

FOR APPROVAL

PUBLIC

OPEN SESSION

TO: UTM Academic Affairs Committee

SPONSOR: Professor William A. Gough, Interim Vice-Principal, Academic & Dean
CONTACT INFO: vpdean.utm@utoronto.ca

PRESENTER: Professor Bryan Stewart, Vice-Dean, Academic Programs
CONTACT INFO: vdacademicprog.utm@utoronto.ca

DATE: March 17, 2025, for March 24, 2025

AGENDA ITEM: 3

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Minor Modification: New Certificate in Politics, Law and Social Justice (Category 2), Department of Political Science, UTM (for approval)

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

Under section 5.6 of its terms of reference, the Academic Affairs Committee is responsible for new certificates, as defined by the Policy on Certificates (For-Credit and Not-For-Credit), and the closure of such certificates. An annual report on certificates shall be provided for information to the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs.

GOVERNANCE PATH:

1. UTM Academic Affairs Committee [For Approval] (March 24, 2025)

PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:

No previous action taken.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The Department of Political Science proposes a new Certificate in Politics, Law and Social Justice (Category 2), which will be open to all undergraduate students enrolled in a degree program at UTM. It is expected that the Certificate will initially be of interest to current students in the Specialist, Major and Minor in Political Science, but will eventually have broad appeal as a complementary learning experience for students in other programs.

The Certificate will require 2.0 credits, including one required course (0.5 credits) introducing students to the politics of social justice, followed by 1.5 credits in elective courses that students may choose from a list of pre-approved 300- and 400-level courses on themes of law, human rights, and political struggles for justice. Students will be able to engage with faculty who research social justice, law, and human rights, will be prepared to pursue research opportunities, and have a cohort-building learning experience with other students in the Certificate courses.

The proposed Certificate supports the Department's recent hiring of faculty whose work emphasises law, social movement, and human rights. Political Science program students have also expressed a strong interest in courses related to law and legal studies, with 50% of students surveyed indicating an interest in careers in law and legal fields. The Certificate also aligns with the goals of UTM's Strategic Framework of Fostering Student Success, Empowering Research Discovery and Impact, and Encouraging Collaboration and Belonging.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications of the proposed change.

RECOMMENDATION:

Be It Resolved,

THAT the proposed New Certificate in Politics, Law and Social Justice (Category 2), in the Department of Political Science, UTM, as detailed in the proposal dated February 21, 2025, be approved, effective September 1, 2025.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

Proposal to Create a Certificate in Conjunction with an Undergraduate Program: Certificate in Politics, Law and Social Justice (UTM).

The Certificate will require 2.0 credits, including one required course (0.5 credits) introducing students to the politics of social justice, followed by 1.5 credits in elective courses that students may choose from a list of pre-approved 300- and 400-level courses on themes of law, human rights, and political struggles for justice. Students will be able to engage with faculty who research social justice, law, and human rights, will be prepared to pursue research opportunities, and have a cohort-building learning experience with other students in the Certificate courses.

The proposed Certificate supports the Department's recent hiring of faculty whose work emphasises law, social movement, and human rights. Political Science program students have also expressed a strong interest in courses related to law and legal studies, with 50% of students surveyed indicating an interest in careers in law and legal fields. The Certificate also aligns with the goals of UTM's Strategic Framework of Fostering Student Success, Empowering Research Discovery and Impact, and Encouraging Collaboration and Belonging.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications of the proposed change.

RECOMMENDATION:

Be It Resolved,

THAT the proposed New Certificate in Politics, Law and Social Justice (Category 2), in the Department of Political Science, UTM, as detailed in the proposal dated February 21, 2025, be approved, effective September 1, 2025.

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

Proposal to Create a Certificate in Conjunction with an Undergraduate Program: Certificate in Politics, Law and Social Justice (UTM).

University of Toronto

Proposal to Create a Certificate in Conjunction with an Undergraduate Program

Certificates offered in conjunction with an undergraduate program are for-credit undergraduate certificates governed by the *Policy for Certificates (For-Credit and Not-For-Credit)*.

Creation and closure of these certificates follow the protocols for minor modifications; are reviewed with the relevant undergraduate program; and are reported to the Provost through the Office of the Vice-Dean, Academic Programs (VPAP). Successful completion of the certificate is recorded on the academic transcript. Students must be enrolled in a specific undergraduate program. **Please consult with VPAP on the certificate's name ahead of governance.**

This template (last updated by VPAP on April 5, 2021) should be used to bring forward all proposals for new undergraduate, for-credit, certificates that will be offered in conjunction with an existing undergraduate degree program. The creation of the certificate follows a minor modification process and is reported to the VPAP Office after approval.

Proposed certificate name: E.g., Certificate in Human Resources Management (Faculty of Arts & Science)	Certificate in Politics, Law, and Social Justice (UTM)
Undergraduate degree(s) the certificate will be offered in conjunction with:	Honours Bachelor of Arts (HBA) Bachelor of Commerce (BCom) Honours Bachelor of Science (HBSc) Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA)
Academic unit:	Department of Political Science
Academic Unit Contact:	Professor Steve Bernstein Chair, Department of Political Science chair.pol.utm@utoronto.ca
Faculty/academic division:	University of Toronto Mississauga
Faculty/academic division contact:	Professor William A. Gough Interim Vice-Principal, Academic & Dean vpdean.utm@utoronto.ca
Dean's Office contact:	Bryan Stewart Vice-Dean, Academic Programs vdacademicprog.utm@utoronto.ca

	Ferzeen Sammy Manager, Academic Programs, Reviews & Quality Assurance ferzeen.sammy@utoronto.ca
Version date:	February 21, 2025

1 Summary

- Please provide a brief summary of the certificate, including:
 - ▶ academic rationale for certificate
 - ▶ impetus for its development (including interest and demand)
 - ▶ how the certificate fits with unit/division’s academic plans
 - ▶ any important or distinctive elements.

The Department of Political Science (POL) proposes a Category 2 Certificate in Politics, Law, and Social Justice. In its first iteration, this certificate aims to enhance the academic experience of POL students who seek to concentrate their studies on these themes and problems. Over time, we aspire for the certificate to expand beyond our current students to attract and provide enhanced learning to others interested in these fields.

The certificate will consist of 2.0 credits, including one required course (0.5 credits) introducing students to the politics of social justice, followed by 1.5 credits in elective courses that students may choose from a list of pre-approved 300- and 400-level courses on themes of law, human rights, and political struggles for justice. We believe this certificate will respond directly to our students’ interest in, and need for, more concentrated coursework in these areas, and it will help them develop their critical analytic skills as students in our program and as political actors in the wider world.

This certificate also fits well with recent initiatives in our department, namely our active efforts to recruit – and recent successful hiring of – faculty who work on law, social movements, and human rights. It also corresponds to a result of our 2021 curriculum mapping exercise, during which we planned for several new related courses that we have since added to our departmental offerings.

Our proposed certificate also aligns well with at least three goals outlined in UTM’s Strategic Framework: (1) **Fostering Student Success.** Through this certificate our political science students interested in social justice, human rights, and the law will enhance their educational experience; orient their coursework around these themes; study with peers with similar interests; cultivate working relationships with affiliated faculty and explore independent research and collaboration opportunities; and acquire a degree designation signaling their thematic focus. Substantively, we will train them to think about pressing social and political questions via the tools of political science in preparation for the challenges facing tomorrow’s citizens. (2) **Empowering Research Discovery and Impact.** This certificate will enable our UTM undergraduates to form stronger working relationships with our faculty experts in social justice, human rights,

and the law and encourage prospective participation in their research projects. We see direct links to the existing and expected research of many of our faculty members who have an already strong record of supporting student engagement in related research, including through ROP courses and work-study positions. We also expect these research areas to expand as our new faculty advance their work (e.g., current faculty have active research programs in human rights, accountability, migration, social justice, international law, international Indigenous law, and housing and homelessness). Our students will play a strong role in this research activity. (3) **Encouraging Collaboration and Belonging.** This certificate is a direct outgrowth of our commitment to this strategic priority. Recently, we have made a concerted effort to diversify our faculty and curriculum, which prepares us to offer courses on problems of social justice, human rights, and the law. Specifically, by connecting questions about the law with those on social justice and human rights, the certificate responds precisely to the call for “enacting anti-racism and anti-oppression work as collective responsibilities and shared actions.”

Our department is singularly situated to provide a foundation for understanding the links among politics, law, and social justice not captured elsewhere at UTM. For example, we can provide students with a critical appreciation of how political and policy decisions underpin the law and how the law, rights, and conceptions of justice are informed by political struggles, decisions, and institutions. Thus, our proposed program will provide a unique academic experience for future lawyers, activists, politicians and policymakers, who will work at the intersection of these problems.

2 Effective Date

September 1, 2025

3 Academic Rationale

- What are the academic reasons for the certificate, and how does it fit with the unit/division’s academic plans?

We propose a new certificate comprising political science courses on social justice, human rights, and the law. This proposal builds on recent changes in our POL faculty complement as well as strong signs from our POL majors, minors, and specialists that they are interested in such a certificate and its offerings.

In the last five years, POL has actively recruited faculty with expertise in these themes and topic areas (e.g., Professors Naomi Adiv, Martha Balaguera, Geoffrey Dancy and Spyridon Kotsovilis). We have also completed a curriculum mapping exercise and major curriculum reform in response to our last UTQAP review in 2018. This effort,

along with our successful faculty recruitment, has yielded several new courses in these thematic areas of research, teaching, and scholarship.

Secondly, in 2021 we surveyed POL students, with “law and legal studies” emerging as the most popular request for new themed course offerings (See also Section 4 and Appendix C for more details.). Further, the long-established student “Political Science and Law Association” reflects many POL students’ goals of pursuing law degrees upon graduation. Subsequent to our faculty growth and curriculum development, we are strategically positioned to mentor and teach them effectively through a new certificate that situates law in dialogue with other relevant themes.

We believe a four-course (2.0 credits) certificate is an excellent way to respond to our students’ interests and needs. It will build on a successful 100-level course, POL116H5: Politics and Social Justice (developed and introduced by Professor Balaguera in 2022). Following this required gateway course, students will choose three elective courses from a curated list of offerings that explore questions and problems of social justice, human rights, and law across all political science subfields—Canadian and comparative politics, international relations, and political theory. This series of courses will help our students further refine their ability to think and react critically in response to pressing political problems and dilemmas.

The certificate will also open further opportunities for our students to pursue ROP coursework or work-study research with faculty working on these themes. Our intention is that the certificate will introduce students to our excellent faculty who conduct research on social justice, law, and human rights through required and elective coursework, and that it will help them establish working research relationships with these faculty. POL has also seeded a new relevant research initiative under Professor Dancy’s leadership for a Justice and Accountability institute, building on major research already underway in our department. We anticipate that the institute will provide yet another outlet for our students to develop and hone critical thinking, research, and collaboration skills.

We are also aware of the proposal for a new Focus in the Anthropology of Politics, Policy, and Law from the Department of Anthropology. We are excited about complementarities between the focus and our proposed Certificate, and we see many possible benefits for students who take advantage of both. In particular, students interested in political science and anthropological approaches would have the opportunity to gain multi-perspective understandings of related themes if they enrol in both programs.

Lastly, we see the long-term potential of this certificate to connect to our strategic departmental plans, which include a hiring priority (e.g., replacing a retired faculty position) for a colleague specializing in law and politics/or public policy. While the program will build on our existing strengths, we also see close connections to our plans for growth and development.

4 Need and Demand

- Provide a brief description of the projected interest in and demand for the proposed certificate.
- Provide details regarding the anticipated yearly in-take.

Our proposed certificate is open to all UTM students, but it is primarily aimed at current and prospective POL majors, minors, and specialists. Our work with them has provided some evidence that they will have strong interest in a program like the one we propose here.

First, in 2021, we conducted a student survey prior to our curriculum mapping and reform. Of note: of 178 student respondents (15% of POL students in 2021), roughly 50% selected “law and legal studies” as their top choice for future departmental growth areas (see p. 16, Appendix C). Survey findings also revealed many of our minors pursue major or specialist degrees in criminology and sociology, due to their stronger offerings in these areas. Therefore, supporting our political science students’ academic interest in legal studies is an important priority for us. In a curriculum mapping and reform retreat held in December 2021, our faculty discussed developing and shaping a certificate program to respond to our students’ stated interests.

Second, our students have also expressed interest in struggles for social justice, and related politics and policies. As noted in Section 3, Professor Martha Balaguera introduced a new 100-level course in politics and social justice in 2022, and it has been consistently well enrolled.

Our planned certificate will serve our students’ intellectual interests and needs. It will invite them to pursue a semi-structured sequence of courses illustrating how political scientists study human rights, law, and social justice problems while encouraging them to cultivate connections with expert faculty. We anticipate that some of this coursework experience may yield research opportunities for our POL students, either in ROP courses or work-study research positions. A “cohort effect” will also benefit these students, as they will routinely enrol in the same certificate-yielding classes with classmates who share their interests.

We estimate conservatively that roughly 10 students will enrol in the certificate each year. Based on our survey results, we found that about 89 expressed a strong interest in law and legal studies (which divides into roughly 22 students per year). The proposed certificate has simple requirements and will include a first-year course that enrolls at least 200 students per year. With recruitment from that course (and related courses), we anticipate that we can enrol at least 10 students the first year and maintain or slightly increase that intake each year. This would result in a steady state of about 30-40 students enrolled each year.

5 Admission Requirements

- Provide the admission requirements for the certificate.

Enrolment in the certificate program is open to all undergraduate students completing programs at UTM.

6 Program Requirements

- This certificate will consist of a coherent sequence of for-credit undergraduate courses related to an identified topic or theme that may complement the degree program.
- Describe the academic requirements of the certificate and mechanism for the assessment of student performance.
- Clarify the certificate program length.
- Is this certificate linked to a particular undergraduate program or degree? Please explain the relationship.
- Please provide a calendar copy in Appendix B.

The certificate will consist of 2.0 total credits: one required 100-level H course (0.5 credits) on politics and social justice, followed by an additional 1.5 credits of course electives to be selected from a designated group of 300- and 400-level courses.

Required course:

POL116H5: Politics and Social Justice—This course provides an introductory overview of political struggles for justice locally, nationally, and globally.

This course will provide a foundation for students and prepare them to take more specialized courses. They will learn and apply the basic tools of political science analysis to a range of empirical cases of political struggles for justice.

After completing this course, students may satisfy the other 1.5 credits required for the certificate from a list of approved 300- and 400-level courses within POL. (Courses below have prerequisites that must be met/completed.):

POL309Y5: The State, Planning, and Markets
POL318H5: Power and Conflict in Federalism
POL322H5: The Idea of Human Rights
POL323H5: The Practice of Human Rights
POL340Y5: International Law
POL362H5: Border, Migrants, and Refugees
POL367H5: Feminist Political Theory
POL368H5: Gender and Politics
POL373H5: Politics of the Middle East and North Africa

POL407H5: The Politics of Oil and Mining Extraction: Contracts, Conflict, Consent
POL414H5: The Future of Work
POL444H5: Protest and Revolution in the Middle East and North Africa
POL445H5: Politics of Queer and Trans Migration
POL447H5: Collective Action and Political Change
POL448H5: Protest and Social Movements in Comparative and Transnational Perspective
POL475H5: Global Environmental and Sustainability Politics

300- and 400-level special topics courses may also qualify depending on the topic offered in a given term. This will require department-level approval.

While some of these courses address specific topics and areas of study beyond the themes of the certificate, all courses listed above, and their learning outcomes, are designed to support deeper inquiry into problems of law and social justice as well as the proposed learning outcomes in Appendix A.

Student performance in these courses will be assessed by course assignments designed to improve their critical and analytic skills, their oral presentation skills, and their argumentative and analytic writing skills. These assessments include but are not limited to in-class debates, research papers, critical reflection papers, and creative final projects/accompanying analytic papers.

7 Consultation

- Outline any consultation undertaken with the Dean and chair/director of the relevant academic units and relevant programs.

In 2023, Professor Steven Bernstein (Chair), Professor Emily Nacol (Associate Chair, Academic), and Ms. Kristina McCutcheon (Academic Advisor) consulted Professor Marc Dryer in his capacity as Associate Dean, Academic Programs, and Ms. Yen Du in her capacity as Manager, Academic Programs. Discussions of content and program design were then managed by an ad hoc committee in the Department of Political Science. This committee included Professor Emily Nacol (in her capacity as Associate Chair) and Professors Martha Balaguera, Geoffrey Dancy, and Spyridon Kotsovilis, whose courses are key to the certificate's structure and success. We also have held periodic discussions about the certificate and its development in department meetings and retreats.

8 Resources

- Describe any resource requirements including, but not limited to, faculty complement, space, libraries and enrolment/admissions.

- Indicate if the certificate will affect any existing agreements with other institutions, or will require the creation of a new agreement to facilitate the certificate (e.g., Memorandum of Understanding, Memorandum of Agreement, etc.). Please consult with the Provost’s Office (vp.academicprograms@utoronto.ca) regarding any implications to existing or new agreements.

The certificate will not draw any additional resource requirements in terms of faculty complement or facilities. It comprises course offerings taught by current faculty in our existing facilities, and it thus far does not require the creation of any new courses or additional teaching resources, including teaching assistants. The administration of the certificate (eligibility checks for students, maintenance and updating of eligible courses and completion requirements as part of the normal curriculum review process) will be administered by Ms. Kristina McCutcheon, our department’s academic advisor. These duties will fall within her current workload. The certificate does not affect existing agreements with other institutions.

9 Oversight & Accountability: Review

- Category 2 certificates are subject to periodic reviews with the relevant undergraduate program. Please provide details. This will be tracked by the VPAP Office.

The certificate will be housed in the political science (POL) department, so the POL unit will have the administrative and academic responsibilities to 1) review and perform regular updates to the list of eligible courses and 2) review the academic quality of the certificate along with the mandated review of its academic programs.

10 Process Steps & Approvals

The pathway is summarized in the table below.

	Approving Body	Approval Date
Development & Consultation within Unit	Steven Bernstein Chair, Political Science	February 21, 2025
Consultation with Dean’s Office (and VPAP)	Bryan Stewart Vice-Dean, Academic Programs	February 21, 2025
	VPAP sign-off	February 21, 2025
Divisional Governance Approval	UTM Academic Affairs Committee	
Submission to Provost’s Office		

AP&P (report)	
---------------	--

Appendix A: Proposed Learning Outcomes

Certificates offered in conjunction with an undergraduate program will have a subset of complementary learning outcomes in relation to the program. Divisions are responsible for developing the outcomes and expectations for certificates in the context of divisional norms. Please outline in the table below how the design, structure, requirements and delivery of the certificate support the certificate learning outcomes and expectations.

Certificate Expectations	Certificate Learning Outcomes	How the Design/Structure Supports the Certificate Expectations
Depth and Breadth of Knowledge	<p>LO1: Identify and explain some of the key struggles for social justice studied by political scientists today (Breadth of Knowledge)</p> <p>LO2: Identify and explain key problems of social and political justice and their relationships to law, political institutions, and political movements. (Depth of knowledge that will add focus and concentration to their POL major, minor, or specialist programs.)</p>	<p>The “foundation course” required of all participants (POL116H5) is specifically designed to give students an overview of a broad range of struggles for social justice in local, national, and international political contexts. (LO1)</p> <p>In choosing electives, students may opt to focus on courses in law, human rights, social movements, or institutional design that offer different approaches to the pursuit of social justice. They may choose to approach this from a breadth or depth perspective (LO1 and LO2).</p>
Application of Knowledge	<p>LO3: Students will learn to interpret and critically evaluate key arguments and debates in political science literature on the core topics of the certificate. This will extend, too, to their critical evaluation of problems as they unfold in our own political contexts.</p>	<p>The range of courses affiliated with the certificate allow our students to build a selection of courses that will give them the theoretical and analytical tools to critically evaluate substantive arguments and debates in social justice, human rights, and the law in a range of political contexts and settings. The selection of courses provides students with</p>

	<p>LO4: Students will learn the basic contours of a political science-approach to studying problems in social justice, human rights, and law well enough to begin formulating their own research questions and puzzles.</p>	<p>opportunities to concentrate on particular themes (e.g., law, or human rights) /or to study how these debates play out in specific regions or settings (e.g., the Middle East, the workplace). (LO3) Because we concentrate offerings at the 300- and 400-level, students will have more advanced assessments that encourage them to think critically and produce their own knowledge (e.g. in-class debates, research papers). (LO4)</p>
<p>Autonomy and Professional Capacity</p>	<p>LO5: This certificate is aimed at helping our students learn to identify and critically evaluate the key struggles for social justice in political life today. It will equip them with the analytical tools of political science to help them critically assess these struggles, which will prepare them for graduate study in a range of fields (political science, law, and public policy) and for practicing effective global citizenship.</p>	<p>Each of the courses in this certificate will both educate students in substantive areas of political inquiry and teach them to use the tools and approaches of political science to analyze them. Students can take this training forward with them to common fields of graduate study, but it will also orient them to better critical practices of global citizenship. (LO5)</p>

Appendix B: Proposed Calendar Copy

Certificate in Politics, Law and Social Justice

Description:

The Certificate in Politics, Law and Social Justice is open to students interested in social justice, human rights, and the law. The 2.0 credit requirement will permit students to orient their coursework around these themes; study with peers with similar interests, cultivate working relationships with affiliated faculty and explore independent research and collaboration opportunities; and acquire a transcript notation signaling their thematic focus. Substantively, this certificate will train students to think about pressing social political questions via the tools of political science in preparation for the challenges facing tomorrow's citizens.

Enrolment Requirements:

Enrolment in the certificate program is open to all students completing programs at UTM.

Completion Requirements:

2.0 credits are required.

1. Foundation: POL116H5

2. 1.5 credits to be chosen from the following list: POL309Y5, POL318H5, POL322H5, POL323H5, POL340Y5, POL362H5, POL367H5, POL367H5, POL368H5, POL373H5, POL407H5, POL414H5, POL444H5, POL445H5, POL447H5, POL448H5, POL475H5

Notes:

- (1) Additional courses may be required to fulfill prerequisites for electives.
- (2) Additional courses, including special topics courses in POL, may have sufficient related content to be eligible for the certificate. Students must receive permission from the Academic Advisor prior to course enrolment.

Appendix C: 2021 POL Student Survey Report

Political Science Student Survey Summary Report

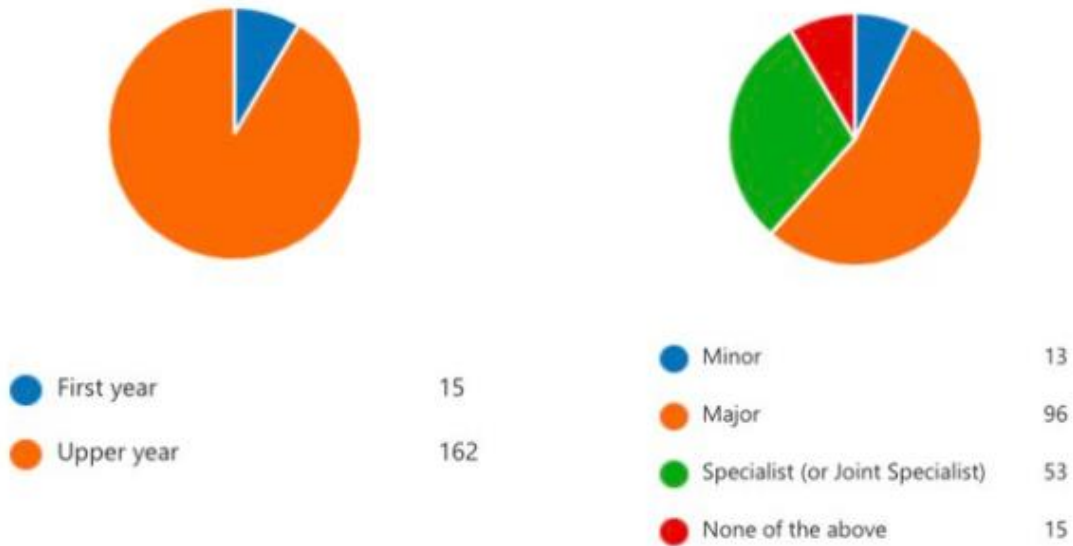
December 2021

The intention of the student survey was to gain better understanding of undergraduate students' experience in the Department of Political Science, their hopes for the future of the program, and any recommendations to improve the program and the department.

The survey was sent to all political science students by the POL undergraduate advisor. The incentive to get students to respond was a lucky draw to win either one of ten hoodies or an Amazon Fire tablet.

A social media post and an information slide for professors to share, were created and distributed to the needed platforms.

A total of 178 students responded to the survey. This makes up roughly 15% of political science students.



Political science minors responded that they are majors or specialists in Philosophy; Criminology, Law and Society; Environmental Law and Policy; Sociology; Geography; and Education Studies.

Political science majors responded that they are majors, minors, or specialists in English; Sociology; Criminology, Law and Society; Professional Writing and Communication (PWC); Communication, Culture, Information and Technology (CCIT); and Economics.

Political science specialists responded that they are minors or majors in Economics; Philosophy; History; Environmental Law and Policy; Sociology; Geography; and Education Studies.

105 of the respondents had completed more than 4.0 credits in POL at the point of the survey. Some favourite courses listed by students at the point of the survey include, but are not limited to: POL111H5, POL114H5, POL209H5, POL200Y5, POL215H5, POL210H5, POL369H5, POL336H5, POL340Y5, POL346H5, POL490H5.

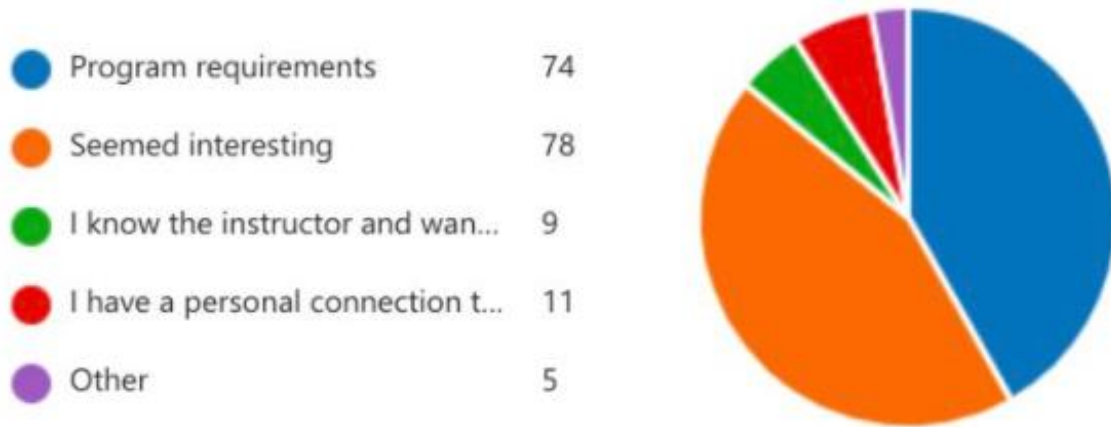
To gain some general understanding of how engaged students are with POL outside of classes, we asked students about whether they are connected with UTM POL on social media. Majority of students, 139 of them, said they follow UTM POL on Instagram, 32 said they followed on Twitter, 25 on LinkedIn, and 22 on Facebook. This result can encourage the POL department to invest more time on Instagram to stay connected with the student body and make the department more accessible to students.

My recommendation for social media would be to make at least one post a week or two weeks, featuring alumni, faculty, services, unknown or cool facts, events, etc. We can also have a potential 'question of the week' about a certain current affair in politics around the world, and film faculty or students provide a 10 second response to post on Instagram Stories. This would allow students to engage with faculty outside of classrooms and emails.

On a scale of one to five, students responded mostly level four and five for how much they are enjoying the political science program. One being the lowest and five the highest. Similarly, students said level four and five for how supportive they found instructors in teaching course material, how the political science program met their expectations when they enrolled, and how interesting they find their courses.

Students' level of engagement and method of learning has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. So, we asked students if since starting at UTM, whether their POL courses been virtual or in-person. About half the respondents said their classes have been mostly virtual, the next biggest section of respondents said half in-person, half-online, the remaining said mostly in-person. This result suggests that even though most students that participated in the survey have had their classes online, levels of engagement with course material and instructors remain high.

Below are the reasons for why they chose their POL courses.

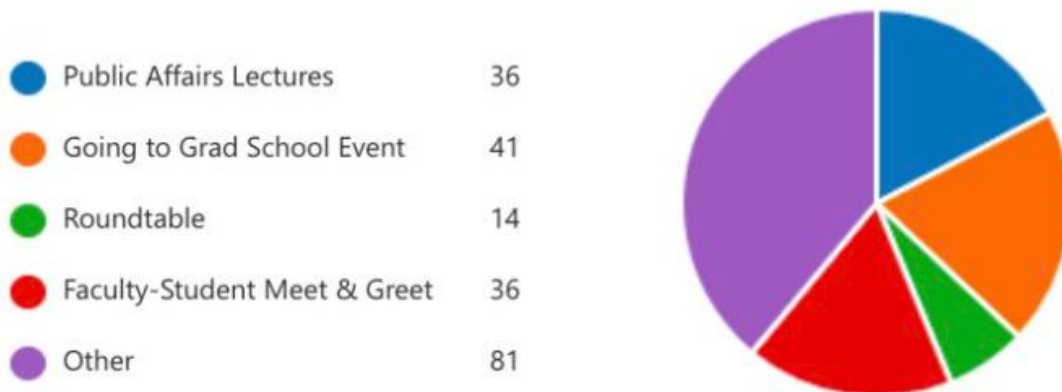


We asked the students in what ways can courses be more interesting for them. Below is a list of the most common answers compiled together.

- Diversity of perspectives from other areas in the worlds (including scholarly work from different parts of the world). Greater discussions of intersectionality, and diversity in course work/lecture activities.
- Field trips
- Having guest speakers in lectures (from those in the field of political science outside of UTM).
- Greater research opportunities.
- More interactive and creative assignments.
- A discussion-based approach to learning.
- Connecting the course content to real-world situations to develop better understanding.
- Diversity in courses offered, such as politics of other countries, regions, communities, etc.

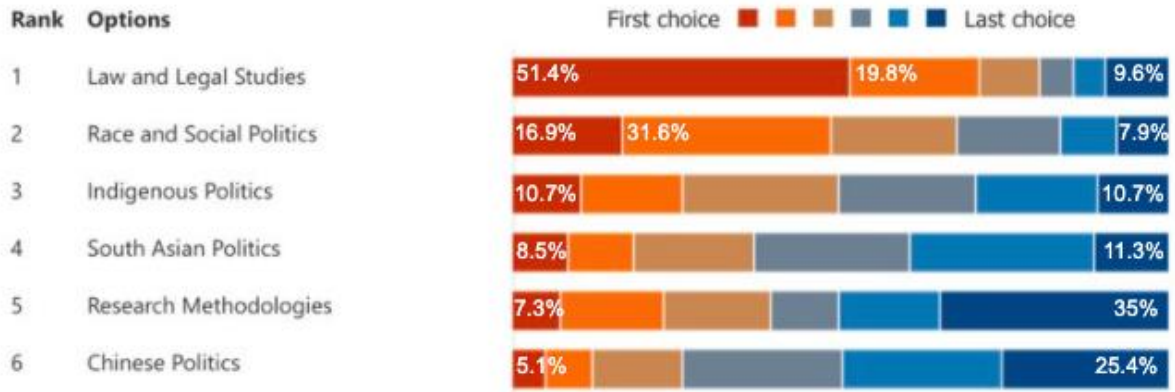
Most respondents, 148 of them, did not take any courses at UTSG or UTSC since starting at UTM; 29 said they have.

When asked if they had attended any events by POL, the following are the results:

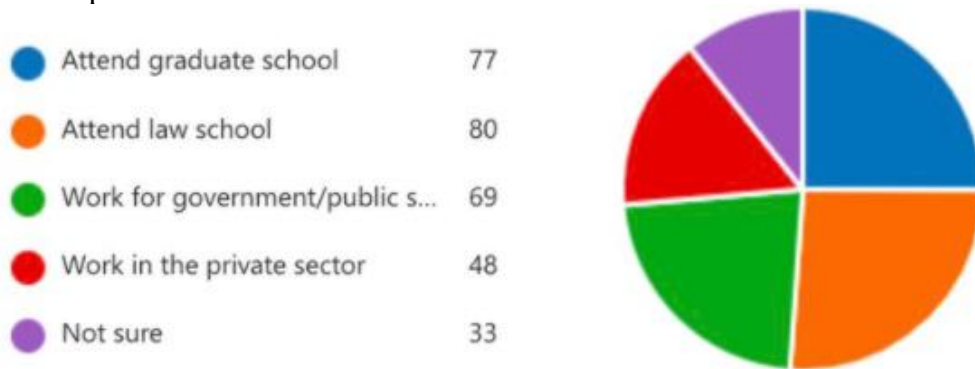


Most students in this survey had attended a POL event.

We asked the students to rank six options of areas in which we should offer more courses in. These options were from a pre-selected list and students only had to rank them in order of preference.



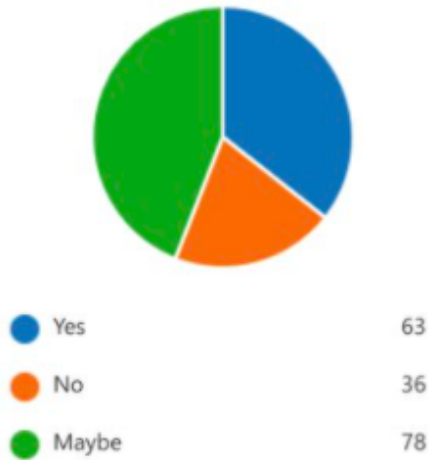
“Law and legal studies” was the majority first choice for the respondents. Research methodologies, although ranked fifth overall, had the highest number of respondents select it as their last choice. The choice for more law and legal studies courses is supported by the respondents’ post-graduation hopes, wherein a large portion of them want to pursue law.



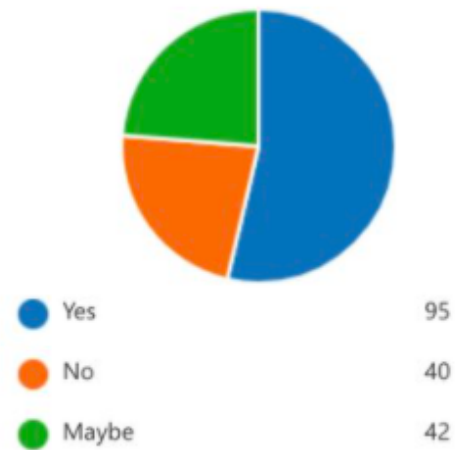
To garner general interest in either a POL student podcast or student journal, we asked students if they are interested in submitting work, or in other areas of the publications.

For a student journal:

Interested in submitting work

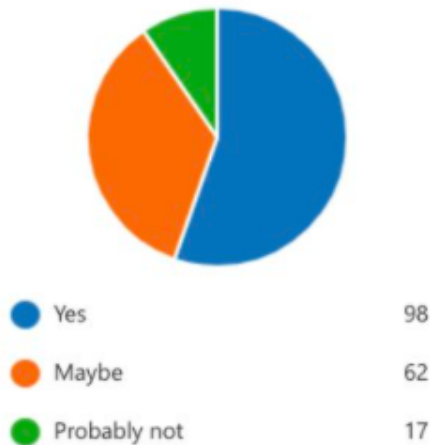


Interested in other areas (e.g. peer reviewing, editing, publishing, etc)



For the podcast:

Interested in listening, with guests including students, professors, politicians and journalists?

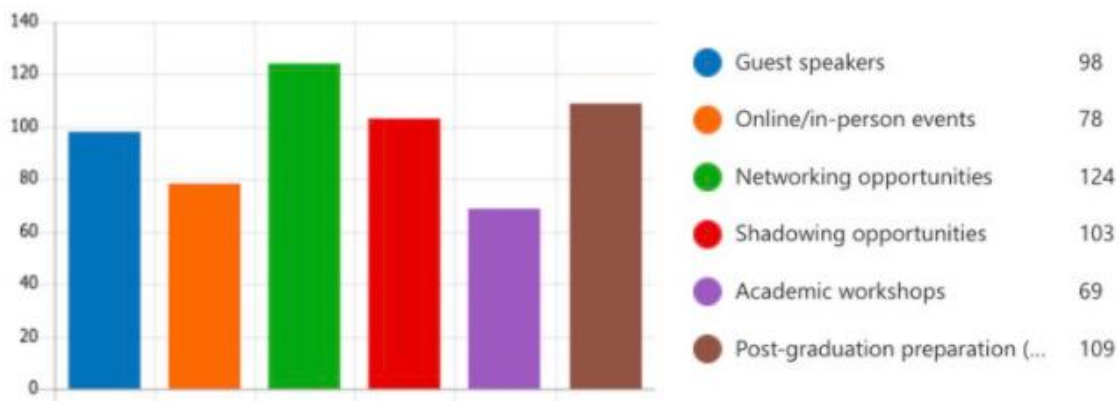


Interested in other areas (e.g. interviewing, recording publishing, etc)



These results suggest that most students have a keen interest in either submitting or contributing to a podcast or student journal. These two opportunities would allow to students to engage with POL outside the classroom, and network with peers, faculty members, and other professionals in the field. It would allow space to explore individual interests within the political science field, as we saw many students are also majors, minors, or specialists in English, PWC, Economics, CCIT, etc. We would need to find groups of students who would be keen to form an editorial team or publishing team to work together to get these started. For a podcast, creating a POL Spotify or Apple Music account is the best way forward. Minimal equipment is required. A small microphone, and a sound editing software like GarageBand is all that is needed on the technical side.

We asked students what they hope to see more of in the POL program out of a set list including guest speakers, online/in-person events, networking opportunities, shadowing opportunities, academic workshops, and post-graduation preparation.



Lastly, we asked students what resources they would like to see from the POL department.



Final remarks and recommendations for the program have been compiled together in a short list, based on general thematic responses.

- More of a focus on non-western political thinkers and theorists. Diversifying scholarly work studied.
- More ROP or Co-op opportunities.
- Mental health preparedness and flexibility be built into the structure and system of courses, and the general approach of instruction.
- More female or racialized faculty.
- More clarity on program requirements
- Semester courses rather than year courses.