

**Proposal for
International Relations Option
In B.A. in Political Science Degree**

PURPOSE:

To establish an Option in International Relations in the B.A. in Political Science.

OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS**Demand**

Over the past five years, the Political Science department has not only experienced a substantial increase in the number of majors (about 34%), but a growing number of students and prospective students have also expressed an interest in concentrating their Political Science studies in the subfield of International Relations. Indeed, some students inquire whether we offer International Relations as a major. Nationwide, while a major in International Relations or International Studies at the undergraduate level is rare, many institutions offer the subfield as a concentration within the Political Science curriculum.

Relation to MSU-Bozeman Mission

Increasing the internationalization of the student body as well as the opportunities for international experiences of Montana students are among the goals of the Five-Year Plan of the University. Additionally, MSU has entered into a partnership with several universities in Turkey to offer two years of study at MSU in conjunction with a two-year curriculum at their home institution in order to deliver a joint degree to Turkish students. A large proportion of the students applying to this program also express an interest specifically in International Relations. Offering an option in International Relations to Political Science students will advance both of these goals.

Need

In addition to advancing the institution's strategic goals, an International Relations option for Political Science majors will better prepare students in pursuit of a variety of post-graduate career and educational opportunities. According to exit interviews conducted in the department, somewhere around one-third to one-half of our majors will pursue further studies or professional opportunities that involve an international orientation or experience. For example, we have graduates working in the international trade division of the Department of Commerce, in the Peace Corps, and pursuing advanced degrees in International Relations and International Law. Many students indicate an interest in working for international non-governmental organizations. This year a recruiter from the CIA also visited our campus to explore the potential for recruitment MSU-Bozeman Political Science graduates into that agency. An International Relations Option will therefore better serve a variety of student needs and interests of Political Science majors upon graduation.

Intellectual Basis

International Relations developed as an academic field at the intersection of two intellectual trends that marked the turn of the 19th century into the 20th –Diplomatic History and Political Science. Although its inclusion as a subfield of political science is widely accepted today, it also lends itself to an interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary orientation, drawing not only on history but also on economic theory and practice and social theory. This is reflected in the membership and research agenda of the members of the International Studies Association

where about one-fourth of the membership represents fields other than Political Science. As a subfield of Political Science, however, International Relations also cross-cuts with the subfield of Comparative Politics. The courses included in the subject area of the option therefore include not only a series of political science courses that are standard fare at the introductory and advanced level of International Relations, but also courses offered by the Political Science department on Comparative Politics along with a small number of courses offered by Sociology and Economics. Since Political Science majors are already required to take four courses (16 credits) in the combined areas of International Relations and Comparative Politics, the new Option entails taking an additional 16 credits of courses with an international focus, all of which are offered at the upper level.

Option Requirements

As explained above, in addition to the minimum of 16 credits in the International Relations-related courses offered in the department, students choosing the option would take another four courses (16 credits) of related courses. They would also be required to complete two courses in introductory economics and through the intermediate level of competency in a foreign language. Again, these requirements extend beyond those required for students in the standard Political Science Option, who must take *either* two economics or two foreign language courses. Students in the proposed option would have to take *both*, and their language competency would have to reach the intermediate level (as opposed to simply taking two semesters of introductory level language courses). Finally, students would be required to take three additional courses for a total of 9 credits in subjects that reflect cultural, historical, religious, or philosophical knowledge related to the language option (Spanish language, Latin American history, literature, and cultural studies, for example).

ADEQUACY, ACCREDITATION, AND ASSESSMENT ISSUES

All of the courses included in this option are currently offered by Montana State University. Ten of the twelve courses in the subfield of International Relations within the Political Science Department have been offered by the department regularly over the past 6-10 years, and are taught by existing tenured faculty members. Two were offered for the first time last year (POLS 400 Globalization and Politics, Fall 2004 and POLS 480 Politics of the Middle East, Spring 2005). The course on Globalization and Politics is currently being team taught by a tenured member of the Department and an Economics Department adjunct faculty member who holds a Ph.D. in economics. The Politics of the Middle East was taught by a long-time adjunct faculty member who holds a Ph.D. in Political Science with a specialization in International Relations and whose dissertation research addressed the politics and economics of U.S. relations with states in the Middle East. He has also been teaching a course on the History of the Middle East in the History Department at MSU for the past two years.

Adding the International Relations Option for political science majors does not affect our accreditation. The courses and faculty are assessed using the several instruments and methods the Department of Political Science currently employs for all of its faculty members and courses.

IMPACT ON FACULTY, FACILITIES, COSTS. STUDENTS, OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Faculty Impact

All of the Political Science, Sociology, Economics, and Modern Languages courses included in this option are already taught at MSU. Some of the Political Science courses have been

introduced as special topics that will become regularly offered courses in the catalog. These courses respond to existing student demand and decisions to offer them are independent of the current proposal. Additionally, other courses may be added or approved as the faculty and their research interests enlarge or change. There are enough existing courses already offered to create the option.

Facilities and Costs

There are no new costs associated with this option. The option comprises courses already offered with existing facilities.

Impact on Students

The current requirements for majors in the Political Science option total 48 credits. When added to the 32 credits required by the University Core, Political Science majors are left with approximately 40 credits that are not claimed by either departmental or university requirements. Students are advised to use these credits for a minor, second major, or to choose a selection of courses that reflect the interests they wish to cultivate with respect to the post-graduate educational and career goals. This leaves ample room for the incorporation of the International Relations option among students who choose to do so. By offering the option, it is also possible that the Political Science major will be more attractive to a larger number of students, perhaps even enhancing recruitment and retention by the university.

Impact on Other Departments

The other departments potentially impacted are primarily Economics and Modern Languages. This impact should be very small since the vast majority of Political Science majors already take either a foreign language or two courses in Economics, which since the beginning of this year is a departmental requirement. Many students take both. These changes were discussed with the Department Heads of Economics and Modern Languages and their letters of support were considered as part of the internal review and approval process.

It should also be noted that MSU currently offers a minor in Global Studies and a Liberal Studies degree with the option of concentrating in "Global/Multicultural Studies." The proposed International Relations option differs from these in several respects, both institutionally and intellectually. Institutionally, the Global Studies minor serves primarily students of all majors who wish to undertake a semester or year of study abroad, which is a requirement of this minor. And intellectually, International Relations is a major subfield of the Political Science discipline and in the department courses are taught by professors whose primary field of graduate concentration was International Relations, which is only possible within the discipline of Political Science. The other two programs combine studies that are cross-cultural and transnational in content rather than in the intellectual and scholarly focus of research carried on within the area of International Relations. Given that the option will only be available to Political Science majors, this is neither a programmatic duplication nor a conflict of interest.

PROCESS LEADING TO SUBMISSION OF THE PROPOSAL

The proposal to offer a departmental International Relations Options developed in response to student demand and interest and was outlined by the Department Head and discussed by the Political Science faculty. Student interest was apparent through several channels: advising, exit interviews, orientation sessions with new students, and discussions with

prospective incoming and transfer students. The faculty considered the original proposal, made suggestions for additional courses to be included in the “International and Comparative Studies” component, and unanimously endorsed the proposal by consensus. After review by the Dean of the College of Letters and Science, the University Undergraduate Studies Committee and the Academic Affairs sub-committee of faculty council reviewed and endorsed the proposal.

International Relations Option Overview of Requirements

		Credits
I.	Political Science Foundation Courses	
	a. POLS 206 American National Government	
	b. POLS 214 Principles of Political Science	
	c. POLS 208 State and Local Government	
	d. POLS 241 Introduction to International Relations	
	e. POLS 251 Methods of Inquiry in Political Science	15
II.	Political Science Subfields and Capstone	
	a. Two courses in American Political Institutions	
	b. Two courses in Political Theory	
	c. Two courses in Public Administration and Policy	
	d. POLS 460 Capstone Research Experience	21
III.	Economics	
	a. ECON 102 Principles of Macroeconomics and International Economics (ECON 101 may be required as a prerequisite)	3
IV.	International and Comparative Studies	24
	a. Take a total of eight courses from the following list:	
	POLS 331 Comparative Democracy	
	POLS 334 Social Movements and Political Change	
	POLS 340 International Relations Theory	
	POLS 352 Comparative Public Policy	
	POLS 402 International Law	
	POLS 400 Globalization and Politics	
	POLS 403 International Organization	
	POLS 405 Political Psychology	
	POLS 441 International Human Rights	
	POLS 442 War and Peace	
	POLS 480 Politics of the Middle East	
	POLS 420 Politics of Indigenous Peoples	
	SOCY 365 Sociology of Globalization	
	ECON 314 International Economics	
	ECON 317 Economic Development	
V.	Language and Area Studies	
	a. Foreign Language through the intermediate level of competence	3-11
	b. Three courses in the culture and/or history of a related region (May be taken in Modern Languages or History Department)	9
Total Credits		75-83