kim at dkin4@fau.edu or Dr. Nichols at nicholsa@fau.edu.

Program Standards

- a. Students must maintain a cumulative 3.2 GPA throughout the program to progress.
- b. If less than a B is earned in any political science course or the student's cumulative GPA falls below 3.2, the student will be reviewed for dismissal from the Honors program. The honors committee will review such cases and make a final decision regarding the student's continuance.
- c. Students admitted to the Honors Program must maintain high academic and ethical standards, attend classes, and meet honors level expectations.
- d. The minimum amount of time necessary to complete the honors program is one year.

Criteria for Successful Completion

In addition to maintaining the program standards listed above, students must:

1. Complete the following course requirements:
 - a. An undergraduate methods course with an honors compact or a graduate level methods course (must have already taken undergraduate methods to choose this option).
 - b. An upper-level undergraduate course or graduate level course relevant to thesis project.
2. Complete the capstone project.
 - a. Project will take the form of a senior thesis, *i.e.* an article-length (at least 25 pages doubled-spaced) investigation of a significant research question.
 - b. Project must be overseen by a faculty member in the Department of Political Science through Directed Independent Study (DIS) classes. Students should enroll in a minimum of 3 DIS credit hours and a maximum of 9 DIS credit hours.
 - c. Students must present their project at a department workshop, the university's undergraduate research symposium, or a major political science conference such as the annual meeting of the Florida Political Science Association.
 - d. Students must submit their project for review and approval by the honors program committee. Thesis should be submitted at least one month prior to desired graduation date.
 - e. If a student does not maintain the necessary standards, credits earned during honors may be applied for credit in the major.

Benefits to Students

1. Gain research skills required for graduate school and better prepare them with practical skills for employment upon graduation.
2. Improve research, critical thinking, and writing skills.
3. Increase interaction with faculty members in the political science department, which provides students with invaluable mentorship and knowledge about the discipline.
4. Completion of an undergraduate degree with honors distinction (Honors recognition with cord at graduation).

UNDERGRADUATE POLITICAL SCIENCE HONORS PROGRAM APPLICATION

Name:

Z number:

FAU Email Address:

Phone number:

Year/Semester:

Cumulative GPA:

Political Science GPA:

Faculty Mentor:

Please also do the following:

1. Attach a copy of your current (unofficial) transcript highlighting all Political Science courses to your application.
2. Attach a 1-2-page statement of purpose which details why you are applying for the Honors Program and your proposed plan of study.
3. Please have your faculty mentor submit a letter of support stating their willingness to oversee your thesis.

I certify that the information given in this application is complete and accurate. Should any of the information I have given change prior to my entry to the program I will immediately notify the Political Science department.

Signature _____ Date _____