

Seminar Pre-registration for Majors

Political Science seminars normally require instructor approval of applicants. Majors, especially in their junior and senior years, have priority for admission to seminars, but can not be guaranteed acceptance into any particular one. They can however increase their chances of being admitted through the pre-registration process.

In order to participate in pre-registration a student must already have declared Political Science as a major at the time when the process starts. Students can declare through SIS.

In July, before the Fall semester, and in November before the coming Spring semester, the undergraduate registrar sends out, via e-mail, essential pre-registration information and instructions. These go out exclusively to declared majors. Attached will be a list of seminars open to pre-registration in the coming term. The list will include an expanded course description and pre-requisites if there are any.

If a seminar does not appear on this list, it means the instructor has not chosen to participate in the pre-registration process.

Also attached will be an Excel form to be filled out carefully, thoroughly, and accurately, by a specified deadline. The form has a drop-down box that allows a choice and ranking of up to four seminars. Here majors are also asked to provide useful information about why they would like to participate in each seminar chosen and why they can contribute significantly to it. Instructors, using this information as well as other considerations, can admit a limited number of students at this point. They can pre-register up to 12 majors in most seminars, but only 8 for seminars that are cross-listed with another department or offered as a graduate course. (See below for information about admission to remaining open spots.)

After students submit their forms, the information is then distributed to the faculty members offering seminars. Instructors then send back to the undergraduate registrar their lists of students they have accepted into their seminars. Sometimes students are accepted into two or even more seminars. Because they can be pre-registered in no more than two seminars, the registrar will assign them to the two highest ranked of the students' choices.

Pre-registration guarantees a place in a seminar only to students who attend the first class meeting. If the student fails to appear at the first class, the instructor is free to make the place available to another student. Students who decide not to take a seminar in which they are pre-registered should inform the instructor of this by e-mail immediately after deciding so the place can be offered to another student.

Unfortunately, because the number seeking entrance into a seminar often exceeds the number of places open at the time of pre-registration, some students may not succeed in getting pre-registered in a preferred seminar. But because some pre-registrants may decline the offer of participation in one or perhaps even both of the seminars they were admitted to, instructors who created wait-lists from their applicant pools may admit students who they had not chosen initially. Also, and more important, all seminar spots are not assigned through pre-registration, as explained above. This means that students are strongly urged to keep trying to gain admission during the regular shopping period.