

Process

The Department of Political Studies will be organizing enrolment in 400-level courses by a balloting system. Students will be asked to submit a form listing their preferences for 400-level courses. Based on this information the department will assign students to courses manually, prior to the July registration period. The purpose of this system is to ensure that (to the extent possible) every student gets some of their top choices of courses. Note that this process applies **ONLY** to 400-level courses. The prerequisite for taking 400-level POLS courses is as follows:

“Level 4 and (registration in a POLS Major or Medial Plan) and POLS250/6.0 and POLS384/3.0) and (a GPA OF 2.6 on 30.0 units in POLS).”

OR

“Level 4 and (registration in a POLS Major or Medial Plan) and POLS250/6.0 and POLS384/3.0) and (a GPA OF 2.5 on ALL units in POLS).”

What this means is that you:

1. Must have 84 units, so that you count as a Level 4 student
2. Must have passed POLS250
3. Must have passed POLS384 (*but see below*)
4. And have a GPA of at least 2.6 on your best 30 POLS units OR have a GPA of at least 2.5 on ALL units in POLS.

The caveat about number 3 is that some students on exchange have not taken POLS384 in their third year, and have been given permission to take it in their 4th year. There is also a caveat about number 4, which is that PEOPLESOFT does not correctly calculate the prereq, which results in some students wrongly failing the prereq (but none wrongly passing). We will therefore be calculating prereqs manually.

Timeline

May 15: Deadline for submission of course preference form (“ballot”) to Cynthia MacIntosh in Politics main office (by e-mail: ugpols@queensu.ca).

May 15: Deadline for application for B.A.H. Thesis option (POLS590)

June 17: Course timetable available on SOLUS

Late June (24 to 30): Manual enrolment of students in 400-level courses by Cynthia MacIntosh. Students will be able to check which courses they have been given (via SOLUS) as these enrolments occur.

- July 8: student “shopping cart” becomes available
- July 17: Restricted enrolment begins on SOLUS (by appointment time)
- July 26 – Aug 2: Open enrollment begins on SOLUS
- August 6: Registration hiatus begins (no enrolments by anyone); open enrolment recommences August 20.

Further Points

- The department’s expectation is that students will select their elective and Minor field courses to fit the 400-level Politics courses they have been given.
- Students who end up having conflicts with courses that they *must* take in order to complete a Medial field should contact Cynthia MacIntosh. The Department will attempt to resolve such conflicts once registration begins, July 17.
- All changes to 400-level course enrolments will have to go through Cynthia MacIntosh (due to the prereq calculation error that would otherwise disadvantage some students).

BALLOT FORM

400-LEVEL COURSE SELECTION FOR POLS MAJORS AND MEDIALS

Name: _____ Student Number: _____

E-mail: _____ Summer Phone Number: _____

MAJORS:

Four courses needed; please select *ten* 400-level courses in order of preference, by term.

Fall Term

Winter Term

1. _____

1. _____

2. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. _____

4. _____

4. _____

5. _____

5. _____

MEDIALS:

Two courses needed; please select *eight* 400-level courses in order of preference, by term.

Fall Term

Winter Term

1. _____

1. _____

2. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. _____

4. _____

4. _____

NOTE TO POLITICS DEPARTMENT: (If you need to let us know any special circumstances, please list them here)

B.A.H. THESIS – POLS 590 (9.0 units)

The B.A.H thesis is for level 4 students in a POLS Major or Medial Program plan who have attained a GPA of 3.0 on their best 30 POLS units and who normally have a have an A- [(80-84 %), 3.7 GPA] in the politics sub-field in which they are writing.

The thesis, which is really an “honours essay”, allows students to undertake a substantial piece of work, focusing on a particular problem or body of literature. Students wishing to write on a specific topic need to find a member of the faculty who is willing to supervise the thesis, although you can apply without having secured prior agreement to supervise from a faculty member. The topics should be selected early (usually in second term of your third year or early September of your fourth), and a working relationship established with the supervisor as soon as possible.

In order to apply, students must fill in the form below and write one single-spaced page describing their thesis topic and area, and return it to the Undergraduate Assistant, Cynthia MacIntosh in Mackintosh-Corry Hall Room C321 via email (ugpols@queensu.ca) by **May 15**. This document must indicate your primary research question(s), your plan for addressing the question(s), and a short description of the literature you intend to use in your thesis to support your claims.

Questions about the thesis option should be directed to Andrew Grant, Undergraduate Chair:
kyle.hanniman@queensu.ca

Name: _____

Student Number: _____

Who might supervise this thesis? _____

Have you spoken to the supervisor? YES _____ NO _____

POLS590 Honours Thesis – Questions and Answers

What is an honours thesis, and how does it differ from a conventional research paper?

An honours thesis is a 50-60 page research paper based on two terms worth of research on a topic that is broader or more complex than can normally be handled in a term paper for a course. More than length alone, the honours thesis is distinguished by its analytical detail and sophistication; by the need for a disciplined, multi-stage investigation of a research question; and by its scope relative to the work you've done to this point. The major benefit is that you get to engage in this extended project with the one-on-one supervision of a faculty member over the course of an entire academic year. In the end, the honours thesis can be really special, and many view it as the culmination of their undergraduate career.

What is POLS590?

POLS590 is the course you will be registered in if you are writing an Honours Thesis. POLS590 is a full year course. If you are writing an Honours Thesis, you will register in one other 400-level POLS courses, assuming you are a Major. That is to say, POLS590 substitutes for three out of the four 400-level courses that POLS Majors ordinarily do; POLS Medials taking POLS590 would not take any 400-level courses.

Is it better to do an Honours Thesis than just to take regular 4th year courses?

Not necessarily. The more important question is whether the Honours Thesis option is right for you.

Is the Honours Thesis option right for me?

If you answer "yes" to the following questions, the thesis option may be right for you:

- Do you have a best-30 POLS units GPA of 3.0 (B) or more?
- Is there a particular topic that you've been wanting to study in detail? Are you interested in spending a whole year studying and writing about this one topic in depth?
- Are you someone who will stay organized and motivated without the structure and social setting of an ordinary course? A thesis requires steady, largely independent work over the course of the full academic year; it is not something you can research and write at the last minute.
- Is there a Professor who works in this area who you think you would get along well with? This would typically be someone who taught a course that you enjoyed, and that you did well in.

Must I find a professor to supervise my thesis before applying for POLS590?

You need not have secured the agreement of a supervisor in order to apply for POLS590. However, you must have thought about who would be an appropriate supervisor, and you are strongly encouraged to have contacted potential supervisors to see if they are willing in principle to supervise you, and to get advice on how to formulate your thesis topic.

Who do I ask if I have questions about the Honours Thesis?

Kyle Hanniman, Undergraduate Chair (kyle.hanniman@queensu.ca)