

SPECIAL REPORT
of the
ACADEMIC PRIORITIES COUNCIL
concerning the
**MERGER OF THE DEPARTMENTS OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE AND LEGAL STUDIES**

Adopted unanimously by the Rules Committee,
acting on behalf of the Faculty Senate,
June 4, 2010

Presented at the
696th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
September 16, 2010

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

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June 3, 2010

The Academic Priorities Council strongly endorses the proposed merger of Political Science and Legal Studies. The units have jointly developed a merger plan in which the faculty and staff of Legal Studies will become members of the Political Science Department and Legal Studies will become a major within the Political Science Department. The merger will strengthen Legal Studies and provide faculty with greater support, a stronger infrastructure, the potential for increased interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary research opportunities and new graduate programs, and support for the Law and Society initiative. Details concerning personnel actions, hiring, workload, and resource allocation have been agreed upon by Legal Studies and Political Science in an effort to smooth the transition. The faculties in both units are supportive of the merger and it is expected that faculty, students, and the University will be well served by it.

**MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Merger of the Departments of Political Science and
54-10 Legal Studies, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 10-052.**

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
THE FACULTY SENATE

PROGRAM REVISION APPROVAL FORM

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PROGRAM TITLE: Legal Studies

PLEASE CHECK: GRADUATE UNDERGRADUATE X

DEPARTMENT: Legal Studies

HEAD/CHAIR: John A. Hird, Acting Chair

SCHOOL OR COLLEGE: SBS

DEAN: Robert Feldman

Submission Date: June 3, 2010

Proposed Starting Date: July 1, 2010

I. PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Describe the Proposal.

We propose that the Legal Studies major be administered through the Department of Political Science, through the merger of the two departments. The Political Science department would now administer two undergraduate degrees: an undergraduate major in Political Science, and another in Legal Studies. Separate Legal Studies courses, committees, teaching, advising, and other functions would be maintained.

B. Provide a brief overview of the process for developing the proposal.

The process for developing this proposal began with the upper administration's decision to merge the two departments, set forth in a memo dated February 2, 2010. The departments then formed a transition team comprised of three faculty from each department, plus the chair of Political Science and SBS Associate Dean Douglas Anderton representing Legal Studies. The Committee developed a Merger Plan which, after modification through negotiations between the MSP and the administration, was approved independently by both the Political Science and Legal Studies faculties.

II. PURPOSE AND GOALS

Describe the Proposal's purpose and the particular knowledge and skills to be acquired.

The purpose of the merger – and the subsequent administration of the Legal Studies major by the Department of Political Science – is set forth in the February 2010 memo describing the administration's intent to merge the departments: "the goal of this administrative move is to strengthen Legal Studies at UMass." The memo further stipulates that "any administrative changes will enhance both units involved in the merger," "the number of faculty will not be reduced in either unit as a result of the merger," and "the Legal Studies undergraduate major will remain intact, with no changes in requirements due to the merger."