

University of Pretoria Yearbook 2025

MA specialising in Security Studies (Coursework) (01250408)

Department Political Sciences

Minimum duration of study 2 years

Total credits 180

NQF level 09

Admission requirements

1. Honours degree in Political Sciences
or
Relevant honours degree
2. A weighted average of at least 65% for the honours degree

Note:

1. An admissions essay/entrance examination may be required
2. Additional work/modules may be required in order to reach the desired level of competency
3. Applicants with a weighted average of between 60% and 64% for the honours degree, might be considered for admissions via the RPL process (Refer to the UP General Academic Regulations and Student Rules G55)

Additional requirements

- Prospective students may be required to submit an admissions essay or to sit for an examination or to do additional work/modules to enable them to reach the desired level of study.
- An acceptable level of proficiency in English is required.

Other programme-specific information

- At least two modules must be taken during the first year of study.
- Students may, with the approval of the programme manager, replace at the most one module with another suitable module with equal credits from another discipline.
- This program is not presented telematically or via distance education.

Curriculum: Year 1

Core modules

Mediation in African conflicts 871 (PTO 871)

Module credits	30.00
NQF Level	09
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	1 lecture per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Political Sciences
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

The module aims to develop an advanced understanding of the key academic and policy debates regarding international mediation; to explore both the theory and the practice of mediation; and to develop strategising skills for peacemaking. The focus is on mediation undertaken by the United Nations, the African Union and sub-regional bodies in major conflicts in Africa. This module may be taken by students enrolled in MA specialising in Security Studies, after consultation with the department.

National security 871 (SEC 871)

Module credits	30.00
NQF Level	09
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	1 lecture per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Political Sciences
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

This study of national security focuses on decisions, activities and institutions related to national security and national security policy. These underpin the strategic choices made at international, regional and national levels in response to security challenges, be they by individual countries or in the multilateral context of regional or global security cooperation. competing theoretical approaches to national security are also explored and assessed, as well as the policy and strategic contexts that influence the decisions, institutions and processes of national security policy-making and security sector governance.

Security and strategic theory 877 (SEC 877)

Module credits	30.00
NQF Level	09

Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	1 lecture per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Political Sciences
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

A critical analysis of the development of security theory and competing perspectives of security, in response to changing power configurations and security threats in the contemporary international system. This includes alternative frameworks for security cooperation at a regional and global level. Against this background, the evolution of security and strategic thought is analysed. The contemporary application of the principles of strategy is discussed, and 21st century thinking on strategy, security and war is addressed.

Methodology of security studies 878 (SEC 878)

Module credits	30.00
NQF Level	09
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	1 lecture per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Political Sciences
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

By using appropriate methodological approaches and research methods, selected aspects of related modules in security studies are applied to specific security and strategic case studies and issues of importance. In addition to the emphasis on methodological aspects and selected research methods, attention is also paid to the development, structure and writing of research reports in the field of security studies. This module has an approved research proposal on a security or strategic theme for the mini-dissertation that also complies with ethical guidelines, as an outcome.

Strategic intelligence and forecasting 879 (SEC 879)

Module credits	30.00
NQF Level	09
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Contact time	1 lecture per week
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Political Sciences
Period of presentation	Semester 1 or Semester 2

Module content

National security is closely related to threat perception, and threat analysis is in turn largely dependent on sound strategic intelligence. Attention is given to contemporary theory and practice as far as strategic intelligence is concerned; questions of policy on, agencies for an control over the intelligence process; and the current processes, focus, value and utilisation of strategic intelligence in a changing world. Strategic forecasting (with the inclusion of risk analysis and scenario construction) is linked to threat perception and national security to the extent that it forms an important part of planning for the future - hence the study of the nature, methodology and use of forecasting in the security environment.

Curriculum: Final year

Core modules

Mini-dissertation: Security studies 895 (SEC 895)

Module credits	60.00
NQF Level	09
Prerequisites	No prerequisites.
Language of tuition	Module is presented in English
Department	Political Sciences
Period of presentation	Year

Module content

A mini-dissertation, based on independent research done by the student in the broad field of security, is written under the guidance of a supervisor.

General Academic Regulations and Student Rules

The [General Academic Regulations \(G Regulations\)](#) and [General Student Rules](#) apply to all faculties and registered students of the University, as well as all prospective students who have accepted an offer of a place at the University of Pretoria. On registering for a programme, the student bears the responsibility of ensuring that they familiarise themselves with the General Academic Regulations applicable to their registration, as well as the relevant faculty-specific and programme-specific regulations and information as stipulated in the relevant yearbook. Ignorance concerning these regulations will not be accepted as an excuse for any transgression, or basis for an exception to any of the aforementioned regulations. The G Regulations are updated annually and may be amended after the publication of this information.

Regulations, degree requirements and information

The faculty regulations, information on and requirements for the degrees published here are subject to change and may be amended after the publication of this information.

University of Pretoria Programme Qualification Mix (PQM) verification project

The higher education sector has undergone an extensive alignment to the Higher Education Qualification Sub-Framework (HEQSF) across all institutions in South Africa. In order to comply with the HEQSF, all institutions are legally required to participate in a national initiative led by regulatory bodies such as the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET), the Council on Higher Education (CHE), and the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA). The University of Pretoria is presently engaged in an ongoing effort to align its qualifications and programmes with the HEQSF criteria. Current and prospective students should take note that changes to UP qualification and programme names, may occur as a result of the HEQSF initiative. Students are advised to contact their faculties if they have any questions.