Changes to the Political Science Major as of Fall 2016

Starting in Fall 2016, most of the upper division Political Science courses will be offered as 4 unit courses (with the exception of upper division GE courses, and Political Thought courses 160A-163). This will impact the number of upper division elective courses within the major that students are required to take, reducing the number from four 3-unit courses (12 units) to two 3 or 4-unit courses (6-8 units). The total number of units required for the major is changing from 45 to 44-46.

CATALOG RIGHTS: Students retain the right to graduate under the catalog rules in effect during their first semester at SJSU. Students who enrolled at SJSU before Fall 2016 are therefore entitled to graduate under the old model (45 units). Students who enrolled at SJSU in Fall 2016 or later must complete the requirements listed for the new model above.

These changes are detailed below (shaded areas highlight changes under the new model).

OLD MODEL			**NEW MODEL**	
Lower Division	**Units**		**Lower Division**	**Units**
POLS001 or 15B American Government	3		POLS001 or 15B American Government	3
POLS002 Intro to Comparative Politics	3		POLS002 Intro to Comparative Politics	3
POLS003 Intro to Political Thought	3		POLS003 Intro to Political Thought	3
POLS004 Intro to International Relations	3		POLS004 Intro to International Relations	3
Lower Division Total	12		Lower Division Total	12
Upper Division			**Upper Division**	
Major Field: U.S. Government & Politics One course from POLS102, 103, 106, 107, 108, 114, 122, or 130	3		Major Field: U.S. Government & Politics One course from POLS102, 103, 106, 107, 108, 114, 122, or 130	**4**
Major Field: Comparative Politics One course from POLS140-149	3		Major Field: Comparative Politics One course from POLS140-149	**4**
Major Field: International Relations One course from POLS152-156	3		Major Field: International Relations One course from POLS152-156	**4**
Major Field: Political Thought One course from POLS160A-163	3		Major Field: Political Thought One course from POLS160A-163	3
Four additional upper division Political Science courses (electives in the major)	12		Two additional upper division Political Science courses (electives in the major)	**6-8**
POLS100W: Writing Workshop	3		POLS100W: Writing Workshop	3
POLS195A: Political Inquiry	3		POLS195A: Political Inquiry	**4**
POLS190: Senior Seminar	3		POLS190: Senior Seminar	**4**
Upper Division Total	33		Upper Division Total	**32-34**
TOTAL FOR THE MAJOR	**45**		**TOTAL FOR THE MAJOR**	**44-46**

We are committed to working with students to make this transition as easy as possible. Please come talk to a major advisor or the department chair ASAP if you have concerns!

SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR FAQ'S

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FALL 2016 CHANGES TO THE POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJOR

Q: Will this mean I have to take more classes to complete the major?
A: No, in fact you will most likely end up taking *fewer* classes to complete the major. The new model is designed to allow students to take a total of 9 upper division classes, rather than 11. The number of upper division elective classes required in the major has been reduced from four to two classes (see table on reverse for details).

Q: Why did the department decide to change most of the upper division classes to 4 units?
A: The change to 4-unit classes reflects a desire on the part of the department faculty to offer students more in-depth learning experiences with a variety of activities and projects both in and outside of class. We are excited about the opportunities this offers for different types of educational activities such as service learning, research projects, simulations, or online activities. As we make this transition to 4-unit courses, we are interested to know how it is impacting students. Please let us know what you think!

Q: Will 4-unit classes be more work than 3-unit classes?
A: Yes. SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. For a 4-unit course, you can expect to spend a minimum of nine hours per week, in addition to time spent in class, on scheduled tutorials, assignments, or activities. This additional unit will allow for more in-depth investigation and engagement with course topics. Careful time management will help you keep up with readings and assignments and enable you to be successful in all of your courses. Department faculty are also committed to supporting students to be successful in 4-unit classes by being available in office hours and by appointment, and providing guidance and feedback on student performance throughout the semester.

Q: How many classes should I take per semester under the new model?
A: If you aim to graduate in four years (or two years, as a transfer student), you should plan to take **15 units per semester**. Keep in mind that three 4-unit classes gives you the same number of units as four 3-unit classes (12 units). The number of classes you choose to take each semester may depend upon a number of factors including the number of hours you work outside of school, family obligations, and personal preference. You will still be able to take up to 15 units per semester with a mix of 3 and 4 unit classes under the new model. Students are currently allowed to take up to 16 units per semester without petition to the registrar. This limit may be higher for graduating seniors, and may be revised each semester. Be sure to check the registrar's website for latest information (http://www.sjsu.edu/registrar/).

Q: Why are only some of the upper division classes changing to 4 units?
A: The department teaches several upper division GE (SJSU Studies) classes: POLS120, 150, 170V, and 100W. These courses are not permitted to change to 4 units due to GE requirements. The upper division Political Thought classes (POLS160A-163) are also remaining at 3 units for the time being due to teaching schedule restrictions for our faculty members in this subfield. All other upper division Political Science courses are switching to 4 units as of Fall 2016.

Q: What if I have taken a mix of 3-unit and 4-unit upper division classes? How will this affect my ability to complete the major and graduate on time?
A: No problem. You should meet with an advisor and fill out the revised Study Planner worksheet to see which classes you have already completed and which you still have left to do. Under the old model, you would need to complete a total of 11 upper division classes (including four upper division electives in the major). Under the new model, you need to complete a total of 9 upper division classes (including two upper division electives in the major). During the transition period over the next few years, some of you may end up taking two, three, or four upper division electives in the major to reach the total number of units needed. You may end up with one or two units more than you need for the major, which is fine. If you somehow end up one or two units short of the total number needed for the major, you can work with a major advisor and/or the department chair to resolve the issue.