

**Political Science Honors Thesis Courses**  
**POSC H490, and POSC H491**  
**Fall 2009**  
**Honors Coordinator: Jeff Fine**

**Introduction:** Successful completion of H396 (defined as achieving a grade of B or higher in the course) is a prerequisite to enrollment in POSC H490 and H491, which involve the research and writing of the Senior Honors Thesis. The Junior Honors Research Paper and the Senior Honors Thesis are to be written under the guidance and direction of one or more members of the political science faculty. In appropriate cases, and with the approval of the honors coordinator, the junior honors advisor or co-advisor may be a faculty member from outside the Department of Political Science.

**Requirements for H490:** The requirement for POSC H490 is to produce an article-length draft of the senior thesis. The goal for H490 is to generate a manuscript that could be presented at a political science conference. The paper for H490 will build on the work already conducted during H395 and H396. Specifically, the senior thesis paper should consist of: (a) a statement of the question examined and why it is important, (b) the method for approaching and answering this question, (c) a comprehensive review of the relevant books and articles in the political science literature and the “gap” that your paper fills (d) a discussion of what you expect to find, (e) the results of your research, and (f) conclusions about what you find, how your paper fits within the literature, and directions in which future research may go. The completed draft must be completed by *November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009*.

**Requirements for H491:** The requirement for POSC H491 is to complete a polished senior thesis. In other words, the expectation is that students in H491 will generate an article-length paper that is ready for submission to a peer-reviewed political science journal. Completion of the senior thesis will involve several rounds of revisions of the paper completed for H490. This will entail both stylistic and substantive revisions and may include incorporating additional books/articles to the literature review and expanding the scope of the analysis (or adding additional cases). The components of the paper are the same as for POSC H490, with the expectation that the manuscript submitted at the end of the semester (by *November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009*) will be polished and well researched, such that it is ready for submission to a peer-reviewed political science journal for consideration to be published.

It is strongly recommended that students and advisors adhere to the following guidelines:

- For H490 – by *November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009* the student should submit the honors coordinator a preliminary draft of the senior thesis. The preliminary draft should include each of the components of the senior thesis, with the exception of the conclusions section.
- For H491 – by *November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2009* the student should submit the honors coordinator a final draft of the senior thesis. The final draft should include each of the components of the senior thesis. After receiving the feedback on this final draft, the revised paper will constitute the senior thesis. The completed senior thesis is due by *November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2009*.

**The student’s responsibilities:** Although the faculty is committed to helping each student in the research and writing of his/her junior paper, it is the student’s responsibility to complete the required work, to initiate and maintain contact with his/her advisor, and meet all deadlines set by the advisor, and to abide by these guidelines. Any problems should be reported immediately to either the student’s advisor or to the honors coordinator, or both.

**Grading Procedures:** Grading procedures for the junior paper and prospectus are similar. In both cases, students should submit one copy to their advisor and one to the honors coordinator, who may refer it to an outside reader. Grades are assigned by the honors coordinator in consultation with the advisor. Late papers will result in the assignment of a grade of I or F.

Senior papers are awarded a letter grade as follows:

- A: Excellent paper – clearly written and argued, offers insight into a clearly defined problem
- A-: Very good paper with relatively minor flaws **or**  
Paper with great strengths but also relatively serious weaknesses
- B+ to B-: Good paper with one or more serious flaws
- C+ to C-: Shows some effort but not up to the level expected of an honors student
- D+ to D-: A poor effort that barely qualifies for a passing grade
- F: Paper is either not completed or does not qualify for a passing grade

**I have read and understand the above guidelines.**

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(signed)

(print name)

(date)