

New Academic Program: B.A./B.S. in Political Science (OSU-Cascades)

Program Proposed Start Date

Fall 2022

Program Description

Staff propose to offer the B.A./B.S. degree in Political Science at the OSU-Cascades campus in a collaboration between OSU-Cascades and the Political Science program in the School of Public Policy (SPP) within the College of Liberal Arts at the OSU-Corvallis campus. Political Science is a popular major at the OSU-Corvallis campus with over 300 enrolled students. It is anticipated that the B.A./B.S. program in Political Science at OSU-Cascades will also be popular as it provides a marketable degree that would otherwise be unavailable in a face-to-face modality in a central and growing region of the state.

The Political Science undergraduate degree has options in law and politics, international affairs, and environmental and energy politics. The B.A./B.S. degree in Political Science prepares students for careers in all levels of government, foreign service, national and international nongovernmental organizations, journalism, public management, as well as for law school or graduate programs in political science, public administration, public policy, or other social sciences. A Political Science degree is outstanding preparation for these careers as students develop analytical skills and cultivate the ability to think, write, and speak persuasively. Graduates will gain the skills needed to understand the basic structure and processes of government systems and their theoretical underpinnings; to analyze political problems, arguments, information, and theories; and to apply methods appropriate for accumulating and interpreting data pertaining to the discipline of Political Science.

Program Context

This proposal is a collaboration between OSU-Cascades and the Political Science program in SPP, and the academic home will be in SPP. Program coordination occurs in Corvallis under the direction of Dr. David Bernell, Associate Professor, and Catherine Bolzendahl, Director of SPP. The administration of the program in Bend will be overseen by OSU-Cascade's Dean of Academic Affairs and an OSU-Cascades program coordinator (TBD). There are adequate resources to support this new location in terms of budget (the program will break even in its initial year), facilities, faculty, student support services, and library holdings (available through the Corvallis campus).

The program will not differ from that on main campus. The curriculum, catalog description, and degree learning outcomes and assessment plan (including direct measures of student learning) will be aligned across campuses. All courses needed to complete the major will be offered face-to-face in Bend, though the full complement of courses in the course designator cannot be offered face-to-face in Bend. If a student's interest suggests a need for alternative courses from those offered in Bend, that need can be met through Ecampus courses where all of the courses in the designator are available.

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Students in this major are a part of OSU-Cascades, where student services exist for academic advising, financial aid, course registration, textbook purchases, a career development center, veterans' support services, experiential learning access, tutoring and student support services, disability services, and mental and health counseling. Where appropriate, students at OSU-Cascades also have access to on-line services, such as the Writing Center and technology support services, provided on the Corvallis campus.

Program Purpose/Relationship to University Mission/Strategic Plan

The B.A./B.S. in Political Science at OSU-Cascades directly addresses OSU's Strategic Plan 4.0 to provide access to high quality post-secondary education. The B.A./B.S. in Political Science degree at OSU-Cascades will expand accessibility to higher education, serve a greater number of under-served students, first-generation students, and adults seeking career advancement, and will help meet the increasing educational demands of the region. The Political Science program at OSU-Cascades will produce graduates who contribute as educated citizens and support the workforce needs of the region and the state.

Need for the Program

The central Oregon region has one of the fastest population growth rates in the country.¹ The Political Science B.A./B.S. program at OSU-Cascades will deliver a high quality, comprehensive academic program to develop and expand the next generation of scholars and will contribute to serving the diverse needs of students in the central Oregon area.

All public institutions in Oregon with a comprehensive liberal arts program offer an undergraduate degree in Political Science: University of Oregon, Eastern Oregon University, Southern Oregon University, Western Oregon University, and Portland State University. The synergy created by the Political Science degree programs in the state of Oregon will provide accessible educational opportunities for all regions of the state. The Political Science programs at these institutions are complementary as regional schools as well as state institutions contribute to the health of their regional economies and communities.

Program Financials

The estimate of enrollment was completed using data from trends in completions from Hanover Research and an assessment of enrollments from peer institutions. The estimate of the first five years of enrollment was also based on historical growth trends for new programs at OSU-Cascades. It is expected to see majors graduating by spring 2024 with some students being able to select this major in their junior year in fall 2022.

¹ Hillman, Nicholas, and Taylor Weichman. "Education Deserts: The Continued Significance of 'Place' in the Twenty-First Century." *Community*, American Council on Education and the Center for Policy Research and Strategy, 25 May 2017, community-wealth.org/content/education-deserts-continued-significance-place-twenty-first-century.

² Peacher, Amanda. "Central Oregon Is Among Nation's Fastest Growing Regions." *Opb*, OPB, 2 June 2020, www.opb.org/news/article/central-oregon-is-among-nations-fastest-growing-regions.

All instructor credentials will be vetted by faculty in SPP. In FY2023 (the first year of the program, or zero year), the intention is to hire a part-time instructor to teach three courses in the major and to act as the initial program coordinator. Instructors at OSU-Cascades hold a minimum of a master’s degree in their field (PhD preferred) and provide evidence of teaching experience and success. The program coordinator will work with the Corvallis campus on assessment plans, the recruitment of students, and the coordination with advising staff. During FY2023, a search will be conducted for a full-time 9-month Instructor who will take on the role as the OSU-Cascades program coordinator, teach 5-6 courses in the program, and assist the Dean of Academic Affairs and the program coordinator in Corvallis to roll out additional courses and select/hire additional part-time faculty.

Advisors at OSU-Cascades are assigned at the ratio of 1 FTE per 275 student head count. At program maturity, it is anticipated that 0.5 FTE of advising staff will be assigned to the Political Science and Economics programs. No other support staff will be needed.

The budget is summarized in the table below.

	Academic Year 2022-23	Academic Year 2023-24	Academic Year 2024-25	Academic Year 2025-26
COSTS				
Personnel				
Faculty (T/TT & fixed term) & Staff	\$14,227	\$58,000	\$69,258	\$71,050
OPE	\$3,345	\$33,376	\$37,347	\$39,109
Personnel Subtotal	\$17,621	\$91,376	\$106,605	\$110,159
Other Resources				
Library printed/electronic	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Services & Supplies: office supplies, postage, professional development, student workers, student transportation to coast	\$100	\$6,123	\$4,255	\$4,338
Other Resources Subtotal	\$100	\$6,123	\$4,255	\$4,338
TOTAL COSTS	\$17,721	\$97,498	\$110,860	\$114,497
INCOME/SUPPORT				
Tuition & Degree Conferrals*	\$77,970	\$123,673	\$173,306	\$222,998
MSI Support	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL INCOME/SUPPORT	\$77,970	\$123,673	\$173,306	\$222,998

*In its initial year (AY 2022-23) and thereafter, projected tuition and degree conferrals will generate revenue sufficient to fully cover projected program costs.

RECOMMENDATION

All appropriate university committees and the OSU Faculty Senate have positively reviewed the proposed program. The Provost recommends that the Academic Strategies Committee approve the establishment of a B.A./B.S. in Political Science at OSU-Cascades, effective fall 2022, pending support of the Statewide Provosts Council and the approval of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission.