

POLS 399R: Directed Research in Political Science

Course Information and Enrollment Forms

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Course Description

This course offers **3 hours** of independent research study credit. It may be repeated up to four times, for a total of 12 credit hours over four semesters, but **only one 3 credit hour** POLS399R course (or one POLS387R: Directed Research CLSS) may be used as an *elective* toward a Political Science major or minor, or toward the International Studies major; **POLS 399R does *not* fulfill the major's RSCH requirement.**

Participating students are matched with a member of the Emory faculty, or an advanced graduate student, and conduct independent research under his or her supervision. Typically, the student will carry out research tasks related to faculty or graduate student projects. Students are encouraged to attend research presentations hosted by the Department of Political Science. This course offers a unique opportunity to learn about the research process, to meet with leading scholars from around the globe, and to talk to them about their research careers.

Performance Expectations

Students should expect to offer **8-10 hours of independent research assistance per week.** Faculty/graduate student and undergraduate RA pairs are encouraged to discuss and develop clear research expectations. Students should be given specific tasks and a timeframe for completing those tasks.

A good research assistant is available given the expectations developed, open with advisors when uncertain, and punctual. Following explicit research protocols (should they be developed) and completing tasks correctly within the planned timeframe will constitute strong performance. In addition, being intellectually engaged, demonstrating an understanding of the project's goals and the student's own role with in the project will constitute excellent performance. If a student is uncertain about expectations or project goals, the student is encouraged to speak with their faculty or graduate student mentor. The student may contact the course director as well.

Grading

Students are assessed as follows:

- *Mentor evaluation (60%).* The student will be evaluated by their faculty or graduate student mentor on four dimensions. 1. Correct completion of assigned tasks; 2. Punctuality; 3. Availability as understood in light of shared research expectations; 4. Understanding of project goals and the student's role in the project.
- *Self-evaluation (10%).* At the end of the semester students will complete a self-evaluation and turn it in to their mentor. Students should address the same four topics that will be the subject of the faculty evaluation.

- *Research summary (30%).* Students are also required to submit to their mentor a summary of their research activities. Please explain (in 3 to 5 double-spaced pages) what you were asked to do, what you completed, and how these tasks relate to the broader project in which you are involved. The final version is due on the last day of classes.

Readings

There are no assigned readings for the course as a whole; however, students may be required by their mentors to complete certain readings as part of their research plan.

Final Course Grades

Students may choose whether to take POLS 399R on letter grade or S/U basis. **If taken S/U, the course will not count toward the POLS major/minor or the IS major.** If letter grades are used, they will reflect the Department of Political Sciences grading standard detailed below. Clearly, it is impossible for each assessment to reflect the standard exactly. Instead, the assessments, taken as a whole, are designed to produce a final letter grade that reflects the department's standards.

A Exceptional Performance

Consistently outstanding work on all course-related tasks at a level that distinguishes the student from other members of the class. A comprehensive and incisive command of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A frequently demonstrated exceptional capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. The ability to master and integrate large amounts of factual material and abstract theories. An outstanding ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

A- Excellent Performance

Consistently strong work on all course-related tasks. A comprehensive command of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A clearly demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. Understands well and can integrate the relevant factual and theoretical material central to the course. A strong ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

B+ Very Good Performance

Consistently above average work on all course-related tasks. A very good grasp of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A generally demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical, and logical thinking. A very good command of factual and theoretical material, and some capacity to integrate the two. A solid ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

B Good Performance

Good and generally consistent work on all course-related tasks. A general understanding of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. Modest evidence of the capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. A good understanding of factual and theoretical material, but limited evidence of the capacity to integrate the two. A basic ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

B- Satisfactory Performance

Satisfactory work on course-related tasks. A reasonable understanding of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. An infrequently demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking. Understands at a basic level the facts and theories related to the course, but demonstrates weak integration skills. A limited or inconsistent ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills.

C+/C/C- Adequate Performance

Adequate performance on course-related tasks. An understanding of the basic elements of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A rarely demonstrated capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking (C+). An inability to go beyond a recitation of basic factual material related to the class (C). Demonstrated weaknesses in the ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills (C-).

D/D+ Minimal Passing Performance

Barely acceptable work on course-related tasks. A generally superficial and often inconsistent familiarity with the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. A failure to demonstrate the capacity for original, creative, critical and logical thinking related to course content (D+). An uneven understanding of basic factual material related to the course; no evidence of fact/theory integration. Demonstrates significant gaps in the ability to discuss effectively course subject matter using both written and oral communication skills (D).

F Unacceptable Performance

Fails to meet minimum course expectations. Unable to understand even the most basic elements of the issues, literature, and substantive information relevant to the course. Demonstrates an inability to engage in coherent written or oral discussion of course material. Does not satisfy specific course expectations with respect to attendance, deadlines, participation, etc.

Incomplete Grades

No incomplete grades will be given unless there is an agreement between the instructor and the student prior to the end of the course. The instructor retains the right to determine legitimate reasons for an incomplete grade.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Emory University is committed under the Americans with Disabilities Act and its Amendments and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to providing appropriate accommodations to individuals with documented disabilities. If you have a disability-related need for reasonable academic adjustments in this course, provide the instructor(s) with an accommodation notification letter from Access, Disabilities Services and Resources office. Students are expected to give two weeks-notice of the need for accommodations. If you need immediate accommodations or physical access, please arrange to meet with instructor(s) as soon as your accommodations have been finalized.

Peer Tutoring Writing Support

Tutors in the Emory Writing Center and the ESL Program are available to support Emory College students as they work on any type of writing assignment, at any stage of the composing process.

Tutors can assist with a range of projects, from traditional papers and presentations to websites and other multimedia projects. Writing Center and ESL tutors take a similar approach as they work with students on concerns including idea development, structure, use of sources, grammar, and word choice. They do not proofread for students. Instead, they discuss strategies and resources students can use as they write, revise, and edit their own work.

Students who are currently enrolled in an ESL-supported section of English 101, English 123, or English 221 or who plan to take one of those courses next semester should see ESL tutors, as they are specifically trained to support students in ESL Program courses.

To learn more about ESL tutoring or to make an appointment, go to tinyurl.com/eslemory. All other students in the college should see Writing Center tutors who are trained to work with this broader population. Learn more and make an appointment at writingcenter.emory.edu. Please review tutoring policies before your visit.

Honor Code

The honor code is in effect throughout the semester. By taking this course, you affirm that it is a violation of the code to cheat on exams, to plagiarize, to deviate from the teacher's instructions about collaboration on work that is submitted for grades, to give false information to a faculty member, and to undertake any other form of academic misconduct.

You agree that the teacher is entitled to move you to another seat during examinations, without explanation. You also affirm that if you witness others violating the code you have a duty to report them to the honor council. For more information about the honor code, see <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html>.

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Enrollment Request Form

Student Name: _____

Student ID: _____ Email: _____

Semester/Year: _____

Grading Basis (choose one): Letter Grade _____ S/U _____

(If taken S/U, the course will not count toward the POLS major/minor or the IS major.)

Supervising Faculty or Graduate Student: _____

Supervisor's email: _____

Expectations of the Directed Research Project

- The student is expected to have meaningful learning opportunities that allow him/her to make relevant contributions to the overall research project.
- The experience should provide the student an opportunity to extend his/her knowledge of political science research beyond the classroom.
- The directed research project must not duplicate existing course offerings.

The student should work with his or her supervisor to develop a detailed description of the proposed project and the student's expected contribution. It should be a detailed contract between you and your supervisor and should include a description of the subject, your responsibilities, evaluation criteria, and project deadlines.

The supervisor is responsible evaluating the student's work and for assigning the final semester grade. After consulting with the supervisor, the course director will be responsible for submitting the final grade on OPUS.

We agree to the above outline expectations concerning the goals and grading basis:

- By signing this agreement, the supervisor acknowledges responsibility for oversight of the student's work, including the responsible conduct of research.
- Students should expect to offer 8-10 hours of research assistance per week.
- By signing this agreement, the student acknowledges that a maximum of 3 hours of POLS399R (or POLS 387R) letter grade credit may be applied toward the Political Science major/minor, or toward the International Studies major; the student also acknowledges that this course does not fulfill the major's RSCH requirement.

Signature of student: _____ Date: _____

Signature of supervisor: _____ Date: _____

Signature of course director: _____ Date: _____