Honours in Political Economy

The fourth year Honours Program is an opportunity for eligible students to develop a deeper understanding of key issues in contemporary political economy and to develop the capacity for advanced, self-directed research.

Eligibility

For students who commenced their degree before 2018
In order to be eligible to apply for the fourth year honours program students must have completed a major in political economy with an average of 70 or above. This will include requirements for a major in political economy and the three pre-honours courses - ECOP 2911, ECOP 3911 and ECOP 3912.

In order to enter the pre-honours courses students must obtain an average of 70 or above in their two first year political economy courses ECOP 1001 and ECOP 1003. The department will invite all students who receive 70 or above to enrol in the second year pre-honours ECOP 2911.

Typically students take ECOP 2911 in the first semester of their second year of enrolment, ECOP 3911 in first semester of their third year of enrolment and ECOP 3912 in second semester of their third year. This is the most common course of progression. Where students decide belatedly that they would like to have the option to pursue the fourth year honours program they can apply to enrol concurrently in ECOP 2911 and ECOP 3911. Permission must be sought from the Department of Political Economy honours coordinator. The coordinator is Professor Adam Morton.

Students who have completed all honours pre-requisites and a major in political economy with a grade average of 70 or above are eligible to apply for the fourth year honours program. Acceptance into the honours program will be based on (1) the capacity of the student; and (2) supervisory capacity of the department.
For students commencing their degree in 2018 or after
Admission to Honours in Political Economy requires a major in Political Economy with an average weighted mark of 70 or above, and a second major. Students are also encouraged to complete the pre-honours units ECOP2911, ECOP3911 and ECOP3912 which provide excellent preparation for the final year of honours study. Acceptance into the honours program will be based on (1) the capacity of the student; and (2) supervisory capacity of the department.

Eligibility for Final Honours Year without Having Taken the Prerequisite Units of Study at Sydney University

To enter Fourth Year Honours, students must have completed a bachelors degree, with at least 36 senior credit points in Government and International Relations (i.e. 6 senior units of study), and have obtained a grade of credit or above in those 6 units of study. Cross-listed units may be credited towards the 36 credit points.

*Please note: the minimum requirement for entry into Honours is an average of 70% or above across 36 senior credit points in the intended subject area/s.*

Applying for Honours

All students who plan to undertake Honours in Arts must submit an application to the University. As soon as you decide you may want to do Honours in a subject area of your choice, you should confirm with the Honours Coordinator in the department in which you wish to study exactly what the specific requirements will be for that subject area and plan your degree structure accordingly.

The closing date for Honours 2019 applications is 30 November.

Final Honours Year in Political Economy

Objectives of Final Honours Year in Political Economy
The final honours year is an opportunity for each student to develop a deeper understanding of key issues in contemporary political economy and the capacity for advanced, self-directed research. By the end of this course honours students should have achieved:

- a capacity to critically evaluate different theories in political economy, and to apply those theories to contemporary economic issues;
- the analytical and theoretical skills required to read academic journals in the field of political economy;
- research skills which will enable the student to draw on extensive and diverse primary and secondary sources in the construction of a written analysis;
- the ability to prepare short, systematic reports on set topics;
- the ability to undertake a sustained piece of largely self-directed, original research;
- the capacity to present a clear, short prepared paper orally to a small audience and to participate constructively in discussion.

**Structure of the honours year**

The honours year consists of:-

- two semester-length advanced seminars in political economy – both are run in first semester.
  - An 18,000 - 20,000 word thesis on a subject of the student's choosing and supervised by a member of staff.
  - Two/three research seminars that provide input and feedback to students on thesis writing. These are compulsory.

Students may be required to complete other tasks that contribute to the development of their theses. The honours coordinator will inform students of such requirements.
Theses Writing

Writing a thesis is a rewarding process. It is an excellent opportunity to explore a particular topic in depth. Each student is allocated to a supervisor, and is responsible for making appropriate arrangements with his/her supervisor for meetings to discuss progress with the thesis during the year. A monthly meeting to report on progress is normal. Drafts of chapters should be given to the supervisor for comment, provided this is done consistently during the year. A first draft of the entire thesis given to the supervisor by the end of September is a good goal to aim at. In general, supervisors are there to offer help but not to take control of the process. The student is responsible for the quality and progress of his/her own thesis. In particular, it is up to the student writing the thesis to push his/her own work along: this requires some self-discipline but the result is invariably a greater source of personal satisfaction.

Each thesis will have two examiners. They will normally evaluate it according to how well it does the following:

- constructs an interesting proposition or set of propositions;
- develops a clear organisational and conceptual structure for addressing that question or questions, well set out in chapters, with sub-sections where appropriate;
- presents appropriate theoretical, historical, institutional or statistical material in a clear and systematic manner;
- presents a core argument with coherence and continuity, showing how the argument develops throughout the various chapters;
- draws appropriate conclusions, identifying the principal lessons to be drawn from the study for economic analysis and/or policy;
- makes appropriate and correct documentation of all sources used;
- makes clear and straightforward use of the English language.

This is a good check-list for students to use in critically appraising their own work, say, at the mid-year point and then when writing the final thesis draft.

Copies of some of the best honours theses submitted in recent years can be accessed via the e-scholarship repository in Fischer Library. Hard copies of past theses are also available on request.
Assessment of the Honours Program

The final mark for the honours program is made up of two honours seminar marks (worth 20% each) and the thesis (worth 60%). Students who receive a final mark of 90 or above are eligible to be considered for the University Medal. Students who receive between 80-100 receive a first class honours degree, between 75-79, a second class, Division 1 degree; between 70-74 a second class, Division 2 degree and between 65-69 a third class honours degree. Honours is not awarded to students receiving less than 65.

For any further information about the honours program or a copy of the current Honours in Political Economy Guidelines please contact the Honours Coordinator.

Contacts

Honours Coordinator

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