Bachelor of Philosophy Sample Plan of Studies
Majors: Political Science and A&S Dual Business

The academic program of study which I am pursuing at the University of Pittsburgh during my undergraduate career can be best described by two characteristics: “interdisciplinary” and “multi-lateral”. My strong interests in the polity that is the European Union and the economical and political development of Eastern Europe since the end of the cold-war are clearly reflected in both of my declared majors; Political science & Business. I believe that free and well functioning enterprise in a nation can serve as a catalyst for economic, political and social reform.

My choice to pursue a Business major in addition to the Political Science major can be best explained by my strong conviction that enterprise is a key instrument in transformation of young Eastern European democracies into functioning democratic governments, through introduction of "incentives" and "opportunities" for a better livelihood for the people in the former Warsaw-pact nations. A nation that has a functioning democracy, a rule of law and respect for human rights in turn serves as a great environment for a market economy and consequently allows for a smooth business operation. In fact this logic I believe is similar to the one that has encouraged many Eastern European states in the past decade to work very hard on transformation of their political systems to become enterprise-friendly and in turn rapidly improve economic performance leading to negotiations for accession to the European Union. My strongest interests lie in the area of political economics, a notion at the foundation of the European Union founding and desire for a common market. I am interested in exploring the impact of imminent EU accession on party-politics in Eastern Europe. Yet, when the question of interest addresses party-politics in any nation, concerns other than economics and political reform are very important too.

There are many different political parties within each nation of Eastern Europe, those that build their platforms on ideologies such as nationalism, socialism, euro-skepticism and many others. Consequently in my program of study I have began to incorporate course and research in many other disciplines that both pertain to my proposed thesis and at the same time provide a well-rounded approach to my undergraduate curriculum. My course of study includes previously taken courses on Transatlantic Political Global Economy, Politics of the European Union, UHC Russia & West, Madness and Madmen in Russian Culture, Macroeconomics and Microeconomics. Currently I am enrolled in courses entitled, “Nations and Nationalism”, which explores the issue of nationalism in Eastern Europe, as well as a course entitled, Comparative Development Administration, which seeks to compare development aid given by the European Union and United States to the developing world and economies and in transition, like many nations in Eastern Europe. In the future I plan to enroll in the classes like “Eastern European Politics”, taught by Dr. Ron H. Linden and “Economies in Transition”, taught by Professor Berkowitz in the Economics Department. I also would like to enroll in more courses like “Modern Polish Cinema”, taught by Professor Elizabeth Ostrowska, which focuses more on culture and literature of Eastern European nations. I believe that through better understanding of the culture and political trends in Eastern Europe; I will be more successful in finding meaningful results on the question raised in my proposed thesis.

In the near future, I intend to apply for the Brackenridge Undergraduate Research Fellowship, to help me with the expense incurred while conducting research during the summer months. Moreover, I plan to conduct research in Brussels or Prague in the area of my proposed thesis topic before my graduation date, depending on funding and time availability.