

Table of Contents

Welcome.....	3
Introduction.....	4
Time-Sensitive Information	4
Location.....	4
Useful Contacts.....	4
Organization, Administration, and Staff	5
Organization of the School.....	5
Dean.....	5
Vice-Dean of Academic Affairs	5
Department of Political Science and International Relations	5
Goals of MA Degree	7
Academic Year Calendar	7
Understanding Course Listings	7
Credits.....	7
Program Designators.....	7
Course Number	8
MAPSIR Course Offerings	9
MAPSIR Degree Requirements.....	14
MAPSIR Coursework.....	16
MAPSIR Graduate Thesis.....	16
Internships.....	18
Study Abroad	18
Student Travel.....	18
Registering and Enrolling in Classes	19
Registration	19
Class Attendance	19
Grades and Marks.....	20
Grading Scale.....	20
Grade Point Average	21
Course Withdrawal.....	21

Administrative Withdrawal	21
Re-sitting Exams	21
Incompletes	21
Retaking Courses	22
Appealing Grades	22
Transferring Credit from Outside NU	22
Work Completed Prior to Enrolling at NU.....	22
Credit for Concurrent External Work.....	23
Misconduct.....	24
Warnings against Plagiarism and Cheating	24
Advising.....	26
Student Standing.....	26
Good Standing.....	26
Conditional Students.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Full-Time	26
Clubs and Organizations.....	27
Student Life.....	27
Student Health Services	28
Student Psychological Counseling	28
Emergency Situations	28

Welcome

Congratulations on being admitted to the Master Arts in Political Science and International Relations (MAPSIR) program at Nazarbayev University! On behalf of the Department of Political Science and International Relations, welcome to the School of Sciences and Humanities at NU. We are delighted that you decided to join us for advanced graduate training in political science and international affairs and we look forward to meeting you at Nazarbayev University.

This Student Handbook describes program requirements, specializations and course offerings. We have done our best to provide answers to most of your questions about graduate studies in the Political Science and International Relations program. Our faculty and staff are happy to answer any questions not covered in this Handbook. Please feel free to talk with us as you plan your academic schedule and begin your studies.

Your acceptance to the MA program makes you a part of our growing department. As an MA student your role is much different than that of a traditional undergraduate student. Your ideas and suggestions are not only welcome, but vital to the success of both your education and our MAPSIR program. You will work with high quality faculty and staff and learn in a supportive environment that will prepare you for the challenges that lie ahead. You will also be expected to do much of your work independently as you learn how to do your own research under the guidance and mentoring of your professors. What you are expected to learn and do in classes is only the beginning of your education.

As you will quickly learn from your studies at NU, SSH, with its multidisciplinary faculty, exceptionally high quality student body, and excellent facilities, offers the perfect yet challenging environment for graduate education in political science and international relations. MAPSIR is designed to bridge the gap between your undergraduate experiences and your future professional interests and goals as a political scientist or public servant or diplomat. MAPSIR graduates will be prepared to meet national and global challenges and serve in a wide range of positions in government, international and non-governmental organizations, and in the private sector.

On behalf of all of the faculty in the Department of Political Science and International Relations, congratulations and welcome to the School and the Department of Political Science and International Relations. Best wishes for success in your graduate studies!

Sincerely,

Alexei Trochev
Chair, Department of Political Science and International Relations

and

Caress Schenk
Director, MA in Political Science and International Relations

Introduction

This Handbook contains tips, tools, and all the information to help you get the most out of your graduate education here at NU. It is intended to serve as a central repository for information relevant to student life in the School of Sciences and Humanities. It includes information on the MAPSIR degree, courses, policies, and procedures for academic year 2020-2021. Please use this handbook as a guide about rules and regulations in SSH, but always consult your academic advisor for more detail. This is NOT intended to be a complete description of all of the rules and regulations at Nazarbayev University, so please consult relevant documents and advisors if you have further questions.

Time-Sensitive Information

Please note that NU is developing quickly and some of the information here will become out of date soon. Make sure that you have the latest version of this bulletin when searching for time sensitive information. Revisions to the handbook and relevant policies will be available at the beginning of each academic year. These changes will not affect the requirements of your degree.

Location

The School of Sciences and Humanities is located in Block 8 of Nazarbayev University. The offices of the Dean, the Vice Dean, the support staff are on the second floor. Faculty offices can be found on every floor. Classrooms are currently located on the first and third floor and computer labs are located in rooms 8.322 and 8.422 on the third and fourth floors respectively.

Useful Contacts

SSH Manager Assem Koishybayeva +77172 706522 assem.koishybayeva@nu.edu.kz

MAPSIR Program Director Caress Schenk +77172 705918 cschenk@nu.edu.kz

NU HelpDesk +77172 706200 helpdesk@nu.edu.kz

University Health Center +77172 692616 Block 24, 8 am - 8 pm

On-campus Pharmacy +77172 695756 Block 24, 1st floor

Emergency, accident or fire +77172 706262

Head of Security Affairs Alibek Abdullayev +77172706407 alibek.abdullayev@nu.edu.kz

Organization, Administration, and Staff

Organization of the School

The School of Sciences and Humanities has four major divisions – Division of Humanities, Division of Social Sciences, Division of Natural Sciences, and Division of Kazakh Language and Turkic Studies. The Department of Political Science and International Relations is located in the Division of Social Sciences.

Dean

The dean of the School of Sciences and Humanities is the head of the school. This person makes final decisions about school policies and oversees all activities within the school. Students are free to discuss concerns about school policies. This is a very busy person though, so students are encouraged to make an appointment through his personal assistant, whose office is located in room 8.201. For Academic Year 2020-2021, the dean of SSH is Dr. Daniel Pugh.

Vice-Dean of Academic Affairs

The vice dean for academic affairs (VDAA) assists the dean in managing the school as well as developing and implementing policies, including curriculum, instructional support, disciplinary issues, and all other academic issues. For Academic Year 2020-2021 the VDAA is Dr. Philip Enns.

Department of Political Science and International Relations

The Director of the MAPSIR program is Associate Professor Caress Schenk. Her office is Room 6.106. Her phone number is +77172 705918. Her email address: cschenk@nu.edu.kz. The Director is assisted by the Graduate Program Manager Dilroba Omarova. Her office is Room 8230. Her phone is +77172 709013. Her email address: dilroba.omarovav@nu.edu.kz.

The Department of Political Science and International Relations consists of internationally recognized faculty drawn from North America, Europe, Africa, and Asia. In 2020-2021, there are 14 full-time professors with diverse research and teaching interests:

- **Alexei Trochev** (Chair of Department, PhD in Political Science, University of Toronto, 2005). Comparative Politics; Law and Society; Judicial Politics; International Law; Human Rights.
- **Caress Schenk** (MAPSIR Director, PhD in Political Science, Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, 2010). National Identity and Multiethnic States; Political Economy of Migration; Political Corruption. Post-Soviet Region.
- **Jean-Francois Caron** (PhD in Political Science, Université Laval, 2010). Political Theory, Canadian Foreign Policy; Applied Ethics.

- **Bimal Adhikari** (PhD in Political Science, University of Missouri, 2018). Foreign Aid; International Organizations.
- **Charles Sullivan** (PhD in Political Science, George Washington University, 2014). Russian Politics; Russian Political Culture.
- **Chunho Park** (PhD in Political Science, Michigan State University, 2017). Comparative Political Economy; Electoral Politics.
- **Helene Thibault** (PhD in Political Science and Government, University of Ottawa, 2014). Politics of Religion and Secularism; Central Asian Politics.
- **Ho Youn Koh** (PhD in Political Science, University of Maryland at College Park, 2016). International Security; Game Theory; Korean Politics.
- **Maja Savevska** (PhD in International Studies and Political Science, University of Warwick, 2015). International Political Economy; Political Discourse; European Union Politics.
- **Neil Collins** (PhD in Political Science, Trinity College, University of Dublin, 1984). Comparative Public Policy and Politics of European Union, Ireland, and China.
- **Brian Smith** (PhD in Political Science, Boston University, 2016). Citizenship, Anarchy, Transmigration, John Locke, Hannah Arendt.

To learn more about their research, please see our faculty webpages: <https://ssh.nu.edu.kz/departments/department-of-political-science-and-international-relations/faculty/>

Goals of MA Degree

The ultimate purpose of the MA degree in PSIR is to train students to think critically about, and to do research in political science and international relations. Courses in the MAPSIR program are meant to provide our students with tools for critical thinking, writing, and analysis. The ultimate goal of MA students should be to build their own abilities to a point that they can produce their own original research in the form of an MA thesis. For those students who are interested in moving on to a PhD program, the MA help you to prepare academically. If you are interested in work in the government, NGOs, or business, the MA will help you to develop the skills necessary to critically evaluate a variety of problems. The quality of the MAPSIR program is regularly checked by the University of Wisconsin-Madison, its social science program is ranked in the top 20 in the world.

Academic Year Calendar

SSH follows the timetable established by Nazarbayev University. The academic year begins with the fall semester, which runs to early December. After a short break, the second 14-week-long semester begins in early January and runs through late April. There are short breaks in each semester. Precise dates of classes and breaks are determined at the university level and posted to the Office of Registrar website: <https://registrar.nu.edu.kz>.

Understanding Course Listings

Credits

Progress toward graduation and completion of program requirements is measured in terms of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits that reflect the amount of class time and work required. This system is standard in countries that follow a set of international standards described as The Bologna Process (go read about it on the internet, it's kind of interesting). Using this system makes it easier to compare the work students do at NU with that done by students throughout Europe and parts of Asia. Each MAPSIR course is 8 (eight) ECTS credits and a graduate thesis is 48 (fourty-eight) ECTS credits over four semesters. Number of credits earned is used to determine a student's progress towards the completion of the MAPSIR degree and eligibility for graduation. MAPSIR graduates will earn the total of 120 ECTS credits. The course schedule for each semester is posted at the beginning of each semester on the Office of Registrar website: <https://registrar.nu.edu.kz>

Program Designators

Each course has a title and a number. The number includes important information about the course. The first part of the course number is a set of three or four letters called the program designator. The program designator indicates which academic program or department is responsible for the course. For example, PLS 511 is a course in Political Science because PLS is the program designator for Political Science and International Relations.

Course Number

After the program designator, you will see a three-digit number. This number distinguishes each course from another course within the program designator. Each course title is connected with one number and vice versa. For example, PLS 550 will always be Core Seminar in International Relations. This will be one of the first courses that you will be taking in the MAPSIR program. And every time this course is taught, its number will be PLS 550.

Course numbers are also used to indicate the difficulty level of a course. Courses from 000-499 are undergraduate courses while courses numbered 500 and above are graduate-level courses. Most MAPSIR courses will be between 500 and 699, although occasionally courses from 400-499 may be appropriate for graduate students if those courses help you in your preparation for your thesis research. Talk to your advisor about course options if you think one of these classes may be appropriate for your research preparation.

Please note that the course numbers correspond to sub-fields of Political Science/International Relations, and corresponding course requirements, as follows:

510-519 Research Methods and Thesis Proposal

520-529 Political Theory

530-549 Comparative Politics

550-569 International Relations

570-579 Law and Public Policy

MAPSIR Course Offerings

The courses that are offered in MAPSIR change each term and each year. You can take a look at the course outlines from the two previous years at: <https://ssh.nu.edu.kz/departments/department-of-political-science-and-international-relations/courses/>. A catalog of available courses will be published by the Office of Registrar on its [website](#) prior to registration each term; you should consult that in order to find courses to choose from. Some courses will be offered every year or every semester. However, SSH cannot guarantee that any given course will be offered exactly when a student needs it and time conflicts may arise between courses. Therefore, it is important that you meet with an adviser when choosing classes and that you prioritize mandatory and prerequisite courses. Please see below for a sample of MAPSIR courses.

PLS 510 and PLS 511 Advanced Research I and II: This course is about the theory and application of different research methods in empirical research in political science. The objective of the course is to train students to be able to understand the basic frameworks behind quantitative and qualitative empirical research in political science and to confidently and properly interpret, assess and employ the most commonly used research methods in political science research. **(Required)**.

PLS 512 Scientific Research in IR/Political Science. This course will introduce students to the quantitative study of international relations, with a special emphasis on research designs and methods. The students will be exposed a variety of research strategies, both theoretical and empirical, used in the actual research papers and learn the process of conducting scientific research. Methodological topics will include causality, levels of analysis, substantive effects, game theoretic models, selection models, missing data, conditional hypotheses, and selection bias. A major component of the course will involve students developing and implementing their own research designs.

PLS 514 Qualitative Research Methods. How to interview people and how to observe the world around us? These are important skills that can be used in social science research and beyond. This course will teach you about qualitative research methods and give you a chance to practice conducting and analyzing your own research. Through readings and class discussions, you will become familiar with the basic tools and concepts of qualitative social research. You will design and conduct your own research to examine the question that you select. You will also have an opportunity to acquire and practice research skills in applying qualitative research methods. Throughout the course, you will develop your own research project, and at the end of the term you will present the findings in a final paper.

PLS 515 Maximum Likelihood Models. The classical linear model is inappropriate for analyzing data in many interesting areas of political science.

This class teaches students a more general modeling framework called “generalized linear models” to analyze a broader class of outcomes, including binary outcome, event counts, and duration. The class is organized in three parts. In the first part, students learn basic probability theory and how to construct a statistical model in the generalized linear model framework. In the second part, students are introduced to the mechanics behind maximum likelihood estimation and then use it to estimate parameters of statistical models. In the third part, students learn how to present the results of these non-linear models in ways that convey the magnitude of an effect and have opportunities to apply these techniques to analyze real data through replications of existing studies. After taking this class, students will be equipped with techniques to analyze a wide range of data and conduct a rigorous empirical analysis in social sciences.

PLS 516 Experimental Political Science. This seminar is designed to introduce students to experimental literature in political science. We will cover important concepts of experiment (treatment, randomization, causality), types of experiment (lab, survey, field, and natural), basic logics of experimental design, and practical issues of conducting experiments (ethics and procedures). We will also read and discuss applications of experimental research across topics within the discipline, including foreign policy making, bargaining, collective action, and political participation. While we read experimental studies in different subfields of political science, students will also have opportunities to develop and conduct their own experimental research.

PLS 520 Human Rights and Cultural Differences. In this course you will acquire the tools to analyze rights-talk and learn to appreciate the relevance of history for our understanding of human rights as well as the purpose and relevance of normative theories. You will also be introduced to a theory of cultural differences.

PLS 522 Just War Theory. Notwithstanding the development of supra-national structures of authority, such as the United Nations, war remains an inescapable reality of the international community. Despite the horrors involve in armed conflicts, philosophers and legal scholars believe that this sad reality can be constrained by ethical principles. The aim of this class is to examine the moral norms that should circumscribe war. It focuses more specifically on the moral conditions under which the use of violence is permitted (jus ad bellum), the ones that should regulate the conduct of a war (jus in bello) as well as principles that should lead to a just peace (jus post bellum). Moreover, this class will study the contemporary ethical issues that have arisen since the beginning of the 21st Century which are associated with the War on Terror and the development of technologies, such as drones and armed robots .

PLS 530 Nationalism and Multiethnic Governance: This course considers

both the theories of group identity and group rights in the political context of the nation-state as well as policy choices governments make to implement certain theoretical perspectives. Toward this goal, we will consider both liberal and non-liberal approaches to addressing multiethnic populations and assess the successes and breakdowns of governance in a number of cases.

PLS 531 Politics and Governance of the Russian Federation. This course is designed to provide students with an in-depth understanding of Russian politics from the late Soviet era to the present (i.e. from Gorbachev to Putin). A range of topics will be covered in class, such as (1) the collapse of the Soviet Union and ensuing transition to a market economy under Yeltsin, (2) the nature of federalism in Russia during the 1990s under Yeltsin and the recentralization of power under Putin, (3) the Chechen Wars, regional instability in the North Caucasus, and the 2014 Sochi Olympics, (4) contemporary Russian foreign policy, (5) Russian civil society, and (6) future social, political, and economic challenges facing the Russian Federation. In terms of course assessment, since this is an upper level undergraduate course which will be open to PSIR graduate students, I prefer writing assignments (several memos based on weekly readings), a research paper, and an oral presentation in class. I would like to cap enrollment in this course at approximately 24-28 students.

PLS 532 Comparative Democratization: Democratization is one of the key areas of study in comparative politics. In the last fifty years, authoritarian regimes around the world have been replaced—sometimes in evolutionary fashion, sometimes practically overnight—with governments that are responsive to their citizens and committed to the rule of law. As evidence that democracy is “the only game in town,” today the majority of states are democratic at least in name. At the same time, many are considered “imperfect” or “compromised” democracies at best. In this course, we will raise central questions that motivate social scientists and policymakers the world over. How is an authoritarian regime different from a democracy? Why do some countries democratize while others do not? How can we make sense of the wide swath of countries that “are stuck” somewhere in between these two ideal types? Students will analyze, critique, and apply theories and concepts that political scientists have developed in response to these questions. In the process, they will hone their research and writing skills by gathering and presenting evidence to support an argument, writing, editing, and revising their written work.

PLS 533 Politics of Eurasia: This course is a comparative analysis of political institutions, ideas and practices in the former Soviet countries of Eurasia. We will assess the political legacies of the Soviet system, address the challenges of political reforms, and analyze the origins, functioning and impact of formal and informal political institutions. We will learn how to construct a comparative framework and build arguments for explaining the different political processes and outcomes post-Soviet countries have experienced.

PLS 534 Public Policy of Eurasia: In this course, students 1) learn some of the recent theoretical and methodological developments in analyzing good and bad governance reforms; 2) apply this theoretical knowledge and analyze and explain the public policy design, implementation, and outcomes in the post-Soviet states of Eurasia; 3) learn to collect, organize, evaluate, interpret and present evidence of various dimensions of public policy; and 4) learn to build and refute arguments about various policy choices.

PLS 540 Core Seminar in Comparative Politics: This course is a survey of the field of Comparative Politics. It will introduce students to the dominant methodologies and theories of Comparative Politics and will help students locate a comparative perspective within the larger field of Political Science and the Social Sciences. Students will gain an understanding of the main questions addressed by Comparative Politics as well as the ways in which real world political phenomena are approached. The course will cover thematic topics such as state building and institutional design, political change through routinized methods such as elections as well as more spontaneous methods such as social movements and revolutions, nationalism and other forms of political identity, applying theoretical approaches to both historical and modern examples. **(Required).**

PLS 541 Advanced Topics in Comparative Politics. The topics of this course vary by professor and semester.

PLS 545 Political Violence. This course is designed to provide students with an overview of the various ways in which violence relates to the conduct of politics. Accordingly, this course will cover a range of topics such as (1) the formation of nation-states, (2) state failure and collapse, (3) civil wars and regional conflicts, (4) insurgency and counterinsurgency, (5) terrorism in the contemporary era, (6) military interventions, (7) civil society and state-initiated crackdowns, (8) ethnic conflict, (9) and genocide. Students will be assessed through the writing of memos throughout the course and with a course term paper.

PLS 546 The Politics of Immigration Control: The movement of people across borders is distinctly political as it challenges governments' abilities to regulate everything from security to citizenship to labor markets. This course will look at theories of why people move and how both sending and receiving governments attempt to control that movement. It will assess how migration connects with other important political phenomena such as national identity, economic development, state capacity, security, etc.

PLS 547 Comparative Political Parties. This seminar will deal generally with the topic of political parties. Specifically, models, roles, and changes in political parties and party systems will be discussed. During the semester, all students

will learn to address specific research questions on the topic of political parties from the comparative perspective, by formulating a testable hypothesis, producing data with which to test that hypothesis and writing a research paper which clearly lays out the procedures used and the findings and conclusions pertaining to the research question.

PLS 550 Core Seminar in International Relations: What are the key theoretical approaches to international relations? The course examines the core competing and complementary approaches to international relations and their application to current debates, develops the ability of students to assess these theoretical approaches critically; and helps students refine the theoretical foundations of their graduate Thesis. **(Required)**.

PLS 551 Foreign Policy Analysis: This course will explore why states behave in the way they do in the international system. We will put a substantial emphasis on domestic determinants of foreign policies but also explore various other political, economic, and psychological factors that influence foreign policy decision-making.

PLS 557 International Security and Conflict: This course will explore issues of international security including deterrence, interstate war. The course will rely on readings from international relations and political science journals for theoretical and empirical examination of these issues. The course is an elective course for MA students. The course is reading and writing intensive. The final project for the course is a term paper (20-25 pages – not including bibliography and title pages). The final paper will be original research through a case study, data analysis, or literature review that significantly builds on existing research, or which ties research from different areas together in a new and interesting way.

PLS 558 International Organization: The purpose of this course is to provide students with a firm foundation of formalized interstate cooperation in a globalized world. This course builds on foundational courses in international relations with the objective of understanding the evolution of international cooperation. To attain this objective, the course will be structured into three broad sections: 1) an overview of theories of interstate cooperation; 2) an examination of the role of international organizations in key global issue areas; and 3) the future role of international organizations in an interdependent world.

PLS 565 Politics of International Finance: This course is a graduate course intended for master students who are familiar with the basic tenets of International Political Economy (IPE). Lectures and reading material will deal with substantive issues in international finance and monetary affairs, which is one of the key issue areas in IPE, the others being trade, production and development. This course aims to provide students with a strong analytical

understanding and empirical survey of the major debates in the field such as the analysis of exchange rate policies, capital movements, currency crises, international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Bank of International Settlement, etc.

PLS 569 International Relations of Eurasia. This course investigates the international politics of the wider Eurasia, characterized by great power pluralism, and foreign policy adaptation, in what is often described in terms of a New Great Game. The first half of the course will lay down a conceptual framework to understand the region, mixing regional and theoretical literatures. We begin by examining the efforts of the great powers to integrate the region into the emerging multipolar system according to their respective regional objectives and competitive governance structures. Subsequently, we examine how great power patronage facilitates the intersection between external behavior, state building, and regime survival. From this perspective, we relate the approaches developed to analyze the foreign policy of Eurasian states -from multivector diplomacy to “local rules”- to IR literature. The remainder of the course will assess in what ways specific issues shape Eurasian regional dynamics following an “issue” approach to stimulate students’ curiosity. Security issues like radical Islam, drug trafficking, organized crime, and the war in Afghanistan will be considered in their multiple facets, as their ramifications reverberate regionally and globally. Natural resources from hydrocarbons, to uranium and gold play a large role in the geopolitics of this region: particular attention will be dedicated to issues like the politics Caspian oil and gas and pipeline routes.

MAPSIR Degree Requirements

In order to earn a MAPSIR degree and graduate from SSH, a student must complete a degree program. This includes five required courses to be taken at various levels of difficulty, four elective graduate-level courses, one of which could be taken outside of the MAPSIR program with the approval of the Director of Graduate Studies, and the completion of a graduate thesis. (See section on MA Thesis for more information about requirements for the thesis and important deadlines for its completion.)

The MAPSIR program is very demanding and a great deal of your success depends on how you organize your schedule. It is important for you to organize your time so you can make the most of your studies. You should work toward furthering your professional goals by taking full advantage of the PSIR department, the university, and the opportunities that Astana offers. Therefore, plan well. **Do not plan to work a job in addition your studies.** As soon as you begin the program, you will have an academic advisor, a PSIR professor, who will be helping you with choosing courses and other academic matters. Talk to the SSH faculty and choose courses wisely. Think early on about the Graduate Thesis and make connections!

For example, **by the end of the first semester**, you will need to choose one course to be taken in the second semester and identify an adviser with whom you'd like to explore a thesis topic. **By the end of the second semester**, you should also know how to design a research project for the Graduate Thesis, confirm your thesis advisor and topic, review the basic literature for your topic, and plan your summer field research or data collection. **By the end of the summer term**, you should have completed a thorough literature review and final thesis proposal. **In the third semester**, you will focus on data collection and analysis, complete at least one thesis chapter and prepare a dossier if you plan to apply for PhD programs. And **in the fourth semester**, you should be well-positioned to write several drafts of your Graduate Thesis in order to achieve the final draft of publishable quality in addition to being ready for job interviews if you plan to seek job opportunities.

MAPSIR Coursework

The typical roadmap of completing MAPSIR degree in 21 months is the following:

Semester 1 (August-December) 24 ECTS credits

PLS 550 Core Seminar in International Relations – required course

PLS 540 Core Seminar in Comparative Politics – required course

PLS511 Advanced Research I – required course

Semester 2 (January-May) 28 ECTS credits

PLS 520 Core Seminar in Political Theory – required course

PLS 510 Advanced Research II – required course

Elective course #1 – chosen by the student

PLS 596 Thesis Preparation

Summer: PLS 597 Research for Thesis (June-July) 12 ECTS credits

Semester 3 (August-December) 28 ECTS credits

Elective course #2 – chosen by the student

Elective course #3 – chosen by the student

PLS 598 Thesis I (12 ECTS)

Semester 4 (January-May) 28 ECTS credits

Elective course #4 – chosen by the student

PLS 599 Thesis II (20 ECTS)

MAPSIR Graduate Thesis

The final and fundamental part of earning the MAPSIR degree is writing a graduate thesis, which is intended to represent a synthesis of learning outcomes in the MAPSIR program and demonstrate competence in political science approaches, proficiency in designing research using appropriate methods and addressing important local, national and global problems, and the abilities to write high quality, article-length manuscripts of publishable quality and to make an effective oral presentation of research findings in English. Beginning in semester two students will begin to form their Thesis Committee, which must be approved by the MAPSIR Program Director. The Committee consists of a Thesis Advisor and two additional faculty members. Of the three members of the Thesis Committee, the Thesis Advisor and at least one other Committee member must be on the Political Science and International Relations program faculty, and the third must be an external committee member. The Thesis is written under the direction of the Thesis Advisor, and must be approved by all members of the Thesis Committee.

The length of the thesis will vary depending on the topic and methodological approach of the student. Your thesis generally should be about 20,000 words.

Tip: Although a Graduate Thesis can be developed from a paper that you have already written, it must be broader and deeper to be considered as a separate Graduate Thesis. You cannot just submit a paper written for a course, but you should consider it as a first step in completing your Graduate Thesis requirement. Any use of previous papers in developing or writing your thesis will be done with permission and under the supervision of your thesis adviser.

Timeline and Deadlines:

1. End of first semester: Identify thesis advisor
2. End of second semester: make a plan for summer work, compile reading list for literature review
3. Summer semester: complete a literature review and thesis proposal
4. Beginning of third semester: Thesis proposal defense
 - a. Thesis proposal defense will be a formal meeting in which each student presents their thesis research proposal to the two PSIR faculty members on the thesis committee.
 - b. The thesis proposal will contain a description of the project, a preliminary literature review, a theoretical framework, and a plan for conducting the research to answer the research question raised in the project description.
 - c. Proposals can receive the following feedback:
 - i. Pass
 - ii. Fail pending revisions (This indicates minor changes to satisfy the committee about some aspect(s) of your proposal. You will be given a time frame in which to make changes and present the changes to the committee. The expectation is that you will complete the necessary work and receive a "Pass" grade if the requested changes are made).
 - iii. Fail (This indicates that the thesis proposal is unacceptable and requires too many changes to pass with minor revisions.) Students that fail the initial proposal defense will have an opportunity to re-work their proposals and defend them. However, this will cause significant delays, may jeopardize your academic standing, and may negatively impact your ability to complete your degree.
5. April (2nd year/4th semester). Thesis defense.
 - a. The thesis defense date will be announced by the director of graduate studies by the beginning of the Spring semester.
 - b. Students will work with their thesis advisers to be prepared to defend their thesis by the deadline.
 - c. Thesis defense will include the three members of the thesis committee for each student and is open to the public.

- d. Thesis defense will include a 10 minute presentation of the project (question, theory, evidence, main conclusions) by the student and will be followed by questions from the thesis committee.
 - e. Thesis committee will confer and determine the status of the thesis:
 - i. Pass as is
 - ii. Pass with revisions
 - iii. Fail
6. May (2nd year/ 4th semester): Thesis deposit
- a. Students will format thesis according to thesis guide.
 - b. An electronic copy of the thesis in PDF format will be provided to the School of Humanities and Social Science, and to the NU Repository. The library may also require that a student provide a written and bound copy of the thesis for their collection. *Please see thesis guide for more information on these expectations and formatting.*

Internships and outside employment

The Department of Political Science and International Relations strongly discourages MAPSIR students from participating in internships or outside employment during studies. **Employment may never be used as an excuse for poor performance in the program.**

Study Abroad

Students in SSH have a number of study abroad options. Some students arrange to study in the summer and may have the credits transferred to NU. For example, in June 2015, the top 3 MAPSIR students received funding from NU and took part in the IPSA Summer School on Research Methods at the National University of Singapore. In summer 2016, 2 MAPSIR students took courses at Humboldt University in Berlin. The Career Advising Center frequently finds opportunities for students to participate in programs abroad, some of which involve university credit. NU is working on creating a Study Abroad program, and SSH students should be attentive to announcements from the Career Advising Center to learn about this program as it develops. Study abroad opportunities are taken at the students' initiative.

Student Travel

NU and SSH have funds that can be used to help students travel to conduct field research, present their research at scholarly conferences, and other university-related activities but not Summer Schools. Students must apply for them well in advance. Applications for travel funding are reviewed by the Student Affairs Committee in cooperation with the SSH advising staff. The student coordinators can provide the full policy and guidelines upon request. Requirements for travel funding include (but are not limited to):

- Requests for travel funding must be presented to the student coordinators in writing at least 45 days before the date of expected travel. We know that this is quite long, but unfortunately it is usually impossible to process requests through NU's accounting system faster than this).
- Requests should include a full description of the event including dates, participants,

hosts, and purpose.

- Students should have a faculty mentor who has helped to prepare for the event (for example a mentor who guided the writing of a paper to be delivered at a conference). That mentor must submit a letter of support.
- Students are generally only allowed to travel once with university funding per year.
- Students must have a minimum GPA of 3.5 with no outstanding incompletes.
- Students must have a clean disciplinary record; any record of serious (Category B or C) academic misconduct will prevent a student from being awarded funded travel.
- The event must be directly related to study or university life.
- Funding for travel is never provided for events that happen within the final week of a semester, finals period, or midterm exam period.
- Funding can usually only be provided up to a certain level. In many cases students will have to cover partial costs on their own.

Registering and Enrolling in Classes

Registration

Students enroll in courses through the NU registrar's web site. This process is managed by the Office of Registrar but PSIR faculty and staff can assist students. Registration is typically done several weeks before the beginning of an academic term. Each student should meet every semester with the Director of Graduate Studies and with his or her adviser to discuss and agree upon a course of study. Other PSIR faculty and staff are also available and students should feel welcome to consult with multiple faculty members about choosing courses. Registering for elective courses takes place after their approval by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Class Attendance

You are expected to attend all classes for which they enroll at Nazarbayev University. In some cases, a student may have a pressing need to miss class such as illness or a family emergency. In these cases the student should inform all instructors as soon as possible, preferably BEFORE the course meeting time, and obtain documentation of the need to miss class wherever possible. An instructor may choose to excuse absences if they are well-documented, but this is an individual decision of the instructor and the student should take responsibility for making the necessary arrangements. Instructors may expect that all course work and missed exams or quizzes would still be completed and a student should not necessarily expect that the instructor would adjust deadlines or requirements.

In cases where class must be missed for medical reasons, students are expected to obtain a certified note from the doctor. This note should be registered with the Student Services office and it should also be shown to each faculty member who teaches a class that the student has missed. It is the individual responsibility of the student to show this documentation to the faculty member and students should not expect that an instructor will know about a doctor note simply because it is on file with Student

Services. Please note that fraudulent medical notes are considered serious misconduct and attempts to use them can result in harsh punishment.

Grades and Marks

Grading Scale

Nazarbayev University has adopted a letter grading system A, B, C, D and F. SSH uses the same grading scale as the rest of the university. The numerical equivalents of the grades as determined by the faculty are detailed below.

A	95-100	Excellent, exceeds the highest standards in the assignment or course
A-	90-94.9	Excellent; meets the highest standards for the assignment or course
B+	85-89.9	Very good; meets high standards for the assignment or course
B	80-84.9	Good; meets most of the standards for the assignment or course
B-	75-79.9	More than adequate; shows some reasonable command of the material
C+	70-74.9	Acceptable; meets basic standards for the assignment or course
C	65-69.9	Acceptable; meets some of the basic standards for the assignment or course
C-	60-64.9	Acceptable, while falling short of meeting basic standards in several ways
D+	55-59.9	Minimally acceptable
D	50-54.9	Minimally acceptable; lowest passing
F	0-49.9	Did not satisfy the basic requirements of the course

Final grades are reported by instructors as letters with modifiers and these translate into grade points. The list of letter grades and grade point equivalents is below. Instructors and courses may have different requirements for earning particular letter grades, but these will be spelled out in each syllabus.

Grade	Point Value
A	4.0
A-	3.67
B+	3.33
B	3.00
B-	2.67
C+	2.33
C	2.00
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.00
F	0.00

Thesis courses PLS 596, 597, and 598 are graded with a IPS (In Progress Satisfactory) or IPU (In Progress Unsatisfactory), which are converted to P/F (Pass or Fail) on your final transcript once PLS 599 has been completed. The thesis series of courses do not calculate into your GPA.

Grade Point Average

A Grade Point Average is a running measure of a student's academic performance over time. GPA is calculated by multiplying the grade point value of each letter grade by the number of credits in each class, then dividing by the overall number of credits attempted. Two kinds of GPA are calculated – Semester GPA includes only the grades and credits earned in a particular term, while Overall GPA (or “Cumulative GPA”) is a running total that includes all courses taken at NU.

Course Withdrawal

A student may drop out of a course by filing a form with the Office of Registrar. After the end of the Withdrawal period, there are no options for removing a course from a schedule. Withdrawal results in a letter grade of W being assigned to the student's transcript for the course. A grade of W does not affect a student's GPA and it does not get counted as an attempt for purposes of retaking courses. Withdraw is intended for use by students in emergency situations where they realize that continuing in a course will be very bad for their studies but it is too late to drop. Too many Ws on a transcript can be a sign to employers and graduate schools that students have difficulty committing to and completing tasks and they could affect a student record negatively even without impacting GPA.

Administrative Withdrawal

A student may be withdrawn from a course by the administration of SSH or NU due to unforeseen circumstances that make it unreasonable to expect a student to finish a class. These cases are very rare and include situations such as unexpected illness or severe classroom conduct problems. In case of Administrative Withdrawal, a letter grade of W will be assigned to the class on the student's transcript.

Re-sitting Exams

As a general policy, SSH does NOT allow re-sitting of exams for any student. Individual instructors may have policies that allow this, but their decisions are final and SSH will not hear petitions to force exam re-sits.

Incompletes

A student who is unable to complete a class due to unforeseen circumstances such as sudden illness or family emergency may petition for a grade of incomplete. If this petition is granted, the result will be a letter grade of I temporarily placed on a student's transcript. The student will then have a period of time, up to one full semester, to complete the work for the course in consultation with the instructor. If the work is not completed in this time, it will change to a grade of F on the transcript.

Students who feel that this may be a necessary course of action should contact their instructor and the Director of Graduate Studies as soon as possible to make arrangements. Please note that Incompletes are granted only in exceptional cases.

Retaking Courses

SSH follows NU policy regarding course retakes. A student may retake a course only if improvement or passage of the course is necessary for advancement in the student's degree program. Students are only allowed to retake two courses during their time at NU. In the event of a successful retake, only the successful grade will be calculated into the GPA, but the original mark will remain on the transcript.

Appealing Grades

If a student believes that he or she has received an unfair or erroneous grade, the student may appeal. The student must first provide a written account of the appeal to the instructor within 10 working days of his or receipt of the contested grade (that time may be extended in the event the instructor is shown to have been unavailable during the period following the student's receipt of the grade in question). In the event that the student is still dissatisfied, he or she may appeal to the Dean of the relevant School or the Dean's designee within 7 days. The Dean or designee shall consult with the Instructor before making any decision. The decision of the Dean or designee shall be final.

Students should not expect that grade appeals will result in changed grades except in exceptional circumstances. Abuse of this system will be considered misconduct.

Transferring Credit from Outside NU

There are a number of ways that a student may earn credit within SSH for work that was performed elsewhere. The minimum criteria for credit to transfer from another university include:

- An overall GPA at the other institution of 3.4/4.0 or higher
- A grade on an individual course of B or higher
- A similar course existing within SSH
- Evaluation by the PSIR faculty committee to determine the merit and relevance to political science of the course based on detailed course descriptions

In cases where transfer credit is awarded, the credit does not impact a student's GPA. A maximum of 16 ECTS credits or 2 three-credit courses or 1 four-credit course can be transferred for any individual student.

Work Completed Prior to Enrolling at NU

Transfer of credit for work done at other universities before coming to NU can ONLY be done at the time of admission. Once a student has been admitted to NU, SSH will not consider petitions for awarding credit to work done before arrival under any circumstances.

Credit for Concurrent External Work

In some cases, students may wish to take courses at other universities during their time as a student at NU. Examples may be credit earned during student exchange programs or from taking summer practical courses. In these cases, the student must make arrangements for transfer of credit prior to performing the course work. It is the responsibility of the student to consult with an advisor and other relevant people such as the dean or associate dean to ensure that the credits will transfer.

Misconduct

SSH adheres strictly to NU policies on both academic and non-academic misconduct. The school includes a committee that handles issues of academic discipline. The committee receives reports of misconduct from instructors and maintains a central record. Punishments may range from verbal reprimands to a recommendation for expulsion from the university.

The disciplinary committee also listens to disputes from students who believe they have been falsely accused and students are encouraged to speak with advisors, the SSH student services manager, or the associate dean about any questions regarding disciplinary issues.

Warnings against Plagiarism and Cheating

Both plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated and punished according to the procedures of "Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures of Nazarbayev University." If you are not sure about whether your actions constitute one or both of these practices, please talk to me about them. Under this Student Code, plagiarism "is intentionally or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own. It includes submitting an assignment purporting to be the student's original work which has wholly or in part been created by another person. It also includes the presentation of the work, ideas, representations, or words of another person without customary and proper acknowledgement of sources. Plagiarism occurs when a person:

- Directly copies one or more sentences of another person's written work without proper citation. If another writer's words are used, you must place quotation marks around the quoted material and include a footnote or other indication of the source of the quotation. This includes cut and paste from the internet or other electronic sources;
- Changes words but copies the sentence structure of a source without giving credit to the original source, or closely paraphrases one or more paragraphs without acknowledgement of the source of the ideas, or uses graphs, figures, drawings, charts or other visual/audio materials without acknowledging the source or the permission of the author;
- Submits false or altered information in any academic exercise. This may include making up data for an experiment, altering data, citing nonexistent articles, contriving sources, etc.;
- Turns in all or part of assignment done by another student and claims it as their own;
- Uses a paper writing service, has another student write a paper, or uses a foreign language translation and submits it as their own original work.

Cheating harms the very fiber of the University community. Honest students are put at a disadvantage due to the unfairness of the act and the potential that the grading structure of the class may be altered to their disadvantage. A student who cheats does

not receive a real education, robbing themselves of the experience of how to learn. This is the focus of any university education. Cheating also damages the reputation of the University as well as the fabric of society. Finally, cheating damages the ethics of the individual, teaching them a wrong approach to life that will not be sustainable in their future careers. Cheating occurs when a person:

- Gains or provides unauthorized access to examination materials.
- Uses notes, mobile phone, books, calculator or other materials/devices during an examination without the permission of the instructor.
- Copies from another student's exam sheet with or without their permission or allows a student to copy from their exam sheet.
- Obstructs or interferes with another student's efforts in an academic exercise.
- States a dishonest reason in a request for an extension for an exam or paper.
- Continues to write even when time is up during an exam.
- Talks during an examination period.
- Asks another student take an examination or quiz.
- Any other action that gives a student an unfair advantage during an examination period or on any assignment being graded for credit."

Advising

Each student is automatically assigned to a PSIR faculty member who will act as an academic adviser at the beginning of the first year of study. Advisers are especially useful for answering questions about degree programs and course expectations. Students are encouraged to seek help from that adviser on any issues related to life at Nazarbayev University. SSH also has a student services manager who can help with many issues related to student life when a faculty advisor is not available or does not have some information.

Students are also encouraged to seek help from faculty members other than their advisers, especially for questions specific to a degree program or academic field. Students should seek feedback, answers to questions, and guidance on issues from the professors in the courses in which they are enrolled. At the end of the first year of study, students will identify their thesis adviser and formally ask a PSIR faculty member to fill that role. Once the thesis chair is identified and has accepted the chair role, the thesis adviser becomes the student's primary academic adviser as well.

Nazarbayev University also has a Career and Advising Center located on the first floor of Block 1. This center can help with questions about career placement, internships, and general advising related to university life.

A psychological health advisor is located in the student dormitories. This person is available to discuss issues ranging from time-management strategies to psychological issues related to personal difficulties.

Tip: All of the faculty and advisers at Nazarbayev University are available to talk. Do not hesitate to contact anyone who you would like to speak with and they will make an appointment.

Student Standing

Good Standing

A student who meets the basic requirements of MAPSIR program (minimum 3.0 GPA) is considered to be in Good Standing. Students in good standing are eligible for most opportunities and rights that are afforded to SSH students. Some opportunities may have other, higher standards as well, but good standing is considered the basic qualification to participate in clubs, student council, internship opportunities, scholarship competitions, etc. If at any point during a student's course of study, his or her GPA falls below 3.0, the student will be given one semester of Probationary Status to bring his or her overall GPA above 3.0. Failure to do so will result in a student's termination from the program.

Full-Time

A MAPSIR student is considered to be enrolled full time with a minimum of 9 credits during Fall and Spring semesters. Summer term does not have a minimum credit load.

All students on government scholarships must maintain the minimum number of credits or they may forfeit their scholarship. The MAPSIR program is not offered as a part-time option, so all students enrolled in the program should be prepared to give their studies their full effort.

Clubs and Organizations

SSH students are encouraged to participate in clubs and organizations at NU. We also have a Student Affairs committee that is made up of faculty and staff dedicated to helping SSH students create and maintain clubs and organizations that appeal to their unique interests. Ask an adviser or the Student Services Manager to find out who is on that committee or to get a list of active SSH student organizations. You will be expected and supported to build a NU Graduate Student Association. Graduate students are encouraged to be involved, but to be cognizant of the increased out of class time required for MA studies. Time management is a key skill that needs to be mastered.

Student Life

The university experience is about more than just doing well in classes. SSH encourages all students to be active in social, civic, and professional spheres. We provide support for some of this development and encourage students to be active in finding activities that are rewarding to them. At the same time, studies must take priority and students should not over-extend themselves. Seek the advice of an adviser, the Student Services manager, the Associate Dean, or the Department of Student Services if you need help in balancing these various parts of student life.

Student Health Services

All NU students are registered at the University Health Center located in Block 24
Phone +77172 692616.

The pharmacy VitaPharm on campus is also located on the first floor of Block 24. Phone +77172 695756.

Student gym is open most days of the year <https://nu.edu.kz/campus/student-life/sports/sport-passess>.

Student Psychological Counseling

The NU Psychological Counselling Center is working in the Department of Student Affairs, where students can get professional psychological help. It is located in Block 19 and 11, offices 19104, 19105, 19106, 11103 and 11105. Counselors of the Center provide consultations and workshops on topics of quality of life, personal effectiveness and self-esteem, interpersonal relationships, and stress management. Other reasons to seek help from a counselor may be, but are not limited to, anxiety, mood swings, conflict situations, sleep disorders, and dependent behavior. For signing up for confidential consultations, student need to use Electronic Sign Up System at my.nu.edu.kz/wps/myportal/student (Student Web Portal).

Phone numbers: +77172 705735, +77172 706194, +77172 706303

Email: nu_counseling@nu.edu.kz

Office Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30AM to 5:30PM

Counselors of the Center:

- Mr. Yerden Nurtayev +77172 705735 yerden.nurtayev@nu.edu.kz
- Mrs. Nazira Saugabayeva +77172 706240 nazira.saugabayeva@nu.edu.kz
- Mrs. Rufiya Omarova +77172 706303 romarova@nu.edu.kz

In case of an **emergency**, as well as during after work hours, students may contact the following numbers:

- Medical Center of Mental Health Problems: +77172 547603 (24 hours)
- Unified Psychological Service in Kazakhstan: 150 or 111 (24 hours)
- Nurseit Kurmantayev, Department of Student Affairs: +77172 706084 and +77076699887 nurseit.kurmantayev@nu.edu.kz

Emergency Situations

In case of emergency, accident or fire, telephone **+77172 706262** at any time (62-62 from an internal NU telephone). In case of fire, inform security of its location and then immediately leave the building, following the signs to the designated assembly point. In case of emergency or serious accident, inform security of your location and the nature of

the emergency or accident. If an ambulance is required dial **+77172 706187** (61-87 from an internal NU telephone). For any inquiries regarding security please contact Head of Security Affairs Alibek Abdullayev by the e-mail alibek.abdullayev@nu.edu.kz or phone **+77172706407**, Senior Manager Galym Nygymetov g.nygymetov@nu.edu.kz **+77172 705715** and Adylkhan Sharipov **+77172 706609** adylkhan.sharipov@nu.edu.kz