

PPOL Petition Instructions

There are two processes for seeking to have counted toward the major or minor courses other than those indicated in the catalog as counting for that purpose:

- (1) Students may submit a *petition* to have courses included in their *concentrations* other than those listed in the catalog;
- (2) Students may submit a *substitution request* to have courses taken elsewhere substitute for *core or skills courses* listed in the catalog.

(1) Students may petition the program to have courses included in their concentrations that are not listed in the catalog for that purpose. These courses may be either (a) courses offered through HWS or (b) courses taken through other institutions. Most successful petitions under (a) will be for courses that should be in the catalog concentration lists, but which are not, either because they are new courses (including new regularly-offered courses or those offered on a one-off basis, such as those in HWS-sponsored terms away from campus) or because a long-standing course has had a change in focus that brings it under one of the concentrations. Many of the successful petitions under (b) will be for courses that closely match HWS courses already listed in the catalog as counting for concentrations.

(2) Students may submit a substitution request to count a course they have taken or are planning to take away from campus as a substitute for a core or skills course. Note that only courses taken away from campus may count as substitution courses. The difference between petitions and substitution requests is that you must show in the latter case, but not necessarily the former case, that the course in question is substantially identical with the listed course for which it will substitute.

All petition and substitution requests should be submitted to the coordinator of Public Policy (Steven Lee, spring 2010, lee@hws.edu; Craig Rimmerman, fall, 2010, rimmerman@hws.edu), who will distribute them to the relevant Public Policy faculty for review. All materials should be submitted in electronic form to facilitate the review process.

All petitions should include a one page, well reasoned argument for your claim that the course in question should be included in the concentration. They should also include a syllabus for the course. They may, as well, include examples of your work in the course (papers, etc.), if these help you make the case that the work you did in the course had a strong policy orientation (especially in cases where this is not clear from the syllabus itself). You may make reference to the other courses you are planning to include in the concentration in order to show how the course you are petitioning about would fit in. In your argument, you need to make the case not only that the course is in the area of your concentration, but that it has a significant public policy content, that it focuses not simply on abstract, theoretical questions related to public policy, but studies specific policy issues.

All substitution requests should include the syllabus for the course, but only a brief statement indicating what listed course would be replaced by the proposed substitute.

Whenever possible, petitions and substitution requests should be submitted before the course is taken because Program approval cannot be guaranteed. One difficulty is that the course in question is often (always in the case of substitution requests) taken away from campus, in which case a syllabus for the course may not be available before the course is taken. Because a syllabus must be submitted, if it is unavailable beforehand, the petition or substitution request can be submitted only after the course has been taken, and if it is denied, the course cannot count.

Because petitions may fail, it is crucial that they be submitted before the last semester of your senior year.