



The University of Georgia®

University Council
Athens, Georgia 30602

August 15, 2014

UNIVERSITY CURRICULUM COMMITTEE – 2014-2015

Dr. William K. Vencill, Chair

Agricultural and Environmental Sciences - Dr. Robert B. Beckstead

Arts and Sciences - Dr. Roxanne Eberle (Arts)

Dr. Rodney Mauricio (Sciences)

Business - Dr. Myra L. Moore

Ecology - Dr. James W. Porter

Education - Dr. Seock-Ho Kim

Engineering - Dr. Sidney Thompson

Environment and Design - Mr. David Spooner

Family and Consumer Sciences - Dr. Silvia Giraudo

Forestry and Natural Resources - Dr. Sarah F. Covert

Journalism and Mass Communication - Dr. Alison F. Alexander

Law - Ms. Elizabeth Weeks Leonard

Pharmacy - Dr. Cory Momany

Public and International Affairs - Dr. Robert Grafstein

Public Health - Dr. Katie D. Hein

Social Work - Dr. Kristina Jaskyte

Veterinary Medicine - Dr. Scott A. Brown

Graduate School - Dr. Timothy L. Foutz

Ex-Officio - Provost Pamela S. Whitten

Undergraduate Student Representative - Mr. William Heaton

Graduate Student Representative - TBD

Dear Colleagues:

The attached proposal to offer the existing major in Political Science and International Affairs (M.A.) with a Non-Thesis Option will be an agenda item for the August 22, 2014, Full University Curriculum Committee meeting.

Sincerely,

William K. Vencill, Chair
University Curriculum Committee

cc: Provost Pamela S. Whitten
Dr. Laura D. Jolly

**Proposal to Add a Non-Thesis Option to the M.A. in
Political Science and International Affairs**

Departments of Political Science and International Affairs

Submitted to: Dean Maureen Grasso
Graduate School
University of Georgia

Submitted by: Professor M.V. Hood III
Director of Graduate Studies
Department of Political Science
School of Public and International Affairs
University of Georgia

Proposed Change

The addition of a non-thesis option for the M.A. in Political Science and International Affairs with a start date in the fall semester following approval.

Program Description

The Departments of Political Science and International Affairs, who jointly share the administration of the M.A. in Political Science and International Affairs, are requesting that a non-thesis option be added for this degree. Under this proposal, students would apply to enter the M.A. thesis program or the M.A. non-thesis program.

The current M.A. requires students to take 18 credit hours of graduate seminars, a three-course (9 credit hours) methodology sequence, and three credit hours for the thesis. These students are obviously required to write a thesis and defend it before a faculty committee. The number of minimum hours required for the thesis option totals 30.

Students completing the M.A. with the proposed non-thesis option would be required to take an additional six credit hours of graduate seminars (these two additional classes would be required to be at the 8000-level and approved by the Graduate Director). In addition, students choosing the non-thesis option would be required to complete one of the following two options: 1) take and pass the general field component of the Ph.D. comprehensive exam in the student's area of concentration or 2) orally present and defend an article-length seminar paper before a two-person faculty committee. Students choosing the non-thesis option would be required to complete a minimum of 33 credit hours.

The table below provides a comparison of the current M.A. degree requirements (with thesis) and the requirements under the proposed non-thesis option.

Table 1. Program of Study for M.A. in Political Science and International Affairs

Current M.A. with Thesis	Proposed M.A. Non-Thesis Option
Graduate Seminars (18 credit hours)	Graduate Seminars (24 credit hours) -Additional Coursework at the 8000-level
Methodology Sequence (9 credit hours)	Methodology Sequence (9 credit hours)
Thesis Hours (3 credit hours) -Oral Defense of Thesis	Comprehensive Examination or Defense of Research Manuscript
Minimum Total Hours: 30	Minimum Total Hours: 33

Program and School Approval

The joint graduate committee from the Departments of Political Science and International Affairs unanimously approved the proposed non-thesis option for the M.A. degree on January 18, 2013, by a vote of 5 to 0. The curriculum committee for the School of Public and International Affairs unanimously approved the same proposal on February 12, 2013, by a vote of 6 to 0.

Justification for Proposed Non-Thesis Option

Our program is requesting a non-thesis option for several reasons which are outlined below:

- The need to take additional coursework to meet the requirements of the non-thesis option will produce a positive externality for our graduate students, allowing for additional 8000-level course offerings. The requirement for additional coursework (and the opportunity for greater exposure to substantive knowledge) will benefit M.A. students who do not wish to pursue a Ph.D., but instead want to teach at the secondary or junior college level or work for a non-profit, government agency, or think-tank.
- Many of our peer and aspirational institutions allow this option for their students, including the University of Florida, Duke University, and the University of Texas. In order to stay competitive in the recruitment of students to our graduate program, we are seeking this proposed option for our M.A. degree.

Admission Procedure for Applicants

The admissions procedure and standards will in no way differ for M.A. applicants following the addition of the non-thesis option. Under the proposal passed by the Graduate Committee, students would inform the Graduate Director that they are pursuing the thesis or non-thesis track for the M.A. degree after their initial year of coursework.

Impact on Current Students

The addition of the non-thesis option to the M.A. will in no way adversely impact current students enrolled in the M.A. degree. Current students (thesis option) will have the option of switching to the non-thesis option if they so desire. We estimate that 3 to 5 current M.A. students may choose to switch to the non-thesis option.

Financial Impact

To implement the non-thesis option for the M.A. degree will not require any additional funding (no new course, faculty, facilities, or services are necessary).