

May 5, 2015

Information for the Academic Council regarding the proposal to establish a Master's of Analytical Political Economy (MAPE)

The MAPE proposal was presented by Professor Becker at the April 16 meeting of the Academic Council. After the meeting, several Council members sought clarifications of three points. ECAC requested that Professors Becker and Beramendi provide written answers to three questions concerning (1) information about prior reviews of the two relevant departments; (2) plans for providing financial aid; (3) the relation of the proposed program to the existing Master's in Political Science. Their responses are attached.

The full proposal and supporting documents from the Academic Programs Committee and the Provost are available on the Academic Council website at <http://academiccouncil.duke.edu/agenda/archive/2014-2015/>.

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RESPONSE TO ACADEMIC COUNCIL QUESTIONS REGARDING THE MAPE

Dear Academic Council members,

We are writing in response to several questions that have arisen following our (Becker's) April 16 presentation to the Academic Council.

(1) Is the proposal consistent with the results of recent departmental reviews?

The last Economics review took place in 2008. It favorably noted the master's program and its student placement record. The external review (p. 13) also noted possible capacity constraints, and concern over uncontrolled growth is a major reason that Economics expects to reduce the size of its core program as joint programs come on stream. The last Political Science last review took place in 2006. No consideration of MA programs was part of the review. We also note that the previous PSC review recommended an increase in the number of faculty lines to be able to maintain the department's national rank. That is hard to maintain in a time of financial austerity and given some losses (Soskice), a stronger collaboration with Economics, such as via MAPE, contributes effectively to bridging the gap identified by the earlier review. There is an upcoming review of Political Science to take place next year.

Unless a department is in disarray, external reviewers are unlikely to suggest substantial new ventures. Rather, they advise on current plans and recent initiatives, both as to their likely prospects and to improved directions. In order for that to happen, there need to be initiatives. From this perspective, MAPE is ideal: it is small, but also compels the Political Science department to gain experience in interdisciplinary collaboration and to think about directions for its master's program. It will give reviewers something to work with. If approved, MAPE will be in the process of recruiting its first cohort and assessors will be able to offer suggestions as to how to best use MAPE for the future direction of the department. In sum, the lack of a recent review and the advent of an upcoming one is no reason to delay MAPE. What it does mean is that the Political Science and Economics departments should anticipate some suggestions as the program is hopefully ready to welcome its first cohort in Fall 2016.

(2) How much financial aid will be available, and how will it be distributed?

MAPE expects to commit 1/3 of gross tuition revenue to financial aid. This amounts to a projected \$83,000 in AY 2016-17, \$163,000 in AY 2017-18, and \$176,000 in AY 2018-19. Data including tuition rates and projected enrollments are included below. There are five types of aid that we envision, including need, diversity, merit aid awarded to incoming students (competitive matching of other offers), performance-based merit aid, and an incentive in the final semester to keep taking a full load of courses.

financial aid type

anticipated share of total aid
(in an equilibrium rather than start-up year)

<i>ex ante</i> merit (competing for students)	15%
performance-based merit	10
diversity	25
need	25
4th semester incentive	25

Proposed Revenue and Dis	Fall 2016	Spring 2017		Fall 2017	Spring 2018	SMR 2018		Fall 2018	Spring 2019	SMR 2019	
tuition rate	\$24,747	\$24,747		\$25,737	\$25,737			\$26,766	\$26,766		
average waiver	33%	33%		33%	33%			33%	33%		
net revenue/student	\$16,580	\$16,580		\$17,244	\$17,244			\$17,933	\$17,933		
total revenue	\$82,902	\$82,902		\$189,681	\$142,261			\$215,202	\$138,984		
total financial aid	\$40,833	\$40,833		\$93,425	\$70,069			\$105,995	\$68,455		
Revenue:											
Graduate School	\$41,451	\$41,451	\$82,902	\$94,840	\$71,130		\$165,971	\$107,601	\$69,492		\$177,093
Economics	\$20,726	\$20,726	\$41,451	\$47,420	\$35,565		\$82,985	\$53,800	\$34,746		\$88,546
Political Science	\$20,726	\$20,726	\$41,451	\$47,420	\$35,565		\$82,985	\$53,800	\$34,746		\$88,546
Net Revenue:											
Graduate School			\$82,902				\$165,971				\$177,093
Economics			\$1,368				\$5,735				\$11,505
Political Science			\$1,368				\$5,735				\$11,505

(3) How does the proposed program differ from the existing Master's in Political Science with a concentration in Political Economy? Why would it not be appropriate to admit the MAPE students to that program?

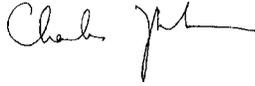
From a Political Science perspective: The MAPE proposal is not justified only on the basis of the need to improved access to faculty on campus for Political Science MA students. This is one relatively minor aspect of one of three main lines of justification (intellectual, market niche, organization). Currently, a political science MA student may choose to take a political economy (PE) track. If so, she would take the PE core and a microeconomics and a macroeconomics class. These latter courses depend on available offerings in Economics and would take place without any prior commitment or coordination with that department, because in the current environment there is no reason why they should commit faculty and staff time to help teach, supervise, or design a program in another department. The same would apply to her training in several aspects of econometrics exclusively offered by the Economics department. More importantly, the final project would not benefit from the input of a co-supervisor from Economics. Currently, political science MA students with a track in PE may take a non-thesis option (just on the basis of courses) or write a paper under the exclusive advice of a Political Science faculty member. MAPE students will have regular and institutionalized input from at least one faculty member from each of the two departments as per the design of the program. This is a much better approach that will yield much better teaching and research outcomes. Obviously, the eventual implementation of MAPE would imply that Political Science MA only students will not concentrate on PE. Those students will be channeled through MAPE.

Conversely, economic MA students interested in political economy currently have restricted access to Political Science faculty. At the same time, many current MA students are interested in pursuing academic careers in Political Economy; others seek non-academic careers in Economic Development. Both of these would gain greatly from a joint program between Economics and

Political Science – especially the three Economics MA students heading this fall to PhD programs in Political Science (at Texas, Minnesota, and, for the second consecutive year, Duke). The joint program will help in the quality of faculty advising; it will also signal interest in the field more credibly than if one had a MA degree exclusively in either Economics or Political Science alone.

In summary, we see no significant downsides to the program and believe that it will lead to enhanced learning and career experiences for students.

Sincerely,



Charles M. Becker
Associate Chair and
Research Professor of Economics



Pablo Beramendi
Director of Graduate Studies and
Associate Professor of Political Science