A Guide to Undergraduate Study in Politics

For Information on Requirements for the Major or Minor, Courses Offered, the Politics Society, the Politics Honors Program, Pi Sigma Alpha, Internships, Readings & Research, and Much More!

January 2016

Department of Politics
New York University
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Contacting the Politics Undergraduate Office

The undergraduate office is located at 19 West 4th Street. You can reach the office by entering on West 4th and taking the elevator to the 2nd Floor.

Emily Mitchell-Marell is the academic advisor for all Politics and IR majors. The advisement office is located at room 232 and is open from 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 5:00pm. You can come by, or email the advisor at politics.undergrads@nyu.edu. The undergraduate advisor, Emily Mitchell-Marell, can help you with the following:

- Declaring a major or minor
- Course clearance and registration
- Special permission for courses
- Transfer credit
- Study abroad approval

For a complete listing of politics department classes, advisement hours and other information, see http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/politics/undergrad/undergrad_requirements.shtml.

Emily Mitchell-Marell
Academic Advisor, Department of Politics
e-mm9@nyu.edu
212 992 8694
19 West 4th, Room 232

Requirements for the Politics Major

General Requirements

The major in politics provides students with the opportunity to explore political science both broadly (across five fields of study: Analytical Politics, Political Theory, American Politics, Comparative Politics, and International Politics) and deeply (through concentration in a single field of study).

The course requirements for Politics majors are:

1. 10 four-credit Politics courses (with a POL-UA course number) with a grade of C or better.
2. Of these 10 courses at least 2 must be chosen from among the four “core” courses – Political Theory (POL-UA 100), Power and Politics in America (POL-UA 300), Comparative Politics (POL-UA 500), and International Politics (POL-UA 700). Most advanced courses have the associated core course or courses as a prerequisite and thus it is a good idea to take core courses as a freshman or sophomore.
3. At least 1 course must be taken in three of the five fields: Analytical Politics, Political Theory, American Politics, Comparative Politics, and International Politics.
4. No more than 5 courses (for a total of 20 credits) taken through transfer credit and/or NYU Study Abroad may count towards the major. AP credits are counted as transfer credits.
5. No more than 3 courses (for a total of 12 credit) taken in NYU Study Abroad programs (courses numbered POL-UA 9xxx) may count towards the major.
Requirements for the Politics Minor

The minor requires 5 four-credit courses (20 credits) in the department (courses with a POL-UA number) completed with a grade of C or better. The department requires that half of the minor be completed at CAS. NYU study abroad and/or transfer credits can be applied to the minor, not to exceed half of the required credits. AP credits are counted as transfer credits. A minor program may reflect a special emphasis in one of the department’s five fields.

What Counts as a Politics Course?

Transfer Credit for Students from LSP
Students transferring from LSP can get “generic” politics credit, POL-UA 000, for 4 points towards the major or minor, for completing Social Foundation I and II in LSP. However, you will still need to take at least two core courses (the four core courses are: POL-UA 100, POL-UA 300, POL-UA 500, POL-UA 700).

Other Transfer Credit
To receive transfer credit from another college or university outside of NYU towards the politics major or minor, students must submit copies of the syllabi for the relevant courses as well as a transcript from the other institution to the undergraduate advisors. Note that all courses must first be approved by the College of Arts and Sciences.

AP Credit in Politics
Students with AP credit in politics can get “generic” politics credit, POL-UA 000, towards the major or minor. Only AP credits in government and comparative politics (not history and statistics) can be counted toward the major/minor. However, AP credit cannot be substituted for a core course in Politics. AP credits are counted as transfer credits.

Non Politics Department Courses at NYU
Only if they have a POL-UA number (are officially cross-listed), and are not counted towards another major or minor, courses offered by other departments can be counted towards the major or minor. NYU courses without a POL-UA number do not count towards the major or minor.

Getting Into Closed Classes
Generally, when a politics course closes enrollment, students can join wait lists for a place in the class. We do not allow students to be placed into classes ahead of the waitlist. Since most classes are closed due to space constraints and fire codes, it is extremely rare for a student to be added to such a class.

Handling Grade Disputes or Problems in a Class
If you have a problem in a Politics class (either in grading or otherwise) you should first try to address the problem through discussions with the instructor. If this fails to resolve the issue, you should
submit a formal complaint via email to politics.undergrads@nyu.edu. Please note that email received at this address is not distributed to the faculty.

**Information for Politics Majors Who Wish to Study Abroad**

We encourage all politics majors and minors to consider at least one semester abroad, especially in London, Florence OR Washington, DC where the department offers excellent courses. However, it is important to be careful in choosing which courses to take abroad, and when to schedule a semester abroad. Below are things you should consider:

- **Only POL-UA courses count:**
  - If studying abroad at an NYU program, only those courses with a V53 designation count towards the politics major. If a course has a title or a description that sounds like it is about “politics” but does not have a POL-UA designation, it will not count towards the major or minor.

- **Maximum Number of Courses:**
  - Only 3 four-point courses taken in NYU Study Abroad programs (courses designated POL-UA 9xxx) may be counted towards the major.
  - No more than 5 four-point courses taken as transfer credit and/or NYU Study Abroad courses may count towards the major.

- **Non-NYU Program:**
  - If studying abroad at a non-NYU program, the courses taken will be treated as transfer credit. Students should get approval for courses before going abroad if they wish for them to count towards the Politics major. Students should get approval from the Dean’s office (Silver, 9th floor) before seeing the advisors in the department (Room 232).

**Field Seminars and Graduate Courses**

**Field Seminars**

Undergraduate field seminars are offered in each field each year. They are advanced seminars for juniors and seniors who are politics majors. Students must have completed four courses in politics, one of which must be the core course in the field of the seminar. They must also have a 3.0 cumulative average or the permission of the instructor. Enrollment is limited to 20 students each.

**Honors Seminars**

These are advanced seminars for juniors and seniors. Non-honors students can take them, but they must have a 3.5 cumulative average. Students must have completed four courses in politics, one of which must be the core course in the field of the seminar. Enrollment is limited to 20 students.

**Graduate Courses for Undergraduates**

To register for a graduate class in politics, undergraduate students must request permission from the instructor of the course and the Director of Graduate Studies. Students should see Carlos Rios in the Department of Politics, email carlos.rios@nyu.edu.
Internships and Readings and Research

 Maximum Points

Students cannot take more than 8 points of independent study and/or internship in the Department of Politics. Both independent study courses and internships require special permission as specified below.

Readings and Research Classes

Description of Readings and Research Class, from the CAS Bulletin:

POL-UA 990 - Readings and Research. 2 or 4 points. Prerequisite: written approval of student's departmental adviser, instructor, and director of undergraduate studies. Students with a 3.0 average in at least three previous politics courses are permitted to carry on supervised individual readings and research. Please note that this course does NOT count toward the Politics major or minor.

A student should choose a topic in consultation with an instructor. An appropriate length of the final paper should be 12+ pages for a 2-credit hours and 20+ pages for 4-credit hours. The project should not be solely a book report, chronology of events, or unsupported opinion. The paper should include multiple sources, facts, interpretations, and viewpoints of the student. Students must submit an application (page 14 of this handbook) along with one-page description of the proposed project. The application must include a signature of approval from the proposed faculty.

Internships in Politics

Internships do NOT count toward the major or minor. To register for an internship you must be either a major or minor in politics and have 3.0 overall GPA. You must also have completed two of the following courses: POL-UA 100, POL-UA 300, POL-UA 500, or POL-UA 700, and have permission of the department internship advisor.

Please note that the politics department does not advertise or recruit students for internships. Students should secure an internship before meeting with the internship advisor. The Department posts internship information on our website and on the internship bulletin board in the department. The sponsoring firm or organization may not give you a salary, but is allowed to reimburse you for personal expenses. This means that the sponsoring firm or organization may pay you for your independent study credits, but the check must be made out to NYU. The sponsoring firm or organization must provide a designated supervisor for your activities and that person must indicate to us the hours that you are to work, the tasks you are to perform, and how your performance will be assessed by them. Please use the form provided by the Department (on page 15 of this handbook) for this purpose. At the end of the internship the designated supervisor must fill out a second form from the Department assessing your work, kinds of tasks you performed, and how your performance was assessed by the organization.

No credit taken for an internship counts towards the fulfillment of your credit requirements to major or minor in politics. You may register for either 2 or 4 credits of internship. If you choose 4 credits, you will be expected to work 8-12 hours a week at your internship and submit a 20-page paper to your advisor; if you choose 2 credits, then you should work at least 6 hours a week and submit a 10-page paper.

Applications for internships to be completed during the Fall semester are due no later than September 30. Applications for internships to be completed during the Spring semester are due no later than January 30. Application forms are found at the back of this handbook (page 15).
American Political Practice and Leadership

American Political Practice and Leadership is a track designed to offer Politics majors the opportunity to gain skills and experience in applied American politics via a study-away semester at NYU-Washington DC, while acquiring the substantive, analytical understanding of U.S. politics provided by American politics courses offered at NYU Washington Square.

While at NYUDC, students gain expertise in political practice and leadership through coursework and a supervised, semester-long internship in the government, political, or non-profit sectors. At the Washington Square campus, students acquire the same training as other Politics majors who specialize in American Politics. The track is available to Politics majors only. Students completing the track are presented a certificate at an awards reception hosted by the Politics Department.

Requirements
1. Successful completion of Power and Politics in America (POL-UA 300) at the Washington Square campus.
2. Satisfactory completion of an internship with a domestic policy focus during the student’s period of study at NYUDC, as well as successful completion of the Internship Seminar & Fieldwork course at the NYUDC campus.
3. Satisfactory completion of three upper division courses in American Politics. At least one of these three courses must be taken at NYUDC, and at least one must be taken at the Washington Square campus. Also, at least one of the three upper division courses must be in a sub-field related to the student’s internship. Consult the Politics Department’s Undergraduate Academic Advisor for an up-to-date list of qualifying courses.

Student Organizations

The Politics Society
The Politics Society is an undergraduate organization, which gives Politics students the opportunity to take an active role in the shaping of their department. Geared towards strengthening the department, the Politics Society allows students to voice opinions on faculty, classes, advising and events. The Politics Society schedules meetings during the semester and all majors are encouraged to participate in the society. The society is divided into four committees, each with a specific purpose to enhance students’ experiences as Politics majors and minors: Faculty, Curriculum, Advising, and Programs/Internships.
Pi Sigma Alpha, the National Politics Honor Society

NYU’s Politics Department Beta Eta Chapter invites qualified students to join Pi Sigma Alpha, the National Political Science Honor Society. To join, an undergraduate student must be a major in Politics or International Relations, have completed 12 points in Politics Department courses (courses numbered with POL-UA), have a 3.5 GPA in the major, and a 3.3 GPA overall. There is a one-time only membership fee of $35 payable (check, no cash accepted) to the national organization. Please see the web site at http://www.apsanet.org/~psa/ for more information.

The Politics Honors Program

Admission to and completion of the Honors Program in Politics requires a GPA of at least 3.65, both overall and in the major. In the spring semester of their sophomore year, politics majors with at least a 3.65 GPA will be invited to an informational meeting about the Honors Program and will be advised of the course requirements for admission to the Honors Program. Application to the Honors Program takes place in the spring of the junior year.

Admission to and completion of the Politics Department Honors program requires the following:

1. Applications are due by March 1 in the spring of the junior year. Application requirements include:
   i. 3.65 GPA both overall and in politics courses.
   ii. Completion of Quantitative Methods for Political Science (POL-UA 800).
   iii. One Economics course (either Micro or Macro Economics), in addition to POL-UA 800 to apply.

   Admission to the Honors program will permit students to register for the fall Senior Honors Seminar I (POL-UA 950), during which students will prepare a research proposal for their senior thesis.

2. Completion of the Senior Honors Seminar I (POL-UA 950) in the fall of the senior year.
3. Completion of the Senior Honors Seminar II (POL-UA 951) in the spring semester of the senior year, during which students will finish the research for and write their honors thesis. The instructor teaching the Senior Honors seminar will, under ordinary circumstances, be the first reader of the theses for students registered in the class. Occasionally, another faculty member may serve as first reader and the instructor of the seminar will serve as second reader.

4. Participation in the Politics Honors Research Conference, to be held in April of the senior year. At the Research Conference each thesis will be read and discussed by a second faculty member, who will serve as the second reader for the thesis.

5. Approval of the honors thesis by both the instructor teaching Senior Honors II and the second reader of the thesis. Theses will be approved for honors if they merit a grade of at least A-, as determined by the first and second readers.

6. Maintenance of a GPA of at least 3.65 both overall and in politics courses. The overall GPA requirement may be waived provided it is at least 3.5.

7. Completion of all other Politics Department major requirements. The honors major requires a total of 10 courses (40 credits). Senior Honors Seminars I and II (POL-UA 950 and POL-UA 951), Quantitative Methods (POL-UA 800) and Field Seminars and Honors Seminars count toward the required 10 courses. To clarify any doubts you may have, please contact advisors at politics.undergrads@nyu.edu.

Students successfully completing the Honors Program will receive a degree with Honors, High Honors, or Highest Honors, as determined by the Department’s Honors Committee, taking into consideration both the quality of the thesis and the student’s record in the Honors Program.

Honors Thesis Guidelines

The following are guidelines for a typical empirical thesis. Those honors students writing normative theses can obtain relevant guidelines in Senior Honors I. Also note that while there are no absolute length requirements, the norm is approximately 40-60 pages.

1. Question
   Your thesis should propose an open question or aim at an explanation of an already observed phenomenon that you believe requires an explanation given the generally accepted background understandings.

2. Literature review
   Your thesis should review the relevant academic literature concerning your question. In what ways does the existing literature not address your question adequately or completely?

3. Primary explanation and testable hypotheses
   You must articulate a logically coherent explanation for the phenomenon of interest, starting with any premises generally acknowledged to be true in the existing literature. If the empirical question you are asking does not have a generally acknowledged answer, you must supply that answer, carefully specifying the procedure that yields it. You then need to derive from your explanation testable hypotheses, which can be assessed in the light of either available data or data you gather yourself.

4. Alternative explanations
   As far as possible, your thesis should examine and reject the testable hypotheses which may be derived from competing explanations.

5. Description of data
   You will need to provide a precise description of the data which you are using to assess the alternative hypotheses. This should include a detailed description of your observations as well as all dependent and independent variables.
While testing explanations and the hypotheses that they imply is much easier when one is dealing with data which can be quantified and analyzed statistically, not all explanations can be so tested. Even if the explanations you are working with do not lend themselves to statistical tests, you may be able to consider the counterfactual arguments that can be adduced in support of these explanations as well as the fit of the additional inferences that can be made from them with the available evidence and conceptual premises accepted generally and/or implied by your explanations.

6. Results
Your thesis should report the results of your tests, along with the appropriate levels of confidence that you have in those results (e.g., confidence levels in statistical analyses, the number of observations that were available for testing your explanations, the quality of data, including coding used, etc.).

7. Conclusion
Your thesis should conclude with a discussion of the significance of your work, the limitations of your work, and its implications for further research.

The International Relations Major

The International Relations Major is an entirely separate major from the Politics major and has an entirely separate set of requirements. For information please go to www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/politics or see Emily Mitchell-Marell, the advisor for IR.

Help for Students in Politics Classes

Tutoring for Politics Classes
Located in Weinstein Residence Hall and with hours that extend well into the evening, the College Learning Center (Weinstein Residence Hall, 1st Floor, 998-8808) offers a variety of services designed to help students realize their fullest academic potential, such as group study sessions in support of specific politics courses, individual review sessions in areas not covered by group sessions, and study skills workshops. There are two computer rooms—one equipped for language instruction and both connected to the Internet, including the World-Wide Web. In addition, the Center houses outposts of the Writing Center and of NYU Speaking Freely, and its staff can make referrals to other sources of help.

Henry & Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities
The Center (31 West 4th Street) facilitates equal access to the programs and activities of the College and NYU. Matters relating to students who visit the Center are strictly confidential. Services cover a wide range of disabling conditions. In addition to working with students who have mobility, visual, and hearing impairments, the Center assists a significant number of students with learning disabilities and many others with chronic impairments, such as diabetes, cancer, HIV infection, psychiatric illness, head trauma, and seizure disorders. The Moses Center is staffed by a group of specialists who have a wealth of experience in helping students obtain necessary academic adjustments and accommodations based upon individual needs. In order to receive services from the Center, students must provide appropriate documentation.
The Writing Center

The Writing Center is a place where one-on-one teaching and learning occur, where the work always focuses on writing. Experienced consultants will assist NYU students, faculty, and staff with their writing at any stage in their writing processes. We work with writers on essays, lab reports, personal statements, poems, stories, and other written texts. Writers may schedule one appointment per week, up to two weeks ahead of time, using our on-line scheduling system. A second weekly appointment is available on a walk-in basis. Appointments normally are 45 minutes in length.

The Writing Center is a part of NYU’s Expository Writing Program. We are located at 411 Lafayette, 3rd floor. Our phone # is (212) 998-8866. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please go to: www.nyu.edu/cas/ewp/html/writing_center.html.
Application for a Major or Minor in Politics  
*This form is for use by CAS Students ONLY.*

Name: ______________________________________, ______________________  _________    Date:______________  

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NYU ID #: ________________________________________

Email: _______________________________________________________________________________

Telephone: __________________________________________

Expected Date of Graduation:   _________ / ____________  

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Declaring a MAJOR _____________
Declaring a MINOR _____________

Majors are required to take at least two core courses and it is suggested that you take three. Please mark below which of these core courses you have taken and the grades you have received:

Grade in POL-UA 100 (Political Theory) __________
Grade in POL-UA 300 (Power and Politics in America) _________
Grade in POL-UA 500 (Comparative Politics) __________
Grade in POL-UA 700 (International Politics) _________

**Emily Mitchell-Marell** will be your academic advisor. For questions or information about your major:

emm9@nyu.edu  
212 992 8694  
19 W. 4th, Rm 232

The department encourages majors to study abroad, especially in our London, Florence and Washington, DC sites. Are you interested in going abroad? If so, where would you like to go?

___________________________________________________________________________________

Overall GPA (estimated) _________

Are you interested in the honors program? ________________

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

___________________________________________________________________________________

*Advisor’s Signature* _________________________________________________________________
Application for Admission to the Politics Honors Major

1. Personal Information

Name: __________________________________________, ____________________________

Last               First               Middle

NYU ID: N_____________ Expected Date of Graduation: _____ / ________ Overall GPA: _____________

mm             yyyy

Are you currently participating in the CAS Scholars program? ______________________ Politics GPA: _____________

2. Campus Address

Street: ____________________________________________________________________________

City: __________________________ State: ________ Zip Code: __________________________

Telephone: _______ - _______ - ___________ Email: _______________________________________

3. Politics Courses Completed (Completion/enrollment in Quantitative Methods and either Econ I or II are required for admission)

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4. The Politics Honors major requires the completion of an honors thesis, typically involving supervised independent research in an area of particular interest to the student. Please attach a page to this form describing the topic you wish to explore for the thesis and any classes you have taken or plan to take that will provide background or experience in your topic. Please be as specific as possible.
Application for Pi Sigma Alpha

Name: _____________________________ , __________________ _________    Date:______________

NYU ID #: ________________________________________

Local Address: ________________________________________________________________________

Email: _______________________________________________________________________________

Telephone: ( _________ ) - _________________________________

Number of Credits Completed in Politics (you must have completed 12 credits): ________

Overall GPA (estimated): _________       GPA in Politics Courses: _____________

Expected Date of Graduation:   _________ / ____________

mm  yyyy

Membership fees are $35. For payment information please contact:

Stephanie Nica
Administrative Aide
sn4@nyu.edu
212-998-8517
Department of Politics
19 West 4th Street, Room 202

If you have any questions, please contact: politics.undergrads@nyu.edu

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FOR OFFICE USE:

Received payment __________________
Application for Readings and Research

Name: _____________________________, __________________  _________    Date:______________

Last          First                      MI

NYU ID#:  ____________________

Semester and Year Requesting Readings and Research: ____________________________

GPA in Politics: _____________________

Number of Credits Earned in Politics: ___________________________________________

Expected Date of Graduation: _________ / ____________

Please attach a one-page description of the project.

-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

FOR THE FACULTY ADVISOR ONLY:

I support Mr./Ms. __________________________________ application for 2 __ 4 __ credits of Readings and Research. I agree to supervise him/her on the project described.

Faculty Advisor:

Name ________________________________       Signature: ______________________________

(Please Print)  (Please Sign)

DEPARTMENTAL APPROVAL:

Signature: __________________________________ Date:___________________________

Director of Undergraduate Studies
Internship in Politics: Application for Approval

Please note: Internship applications are due September 30 (for fall semester internships) and January 30 (for spring semester internships).

1. Personal Data:

Name: ___________________________ NYU ID #: ___________________________
Campus Address: _________________________________________________________
Telephone: ___________________________ Email: _____________________________

2. Academic Standing:

Overall GPA: _______________ Politics GPA: _____________
Expected Graduation: _______ / ______________
                        mm         yyyy

3. About the Internship:

Employer Name: _____________________________
Street Address: _________________________________________________________
City: ___________________________ State:_______ Zip Code: ___________
Phone: ___________________________ Fax:_______________________________
Contact Person: ___________________________ Title: ________________________
Contact Person Email: ________________________________________________

FOR INTERNSHIP SUPERVISOR ONLY:

Signature: ___________________________ Date: ____________

FOR THE INTERNSHIP ADVISOR ONLY:

I support Mr./Ms. ___________________________ application for 2 __4___ credits of Internship. I agree to supervise him/her for the duration of this internship. At the end of the internship I will read and grade his/her Journal and assess whether or not academic credit must be granted.

Name: ___________________________ Signature: ___________________________
Internship in Politics: Approval Letter for Internship Supervisor

Dear Designated Supervisor:

Thank you for accepting the responsibility to supervise our student ______________________________
during his/her internship at your organization. Internships are a very important part of the education we
provide to our majors at the Department of Politics at NYU. Through carefully selected internships we
aim to offer to some of our best students the opportunity to work in and be a part of the activities of
agencies, offices and organizations so that they can combine real life experience with the study of related
problems in politics and political science.

Please take a few minutes to fill out this form, which is very important for assessing how effective this
internship might be for our student. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us at
politics.undergrads@nyu.edu. Thank you for your time.

What is your position within this organization?

How closely will you work with our student?
He/she will work closely with me. □
He/she will work in the office (agency, organization) but not with me. □
I will meet him/her occasionally. □
I will not work with him/her but I will supervise him/her anyway. □

What kind of activities will the intern perform?

How many hours per week will she/he work?
☐ 6 Hours          ☐ 8 hours          ☐ 10 hours          ☐ 12 hours          ☐ 14 hours

How will you assess performance? Please Explain.

Supervisor’s Name: ________________________________________________________________

Phone: __________________________ Email: _____________________________________________

Supervisor’s Signature: ___________________________________ Date: __________

Please return form to:
New York University, Professor Asli Peker, Department of Politics, 19 West 4th Street, 2nd Floor, 10012
Email: politics.undergrads@nyu.edu Tel: (212) 998-8500 Fax: (212) 995-4184
Internship in Politics: End of Internship Letter for Supervisor

This evaluation is confidential and must be faxed by the supervisor directly to the department.

Dear Designated Supervisor:

Thank you for taking your time to supervise our student ___________________________ during his/her internship in your organization. Please take a few minutes to fill out this form, which is very important for our records and for assessing how effective this internship was for our student. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us: politics.undergrads@nyu.edu. Thank you.

How closely did you work with our student?
He/she worked closely with me. □
He/she did work in the office, but not with me. □
I met with the student occasionally. □
I did not work with student, but I supervised him/her anyway. □

What kind of activities did the intern perform?

How many hours per week did she/he work?
□ 6 Hours  □ 8 hours  □ 10 hours  □ 12 hours  □ 14 hours

How would you assess his/her performance?
□ Excellent  □ Very Good  □ Good  □ Satisfactory  □ Not satisfactory

Please explain:

Supervisor’s Name: _______________________________________________________
Phone: __________________________ Email: __________________________________________
Supervisor’s Signature: ___________________________________________ Date: _________

Please return to:
New York University, Department of Politics, 19 West 4th Street, 2nd Floor, 10012
Email: politics.undergrads@nyu.edu  Tel: (212) 998-8500  Fax: (212) 995-4184