

Honors Program Regulations
Department of Political Science
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

(Effective for students graduating in 2015 or later)

OVERVIEW

To graduate with Honors in political science, a student must meet the following criteria:

- a. Successfully complete the major in political science
- b. Successfully complete POLI 691H, POLI 692H, and POLI 693H
- c. Successfully defend an honors thesis
- d. Maintain an overall GPA of 3.3 or higher during the entire thesis process
- e. Maintain a GPA of 3.5 or higher in political science during the entire thesis process

To graduate with Highest Honors in political science, a student must meet the above criteria AND:

- a. The thesis committee must determine that the defended thesis is of exceptional quality and that work goes significantly above and beyond what is required for a successful honors thesis
- b. The student must maintain a GPA of 3.8 or higher in political science

APPLICATION DEADLINE

The deadline for applications to the Political Science Honors Program is October 15 of the student's junior year. All students who apply by the deadline and meet the requirements for POLI 691H will be accepted into the program.

POLI 691H

Students must take POLI 691H (Honors Seminar in Research Design) in the spring semester of their junior year. In this course, students will learn about the political science research process and complete their thesis proposal.

In order to take POLI 691H, students must meet the following requirements at the beginning of the spring semester of their junior year:

- a. Successful completion of at least four political science courses
- b. Overall GPA of 3.3 or higher
- c. Political Science GPA of 3.5 or higher

POLI 692H

Students must take POLI 692H (Honors Thesis Research) in the fall semester of their senior year. In this course, students will present and get feedback on ongoing work on their thesis. They will regularly consult with an adviser, a member of the UNC Political Science faculty, as they write their thesis.

In order to take POLI 692H, students must meet the following requirements at the beginning of the fall semester of their senior year:

- a. Successful completion of POLI 691H
- b. Successful completion of a thesis proposal approved by the Director of Honors and prospective faculty adviser
- c. Overall GPA of 3.3 or higher
- d. Political Science GPA of 3.5 or higher

POLI 693H

Students must take POLI 693H (Honors Thesis Research) in the spring semester of their senior year. In this course, students will work one-on-one with an adviser, a member of the UNC Political Science faculty, as they write their thesis. In order to take POLI 693H, students must meet the following requirements at the beginning of the spring semester of their senior year:

- a. Satisfactory progress on thesis research
- b. Overall GPA of 3.3 or higher
- c. Political Science GPA of 3.5 or higher

THESIS DEFENSE

To graduate with honors, a student must complete an oral defense of his/her thesis before a committee of three faculty members. This committee will consist of the thesis adviser, who must be a member of the UNC Political Science faculty, and two other faculty members selected by the student in consultation with the thesis adviser. At least one of these two other members of the thesis committee must also be a faculty member of the UNC Department of Political Science. Graduate students may not serve on thesis committees.

GRADING FOR POLI 692H/693H

The grades for POLI 692H and POLI 693H will be given upon the defense of the honors thesis. For students who plan to graduate in the spring, a placeholder grade (SP) for POLI 692H will be assigned at the end of the fall semester of their senior year, which will be replaced with a permanent letter grade after the thesis defense. Grades for POLI 693H will be posted at the end of the spring semester. If a student enrolls in 693H but does not complete the work in the form of a defensible honors thesis, or if that defense is unsuccessful, a grade will be assigned commensurate with the quality of the work. If a student does not successfully defend a thesis for honors, the highest grade the student can receive for POLI 692H/693H is a B+.

If a student enrolled in 692H decides not to enroll in 693H and not to write an honors thesis, the student needs to notify the instructor as soon as possible, and the instructor will communicate the work that needs to be done to complete 692H successfully. The grade will then be based on the quality of the required work. If a student fails to notify the instructor about the decision not to enroll in 693H before the end of the semester, the highest grade the student can receive for POLI 692H is a B+.

MAJOR CREDIT

Up to two honors thesis courses can count as elective credit towards the major.

COURSE EXEMPTIONS

Students will be expected to take all three courses in the sequence. Students can petition the Director of Honors to be exempt from one course. Acceptable reasons for an exemption include:

- 1) The student is studying off-campus (e.g., studying abroad).
- 2) The student graduates in December of the senior year.
- 3) The student completes and defends the thesis in the fall semester of the senior year.

GPA CALCULATION

The overall GPA includes all courses taken at UNC for a letter grade.

The political science GPA includes all POLI courses taken at UNC for a letter grade, as well as all cross-listed POLI courses. All political science courses are included, whether or not they will be counted towards the student's major. ECON 101 is not included in the calculation of the political science GPA, even though it is required for the political science major.

In no case will rounding be used to determine a student's GPA.

Grades from a student's final semester will not be included in the final calculation of the GPA to determine whether a student can graduate with Honors or Highest Honors. For example, for students graduating in May (of their senior year), only courses taken through the fall semester of their senior year will be included in the GPA.