

# New Program Request Form for Bachelor's and Master's Degrees

**Directions:** An institution shall use this form to propose a new bachelor's or master's degree program that is in the field of engineering or has costs exceeding \$2 million for the first five years of operation. In completing the form, the institution should refer to the document *Standards for Bachelor's and Master's Programs*, which prescribes specific requirements for new degree programs. Note: This form requires signatures of (1) the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Academic Officer, certifying adequacy of funding for the new program and the notification of other institutions; (2) a member of the Board of Regents (or designee), certifying Board approval. NOTE: Preliminary notification is required for all engineering programs. Prior to submission of an engineering program proposal, the institution should notify the Division of Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research of its intent to request such a program.

**For more information:** Contact the Division of Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research at 512/427-6200.

## Administrative Information

1. **Institution:** University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

2. **Program Name** – Show how the program would appear on the Coordinating Board's program inventory (e.g., *Bachelor of Business Administration degree with a major in Accounting*):

Master of Arts in Political Science

3. **Proposed CIP Code:** 45.1001.00

4. **Number of Required Semester Credit Hours (SCHs)** (If the number of SCHs exceeds 120 for a Bachelor's program, the institution must request a waiver documenting the compelling academic reason for requiring more SCHs): 36

5. **Brief Program Description** – Describe the program and the educational objectives:

The primary objective of the proposed Master of Arts in Political Science at The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) is to provide graduates with training and expertise in selective subfields relevant to the Rio Grande Valley, such as Governance and Policy Process, World and Borderland Politics, and the Politics of Race, Gender, and Class. Education in these substantive subfields will be supplemented with methodological training in statistical and qualitative research methods. This mix of content knowledge and research skills will provide graduates with a degree that allows them to advance in the professions of education, civil service, academia, and the private sector, where this knowledge, as well as underlying research and technical skills are highly valued by employers. Because of the experiential focus of these subfields, graduates of the program will have a set of marketable skills that are transferrable and highly valued in the regional labor market. A variety of different career paths will become available to our graduates, including, but not limited to working in government (civil service), education (secondary and community college), non-profit management, and journalism, among others. To excel in many of these careers, post-graduate work is necessary, and currently Rio Grande Valley (RGV) residents do not have the opportunity to pursue post-graduate work in political science as there is not a master's degree program in Political Science in the region. Data show that Hispanics are underrepresented in the field of political science, particularly the percentage with a post-graduate degree.<sup>1</sup> According to the most recent data

<sup>1</sup> See Lavariega Monforti, Jessica and Melissa Michelson. 2008. "Diagnosing the Leaky Pipeline: Continuing Barriers to the

available from the American Political Science Association, Hispanics comprise only 4% of its 9,620 members.<sup>2</sup> The location, and particularly the demographic composition of UTRGV, provides this program with the opportunity and potential to change this underrepresentation to a significant degree.

Students will have the option of completing the M.A. degree on a thesis or non-thesis (i.e., comprehensive examination) track, which must be declared by the time a student completes 18 credit hours toward the degree. At this time, a thesis committee will be formed to guide the student through the thesis-writing process. Full-time students will complete their theses during their second year in the program, while part-time students taking two courses per semester will complete their theses during the Spring of their third year or the Fall of their fourth year in the program. Students choosing the non-thesis option will schedule and complete a comprehensive examination during their final semester in the program.

The objectives of the M.A. in Political Science are:

- a) to enhance student competence in the content, principles, and methods of political science;
- b) to prepare students for entry into jobs requiring a sound knowledge of statistical and other research methods; and
- c) to equip students with the skills necessary for jobs in secondary and community college education, governmental and quasi-governmental agencies at all levels of government, non-profit organizations, and the media.

Many of these skills, particularly those related to research methods and statistical analysis, are also transferrable to private sector employment and consulting.

Approximately 25 to 35 students will be admitted into the program each Fall semester. This is comparable to other similar political science Master's degree programs in Texas and the United States.

6. Administrative Unit – Identify where the program would fit within the organizational structure of the university (e.g., *The Department of Electrical Engineering within the College of Engineering*):

The program will be administered by the Department of Political Science within the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley

7. Proposed Implementation Date – Report the date that students would enter the program (MM/DD/YY): 09/01/2017

8. Contact Person – Provide contact information for the person who can answer specific questions about the program:

Name: Dr. Clyde W. Barrow

Title: Chair, Department of Political Science

E-mail: clyde.barrow@utrgv.edu

Phone: 956-665-3679

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Retention of Latinas and Latinos in Political Science.” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 41, 1 (Jan.): 161-166. Also see Nelson, Donna. 2007. “A National Analysis of Minorities in Science and Engineering Faculties at Research Universities.” Accessed Jan 27, 2014;

[http://cheminfo.chem.ou.edu/faculty/djn/diversity/Faculty\\_Tables\\_FY07/07Report.pdf](http://cheminfo.chem.ou.edu/faculty/djn/diversity/Faculty_Tables_FY07/07Report.pdf); and

<http://www.apsanet.org/imgtest/IA6.pdf>. Accessed 1-26-2014.

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.apsanet.org/imgtest/IA6.pdf> to view full membership details.

# Program Information

## I. Need

### A. Job Market Need – Provide short- and long-term evidence of the need for graduates in the job market.

The proposed Master of Arts in Political Science advances many of the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley's (UTRGV's) Guiding Principles, particularly its mission to:

- “Promote access to postsecondary education to a diverse student body to become one of the largest and most successful Hispanic-serving institutions in the U.S.A.”
- “Provide a leadership role in fostering economic and community partnerships to help solve local, state, national, and global problems,”
- “Pursue applied and translational research to address critical local, state, national, and global needs,” and to
- “Employ the highest quality faculty members and staff who pursue global excellence in teaching, research, and service.”<sup>3</sup>

A key component of the UTRGV's guiding principles is the directive to meet an underserved demand for higher education in South Texas. The M.A. in Political Science is responding directly to that need in selected niches of the professions. To confirm the need for more people with the knowledge and skills developed in the proposed Master of Arts (MA) in Political Science, the university's Center for Survey Research conducted a market analysis in May 2012 (N=30 employers; 15 public and 15 private). The sample included employers in the education, non-profit, government, and political/legal sectors.

When asked, “How important would you say that data analysis skills are for the success and growth of your business/organization/department” 87% of the respondents indicated that they were important or very important.

Respondents to the survey also considered the following skills to be important/very important: policy analysis (86%), research and writing skills (89%), grant writing skills (86%), program evaluation skills (93%), survey research and focus group skills (50%), having employees with knowledge and understanding of political and governmental process (76%), and employees with specialized knowledge of the border area/population (76%).

Seventy-eight percent (78%) of the respondents to the survey answered “yes,” and an additional 7% answered “possibly,” when asked “Would your business or organization have a need for employees with any of these skills in the near future?”

Furthermore, 17% of the respondents to the survey said they would be willing to create a new position in their organization to hire a person with these skills and an additional 46% said they would do so if funding were available.

One-third (33%) of respondents to the survey indicated that a current employee who earned a Master's degree in political science would earn a raise or promotion as a result of the degree, with an additional 41% saying that a raise or promotion would be a possibility. These results demonstrate a market demand for students who will graduate from the proposed M.A. in Political Science program.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.utrgv.edu/en-us/about-utrgv/transition-plan/guiding-principles>

Furthermore, national data show that graduate level preparation in the Social Sciences in general, including Political Science, results in substantial increases in incomes, which is an indicator of increased labor market value and demand. For example, the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce reported in 2011 that median yearly earnings for Bachelor's degree holders in Political Science were \$59,000 (though with a considerable difference between the 25th and 75th percentiles). However, the Center's analysis of U.S. Bureau of the Census American Community Survey data showed that earning a graduate degree boosted earnings of Political Science graduates by 62% on average.<sup>4</sup>

The Rio Grande Valley includes four counties, 47 independent municipalities, towns, and villages, and 92 unincorporated communities and many of the communities are among the fastest growing municipalities in the United States. This population growth is correlated to higher demands for professionals in the government, education, and non-profit sectors. According to the RGV LEAD 2012 Labor Market Report, education and government have been among the top sources of new jobs in the Rio Grande Valley and the State of Texas. According to this report, government jobs grew 5.2% in the Brownsville-Harlingen MSA and 12.9% in the McAllen-Edinburg-Mission MSA between 2001 and 2010. Furthermore, the education sector expanded by 11.4% and 29.7%, respectively, in the two MSAs over the same time period. The report also reveals that federal and local government employment grew strongly throughout the entire Rio Grande Valley during this period.

State government also added 160,000 employees over the last decade in every category of employment. Local government employment in Texas grew by double digits and federal employment rose by more than 7 percent. Texas is also home to many regional headquarters for government agencies, in part because of its size and central location. The list of agencies with regional headquarters in Texas includes the Environmental Protection Agency (Dallas), Bureau of Labor Statistics (Dallas) and Federal Aviation Administration (Fort Worth). There is also a Federal Reserve Bank in Dallas.<sup>5</sup> According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, this growth will continue and the fastest growth will be in occupations that require a Master's degree.<sup>6</sup>

Similarly, in 2011, only 12% of teachers nationwide held a Master's degree outside the field of education and a total of 44% only had a Bachelor's degree.<sup>7</sup> According to data provided by local school districts across the Rio Grande Valley, local schools have similar percentages of teachers with Master's degrees, but have even fewer with a content-based Master's degree outside the field of education. The proposed M.A. in Political Science will provide a means for addressing this shortage in an academic discipline that is part of the state testing requirements in social studies and where a Master's degree is required to teach in the region's rapidly growing community colleges.

## **B. Student Demand – Provide short- and long-term evidence of demand for the program.**

The proposed M.A. in Political Science will help meet the needs and demands of several different entities within the Rio Grande Valley. An M.A. in Political Science is not available within 200+ miles of the UTRGV campuses (Edinburg and Brownsville).

The degree will allow graduates to become educators at community colleges or serve as a stepping-stone to pursuing a Ph.D. in Political Science. Local K-12 educators can use the degree to increase their salaries or earn a promotion into administration as a Department Chair or Curriculum Coordinator, while simultaneously allowing them to be better prepared

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<sup>4</sup> See <http://cew.georgetown.edu/whatsitworth/> and

<http://www9.georgetown.edu/grad/gppi/hpi/cew/pdfs/socialscience.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.dallasnews.com/business/columnists/mitchell-schnurman/20131014-texas-disses-government-and-grows-it.ece>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.valleychamber.com/read\\_file.php?content\\_type=PDF&file\\_name=900.pdf](http://www.valleychamber.com/read_file.php?content_type=PDF&file_name=900.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> See report at <http://www.edweek.org/media/pot2011final-blog.pdf> page 19.

in the classroom. We anticipate a trickle-down effect where public education in the entire region is improved as teachers increase their educational qualifications.

The Center for Survey Research analysis also found that non-profit organizations, media outlets, and various governmental entities are looking for individuals with skills in polling and public opinion analysis, policy analysis, and program evaluation. There is a need for trained individuals with these skills in the region and student demand will be generated from all of these sectors.

UTRGV is also located in a unique area where local governments are faced with numerous policy problems, including transportation, poverty, health, and education and these governments struggle to obtain resources from the state and national governments. At the same time, the economy and population in the area are among the fastest growing in the United States, while its economic and population are part of a wider international community as a result of its border with Mexico and the North American Free Trade Agreement. The trans-border region is a metropolitan area of more than 3 million people. The political and governmental uniqueness of the Rio Grande Valley generates demand for trained and educated individuals who can understand the challenges faced by the region and work to overcome them. The proposed program will also produce graduates whose training includes specific attention to the social and cultural needs of the Rio Grande Valley given its focus on concentration area in border politics.

Proposed courses in World and Borderland Politics will provide relevant educational opportunities for the numerous Rio Grande Valley residents working for U.S. Customs and Border Patrol, and in related fields within federal agencies, which will allow them to advance in their careers. Courses in environmental and immigration policy, respectively, will also be offered as Special Topics courses. Lastly, students electing to focus their degree on international relations by taking the relevant courses available to them within the program will be prepared for pursuing careers in the Foreign Service, non-governmental organizations, or local international companies and organizations. The graduates of the M.A. in Political Science will be prepared to enter middle management and leadership positions in these agencies and organizations.

A survey conducted in 2010-11 of students enrolled in upper division Political Science courses at UTPA (one legacy institution of UTRGV) had over 220 students (n = 368) express interest in pursuing a master's degree in Political Science. Our alumni have also expressed a great deal of interest in the program; an online survey of Political Science graduates, from 2008 to 2012, found that 76% of the respondents were interested in returning to this legacy institution to pursue a POLS Master of Arts degree. *We think this result speaks volumes not only in regards to the demand for the program, but in the satisfaction of our students with the undergraduate degree they received.*

There is a substantial amount of current student interest in the development of an M.A. program at UTRGV. The Political Science undergraduate program has approximately 375 majors and this number has been comparatively stable for the past 5 years:

<b>Bachelor's Degrees Awarded AY 2011-2015 (Edinburg Campus)</b>															
	AY 2011			AY 2012			AY 2013			AY 2014			AY 2015		
Sex & Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
No. of Degrees	10	13	23	22	19	41	25	19	44	28	7	35	17	21	39

<b>Bachelor's Degrees Awarded AY 2011-2015 (Brownsville Campus)</b>															
	AY 2011			AY 2012			AY 2013			AY 2014			AY 2015		
Sex & Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
No. of Degrees	12	7	19	8	9	17	8	3	11	10	3	13	8	6	14

The Department of Political Science's success in graduating students at both the Edinburg and Brownsville campuses -- currently over 50 per year -- provides another local pool of students where the program will draw enrollments. To this pool, one can add political science graduates from other institutions in or near the region, such as Texas A&M University -- Kingsville, (TAMUK), which graduated 38 students between 2008-2012, Texas A&M University - International (TAMUI), which graduate 62 political science majors during this time; and Texas A&M University -- Corpus Christi (TAMUCC), which graduated 13 political science majors in AY 2012-2013.

Moreover, the faculty and students at UTRGV are active in research, externally funded projects, scholarly publication, and community outreach. Faculty members routinely include students in research and sometimes include them in travel to professional conferences via university's Undergraduate Research Initiative (and this program has led to co-authorship with students in some instances). There are seven student organizations sponsored by the Political Science Department faculty and all of them sponsor community/volunteer activities. This model of faculty-student interaction will be transferred to the graduate level with the M.A. in Political Science.

- C. Enrollment Projections – Use this table to show the estimated cumulative headcount and full-time student equivalent (FTSE) enrollment for the first five years of the program. *(Include majors only and consider attrition and graduation.)*

YEAR	1	2	3	4	5
Headcount	22	45	52	64	71
FTSE	13	26	30	37	41

## II. Quality

- A. Degree Requirements – Use this table to show the degree requirements of the program. *(Modify the table as needed; if necessary, replicate the table for more than one option.)*

THESIS OPTION		
Category	Semester Credit Hours	Clock Hours
Required Courses	9	
Prescribed Electives	9	
Subfield Concentration	12*	
Thesis	6	
TOTAL	36	

<b>NON-THESIS OPTION**</b>		
<b>Category</b>	<b>Semester Credit Hours</b>	<b>Clock Hours</b>
Required Courses	9	
Prescribed Electives	9	
Subfield Concentration	12*	
Free Electives	6	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36</b>	

\*Students may request to take 1 graduate course outside of political science to fulfill an elective requirement; permission of the department Graduate Director is required.

\*\*Students must petition the department Graduate Director to pursue the non-thesis option.

B. Curriculum – Use these tables to identify the required courses and prescribed electives of the program. Note with an asterisk (\*) courses that would be added if the program is approved. (Add and delete rows as needed. If applicable, replicate the tables for different tracks/options.)

<b>Prefix and Number</b>	<b>Required Courses</b>	<b>SCH</b>
POLS 6330*	Public Institutions & the Policy Process	3
POLS 6340*	Political Theory	3
POLS 6370*	Research Methods & Applied Statistics	3
<b>Prefix and Number</b>	<b>Prescribed Electives</b>	
POLS 6320*	<i>World &amp; Borderland Politics, Choose One:</i> Theories & Concepts of World Politics	3
POLS 6321*	Global Political Economy	3
POLS 6322*	Nationalism & Borderland Politics	3
POLS 6331*	<i>Governance &amp; Policy Process, Choose One:</i> Agenda & Information Control	3
POLS 6332*	Theories of Policy Formation	3
POLS 6333*	Policy Analysis	3
POLS 6310*	<i>Politics of Race, Gender, &amp; Class, Choose One:</i> U.S. Race & Ethnic Politics	3
POLS 6323*	Gender Theory in World Politics	3
POLS 6334*	Class, Power, & the State	3

<b>Prefix and Number</b>	<b>Subfield Concentration</b>	<b>SCH</b>
<b>World &amp; Borderland Politics Concentration</b>		
POLS 6320*^	Theories & Concepts of World Politics	3
POLS 6321*^	Global Political Economy	3
POLS 6322*^	Nationalism & Borderland Politics	3
POLS 6323*^	Gender Theory in World Politics	3
POLS 6324*	Conflict Studies	3
POLS 6325*	Global Social Movements	3
POLS 6341*	Democratic Theory	3
POLS 6329*+	Special Topics in World & Borderland Politics	3

<b>Governance &amp; Policy Process Concentration</b>		
POLS 6310*^	U.S. Race & Ethnic Politics	3
POLS 6331*^	Agenda & Information Control	3
POLS 6332*^	Theories of Policy Formation	3
POLS 6333*^	Policy Analysis	3
POLS 6334*^	Class, Power, & the State	3
POLS 6335*	U.S. Economic Policy	3
POLS 6336*	Inequality and the Welfare State	3
POLS 6337*	U.S. Environmental Policy	3
POLS 6338*	Applied Policy Research	3
POLS 6339*+	Special Topics in Governance & Policy Process	3

<b>Prefix and Number</b>	<b>Thesis</b>	<b>SCH</b>
POLS 7300*	Thesis I	3
POLS 7301*	Thesis II	3

^These classes will be counted only once in a student's course plan, either as a course meeting the required course option OR as a free elective.

+These course numbers may be used multiple times with different course topics; students may take these courses more than once for credit as long as the course subtitle is unique each time.

- C. Faculty – Use these tables to provide information about Core and Support faculty. Add an asterisk (\*) before the name of the individual who will have direct administrative responsibilities for the program. (*Add and delete rows as needed.*)

<b>Name of <u>Core</u> Faculty and Faculty Rank</b>	<b>Highest Degree and Awarding Institution</b>	<b>Courses Assigned in Program</b>	<b>% Time Assigned To Program</b>
Alianak, Sonia Full Professor	Ph.D. in Political Science, University of Texas at Austin.	POLS 6320 POLS 6322 POLS 6324 POLS 6329	25%
Barrow, Clyde Full Professor	Ph.D. in Political Science, University of California – Los Angeles	POLS 6330 POLS 6332 POLS 6333 POLS 6334 POLS 6338 POLS 6339	25%
Chomsky, Daniel Associate Professor	Ph.D. in Political Science, Northwestern University	POLS 6330 POLS 6331	25%
Clua Losada, Mònica Associate Professor	Ph.D. in Political Science, University of York	POLS 6320 POLS 6321 POLS 6322 POLS 6325 POLS 6329	25%
Jorgensen, Paul Assistant Professor	Ph.D. in Political Science, University of Oklahoma	POLS 6330 POLS 6332 POLS 6333 POLS 6335	25%



		POLS 6336 POLS 6339	
Kaswan, Mark Assistant Professor	Ph.D. in Political Science, University of California – Los Angeles	POLS 6340 POLS 6341	25%
Keck, Michelle Assistant Professor	Ph.D. in Political Science, Texas Tech University	POLS 6320 POLS 6322 POLS 6324 POLS 6329	25%
Sokoloff, William Assistant Professor	Ph.D. in Political Science, University of Massachusetts-Amherst	POLS 6340 POLS 6323 POLS 6341 POLS 6329	25%
Altema-McNeely, Natasha Assistant Professor	Ph.D. in Political Science, University of Iowa	POLS 6330 POLS 6310	12.5%
Saavedra Cisneros, Angel Assistant Professor	Ph.D. in Political Science, Stony Brook University	POLS 6310	12.5%
Temby, Owen Assistant Professor	Ph.D. in Political Science, Carleton University	POLS 6330 POLS 6337	12.5%

D. Students – Describe general recruitment efforts and admission requirements. In accordance with the institution’s Uniform Recruitment and Retention Strategy, describe plans to recruit, retain, and graduate students from underrepresented groups for the program.

Hispanics, particularly young Hispanics, are the fastest growing population demographic in Texas. The Latino/a population in the state has grown by about 41.8% since 2000 and this growth is driven in large part by new births.<sup>8</sup> Today, Hispanics comprise about 38% of the statewide population and this population is expected to continue its current rate of growth for the foreseeable future.<sup>9</sup> We see this as a natural target for our program as UTRGV enrolls over 28,000 students, 85% of whom are undergraduate students, 70% are the first in their families to attend college, and 91% are Hispanic. UTRGV is a leader in terms of Hispanic students earning undergraduate degrees, and also UTRGV is one of the top producers of Hispanic graduate students in the country. We would like to continue in this tradition; therefore, this is the primary pool of potential students for the MA program. It is unlikely that existing programs in other parts of the state can absorb this rapid rate of population growth, nor do they have the strong tradition and success UTRGV has with Hispanic students.

### **Recruitment efforts**

The MA program will have an official website and Facebook page (or other social media account) that will be used to identify and attract potential applicants. The program will be advertised to current and past students via university email announcements (formerly BroncNotes), Career Services, the UTB, UTPA/UTRGV Alumni Association, the UTRGV Graduate College, on-campus informational sessions/job fairs, and other UTRGV events or communications. Outreach efforts will include direct recruitment of other students in the greater South Texas region, such as those from other universities (including but not limited to TAMUCC, TAMUI, and TAMUK). Recruitment will also include efforts to mobilize teachers, current local/state/federal government employees, as well as those working in issues of international politics in the border area to apply for admission to the program. Finally, pre-College outreach may be possible through contact with faculty members at public schools identified as “high need” or “low-income” in order to build interest in the program early on.

<sup>8</sup> See <http://lonestarproject.net/fast-facts#.UtlFMvTnbQc>.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/01/24/in-2014-latinos-will-surpass-whites-as-largest-raciaethnic-group-in-california/>, or see <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48000.html>.

## Admission Requirements

### Requirements for Graduate Admission

1. Have completed at least 12 hours of undergraduate courses in Political Science and/or Public Policy, including POLS 2470 (Introduction to Political Science Research, with a statistics lab).
2. Submit official transcripts with a minimum 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale for the last 60 hours completed in major coursework, and a minimum 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale in undergraduate political science coursework.
3. Provide GRE scores in verbal and quantitative sections.
4. Have submitted three letters of recommendation from individuals who are qualified to judge the student's academic and professional potential.
5. Submit a Statement of Purpose (1 or 2 pages) describing the applicant's interest in political science, major field of study, and career goals.
6. Submit a curriculum vitae/résumé of educational background, volunteer, and work experience.

## Retention and Graduation Strategies

An important aspect of the MA program will be its responsiveness to the clientele whom the program will serve. The Political Science Department has had informal conversations with a number of potential MA students and anticipates that the program will include some special attributes to respond to student needs and learning styles.

One such planned response is in the area of distance learning/online courses. With the support of UTRGV's Center for Online Learning and Teaching Technology (located in the Education Complex on the Edinburg campus and Rustenberg Hall on the Brownsville campus), we anticipate offering some courses via distance learning. The department is well aware of the need and is desirous of being responsive to the needs of its students.

Advisement will be provided to all MA students once a semester by the Graduate Director to monitor progress, increase retention, and encourage timely completion of the degree. Students enrolled in the MA program will also be encouraged to attend events offered by the Graduate College at UTRGV. The Graduate College offers workshops related to thesis preparation, time management, career services, financial aid, and other topics relevant to graduate life. The Graduate College provides monthly workshops that provide guidance on topics that are important to graduate students.<sup>10</sup> The Graduate College also lists the Center for Teaching Excellence as a source for instruction in course development, pedagogical techniques and classroom technology. Students who become employed as teaching assistants or lecturers, or who wish to pursue an academic position after graduation can acquire skills in preparation for university/college level teaching.<sup>11</sup> Students on the thesis-track will be further encouraged to participate in university-wide research conferences, including the Annual Research Conference, FESTIBA, and International Week, as well as external conferences. With support and information from the department and the Graduate College, students will receive the support they need to complete their master's degree. Faculty participating the graduate program will also serve as mentors to these students, thesis advisors, etc., which will help contribute to student success and ensure their timely progress towards degree completion.

There are other university resources that provide students with opportunities to develop marketable skills which also enhance classroom instruction and encourage retention in the program. The Center for Survey Research at UTRGV allows participating students to gain, maintain and improve hands-on skills that enhance opportunities for employment. The Center is housed in the College of Liberal Arts,

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<sup>10</sup> For a current list of workshops, please see: <http://www.utrgv.edu/graduate/for-new-and-current-students/support-services-and-workshops/workshops/index.htm>

<sup>11</sup> For a full list of campus resources the Graduate College recommends, including the Center for Teaching Excellence, please see: <http://www.utrgv.edu/graduate/for-new-and-current-students/support-services-and-workshops/campus-resources/index.htm>

the same College as the Political Science Department. The Center specializes in multiple modes of survey research (i.e., in-person, phone, mail and web) and provides training in instrument development, grant writing, survey deployment, data collection, data analysis and reporting.

Other strategies to increase retention include allowing part-time study by holding classes at times that are convenient for students who are employed full-time, encouraging students with families to take advantage of University resources such as on-campus daycare, and offering advanced MA students the opportunity to lecture in introductory political science classes as well as become Supplemental Instructors through the Learning Center (main office in the Learning Assistance Center Building, LEAC, on the Edinburg campus, or the Student Union on the Brownsville campus).

We anticipate being able to provide financial support in the form of graduate assistantships to students who are economically disadvantaged and would otherwise not be able to remain enrolled in the program, as well as students whose research aligns with that of our faculty, and based on merit. As an additional incentive for timely completion, these assistantships will be contingent upon satisfactory academic progress.

E. Library – Provide the library director’s assessment of library resources necessary for the program. Describe plans to build the library holdings to support the program.

Currently, the library’s collection is sufficient to support to an M.A. in Political Science program. The political science-related materials, and especially the quantity of full text online journals, have improved considerably in recent years. The addition of numerous political science materials along with related materials in education, economics, sociology, history, public policy, and public administration further strengthen the University Library’s support for the Master of Arts in Political Science degree. Moreover, this base of support will grow to meet the needs of a growing Master of Arts in Political Science degree.

The proposal for the Master of Arts in Political Science Program, however, includes the cost of additional supporting library materials. The Library needs to continue to update its print and online collection, audiovisual materials, add new journals, and maintain its electronic resources subscriptions.

No materials were added specifically in anticipation of the M.A. in Political Science in the past three years, although approximately 1,336 books were added to the collection during the last three complete academic years (2011-2014) in the general subject of political science (see the following chart):

<b>Political Science Books Added, Per Year, to the UTPA Library (One Legacy Institution of UTRGV)</b>					
<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>	<b>2012-2013</b>	<b>2013-2014</b>	<b>2014-2015</b>
<b>Number Added (Edinburg)</b>	449	434	453	449	306

**Source:** UTPA Library (2015).

The library of the University of Texas Pan-American (a legacy institution of UTRGV) currently holds more than 16,000 books directly related to courses in the political science curriculum, including print and e-book format. The Library also holds subscriptions to 42 print journals that are related to political science, including critical titles such as *Journal of International Affairs*, *Comparative Political Studies*, *Political Theory*, and *Politics & Society*, among others. In addition, the Library has subscriptions to many online full-text journals in packages such as Project Muse, Wiley Online Library, JSTOR, etc. Many of these collections of full-text journals contain titles related to political science, such as *American Journal of Political Science*, *American Politics Research*, and *Journal of Theoretical Politics*.

Library users have access to over 100 electronic indexes and databases. Some of these databases are made available through The University of Texas System library cooperative projects and the

State of Texas TexShare program. Databases of special interest to the proposed Master's degree in Political Science are:

- [Academic Search Complete](#) has citations and full-text articles from peer-reviewed journals in the social sciences, humanities, music, education, computer sciences, engineering, language and linguistics, arts and literature, medical sciences, ethnic studies, etc.
- [Alternative Press Index](#) provides citations to hundreds of periodicals presenting alternative views on political, social, economic, and cultural issues.
- [CQ Researcher](#) offers in-depth, non-biased coverage of political and social issues, with regular reports on topics in health, international affairs, education, the environment, technology, and the U.S. economy.
- [Digital National Security Archive](#) has the most comprehensive collection available of significant primary documents central to US foreign and military policy since 1945.
- [ICPSR](#) (the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research), established in 1962, is an integral part of the infrastructure of social science research. It maintains and provides access to a vast archive of social science data for research and instruction. ICPSR does not provide publications, reports, or ready-made statistics, but instead supplies the numeric raw data used to create publications, reports, and figures.
- [Ingenta Connect](#) has millions of citations and abstracts from more than 28,000 journals.
- [JSTOR](#) is a full image database of back issues of scholarly journals in African American studies, anthropology, Asian studies, botany, ecology, economics, education, finance, history, literature, mathematics, philosophy, political science, population studies, sociology, and statistics.
- [LEXIS-NEXIS Academic Universe](#) has full-text company news & financial information, full-text federal, state & international legal materials, full-text and abstracted medical as well as health information, general reference sources, and national and international news.
- [Project MUSE](#) provides online full-text access to over 300 peer-reviewed humanities and social sciences journal titles.
- [Science Direct](#) provides full-image articles from more than 1,000 agriculture, arts and humanities, astronomy, biology, business, chemistry, clinical medicine, computer science, earth and planetary sciences, economics, engineering, energy and technology, environmental science, life sciences, materials science, mathematics, physics, and social and behavioral sciences journals.
- [Social Sciences Full-Text](#) covers a wide range of interdisciplinary fields covered in a broad array of social sciences journals. It also includes full-text/full-image articles.
- [Springer LINK](#) provides abstracts, full-text, and full-image articles from journals published by Springer.
- [Wiley Online Library](#) provides full-image access to over 400 journals from Wiley publishers.

The above indexes and online journals can be accessed off-campus, through a proxy server, by students and faculty. Students also have full access to internet websites relevant to political science. Some of these sites have been linked to the library website for easy access.

The UTPA Library (a legacy institution of UTRGV) also purchases a limited number of media materials for classroom use. The library currently holds almost 70 media materials, including DVD's, CD's, CD-ROM's, etc. that are related to the area of political science.

The UTPA Library (a legacy institution of UTRGV) has an Interlibrary Loan agreement with the UT Austin libraries to receive requested materials within 48 to 72 hours, if available. Many of the databases mentioned above have alert services, whereby a user can register with the database and receive tables-of-content alerts and automatic search updates via email. A table-of-content alert provides the content page of a particular periodical as soon as a new issue of the desired periodical is published. An automatic search update runs a user's search automatically and alerts the user by email when the search retrieves new results. On the occasion when the desired article is not available full-text in the database, and is not held by the Library, the article from these content pages or from these search alerts could be ordered through Interlibrary Loan via online forms free of charge.

The UTRGV Library is a member of the State TexShare program, students and faculty can obtain a TexShare card to borrow materials directly from other university and public libraries that participate in the program.

The Library also offers bibliographic instruction to all students including students from the College of Liberal Arts for their research papers. There are two instructional classrooms in the library fully equipped with over 88 computer workstations, as well as a Symposium with Smart Technology for the instructor. Librarians familiar with social science materials and related resources conduct these classes. Students can use the Multimedia Lab on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Library to customize their research presentations using the latest available software and equipment. Students can also check out laptops from the library to conduct their research work.

Selection of all political science-related books, journals, and audiovisual materials is made through the Library's Collection Development unit. Publishers' catalogs along with bibliographical information on the subject and related resources are sent to the faculty member serving as faculty liaison for the department. A librarian is assigned to work with the department to assist in writing the criteria used for selection of the materials.

The Collection Development office in the library also provides a list of political science related periodical holdings each year to be reviewed by the department chair and the department liaison to determine the continued relevancy of the titles to the program.

Currently, the library's collection is sufficient and will provide ample support to start a Master of Art's in Political Science. The political science materials, and especially the quantity of full-text online journals, have improved considerably in recent years. The addition of numerous political science materials further strengthens the position that the University Library can support a beginning Master's in Political Science degree. In summary, the base of support will grow to meet the needs that a growing Master's in Political Science degree will impose.

The information contained in this subsection (E. Library) was submitted by Farzaneh Razzaghi, Ph.D., Dean of Library (at UTPA, a legacy institution of UTRGV). The proposal for this program includes the funding to allow the Library to continue to update its print and online collection, audiovisual materials, add new journals, and maintain its electronic resources subscriptions.

**F. Facilities and Equipment – Describe the availability and adequacy of facilities and equipment to support the program. Describe plans for facility and equipment improvements/additions.**

With proper reallocation of existing space, current and planned university facilities should be adequate within the College of Liberal Arts to offer an M.A. in Political Science.

**G. Accreditation – If the discipline has a national accrediting body, describe plans to obtain accreditation or provide a rationale for not pursuing accreditation.**

There is not a national accrediting agency for Political Science programs.

**H. Evaluation – Describe the evaluation process that will be used to assess the quality and effectiveness of the new degree program.**

Assessment of academic programs had been a systematic and ongoing process at UTRGV which will be continued at UTRGV. The assessment process begins with the development of a five-year Assessment Plan by the degree program faculty. The plan includes a description of the process used to develop the plan and the faculty involved in its development. A set of student learning outcomes that include what the student is expected to know and be able to do at the completion of the program are defined by the faculty. The methodology for assessment is described in this plan, including the means of assessment, the population to be assessed, and the means for determining whether the criterion has been met or not. Direct measures of student learning, such as comprehensive written examinations, projects, portfolios, or a research paper are the primary means of assessing graduate student learning outcomes. However, qualitative means of assessment, such as graduate exit surveys, alumni follow-up surveys, and employer surveys will be used to assess the overall graduate and employer satisfaction with the program.

Program assessment is conducted during the fall and spring semesters to include students graduating in December or May (August graduates are included in either the December or May groups). Faculty evaluate the assessments through the use of rubrics or templates they have developed. Results of assessments are compiled at the end of the year (usually in June) and entered into a database using a software program that allows the program staff and the administration to run reports. Faculty, chairs, and deans in each of the colleges analyze the results and make changes or modifications to degree programs based on the results.

The Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education oversees and monitors the implementation of assessment plans at UTRGV. The Associate Vice President for Student Academic Success works directly with Assessment Coordinators to implement and improve assessment processes. They, in turn, work with Program Coordinators in each department to ensure that assessment of student learning outcomes is conducted for graduating students.

In addition to the ongoing systematic review of student learning outcomes, every seven years the program will undergo a comprehensive review according to the policy for graduate academic program review established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The comprehensive review process includes the submission of a self-study and a two day site visit by a review panel. The review panel is appointed by the Vice-Provost for Graduate Studies (in consultation with the department chair and the dean of the college) and includes two external reviewers from outside the state of Texas and one internal UTRGV faculty member. After review of the self-study and the site visit, the review panel will prepare an Academic Program Review Report, which will be submitted to the Vice Provost and Dean. The Program will have an opportunity to respond to the report. A summary of the self-study, the Academic Program Review Report, and the response to the report, which are also discussed with the Provost, are submitted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

### **III. Costs and Funding<sup>12</sup>**

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<sup>12</sup> Please use the “Program Funding Estimation Tool” found on the CB website to correctly estimate state funding.

Five-Year Costs and Funding Sources - Use this table to show five-year costs and sources of funding for the program.

Five-Year Costs		Five-Year Funding	
Personnel <sup>1</sup>	\$759,430	Reallocated Funds	\$835,500
Facilities and Equipment	\$ 5,500	Anticipated New Formula Funding <sup>3</sup>	\$576,968
Library, Supplies, and Materials	\$ 50,000	Special Item Funding	\$0
Other <sup>2</sup>	\$140,000	Other <sup>4</sup>	\$0
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$1,784,930</b>	<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$1,412,468</b>

1. Report costs for new faculty hires, graduate assistants, and technical support personnel. For new faculty, prorate individual salaries as a percentage of the time assigned to the program. If existing faculty will contribute to program, include costs necessary to maintain existing programs (e.g., cost of adjunct to cover courses previously taught by faculty who would teach in new program).
2. Specify other costs here (e.g., administrative costs, travel).
3. Indicate formula funding for students new to the institution because of the program; formula funding should be included only for years three through five of the program and should reflect enrollment projections for years three through five.
4. Report other sources of funding here. In-hand grants, "likely" future grants, and designated tuition and fees can be included.

## Signature Page

1. Adequacy of Funding and Notification of Other Institutions – The chief executive or chief academic officer shall sign the following statements:

*I certify that the institution has adequate funds to cover the costs of the new program. Furthermore, the new program will not reduce the effectiveness or quality of existing programs at the institution.*

*I certify that my institution has notified all public institutions within 50 miles of the teaching site of our intention to offer the program at least 30 days prior to submitting this request. I also certify that if any objections were received, those objections were resolved prior to the submission of this request.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive Officer/Chief Academic Officer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

2. Board of Regents or Designee Approval – A member of the Board of Regents or designee shall sign the following statement:

*On behalf of the Board of Regents, I approve the program.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Board of Regents (Designee)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Approval