A. Statement by the Department of Political Science, Student Learning Objectives, and General Education Core Requirements

Statement by the Department of Political Science
The concepts, skills, and knowledge acquired as part of a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science can lead to many diverse career fields, including but not limited to civil service, teaching, law, policy consultant, journalism, non-profit sector management, Foreign Service, politics, and government. Acquired skills can include oral, written, and technological communication, critical thinking and problem solving, and quantitative and qualitative analysis. A degree in political science can lead to a Master of Arts and Ph.D. degrees. The Department of Political Science has divided the discipline into six fields:
1. U.S. Government & Politics
2. Comparative Government & Politics
3. International Relations
4. Political Theory
5. Public Policy & Political Behavior
6. Research Methods

To achieve these goals, a student must earn 120 Credit Hours at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley. These 120 Credit Hours consist of courses in the General Education Core (Part A: 42 Credit Hours) and the Major Requirement (Part B: 78 Credit Hours). To earn a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science students must earn a minor and/or second major in a different discipline.

Student Learning Objectives
1. To comprehend the origins and evolution of U.S. and Texas political systems, with a focus on the growth of political institutions, the constitutions of the U.S. and Texas, federalism, civil liberties, and civil and human rights.
2. To recognize and assume their responsibility as a citizen in a democratic society by learning to think for themselves, by engaging in public discourse, and by obtaining information through the news media and other appropriate information sources about politics and public policy.
3. To examine social institutions and processes across a range of historical periods, social structures, and cultures.
4. To develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues.
5. To analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural, and global forces on the area under study.
General Education Core: 42 Credit Hours
The courses listed below must be taken to satisfy the General Education Core requirement.
1. POLS 2301 & POLS 2302 are part of the General Education Core requirements.
2. POLS 2387 & POLS 2388 are part of the General Education Core requirements for those in the Honors Program, and may be taken in lieu of POLS 2301 & POLS 2302.
3. MATH 1314 College Algebra is required for the Core Math requirement.

B. Requirements for a Major in Political Science: 78 Credit Hours
1. B.A. in Political Science and a Minor and/or Second Major in a different discipline
2. 36 Political Science Credit Hours
   a. Non-Advanced Political Science: 9 Credit Hours (Courses at the 2000 level)
      i. Must include POLS 2370 Introductory Statistics for Political Science, and students must enroll in POLS 3370 Scope & Methods concurrently in a Learning Community
         1. POLS 3370 satisfies 3 Credit Hours of the Advanced Political Science requirement
      ii. Must include 2370 Introductory Statistics for Political Science, or other statistics courses approved by the Department of Political Science
      iii. Must include an additional 6 Credit Hours from a list of defined options
   b. Advanced Political Science 27 Credit Hours (Courses at the 3000 or 4000 level)
   c. Students must successfully complete a “capstone experience.” This requirement may be satisfied in either of two ways.
      i. First, the student may complete an internship with a minimum of 3 semester hours of credit. As a part of the internship the student will prepare and submit an analytic paper evaluating their internship experience and the insights they required. The paper shall be a minimum of 10 pages long. To satisfy this requirement the paper must receive a minimum grade of “C.”
      ii. Second, the student may enroll in a “capstone eligible” course (denoted by an * in the course listing) during their senior year and, (at the direction and under the guidance of the instructor) as a part of that course, prepare and submit a “capstone” research paper. The paper should be no less than 15 pages in length and demonstrate the student’s mastery of and facility with the methodological and substantive concepts and tools of the discipline. The student should:
         1. Select a course from those 4000 numbered courses scheduled for that term, or arrange an independent study with a willing member of the faculty.
         2. Negotiate and execute a contract with the instructor describing the expectations for both the instructor and the student.
         3. To satisfy this requirement the paper must receive a minimum grade of “C.”
3. 27 Beyond-Major Advanced Credit Hours
   a. Used to attain minor and/or second major in a different discipline.
   b. After earning enough credit hours for a minor and/or second major in a different discipline, students may choose Political Science Advanced Courses, or a second minor, or use as Advanced Electives in other disciplines.
4. 15 Beyond-Major Other Credit Hours
   a. Used to attain minor and/or second major in a different discipline.
   b. After earning enough credit hours for a minor and/or second major in a different discipline, students may choose Political Science Advanced Courses, or a second minor, or use as Advanced Electives in other disciplines.

C. Support Courses or Restricted Electives or Free Electives
   1. None

   Total Credit Hours for Graduation: 120 Credit Hours
   Total Advanced Credit Hours: 54

D. Requirements for a Minor in Political Science: 18 Credit Hours
   1. 9 Non-Advanced Political Science Credit Hours (Courses at the 2000 level)
      a. Must include POLS 2301 & POLS 2302
      b. POLS 2387 & POLS 2388 are part of the Honors Program and may be taken in lieu of POLS 2301 & POLS 2302
      c. Must include either POLS 2340 or POLS 2350
   2. 9 Advanced Political Science Credit Hours (Courses at the 3000 or 4000 level)

E. Requirements for a Minor in Legal Studies: 18 Credit Hours
   1. 18 Advanced Credit Hours (Courses at the 3000 or 4000 level), selected from the department-approved list
      a. Students who major in Political Science may also minor in Legal Studies
      b. Students may take and apply POLS 4390 toward the Legal Studies Minor via admission by application and acceptance into the Law School Preparation Institute.
      c. The department-approved list of courses for the Legal Studies Minor includes:
         i. POLS 4310 U.S. Judicial Process
         ii. POLS 4311 U.S. Constitutional Law – Federalism
         iii. POLS 4312 U.S. Constitutional Law – Civil Liberties
         iv. POLS 4390 Legal Research & Writing I
         v. BLAW 3337 Business Law I
         vi. CRIJ 4356 Law & Society
         vii. HIST 3329 American Legal History
         viii. PSYC 4342 Psychology & Law
         ix. PHIL 3370 Philosophy of Law
Curriculum Requirements for Part B.2.a: Non-Advanced Political Science (12 Credit Hours)

Required: Research Methods and Statistics (3 Credit Hours)
POLS 2370 Introductory Statistics for Political Science
*Students are strongly encouraged to enroll in POLS 2370 and POLS 3370 concurrently as a part of a Learning Community
*Students may substitute another introductory statistics course to replace POLS 2370
*Not Applicable for Substitution:
   - Introductory Statistics in Department of Social Work
   - Introductory Statistics in College of Business

Required: Non-Advanced Options (6 Credit Hours)
POLS 2340 Introduction to Political Theory
POLS 2350 Political Economy
ECON 2301 Principles of Macroeconomics
ECON 2302 Principles of Microeconomics
*Students may take only one of the listed ECON courses (ECON 2301 or ECON 2302) to fulfill this requirement. ECON 1301 Introduction to Economics is NOT acceptable in meeting this requirement.

Curriculum Requirements for Part B.2.b: Advanced Political Science (27 Credit Hours)

Required: U.S. Government and Politics (6 Credit Hours)
POLS 3310 U.S. State & Local Government
POLS 3311 Contemporary Texas Politics
POLS 3312 U.S. Political Parties
POLS 3313 U.S. Gender Politics
POLS 3319 Archer Congress, Presidency, and Beyond
POLS 4310 U.S. Judicial Process
POLS 4311 U.S. Constitutional Law – Federalism
POLS 4312 U.S. Constitutional Law – Civil Liberties
POLS 4313 U.S. Legislative Process
POLS 4314 U.S. Executive Process
POLS 4315 U.S. Intelligence Agencies
POLS 4316 U.S. Latin@ Politics
*Students may take only one of the three judicial courses listed (POLS 4310, POLS 4311, or POLS 4312) to fulfill this requirement.
*Students may take POLS 3319 via admission by application, acceptance into, and successful completion of the Archer Fellowship Program.
Required: Comparative Government and Politics (3 Credit Hours)
POLS 3320 Introduction to Comparative Government & Politics
POLS 3321 Comparative Politics of Developing Nations
POLS 3322 European Politics
POLS 3323 Middle Eastern Politics
POLS 3324 Asian Politics
POLS 3325 South American Politics
POLS 4320 Latin American Politics
POLS 4321 Central American & Caribbean Politics
POLS 4322 Western European Politics
POLS 4323 Mexican Politics
POLS 4324 Contemporary Chinese Politics

Required: International Relations (3 Credit Hours)
POLS 3330 International Politics
POLS 3331 Global Security
POLS 3332 Revolution & Reform in Developing Nations
POLS 3333 Gender Theory in World Politics
POLS 4330 Contemporary International Issues
POLS 4331 U.S. Foreign Policy
POLS 4332 International Organizations
POLS 4333 U.S. – Mexico Border Relations

Required: Political Theory (3 Credit Hours)
POLS 3340 Classical Political Theory
POLS 3341 Modern Political Theory
POLS 3342 Contemporary Political Theory
POLS 4340 Politics & Culture
POLS 4341 U.S. Political Theory

Required: Public Policy and Political Behavior (3 Credit Hours)
POLS 3350 Voting Behavior, Campaigns & Elections
POLS 3351 Interest Groups & Political Movements
POLS 3352 Media & Politics
POLS 3353 Urban Politics
POLS 3355 U.S. Public Policy
POLS 3356 U.S. Fiscal Policy
POLS 4350 Political Socialization & Civic Engagement
POLS 4351 Public Opinion & Political Behavior
POLS 4352 U.S. Race & Ethnic Politics
POLS 4353 Race & Gender: The Politics of Intersectionality
POLS 4354 Immigration, Race & Citizenship
POLS 4355 U.S. Labor Policy
POLS 4356 U.S. Environmental Policy

Required: Research Methods (3 Credit Hours)
POLS 3370 Research Methods & Design
Advanced Electives in Political Science (6 Hours)
POLS 3190 Internship
POLS 3390 Independent Study
POLS 3391 Archer Internship
POLS 3392 Archer Policy Process
POLS 3394 Special Topics in Politics
POLS 3395 Movies & Politics
POLS 4390 Legal Research & Writing I
POLS 4391 Legal Research & Writing II
*While courses in Advanced Electives in Political Science can be used only as electives, any courses listed in U.S. Government & Politics, Comparative Government & Politics, International Relations, Political Theory, and Public Policy & Political Behavior may be taken as advanced electives.
*POLS 3190 may be taken no more than four times for credit, for no more than 4 credit hours.
*POLS 3390 may be taken no more than twice for credit; topics must be different.
*POLS 3394 may be taken no more than three times for credit, only two of which may be used to satisfy Political Science degree requirements; topics must be different.
*POLS 3370 satisfies 3 credit hours of the Political Science Advanced Hours requirement.
*Students may take POLS 3319, POLS 3391 & POLS 3392 via admission by application, acceptance into, and successful completion of the Archer Fellowship Program. POLS 3319 may be used to satisfy 3 of the 6 required hours in U.S. Government.
*Students accepted into the Archer Program may register for two sections of 3391 to earn a maximum of 6 hours of Internship credit within the Archer Program.
*Students may take POLS 4390 & POLS 4391 via admission by application and acceptance into the Law School Preparation Institute.