

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Item Name: Request for New Academic Unit For The University of Arizona (UA)

- Action Item
- Committee Recommendation to Full Board
- First Read of Proposed Policy Change
- Information or Discussion Item

Issue: The University of Arizona asks the board to approve the new academic unit Political Economy and Moral Science.

Enterprise Strategic Plan

- Empower Student Success and Learning
- Advance Educational Attainment within Arizona
- Create New Knowledge
- Impact Arizona
- Compliance
- Real property purchase/sale/lease
- Other:

Statutory/Policy Requirements

ABOR Policy 2-223.C. – the Academic Strategic Plan

Background/History of Previous Board Action

ABOR Policy 2-223.C. requires each university to submit a request for approval of new academic units to ABOR.

Discussion

This request includes one undergraduate program and two graduate programs:

- One new academic unit, Political Economy and Moral Science, that will be housed in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

Committee Review and Recommendation

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee reviewed this item at its September 27, 2017 meeting and recommended forwarding the item to the full board for approval.

Requested Action

The University of Arizona asks the board to approve the new academic unit Political Economy and Moral Science.

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Addendum Academic Strategic Plan AY 2017-2018

NEW ACADEMIC UNITS – Planning Request

Proposed New Academic Units:

Name of Proposed Unit	Level (College, School, Department, Division, etc.)	The name of the existing College/School under which the proposed unit will be established (if applicable)	Brief Description (max 50 words)	Justification (max 50 words)	New Resources, if any, and Source <i>Savings/ Efficiencies Gained</i>
Department of Political Economy and Moral Science	Department	College of Social and Behavioral Sciences	The Department would create an administrative structure that enables more effective engagement with students, creates a cohesive infrastructure for research collaborations and academic degree programs, and clearer access for community organizations and partner institutions. The unit will promote the understanding and appreciation of the ideals of freedom and responsibility.	The new department would house the UA Center for the Philosophy of Freedom and would enable the College to build on the programs, research and outreach developed in partnership with the Departments of Philosophy and Economics, the School of Government and Public Policy, and the Tucson Unified School District. The new department will allow the department to grow and expand the number of faculty devoted to political economy, growth that would not be best served in the Department of Philosophy. The undergraduate BA program in Philosophy, Political Science, Economics, and Law has 179 majors. This program would be moved from the Department of Philosophy to the Department of Political Economy and Moral Science and administered by this new department.	Primary revenue: state budget (currently \$2.6M annually goes to FC) and donor support. Three new faculty will be recruited to this unit in the next few years. The new department would be implemented this fall.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Summary Information: Department of Political Economy and Moral Science
University of Arizona
David Schmitz
September 25, 2017

Political Economy is a child of Philosophy and a parent to both Economics and Political Science as academic disciplines. It grew out of the Scottish Enlightenment project of seeking (as David Hume put it) to “apply the experimental method of reasoning to moral subjects.” The name “Moral Science” likewise suggests an Enlightenment philosophical tradition embracing social science in general. For sure, we are not “scientistic” and do not entertain fantasies of being laboratory scientists. However, we are not content to let our students walk away from our classes saying “it’s all relative” or “it’s all subjective.” We aspire to hold our moral and political theories accountable to empirical testing.

We aim to be continuous with the empirical tradition of political economy as practiced by Enlightenment philosophers such as Adam Smith. Smith could see trade barriers, erected in the name of the poor, *hurting* the poor, so he called on honest philosophers to face the facts and adjust their philosophy. Accordingly, Adam Smith is remembered as a defender of free markets, but he defended the public schooling of his day for roughly the same reason: he saw it making poor people better off. Needless to say, Smith, humble scientific philosopher that he was, would have been the first to admit that we need to be careful about what we infer from raw observation. But that is the point. What we teach might be true. Some of it might turn out to be false. But it won’t be a mere matter of opinion.

In addition to being an intellectual home for scholarship about these ideas, the Department of Political Economy and Moral Science will include a research center, an undergraduate major, and outreach to high schools. This is the home for the Center for Philosophy of Freedom. The SBS undergraduate major in Philosophy, Politics, Economics, and Law will be moved to this new department. Furthermore, the new department will house a program in Ethics, Economy, and Entrepreneurship that currently provides a college-level course for high school students on the foundations of responsible citizenship in a commercial society.

The new department will be launched as the pre-eminent of its kind in the world. Philosophers peer-rank Arizona as the #1 graduate program in the world in political philosophy. We are the only program even listed in what the rankings call Group 1, but of the eight schools in Group 2, six have well-developed Philosophy, Politics, & Economics-type programs, separate from Philosophy, some of which are long-standing & others of which took their lead from us. We are funded by a combination of tuition revenues, support from private foundations, and above all a State of Arizona separate appropriation, for which we are immensely grateful.