

*New Preliminary Proposal for Political Science (POLS) degree:*

**Institution:** Southern Polytechnic State University

**Name of Proposed Program:** Political Science

**Brief Description of the Degree:** Political science is the study of governments, public policies and political processes, systems, and behavior. Political science subfields include: 1) American Government; 2) Comparative Politics; 3) International Relations; and 4) Political Theory. The subfield of American government examines political processes in the United States at the national, state, and local levels. Comparative politics utilizes a methodological approach of comparison. The subject of inquiry is often the political processes in countries other than the United States. International Relations studies of the foreign affairs of and relations among states within the international system, including the roles of non-state actors. Finally, political theory engages fundamental normative questions about the state, government, politics, liberty, and justice.

Political scientists use both humanistic and scientific perspectives and tools and a variety of methodological approaches to examine the political dynamics of all countries and regions of the world.

**Institutional Mission**

1. How does this program support the mission of your institution? How does the proposed program help meet the priorities/goals of your strategic plan and the strategic plan of the Board of Regents? Please reference the specific edition and page number of your strategic plan.

In 2006, Southern Polytechnic State University concluded a year-long process of developing a new Strategic Plan and Mission Statement. These documents built upon and reinforced many of the tenets found in our Vision Statement, which states that Southern Polytechnic "... is a comprehensive university with a unique purpose. Through a fusion of technology with the liberal arts and sciences, we create a learning community that encourages thoughtful inquiry, diverse perspectives, and strong preparation of our graduates to be leaders in an increasingly technological world." S.P.S.U.'s Mission Statement states, as well, that "...we serve both traditional and non-traditional students at the undergraduate, graduate and continuing education levels; in engineering and engineering technology, the sciences, applied liberal arts, business and professional programs. We work to develop the broader community's intellectual, cultural, economic, and human resources." (See page 1 of document linked below.) By offering a degree in Political Science at S.P.S.U. – one that seeks to develop in students a higher degree of technical and statistical expertise than those found in customary political science programs elsewhere and also allows for hands-on, applied research – we believe we have developed a unique program that meets not only the requirements set forth above in our Mission and Vision Statements, but also enables the university to meet two of its three primary goals, as set forth in our Strategic Plan, i.e., becoming "... more comprehensive

in scope” and “...to increase enrollment.” (Again, please see page 1 of the linked document.) By offering a degree in Political Science at S.P.S.U., the university will not only increase undergraduate enrollment, but will also broaden the scope of degrees offered.

For the complete Strategic Plan, as well as S.P.S.U.’s Mission Statement and Vision Statement, please see: <http://www.spsu.edu/irpa/StrategicPlanFinal9-25-06.doc>

2. Is it likely that a SACS visit for substantive change will be necessary? Why?

No.

3. Will the program require an increase in state appropriation within the next five years?

No.

4. If this is a baccalaureate program, will you be asking for an exception to the 120-hour expectation?

No.

5. Are there program delivery formats that will be new or different for your institution with the establishment of the proposed program? What is the program delivery format?

On-campus

Some courses to be offered on-line (less than 50%)

External site (school, conference center, another campus, etc.)

What is the external site?

Other?

6. If programs will be delivered externally, do you have an approved Instructional Delivery Plan (IDP) on file? Yes or No (Note: Please check to determine that you have a current IDP on file in the system office).

Yes  No

(Not applicable)

## Need

1. Need: Provide a brief justification and data for why the state needs graduates from this program and for why the University System needs this program.

The skill sets obtained by political science graduates while varied, open up significant opportunities in employment. (See list of career opportunities available to political science graduates below.) The acquisition of quantitative and methodological skills, coupled with an understanding of the political process at the local, state, national, and international levels, would allow for employment in a variety of public and private venues where research techniques are highly prized. As well, the communication, analysis, and critical reasoning skills that our graduates obtain would place them well in a competitive job market, where continual learning is essential and interpersonal competency are greatly in need. As a recent article in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* demonstrates, liberal arts and social science majors are "...in high demand by employers.... Companies want employees with good communication skills. They need people who can think critically; who can write and speak well; who can run projects, interact on teams and sell on paper or in person." (Raines, May 6, 2007, R1, 4)

2. Give a brief justification for why your institution should offer the program.

As stated below (answer to Question #5), the proposed degree will emphasize students gaining extensive proficiency in the use of quantitative research methods and statistical analysis appropriate for empirical inquiry in social science. This focus on quantitative research methods both distinguishes the proposed political science degree at SPSU from others across the state, as well as positions SPSU to offer the program, as a variety of faculty members at the university are well-versed in the use of such methodologies.

3. Demand: Provide data to support the need for the program and list the source. Estimate the number of students who will graduate annually from the program in the steady state.

Graduates of political science programs are equipped with multiple skill sets that allow for diverse career paths. Traditionally, many graduates have found employment in government service at a variety of levels. On the whole, employment in government – at all levels - has been growing over the last decade. And, according to a recent article from *The Financial Times* on public sector employment, in the next five years there will be a significant number of retirements that will create a severe shortfall in staffing. For example, 90% of all middle- and senior-managers in the federal government are eligible to retire in the next decade. Moreover, 40% of all federal employees will be eligible to retire by 2010. (Knight, February 5, 2007, 3)

However, as stated previously, government employment is not the only avenue for employment of political scientists. Another career opportunity for graduates is a private sector budget analyst position, where one-half of all analyst positions reside. And according to the Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Competition for budget analyst jobs is expected over the 2004-14 projection period." As well, "Employment of budget analysts is expected to increase 9-17% through 2014." Another job field for graduates is in administrative service management; the BLS also predicts a competitive environment for such applicants, claiming a similar 9-17% increase through 2014. Yet another career field for political scientists is as a marketing, research, or survey analyst. Such researchers are "...employed mainly by professional, scientific, and technical services firms, especially in market research and public opinion polling; scientific research and development services; and management, scientific, and technical consulting services. State government also provided many jobs for survey researchers." (U.S. Bureau of

Labor Statistics, 2007) Growth in this field is predicted to be quite robust, at 18-26% through 2014.

In the steady state, we anticipate the matriculation of 8-10 students annually.

4. Are there other similar programs in the USG system? List the institutions that offer a similar program.

The following institutions in the USG system offer some type of basic undergraduate degree in political science.

Georgia Institute of Technology  
Georgia State University  
University of Georgia  
Georgia Southern University  
Valdosta State University  
Armstrong Atlantic State University  
Augusta State University  
Clayton College & State University  
Columbus State University  
Fort Valley State University  
Georgia College & State University  
Georgia Southwestern State University  
Kennesaw State University  
North Georgia College & State University  
Savannah State University  
State University of West Georgia

5. If similar programs are geographically nearby, how does your proposed program differ?

Three institutions in the USG system that are geographically nearby (within a 16-mile radius of the SPSU campus) offer an undergraduate degree in political science. These institutions are the Georgia Institute of Technology, Georgia State University, and Kennesaw State University.

Political science is largely an empirically based discipline. Proficiency in the use of quantitative research methods and statistical analysis appropriate for social research is essential. The emphasis on quantitative research methods distinguishes the proposed political science degree at SPSU. The Georgia Institute of Technology and Georgia State University only requires a single course on empirical research methods. Kennesaw State University offers a second course on empirical research methods beyond its introduction to empirical methods in social research. However, they only require this course for one of their four concentrations. Our proposed undergraduate degree will require all students to take three courses in quantitative research methods. The courses are Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods, Intermediate Quantitative Research Methods, and Advanced Multivariate Statistical Analysis.

## Budget

1. Estimate the steady-state cost of the program (in current dollars) and indicate the percentages from state allocation, reallocation, student fees, grants, and other outside dollars.

By year four, the program should reach a steady state with 85 majors. At that time, revenues should exceed costs by \$122K.

state allocation	
new tuition	28%
new student workload	14%
reallocation	57%
student fees	0.4%
grants	0%
other outside dollars	0%

2. Will the program require the addition of a new organizational unit to the institution (e.g., college, school, division or department)?

No, the program will be administered by the existing Department of Social and International Studies.

3. Will the program require additional resources? How do you plan to reallocate resources for this proposed program?

No additional resources are required.

## Other

Please share additional information that you seek to add concerning the proposed program before you submit the preliminary proposal.

## Potential careers with a degree in Political Science:

Typically, a bachelor's degree in political science can lead to exciting careers in one of four major categories of employment: 1) government service; 2) non-governmental organization and advocacy group work and/or non-profit organizations; 3) the legal field; and 4) campaigns/elections and survey management work. Additionally, graduates of political science programs are also frequently employed in the business world, journalism, and educational institutions, be they at the secondary or post-graduate levels.

Our political science majors would gain first-rate proficiency in the methodologies of social science inquiry, as well as analytical skills, administrative competence, and communication abilities that are highly valued in a wide spectrum of potential career areas.

## Examples of Careers for Political Scientists

Activist, Advocate/Organizer  
Administration, Corporate, Government, Non-Profit, etc.  
Administrative Services Manager  
Archivist, Online Political Data  
Budget Examiner or Analyst  
Attorney  
Campaign Operative  
CIA Analyst  
City Planner  
Federal or State-level Congressional Office/Committee Staffer  
Coordinator of Federal or State Aid  
Communications Director  
Corporate Public Affairs Advisor  
Corporate Information Analyst  
Corporate Adviser for Governmental Relations  
Corporation Legislative Issues Manager  
Editor, Online Political Journal  
Federal Government Analyst  
Foreign Service Officer  
Foundation Staffer  
Free-lance writer  
High School Government Teacher  
Immigration Officer  
Information Manager  
Intelligence Officer  
International Agency Officer  
International Research Specialist  
Issues Analyst, Corporate Social Policy Divisions  
Journalist  
Labor Relations Specialist  
Legislative Analyst / Coordinator  
Lobbyist  
Marketing Analyst  
Plans and Review Officer, USIA  
Policy Analyst  
Political Commentator  
Pollster  
Public Affairs Research Analyst  
Public Opinion Analyst  
Research Analyst  
State Legislator  
Survey Analyst  
Systems Analyst  
University Professor  
Urban Policy Planner

## **S.P.S.U.'s Proposed Curriculum: B.S. in Political Science**

42 hours – Areas A through E (in Area E, Group 1: POLS 1101 [Am. Government] is encouraged)

18 hours – Area F:

ECON 1101 Introduction to Economics  
POL 2401 Global Issues  
POL 2801 Comparative Politics  
SIS 2100 Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods  
LANG 2001 (Students must take a foreign language through  
LANG 2002 the 2002 level.)

33 hours – Upper Division Core:

- POLS 3100 Intermediate Quantitative Research Methods
- POLS 3101 International Political Economy
- POLS 3201 Constitutional and International Law
- POLS 3301 Modern Political Theory
- POLS 3601 Contemporary World Politics
- POLS 3701 American Institutions: Presidency/Legislatures or  
Judiciary
- POLS 4100 Advanced Multivariate Statistical Analysis
- POLS 4201 Voting Behavior/Political Behavior
- GEOG 4101 Geographic Information Systems
- SIS 400X Regional Studies
- POLS 4801 Capstone: Political Science Practicum

12 hours – Directed International Electives:

Students choose 12 hours from -

- GEOG 3101 World Regional Geography
- HIST 3801 World History Since 1945
- IT/POLS 4063 Political Issues in Electronic Government
- LANG 300X
- POLS 3401 Regulatory and Environmental Law
- POLS 3501 Intellectual Property Issues
- POLS 4101 Political Economy of Post-Communist Transformation
- PSYC 3101 International Social Psychology
- SIS 3600 Comparative World Cultures
- SIS 4100 Cross National Technology Policy Analysis
- SIS 400X Regional Studies (up to six additional hours)
- STS 4000 International Issues in Science and Technology
- STS 4400 Topical Studies in Science and Technology
- STS 4800 Capstone Seminar for International Studies majors

15 hours – Free Electives

120 hours total