



Political Science Department Statement on Advising

Advising students is an important aspect of the work of all Political Science faculty and is a responsibility that we take very seriously. In carrying out this responsibility, we seek to use our time and professional expertise in the best possible way. This expertise, we believe, includes the experience and understanding to help students better understand the courses offered in Political Science and other departments; the relation between these courses and students' educational and career goals; and the relevance of various internships and employment opportunities to students career and educational goals. We relish discussing such topics with students because such conversations allow us to make use of our distinctive knowledge as political scientists in a manner that, we believe, can greatly benefit students.

However, our experience and understanding as political scientists does not give us any distinctive expertise keeping track of courses on an academic inventory sheet, knowing which course fulfills what Touchstone (general education) Program requirement, or understanding an academic audit. Such responsibilities, we believe, lie with the student or other members of the University community.

To be more specific:

D) The Political Science faculty considers it to be our responsibility to:

- 1) Make ourselves available to students for advising throughout the semester. We do our best to keep our regularly scheduled office hours, but because of illness, appointments with other students, and/or other responsibilities, we may not be available during the posted hours. Thus, while we welcome drop-in appointments, we also encourage students, especially those on tight schedules, to set up appointments in advance via phone or email.
- 2) Encourage students to seek our advice at times other than the several weeks of the semester prior to pre-registration. During the weeks prior to pre-registration, lines outside our offices are frequently long. It is thus often difficult to have appropriately lengthy, thoughtful, and detailed conversations.
- 3) Upon a student's request, help her or him better understand educational and career goals.
- 4) Upon a student's request, help her or him better understand what:
 - Academic programs
 - Courses or combinations of course (both in Political Science and elsewhere)
 - Extra-curricular activities
 - Co-ops, internships, jobs, and so forth

- Reading material and other things or activities

Will best contribute towards achieving her or his educational and career goals.

- 5) Make available to a student any documents such as her/his transcript and unofficial audit to which we have access and which we not prohibited from releasing to the student by statute and/or University policy.
- 6) Maintain on the Political Science web page a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) that deal with many of the most common questions that students have.
- 7) Make available to students, the names of several seniors majoring in Political Science who have agreed to discuss the kinds of issues that would be inappropriate for the faculty to address. Among such questions are, “What kind of teacher is so-and-so?” “How hard is this course?” “Is so-and-so a tough grader?” “What is this course really like?”
- 8) Facilitate a student’s taking responsibility for achieving her or his career and educational goals. To this end, we recognize that it may not be necessary for some students to make an appointment to see us during the customary advising period in the weeks prior to pre-registration. Thus, we will clear any student’s advising flag who sends her or his advisor an email that says: “Dear Professor_____. I don’t need help in choosing my courses and do not need an appointment to discuss next semester’s schedule. Please clear my advising flag.”

II) We consider it a student’s responsibility:

- 1) To obtain an academic inventory sheet in your first semester at Winthrop and keep it up to date and/or track degree progress using DegreeWorks. This is probably the single most important way for you to track your progress towards graduation, especially before you are eligible for an audit. Academic inventory sheets may be obtained on the Winthrop University web site. Students may access DegreeWorks through Wingspan.
- 2) To know which courses satisfy what Touchstone Program, major, minor, and graduation requirements. In fact, just as many students have questions about these requirements, so, too, does the Political Science faculty. In such cases, we typically seek guidance from the Office of Student Services and/or the Registrar’s Office. Rather than serve as an intermediary between a student and these offices, the Political Science faculty encourages any student who does not understand the requirements as stated in the University catalog, the Political Science web page, or any University document or web page to contact the Office of Student Services and/or the Registrar’s Office directly.
- 3) To come prepared to all appointments. Among other things, if you wish to discuss your schedule next semester, you must:

- Bring your academic inventory sheet, transcript, and audit (if you have one).
- Already have a tentative idea of what courses you wish to take and whether they will be offered at times that are convenient for you.

The Political Science faculty believes that the above delineation of responsibilities will help academic advising be educationally productive and rewarding for both students and faculty. We welcome the opportunity to fulfill our responsibilities and similarly expect students to fulfill theirs.

Adopted September 22, 2003