Program Outcomes Assessment

BA/BS in Political Science

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General Information (Program Outcomes Assessment)

Standing Requirements

◈ Mission Statement

The Department of Political Science is committed to providing a high-quality academic experience both in and out of the classroom for its undergraduate and graduate students. Our curriculum integrates exposure to theory, method, and practice – particularly through experiential learning – with critical thinking, effective communication, and a global perspective. In this way, we prepare our students for productive careers in public service or in the private sector, and for lives of active citizenship.

◈ Outcomes Library

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication

Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

Outcome	Mapping
1.1: Engage in civil discussions Students will be able to effectively engage in disciplinarily informed civil discussions on complex, contentious topics.	**Foundational Studies:** 10. Express themselves effectively, professionally, and persuasively both orally and in writing.
1.2: Effective oral presentations Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.	**Foundational Studies:** 10. Express themselves effectively, professionally, and persuasively both orally and in writing.

2. Effective Written Communication

Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

Outcome	Mapping
2.1: Persuasive essay Students will develop the skill of writing a persuasive argument supported by relevant evidence. Included here are the presentation of a clear argument, logical flow of the argument, good organizational structure to the whole essay, and comprehension of primary documents or data.	**Foundational Studies:** 10. Express themselves effectively, professionally, and persuasively both orally and in writing.
2.2: Papers Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful proofreading.	**Foundational Studies:** 10. Express themselves effectively, professionally, and persuasively both orally and in writing.
2.3: Appropriate citation methods for papers Students will learn appropriate citation methods for papers in Political Science. Different faculty may prefer different citation methods; the important objective is that students learn how to properly cite in their written work.	**Foundational Studies:** 10. Express themselves effectively, professionally, and persuasively both orally and in writing.
2.4: Different styles of papers in Political Science	**Foundational Studies:** 10. Express themselves effectively,

Students will develop a facility with different styles of papers in Political Science, including but not limited to analytical, persuasive, and research papers.

professionally, and persuasively both orally and in writing.

3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

Outcome	Mapping
3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues	No Mapping
3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors	No Mapping
3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues	**Foundational Studies:** 2. Critically evaluate the ideas of others.
3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations	No Mapping
3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events Identifying appropriate social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events	No Mapping

4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

Outcome	Mapping
4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.	No Mapping
4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects. Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.	No Mapping
4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately	No Mapping
4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.	No Mapping
4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.	No Mapping

5. Political Science Content Knowledge

Outcome	Mapping
5.1 American political system Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system	No Mapping
5.2 Comparative politics Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them	No Mapping
5.3 International politics Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system	No Mapping
5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science	No Mapping

◈ Curriculum Map

Active Curriculum Maps ⓘ

Political Science (See appendix)
Alignment Set: BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set
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◈ Communication of Outcomes

The student learning outcomes for the Poli Sci major are on the program's website:
http://www.indstate.edu/polisci/learningoutcomes.htm

Archive (This area is to be used for archiving pre-TaskStream assessment data and for current documents.)

◈ **Archive**

File Attachments:

1. **Annual_Student_Assessment_Results_2010.xlsx** (See appendix)
2. **Assessment_Plan_for_2010-2011.docx** (See appendix)
3. **Communication_of_Outcomes_Statement_for_Task_Stream.docx** (See appendix)
4. **Curriculum Map explanation for Task Stream - 1-20-15.pdf** (See appendix)
5. **Curriculum_Map_explanation_for_Task_Stream_11-3-10.docx** (See appendix)
6. **Exit_Interview_2010_with_student_responses.docx** (See appendix)
7. **Exit_Interview_Results.doc** (See appendix)
8. **Final_Assessment_of_Students_Spring_2009.docx** (See appendix)
9. **Final_Assessment_of_Students_Spring_2010.docx** (See appendix)
10. **Poli_Sci_Mission_Statement_--_final.doc** (See appendix)
11. **Student_Learning_Outcomes_in_Curriculum_Revision_forms.doc** (See appendix)

2009-2010 Assessment Cycle

◈ Assessment Plan

Outcomes and Measures

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

BA/BS in Political Science Learning Objective

1. Oral Communication

Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - Formal Presentation
Direct - Other

Details/Description: This course required a formal presentation of the research paper that was scheduled for 5-7 minutes (guidelines for the presentations were provided to all students). Most students took 9-10 minutes.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Assessed every spring

Responsible Individual(s): Course instructor

2. Written Communication

Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Research Paper

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and annually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

3. Critical thinking and analysis

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - class assignments
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Assessment based on class discussions, thought papers, and weekly discussions questions

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and each subsequent spring

Responsible Individual(s): Course instructor

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and anually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

4. Quantitative and qualitative research methods skills

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and anually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - Research Paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students wrote a research paper on a topic of their choice. They were able to write either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. My objective with these papers, which was conveyed in the instructions to the students for writing these papers, was to assess their ability to formulate a research question, decide whether their question required a more traditional research design or a policy analysis research design to answer it, locate and discuss relevant existing literature on their question, and then collect data, analyze/assess it, and then write up the results of their research/analysis.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and each subsequent spring

Responsible Individual(s): Course instructor

5. American Political System

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system.

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: This was a two-hour test that assessed their knowledge of various fields within the discipline, and we are able to compare our students' scores against results from other schools.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and anually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - first-day class discussion
Direct - Other

Details/Description: A class discussion on the first day that drew on several news stories regarding the health care bill. Students were asked to draw from the readings some of the basic concepts of Political Science and American government/politics, such as power, authority, legitimacy, separation of powers, federalism, the notion of representation in our democracy, partisanship and the role of political parties, and the notions of equality and opportunity. (Students were not told which concepts to draw from the readings, but were told to find the basic concepts, so they had to remember what several of these concepts were.)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010

Responsible Individual(s): Course instructor

6. Political Systems of Other Countries

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

systems of other countries and be able to compare them.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and annually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

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7. International Political System

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test - IR subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and annually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

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8. Frameworks, Concepts, and Theories in Political Science

Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science.

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 (first administration) annually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

◈ Assessment Findings

Finding per Measure

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

BA/BS in Political Science Learning Objective

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1. Oral Communication

Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - Formal Presentation
Direct - Other

Details/Description: This course required a formal presentation of the research paper that was scheduled for 5-7 minutes (guidelines for the presentations were provided to all students). Most students took 9-10 minutes.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Assessed every spring

Responsible Individual(s): Course instructor

Findings for PSCI 499 - Formal Presentation

Summary of Findings: Of the eleven students who presented in Spring 2010, five did very good or excellent jobs of presenting their research, which included organizing their thoughts and points for oral presentation and delivering them in a way that was clear and effective. Two other students did a good job, but had some troubles organizing their presentation and in presenting the material in a clear and effective manner. The other four students had greater trouble with the presentation. These troubles typically included omission of required major elements of the presentation, significant problems with the organization of the presentation, and highly problematic delivery of the presentation (getting lost a couple of times in the middle of the presentation, reading from the paper and in a monotone voice, etc.).

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

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2. Written Communication

Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Research Paper

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and annually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for PSCI 499

Summary of Findings: In Spring 2010, six of the thirteen students consistently wrote papers that clearly and effectively got their ideas across. They sometimes had a few problems with typos or grammatical errors, but these were not prevalent for these six students. The organization of their papers was generally quite good. For the other students, two submitted papers that were reasonably well-written but had more grammatical, typographical, or similar errors. The ideas of these two students also needed to be fleshed out more and better developed than for the first six. The remaining five students who submitted papers had greater trouble, either with grammatical and typographical errors, or with staying on topic, or with developing their ideas and arguments with any degree of depth. Some of them would occasionally overcome these issues, but too often they did not.

Results: Target Achievement: Not Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

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3. Critical thinking and analysis

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - class assignments
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Assessment based on class discussions, thought papers, and weekly discussions questions

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and each subsequent spring

Responsible Individual(s): Course instructor

Findings for PSCI 499 - class assignments

Summary of Findings: The analytical skills of the students ranged from excellent to poor. Based on class discussions, the thought papers, and the weekly discussion questions that the students submitted, I would say that of the thirteen students, three were very strong/excellent in their analytical abilities, three were good (but one of these was lazy/erratic and ended up flunking the course), three were moderate or sporadically good, and four were poor. For the three who were very good/excellent, they could easily tease assumptions out of the arguments in the readings, and apply the arguments to new cases. This was quite evident in the thought papers and discussion questions: the weaker students would regurgitate main points of the authors in their discussion questions, and their thought papers merely summarized the main arguments of the authors and posed a couple of questions about them. The better students asked questions that probed the assumptions of the authors or posed new situations in their discussion questions, and their thought papers analyzed the arguments in the readings, criticized and challenged the arguments of the authors, and really grappled with the ideas. The students in the middle typically

did more than just recite the arguments of authors, but did not always answer with any depth the good questions that they raised (although sometimes they did).

The analytical abilities of nine of the thirteen students were at least moderate/adequate if not sporadically good, and three students had very good/excellent analytical skills.

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes : The analytical abilities of nine of the thirteen students were at least moderate/adequate if not sporadically good, and three students had very good/excellent analytical skills.

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and anually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test

Summary of Findings: Dept Means on Assessment Indicators:

Analytical & Critical Thinking 81 (90%)

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

| **4. Quantitative and qualitative research methods skills** | ▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Exam |

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and anually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test

Summary of Findings: Dept Means on Assessment Indicators:
Methodology 69 (65%)

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - Research Paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students wrote a research paper on a topic of their choice. They were able to write either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. My objective with these papers, which was conveyed in the instructions to the students for writing these papers, was to assess their ability to formulate a research question, decide whether their question required a more traditional research design or a policy analysis research design to answer it, locate and discuss relevant existing literature on their question, and then collect data, analyze/assess it, and then write up the results of their research/analysis.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and each subsequent spring

Responsible Individual(s): Course instructor

Findings for PSCI 499 - Research Paper

Summary of Findings:
Of the eleven students who wrote research papers, five students demonstrated very strong research skills in terms of formulating a research question, deciding on the appropriate design, reviewing existing literature, gathering appropriate data and analyzing it, and then presenting the results in a clear manner. Three students demonstrated a more intermediate level of skills in these areas, and three demonstrated a poor level of skills (one of these still had trouble identifying independent and dependent variables in his research).

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

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5. American Political System

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system.

Measure: PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: This was a two-hour test that assessed their knowledge of various fields within the discipline, and we are able to compare our students' scores against results from other schools.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and anually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test

Summary of Findings: Compared with other schools, our students did well in American politics.

See attachement for results.

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

Results from ETS Major Field Test, Spring 2010 (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

Measure: PSCI 499 - first-day class discussion
Direct - Other

Details/Description: A class discussion on the first day that drew on several news stories regarding the health care bill. Students were asked to draw from the readings some of the basic

concepts of Political Science and American government/politics, such as power, authority, legitimacy, separation of powers, federalism, the notion of representation in our democracy, partisanship and the role of political parties, and the notions of equality and opportunity. (Students were not told which concepts to draw from the readings, but were told to find the basic concepts, so they had to remember what several of these concepts were.)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010

Responsible Individual(s): Course instructor

Findings for PSCI 499 - first-day class discussion

Summary of Findings: This exercise was conducted in conjunction with PSCI 496, which meant that we had upwards of 25 students in the classroom for the exercise. Because of the number of students, some students dominated the discussion while others did their best to hide, and several of the better Legal Studies majors were quite vocal. Overall, the students who spoke up (and some who were called on) were able to demonstrate both familiarity and facility with most of these concepts. A few of the better students were able to pull some of the more difficult concepts from this case.

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes : The exercise did not work as well this year as last because of the larger number of students.

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6. Political Systems of Other Countries

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them.

Measure: PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and annually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield

Summary of Findings: Department mean for CP subscore = 66 (95%)

Comparatively speaking, our students did well in this subfield.

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes : Why they did so well in CP when we offer few courses in the subfield is something to ponder.

Substantiating Evidence:

Results from ETS Major Field Test, Spring 2010 (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

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7. International Political System

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

Measure: PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test - IR subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 and annually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test - IR subfield

Summary of Findings: Department mean for IR subscore: 51 (50%)

Results: Target Achievement: Not Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes : The 50th percentile for our scores in the IR subfield is surprising due to the fact this is an area of strength within the department. We will have to watch these scores over the next few years to see how our students do, particularly with the new curriculum.

Substantiating Evidence:

Results from ETS Major Field Test, Spring 2010 (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

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8. Frameworks, Concepts, and Theories in Political Science

Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science.

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 (first administration)
annually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test

Summary of Findings: The thirteen students in PSCI 499 in Spring 2010 had a good handle on the basic concepts of Political Science and the nine who completed the ETS Major Field Test did reasonably well on it as a group.

See attachment for results.

Dept Means on Assessment Indicators:
Political Thought 48 (45%)

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

Results from ETS Major Field Test, Spring 2010 (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

Overall Recommendations

No text specified

Overall Reflection

No text specified

2010-2011 Assessment Cycle

◈ **Assessment Plan**

Outcomes and Measures

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

BA/BS in Political Science Learning Objective

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1. Oral Communication

Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

▼ **Measure:** Oral Presentation of Reserach Project
Direct - Other

Details/Description: PSCI 499 - The oral presentation of the research project will be used to assess each student's oral communication competency.
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline): Assessed every spring
Responsible Individual(s): Course instructor

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2. Written Communication

Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

▼ **Measure:** Research Paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: The research paper in PSCI 499 will be used to assess each student's written communication competency.
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring
Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in the survey on students' perceptions of whether their writing has improved over the course of their studies.

Survey administered in PSCI 499
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring
Responsible Individual(s):

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3. Critical thinking and analysis

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring
Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Research Paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Research Paper in PSCI 499 will be used to assess critical thinking and analytical skills.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually each spring

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Research Paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Research Paper in PSCI 499 will be used to assess critical thinking and analytical skills.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually each spring

Responsible Individual(s):

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4. Quantitative and qualitative research methods skills

▼ **Measure:** Research Paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Research paper in PSCI 499 will be used to assess research skills. The objective is to assess each student's ability to formulate a research question, decide whether their question required a more traditional research design or a policy analysis research design to answer it, locate and discuss relevant existing literature on their question, and then collect data, analyze/assess it, and then write up the results of their research/analysis.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually each spring

Responsible Individual(s): Course instructor

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5. American Political System

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system.

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

<table>
<tr><td>

6. Political Systems of Other Countries

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them.

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▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

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<tr><td>

7. International Political System

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

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▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - IR subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

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<tr><td>

8. Frameworks, Concepts, and Theories in Political Science

Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science.

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▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 (first administration)
annually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

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◈ Assessment Findings

Finding per Measure

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

BA/BS in Political Science Learning Objective

1. Oral Communication

Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

▼ **Measure:** Oral Presentation of Reserach Project
Direct - Other

Details/Description: PSCI 499 - The oral presentation of the research project will be used to assess each student's oral communication competency.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Assessed every spring

Responsible Individual(s): Course instructor

Findings for Oral Presentation of Reserach Project

No Findings Added

2. Written Communication

Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

▼ **Measure:** Research Paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: The research paper in PSCI 499 will be used to assess each student's written communication competency.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research Paper

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in the survey on students' perceptions of whether their writing has improved over the course of their studies.

Survey administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Student Survey

No Findings Added

3. Critical thinking and analysis

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Research Paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Research Paper in PSCI 499 will be used to assess critical thinking and analytical skills.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually each spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research Paper

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Research Paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Research Paper in PSCI 499 will be used to assess critical thinking and analytical skills.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually each spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research Paper

No Findings Added

4. Quantitative and qualitative research methods skills

▼ **Measure:** Research Paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Research paper in PSCI 499 will be used to assess research skills. The objective is to assess each student's ability to formulate a research question, decide whether their question required a more traditional research design or a policy analysis research design to answer it, locate and discuss relevant existing literature on their question, and then collect data, analyze/assess it, and then write up the results of their research/analysis.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually each spring

Responsible Individual(s): Course instructor

Findings for Research Paper

No Findings Added

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5. American Political System

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system.

Measure: ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring
Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test

No Findings Added

Measure: Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring
Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Student Survey

No Findings Added

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6. Political Systems of Other Countries

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them.

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring
Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield

No Findings Added

Measure: Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Student Survey

No Findings Added

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7. International Political System

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - IR subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - IR subfield

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Student Survey

No Findings Added

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8. Frameworks, Concepts, and Theories in Political Science

Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science.

▼ **Measure:** PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2010 (first administration)
annually thereafter

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for PSCI 499 - ETS Major Field Test

No Findings Added

Overall Recommendations

No text specified

Overall Reflection

No text specified

2011-2012 Assessment Cycle

◈ Assessment Plan

Outcomes and Measures

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication
Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

1.1: Engage in civil discussions

Students will be able to effectively engage in disciplinarily informed civil discussions on complex, contentious topics.

▼ **Measure:** Regular class discussions
Direct - Other

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

1.2: Effective oral presentations

Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.

▼ **Measure:** Research presentation
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2. Effective Written Communication
Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.1: Persuasive essay

Students will develop the skill of writing a persuasive argument supported by relevant evidence. Included here are the presentation of a clear argument, logical flow of the argument, good organizational structure to the whole essay, and comprehension of primary documents or data.

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: In the context of PSCI 499, student writing was assessed in three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful proofreading.

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2.3: Appropriate citation methods for papers

Students will learn appropriate citation methods for papers in Political Science. Different faculty may prefer different citation methods; the important objective is that students learn how to properly cite in their written work.

▾ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2.4: Different styles of papers in Political Science

Students will develop a facility with different styles of papers in Political Science, including but not limited to analytical, persuasive, and research papers.

▾ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

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3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues

▾ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the students in terms of these learning outcomes, their three thought papers as well as their research papers were evaluated

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies

Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors

▾ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the students in terms of these learning outcomes, their three thought papers as well as their research papers were evaluated

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works

Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the students in terms of these learning outcomes, their three thought papers as well as their research papers were evaluated

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations

Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Analytical and Critical Thinking Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the students in terms of these learning outcomes, their three thought papers as well as their research papers were evaluated

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events

Identifying appropriate social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the students in terms of these learning outcomes, their three thought papers as well as their research papers were evaluated

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research

Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Methodology Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research

Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research

Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings

Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated. The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

5. Political Science Content Knowledge

5.1 American political system

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

5.2 Comparative politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

5.3 International politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science	▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator Direct - Exam
	Details/Description: **Target:** **Implementation Plan (timeline):** annually **Responsible Individual(s):**

◈ Assessment Findings

Finding per Measure

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication

Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

1.1: Engage in civil discussions Students will be able to effectively engage in disciplinarily informed civil discussions on complex, contentious topics.	▼ **Measure:** Regular class discussions Direct - Other
	Details/Description: **Target:** **Implementation Plan (timeline):** **Responsible Individual(s):**
	Findings for Regular class discussions
	Summary of Findings: Overall, using a three-tier model of low, moderate, an high levels of competence in this learning outcome, and with moderate being our target level, I rated four students at a high level of effective oral communications, three at a moderate level, and one at a low-to-moderate level (since they did not make the oral presentation so I had little on which to base my judgment). **Results:** Target Achievement: Met **Recommendations :** While these results appear to be satisfactory, we should probably develop some more specific rubrics for assessing the students so that we can be more certain of their level of achievements over time. **Reflections/Notes :**

1.2: Effective oral presentations Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.	▼ **Measure:** Research presentation Direct - Student Artifact
	Details/Description: **Target:** **Implementation Plan (timeline):** **Responsible Individual(s):**
	Findings for Research presentation

Summary of Findings: In terms of the research presentations, one student failed to present, and one student had a not very strong presentation. The other six had presentations that were good to excellent, including all required elements and staying reasonably close to the allotted time.

Overall, using a three-tier model of low, moderate, an high levels of competence in this learning outcome, and with moderate being our target level, I rated four students at a high level of effective oral communications, three at a moderate level, and one at a low-to-moderate level (since they did not make the oral presentation so I had little on which to base my judgment).

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations : While these results appear to be satisfactory, we should probably develop some more specific rubrics for assessing the students so that we can be more certain of their level of achievements over time.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

  Assessment of PSCI 499 Students 2012 (2).pdf (Adobe Acrobat Document) (See appendix)
  PoliticalScienceDept Meeting 9-24-12 minutes.pdf (Adobe Acrobat Document) (See appendix)

2. Effective Written Communication

Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.1: Persuasive essay

Students will develop the skill of writing a persuasive argument supported by relevant evidence. Included here are the presentation of a clear argument, logical flow of the argument, good organizational structure to the whole essay, and comprehension of primary documents or data.

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: In the context of PSCI 499, student writing was assessed in three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Papers

Summary of Findings: Two students were rated at a high level of proficiency in their writing, four students at a moderate level of proficiency, and two at a low level.

• For a high level, these students wrote clearly, had well organized and structured papers, typically very few grammatical or typographical errors, developed their ideas well and supported them with relevant evidence, and had appropriate citations in their papers.
• For those with a moderate level of proficiency, these students did not consistently have all of these elements but usually had many of them. I also found that these students sometimes had troubles developing their ideas or had gaps in the logical progression of their ideas, often had more than just a minimal number of typographical or grammatical errors, and in some of their papers needed stronger analysis and better use of evidence.
• For those students with a low level of proficiency, they usually had lots of grammatical and typographical errors, had gaps in the logical progression of their ideas and were lacking deep analysis, and often lacked clear arguments and focus in their papers.

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations : Having more formal rubrics for assessing student writing abilities would be helpful to confirm this assessment over time. Also, we should discuss whether achieving a moderate level of proficiency (as described immediately above) is an acceptable level of writing for our graduates.

Reflections/Notes : The two students at the lower level of proficiency in writing were the two weakest students in the class. The others achieved at least a moderate level of proficiency.

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful proofreading.

Measure: Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Papers

Summary of Findings: In the context of PSCI 499, student writing was assessed in three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers). Out of the eight students, I rated two students at a high level of proficiency in their writing, four students at a moderate level of proficiency, and two at a low level.
• For a high level, these students wrote clearly, had well organized and structured papers, typically very few grammatical or typographical errors, developed their ideas well and supported them with relevant evidence, and had appropriate citations in their papers.
• For those with a moderate level of proficiency, these students did not consistently have all of these elements but usually had many of them. I also found that these students sometimes had troubles developing their ideas or had gaps in the logical progression of their ideas, often had more than just a minimal number of typographical or grammatical errors, and in some of their papers needed stronger analysis and better use of evidence.
• For those students with a low level of proficiency, they usually had lots of grammatical and typographical errors, had gaps in the logical progression of their ideas and were lacking deep analysis, and often lacked clear arguments and focus in their papers.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Formal Rubrics
(Action Plan; 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle)

2.3: Appropriate citation methods for papers

Students will learn appropriate citation methods for papers in Political Science. Different faculty may prefer different citation methods; the important objective is that students learn how to properly cite in their written work.

Measure: Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Papers

Summary of Findings: In the context of PSCI 499, student writing was assessed in three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers). Out of the eight students, I rated two students at a high level of proficiency in their writing, four students at a moderate level of proficiency, and two at a low level.

• For a high level, these students wrote clearly, had well organized and structured papers, typically very few grammatical or typographical errors, developed their ideas well and supported them with relevant evidence, and had appropriate citations in their papers.
• For those with a moderate level of proficiency, these students did not consistently have all of these elements but usually had many of them. I also found that these students sometimes had troubles developing their ideas or had gaps in the logical progression of their ideas, often had more than just a minimal number of typographical or grammatical errors, and in some of their papers needed stronger analysis and better use of evidence.
• For those students with a low level of proficiency, they usually had lots of grammatical and typographical errors, had gaps in the logical progression of their ideas and were lacking deep analysis, and often lacked clear arguments and focus in their papers.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Formal Rubrics
(Action Plan; 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle)

2.4: Different styles of papers in Political Science

Students will develop a facility with different styles of papers in Political Science, including but not limited to analytical, persuasive, and research papers.

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Papers

Summary of Findings: In the context of PSCI 499, student writing was assessed in three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers). Out of the eight students, I rated two students at a high level of proficiency in their writing, four students at a moderate level of proficiency, and two at a low level.
• For a high level, these students wrote clearly, had well organized and structured papers, typically very few grammatical or typographical errors, developed their ideas well and supported them with relevant evidence, and had appropriate citations in their papers.
• For those with a moderate level of proficiency, these students did not consistently have all of these elements but usually had many of them. I also found that these students sometimes had troubles developing their ideas or had gaps in the logical progression of their ideas, often had more than just a minimal number of typographical or grammatical errors, and in some of their papers needed stronger analysis and better use of evidence.
• For those students with a low level of proficiency, they usually had lots of grammatical and typographical errors, had gaps in the logical progression of their ideas and were lacking deep analysis, and often lacked clear arguments and focus in their papers.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

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3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

Comparing and contrasting

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

different perspectives on politics and policy issues

Details/Description: To assess the students in terms of these learning outcomes, their three thought papers as well as their research papers were evaluated

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Papers

Summary of Findings: I have rated two students as performing at a high level of critical thinking and analysis, one student at a high-moderate level, three at a moderate level, and two at a low level of proficiency. The two students at a high level regularly turned in papers that were very insightful and that applied ideas from other classes and areas to the paper at hand. The student at the high-moderate level usually turned in papers that had strong analytical and critical thinking levels, but their research paper was not at a high level. Those students at the moderate level either were inconsistent in the strength of their critical thinking and analysis, or submitted papers that exhibited strong levels in some sections of the paper but weaker levels in other sections. Those rated at a low level usually submitted papers that needed much more development of their ideas and analysis.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies

Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors

Measure: Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the students in terms of these learning outcomes, their three thought papers as well as their research papers were evaluated

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Papers

Summary of Findings: I have rated two students as performing at a high level of critical thinking and analysis, one student at a high-moderate level, three at a moderate level, and two at a low level of proficiency. The two students at a high level regularly turned in papers that were very insightful and that applied ideas from other classes and areas to the paper at hand. The student at the high-moderate level usually turned in papers that had strong analytical and critical thinking levels, but their research paper was not at a high level. Those students at the moderate level either were inconsistent in the strength of their critical thinking and analysis, or submitted papers that exhibited strong levels in some sections of the paper but weaker levels in other sections. Those rated at a low level usually submitted papers that needed much more development of their ideas and analysis.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works

Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues

Measure: Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the students in terms of these learning outcomes, their three thought papers as well as their research papers were evaluated

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Papers

Summary of Findings: I have rated two students as performing at a high level of critical thinking and analysis, one student at a high-moderate level, three at a moderate level, and two at a low level of proficiency. The two students at a high level regularly turned in papers that were very insightful and that applied ideas from other classes and areas to the paper at hand. The student at the high-moderate level usually turned in papers that had strong analytical and critical thinking levels, but their research paper was not at a high level. Those students at the moderate level either were inconsistent in the strength of their critical thinking and analysis, or submitted papers that exhibited strong levels in some sections of the paper but weaker levels in other sections. Those rated at a low level usually submitted papers that needed much more development of their ideas and analysis.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations

Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Analytical and Critical Thinking Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Analytical and Critical Thinking Indicator

Summary of Findings: Dept. Means on Assessment Indicators (Mean % Correct)

Analytical and Critical Thinking 67 (26% below)

Results: Target Achievement: Not Met

Recommendations : This data indicates that we may need to work on the critical thinking skills of our students in a more systematic way.

Reflections/Notes :

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the students in terms of these learning outcomes, their three thought papers as well as their research papers were evaluated

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Papers

Summary of Findings: I have rated two students as performing at a high level of critical thinking and analysis, one student at a high-moderate level, three at a moderate level, and two at a low level of proficiency. The two students at a high level regularly turned in papers that were

very insightful and that applied ideas from other classes and areas to the paper at hand. The student at the high-moderate level usually turned in papers that had strong analytical and critical thinking levels, but their research paper was not at a high level. Those students at the moderate level either were inconsistent in the strength of their critical thinking and analysis, or submitted papers that exhibited strong levels in some sections of the paper but weaker levels in other sections. Those rated at a low level usually submitted papers that needed much more development of their ideas and analysis.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events

Identifying appropriate social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the students in terms of these learning outcomes, their three thought papers as well as their research papers were evaluated

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Papers

Summary of Findings: I have rated two students as performing at a high level of critical thinking and analysis, one student at a high-moderate level, three at a moderate level, and two at a low level of proficiency. The two students at a high level regularly turned in papers that were very insightful and that applied ideas from other classes and areas to the paper at hand. The student at the high-moderate level usually turned in papers that had strong analytical and critical thinking levels, but their research paper was not at a high level. Those students at the moderate level either were inconsistent in the strength of their critical thinking and analysis, or submitted papers that exhibited strong levels in some sections of the paper but weaker levels in other sections. Those rated at a low level usually submitted papers that needed much more development of their ideas and analysis.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

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4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research

Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

Summary of Findings: My evaluation of the research skills of these students is as follows: two students demonstrated a high level of research skills, two demonstrated a high-moderate level of research skills, one student demonstrated a moderate level, and three students demonstrated a low level of research skills. For one of the three students demonstrating a low level of research skill, the basic structure and approach to the project/paper was good, but the execution was lousy (and this is generally a good student who simply rushed the paper).

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Reinforce basic research skills
(Action Plan; 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle)

4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - Methodology Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Methodology Indicator

Summary of Findings: Dept. Means on Assessment Indicators (Mean % Correct)

Methodology 45 (9% below)

Results: Target Achievement: Not Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx (Excel Workbook (Open XML)) (See appendix)

Measure: Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

Summary of Findings: My evaluation of the research skills of these students is as follows: two students demonstrated a high level of research skills, two demonstrated a high-moderate level of research skills, one student demonstrated a moderate level, and three students demonstrated a

low level of research skills. For one of the three students demonstrating a low level of research skill, the basic structure and approach to the project/paper was good, but the execution was lousy (and this is generally a good student who simply rushed the paper).

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Reinforce basic research skills
(Action Plan; 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle)

4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research

Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately

▾ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

Summary of Findings: My evaluation of the research skills of these students is as follows: two students demonstrated a high level of research skills, two demonstrated a high-moderate level of research skills, one student demonstrated a moderate level, and three students demonstrated a low level of research skills. For one of the three students demonstrating a low level of research skill, the basic structure and approach to the project/paper was good, but the execution was lousy (and this is generally a good student who simply rushed the paper).

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Reinforce basic research skills
(Action Plan; 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle)

4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research

Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.

▾ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

Summary of Findings: My evaluation of the research skills of these students is as follows: two students demonstrated a high level of research skills, two demonstrated a high-moderate level of research skills, one student demonstrated a moderate level, and three students demonstrated a low level of research skills. For one of the three students demonstrating a low level of research skill, the basic structure and approach to the project/paper was good, but the execution was lousy (and this is generally a good student who simply rushed the paper).

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Reinforce basic research skills
(Action Plan; 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle)

4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings

Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.

Measure: Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

Summary of Findings: My evaluation of the research skills of these students is as follows: two students demonstrated a high level of research skills, two demonstrated a high-moderate level of research skills, one student demonstrated a moderate level, and three students demonstrated a low level of research skills. For one of the three students demonstrating a low level of research skill, the basic structure and approach to the project/paper was good, but the execution was lousy (and this is generally a good student who simply rushed the paper).

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Reinforce basic research skills
(Action Plan; 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle)

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5. Political Science Content Knowledge

5.1 American political system

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore

Summary of Findings: Dept. Mean = 59 (90%)

US Gov't & Politics Subscore
Top Quintile 2
2nd Quintile 3
3rd Quintile 3
4th Quintile 0
Bottom Quintile 0

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

   📎 Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx (Excel Workbook (Open XML)) (See appendix)

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Student Survey

Summary of Findings: See attached Excel workbook

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

   📎 Political Science Annual Student Survey Results 2012.xlsx (Excel Workbook (Open XML))
   (See appendix)

5.2 Comparative politics
Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics Subscore

Summary of Findings: Dept Mean 59 (90%)

Comp Pol & Gov't Subscore
Top Quintile 3
2nd Quintile 2
3rd Quintile 1
4th Quintile 1
Bottom Quintile 0

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes : The department means for the overall MFT score and the three subfield scores are rather good compared to other institutions taking the MFT.

CP continues to be strong despite the relative lack of courses we offer in this subfield (particularly compared to IR).

Substantiating Evidence:

📎 Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx (Excel Workbook (Open XML)) (See appendix)

5.3 International politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore

Summary of Findings: Dept Mean = 58 (81%)

IR Subscore
Top Quintile 2
2nd Quintile 1
3rd Quintile 4
4th Quintile 0
Bottom Quintile 1

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes : The department means for the overall MFT score and the three subfield scores are rather good compared to other institutions taking the MFT.

Substantiating Evidence:

📎 Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx (Excel Workbook (Open XML)) (See appendix)

5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator

Summary of Findings: Dept. Means on Assessment Indicators (Mean % Correct)

Political Thought 58 (93% below)

Results: Target Achievement: Met

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

　Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx (Excel Workbook (Open XML)) (See appendix)

Overall Recommendations

No text specified

Overall Reflection

No text specified

◈ Action Plan

Actions

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication
Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

1.2: Effective oral presentations Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.	▼ **Action:** Develop specific rubrics **This Action is associated with the following Findings** No supporting Findings have been linked to this Action. **Action Details:** While these results appear to be satisfactory, we should probably develop some more specific rubrics for assessing the students so that we can be more certain of their level of achievements over time. **Implementation Plan (timeline):** **Key/Responsible Personnel:** **Measures:** **Resource Allocations:** **Priority:**

2. Effective Written Communication
Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful proofreading.

▼ Action: Develop rubric to evaluate written work

This Action is associated with the following Findings

No supporting Findings have been linked to this Action.

Action Details: Having more formal rubrics for assessing student writing abilities would be helpful to confirm this assessment over time. Also, we should discuss whether achieving a moderate level of proficiency (as described immediately above) is an acceptable level of writing for our graduates.

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2013

Key/Responsible Personnel: Dept. Chair

Measures: Rubric in place to evaluate work.

Resource Allocations: None

Priority: High

▼ Action: Formal Rubrics

This Action is associated with the following Findings

Findings for Papers
(Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: In the context of PSCI 499, student writing was assessed in three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers). Out of the eight students, I rated two students at a high level of proficiency in their writing, four students at a moderate level of proficiency, and two at a low level.
• For a high level, these students wrote clearly, had well organized and structured papers, typically very few grammatical or typographical errors, developed their ideas well and supported them with relevant evidence, and had appropriate citations in their papers.
• For those with a moderate level of proficiency, these students did not consistently have all of these elements but usually had many of them. I also found that these students sometimes had troubles developing their ideas or had gaps in the logical progression of their ideas, often had more than just a minimal number of typographical or grammatical errors, and in some of their papers needed stronger analysis and better use of evidence.
• For those students with a low level of proficiency, they usually had lots of grammatical and typographical errors, had gaps in the logical progression of their ideas and were lacking deep analysis, and often lacked clear arguments and focus in their papers.

Action Details: The two students at the lower level of proficiency in writing were the two weakest students in the class. The others achieved at least a moderate level of proficiency. However, having more formal rubrics for assessing student writing abilities would be helpful to confirm this assessment over time. Also, we should discuss whether achieving a moderate level of proficiency (as described immediately above) is an acceptable level of writing for our graduates.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues

Action: More precise rubrics

This Action is associated with the following Findings
No supporting Findings have been linked to this Action.

Action Details: The two students at the low level of performance were the two weakest students in the class overall. It would appear that we are getting our students at least to a moderate level of critical thinking skills over the course of the major. However, developing more precise rubrics based on our student learning outcomes would be helpful to ensure that this is the case.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies

Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors

Action: More precise rubrics

This Action is associated with the following Findings
No supporting Findings have been linked to this Action.

Action Details: The two students at the low level of performance were the two weakest students in the class overall. It would appear that we are getting our students at least to a moderate level of critical thinking skills over the course of the major. However, developing more precise rubrics based on our student learning outcomes would be helpful to ensure that this is the case.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works

Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues

Action: More precise rubrics

This Action is associated with the following Findings
No supporting Findings have been linked to this Action.

Action Details: The two students at the low level of performance were the two weakest students in the class overall. It would appear that we are getting our students at least to a moderate level of critical thinking skills over the course of the major. However, developing more precise rubrics based on our student learning outcomes would be helpful to ensure that this is the case.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations

Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations

Action: More precise rubrics

This Action is associated with the following Findings
No supporting Findings have been linked to this Action.

Action Details: The two students at the low level of performance were the two weakest students in the class overall. It would appear that we are getting our students at least to a moderate level of critical thinking skills over the course of the major. However, developing more precise rubrics based on our student learning outcomes would be helpful to ensure that this is the case.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events

Identifying appropriate social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events

Action: More precise rubrics

This Action is associated with the following Findings
No supporting Findings have been linked to this Action.

Action Details: The two students at the low level of performance were the two weakest students in the class overall. It would appear that we are getting our students at least to a moderate level of critical thinking skills over the course of the major. However, developing more precise rubrics based on our student learning outcomes would be helpful to ensure that this is the case.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research

Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.

Action: Reinforce basic research skills

This Action is associated with the following Findings

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers
(Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: My evaluation of the research skills of these students is as follows: two students demonstrated a high level of research skills, two demonstrated a high-moderate level of research skills, one student demonstrated a moderate level, and three students demonstrated a low level of research skills. For one of the three students demonstrating a low level of research skill, the basic structure and approach to the project/paper was good, but the execution was lousy (and this is generally a good student who simply rushed the paper).

Action Details: The other two students with a low level of research skills were the two weakest

students in the class. While we probably need to work on reinforcing the basic research skills taught in PSCI 245 in other upper-level courses, it appears that our majors are understanding at least the basics of what they were taught about research and presenting it.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

▼ **Action:** Reinforce basic research skills

This Action is associated with the following Findings

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers
(Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: My evaluation of the research skills of these students is as follows: two students demonstrated a high level of research skills, two demonstrated a high-moderate level of research skills, one student demonstrated a moderate level, and three students demonstrated a low level of research skills. For one of the three students demonstrating a low level of research skill, the basic structure and approach to the project/paper was good, but the execution was lousy (and this is generally a good student who simply rushed the paper).

Action Details: The other two students with a low level of research skills were the two weakest students in the class. While we probably need to work on reinforcing the basic research skills taught in PSCI 245 in other upper-level courses, it appears that our majors are understanding at least the basics of what they were taught about research and presenting it.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research

Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately

▼ **Action:** Reinforce basic research skills

This Action is associated with the following Findings

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers
(Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: My evaluation of the research skills of these students is as follows: two students demonstrated a high level of research skills, two demonstrated a high-moderate level of research skills, one student demonstrated a moderate level, and three students demonstrated a low level of research skills. For one of the three students demonstrating a low level of research skill, the basic structure and approach to the project/paper was good, but the execution was lousy (and this is generally a good student who simply rushed the paper).

Action Details: The other two students with a low level of research skills were the two weakest students in the class. While we probably need to work on reinforcing the basic research skills taught in PSCI 245 in other upper-level courses, it appears that our majors are understanding at least the basics of what they were taught about research and presenting it.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research

Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.

▼ **Action:** Reinforce basic research skills

This Action is associated with the following Findings

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers
(Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: My evaluation of the research skills of these students is as follows: two students demonstrated a high level of research skills, two demonstrated a high-moderate level of research skills, one student demonstrated a moderate level, and three students demonstrated a low level of research skills. For one of the three students demonstrating a low level of research skill, the basic structure and approach to the project/paper was good, but the execution was lousy (and this is generally a good student who simply rushed the paper).

Action Details: The other two students with a low level of research skills were the two weakest students in the class. While we probably need to work on reinforcing the basic research skills taught in PSCI 245 in other upper-level courses, it appears that our majors are understanding at least the basics of what they were taught about research and presenting it.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings

Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.

▼ **Action:** Reinforce basic research skills

This Action is associated with the following Findings

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers
(Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2011-2012 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: My evaluation of the research skills of these students is as follows: two students demonstrated a high level of research skills, two demonstrated a high-moderate level of research skills, one student demonstrated a moderate level, and three students demonstrated a low level of research skills. For one of the three students demonstrating a low level of research skill, the basic structure and approach to the project/paper was good, but the execution was lousy (and this is generally a good student who simply rushed the paper).

Action Details: The other two students with a low level of research skills were the two weakest students in the class. While we probably need to work on reinforcing the basic research skills taught in PSCI 245 in other upper-level courses, it appears that our majors are understanding at least the basics of what they were taught about research and presenting it.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

◈ **Status Report**

Action Statuses

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication

Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

1.2: Effective oral presentations

Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.

▼ **Action:** Develop specific rubrics

Action Details: While these results appear to be satisfactory, we should probably develop some more specific rubrics for assessing the students so that we can be more certain of their level of achievements over time.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

....

Status for Develop specific rubrics

No Status Added

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2. Effective Written Communication

Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful proofreading.

▼ **Action:** Develop rubric to evaluate written work

Action Details: Having more formal rubrics for assessing student writing abilities would be helpful to confirm this assessment over time. Also, we should discuss whether achieving a moderate level of proficiency (as described immediately above) is an acceptable level of writing for our graduates.

Implementation Plan (timeline): Spring 2013

Key/Responsible Personnel: Dept. Chair

Measures: Rubric in place to evaluate work.

Resource Allocations: None

Priority: High

Status for Develop rubric to evaluate written work

No Status Added

▼ **Action:** Formal Rubrics

Action Details: The two students at the lower level of proficiency in writing were the two weakest students in the class. The others achieved at least a moderate level of proficiency. However, having more formal rubrics for assessing student writing abilities would be helpful to confirm this assessment over time. Also, we should discuss whether achieving a moderate level of proficiency (as described immediately above) is an acceptable level of writing for our graduates.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for Formal Rubrics

No Status Added

3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues

▼ **Action:** More precise rubrics

Action Details: The two students at the low level of performance were the two weakest students in the class overall. It would appear that we are getting our students at least to a moderate level of critical thinking skills over the course of the major. However, developing more precise rubrics based on our student learning outcomes would be helpful to ensure that this is the case.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for More precise rubrics

No Status Added

3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies

▼ **Action:** More precise rubrics

Action Details: The two students at the low level of performance were the two weakest students in

Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors

the class overall. It would appear that we are getting our students at least to a moderate level of critical thinking skills over the course of the major. However, developing more precise rubrics based on our student learning outcomes would be helpful to ensure that this is the case.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for More precise rubrics

No Status Added

3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works

Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues

▼ **Action:** More precise rubrics

Action Details: The two students at the low level of performance were the two weakest students in the class overall. It would appear that we are getting our students at least to a moderate level of critical thinking skills over the course of the major. However, developing more precise rubrics based on our student learning outcomes would be helpful to ensure that this is the case.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for More precise rubrics

No Status Added

3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations

Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations

▼ **Action:** More precise rubrics

Action Details: The two students at the low level of performance were the two weakest students in the class overall. It would appear that we are getting our students at least to a moderate level of critical thinking skills over the course of the major. However, developing more precise rubrics based on our student learning outcomes would be helpful to ensure that this is the case.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for More precise rubrics

No Status Added

3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events

Identifying appropriate social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events

▼ **Action:** More precise rubrics

Action Details: The two students at the low level of performance were the two weakest students in the class overall. It would appear that we are getting our students at least to a moderate level of critical thinking skills over the course of the major. However, developing more precise rubrics based on our student learning outcomes would be helpful to ensure that this is the case.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for More precise rubrics

No Status Added

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4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research

Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.

▼ **Action:** Reinforce basic research skills

Action Details: The other two students with a low level of research skills were the two weakest students in the class. While we probably need to work on reinforcing the basic research skills taught in PSCI 245 in other upper-level courses, it appears that our majors are understanding at least the basics of what they were taught about research and presenting it.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for Reinforce basic research skills

No Status Added

4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of

▼ **Action:** Reinforce basic research skills

Action Details: The other two students with a low level of research skills were the two weakest students in the class. While we probably need to work on reinforcing the basic research skills taught in PSCI 245 in other upper-level courses, it appears that our majors are understanding at least the basics of what they were taught about research and presenting it.

analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for Reinforce basic research skills

No Status Added

4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research

Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately

▼ **Action:** Reinforce basic research skills

Action Details: The other two students with a low level of research skills were the two weakest students in the class. While we probably need to work on reinforcing the basic research skills taught in PSCI 245 in other upper-level courses, it appears that our majors are understanding at least the basics of what they were taught about research and presenting it.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for Reinforce basic research skills

No Status Added

4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research

Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.

▼ **Action:** Reinforce basic research skills

Action Details: The other two students with a low level of research skills were the two weakest students in the class. While we probably need to work on reinforcing the basic research skills taught in PSCI 245 in other upper-level courses, it appears that our majors are understanding at least the basics of what they were taught about research and presenting it.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for Reinforce basic research skills

No Status Added

4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.	▼ **Action:** Reinforce basic research skills
	Action Details: The other two students with a low level of research skills were the two weakest students in the class. While we probably need to work on reinforcing the basic research skills taught in PSCI 245 in other upper-level courses, it appears that our majors are understanding at least the basics of what they were taught about research and presenting it. **Implementation Plan (timeline):** **Key/Responsible Personnel:** **Measures:** **Resource Allocations:** **Priority:** **Status** for Reinforce basic research skills *No Status Added*

Status Summary

No text specified

Summary of Next Steps

No text specified

2012-2013 Assessment Cycle

◈ Assessment Plan

Outcomes and Measures

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication
Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

1.1: Engage in civil discussions

Students will be able to effectively engage in disciplinarily informed civil discussions on complex, contentious topics.

▼ **Measure:** Class Discussion
Direct - Other

....

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

1.2: Effective oral presentations

Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.

▼ **Measure:** Presentation
Direct - Student Artifact

....

Details/Description: the students were required to make a formal presentation of their research project

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2. Effective Written Communication
Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.1: Persuasive essay

Students will develop the skill of writing a persuasive argument supported by relevant evidence. Included here are the presentation of a clear argument, logical flow of the argument, good organizational structure to the whole essay, and comprehension of primary documents or data.

No measures specified

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through

▼ **Measure:** Free response thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

....

Details/Description: Each paper was assessed using ISU's UDIE Written Communication Rubric, which is a modified version of the AAC&U rubric. For each paper, students could earn a total of 20 points (four points per category, five categories).

| learning careful proofreading. | The thought papers asked students to take an idea or argument from their readings and to use that idea or argument as a jumping-off point – they could critique the idea/argument, extend it or apply it to new cases/situations, or find some other way to grapple with the idea or argument in ways that demonstrated that they understood the idea/argument and could discuss it in the context of our discipline. |

Students write three of these.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Measure: Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Each paper was assessed using ISU's UDIE Written Communication Rubric, which is a modified version of the AAC&U rubric. For each paper, students could earn a total of 20 points (four points per category, five categories).

Students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Measure: Summary-reaction-connection papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2.3: Appropriate citation methods for papers

Students will learn appropriate citation methods for papers in Political Science. Different faculty may prefer different citation methods; the important objective is that students learn how to properly cite in their written work.

Measure: Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2.4: Different styles of papers in Political Science

Students will develop a facility with different styles of papers in Political Science, including but not limited to analytical, persuasive, and research papers.

Measure: Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies

Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works

Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations

Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events

Identifying appropriate social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Analytical and Critical Thinking Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Measure: Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research

Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.

Measure: Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - Methodology Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Measure: Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research

Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these

Measure: Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

terms appropriately

Responsible Individual(s):

4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research

Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings

Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

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5. Political Science Content Knowledge

5.1 American political system

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

5.2 Comparative politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield
Direct - Exam

▼

institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

5.3 International politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

◈ Assessment Findings

Finding per Measure

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication
Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

1.1: Engage in civil discussions

Students will be able to effectively engage in disciplinarily informed civil discussions on complex, contentious topics.

▼ **Measure:** Class Discussion
Direct - Other

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Class Discussion

Summary of Findings: In addition to regular class discussions, several of which included some contentious topics, the students were required to make a formal presentation of their research project. Of the nine students, two were usually quiet, two participated occasionally, and five were regular participants in our discussions. In these discussions, all of them handled themselves rather well in terms of engaging in civil discourse. Most were able to make their comments informed by the discipline, although the comments of the two occasional contributors were not always as disciplinarily informed as they should have been.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

📎 Department Meeting 8-26-13 Minutes (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

1.2: Effective oral presentations

Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.

Measure: Presentation
Direct - Student Artifact

....

Details/Description: the students were required to make a formal presentation of their research project

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

....

Findings for Presentation

Summary of Findings: All nine students made oral presentations of their research projects. Using the AAC&U Oral Communication Value Rubric, no one was assessed at less than 11 out of 20 points (there are five categories, with top score in each category earning four points) on their presentation. Four of the nine students scored in the 11-15 range of moderate ability in oral presentations and the other five were assessed in the 16-20 range of a high level of effectiveness in their oral presentation.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes : While these results appear to be satisfactory, we need to decide whether the AAC&U rubric is an appropriate tool, and what level we will deem as the floor of acceptability for demonstrating proficiency in this learning outcome.

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Decide on a rubric and level for floor of acceptability
(Action Plan; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

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2. Effective Written Communication

Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.1: Persuasive essay

Students will develop the skill of writing a persuasive argument supported by relevant evidence. Included here are the presentation of a clear argument, logical flow of the argument, good organizational structure to the whole essay, and comprehension of primary documents or data.

No measures specified

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful proofreading.

Measure: Free response thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

....

Details/Description: Each paper was assessed using ISU's UDIE Written Communication Rubric, which is a modified version of the AAC&U rubric. For each paper, students could earn a total of 20 points (four points per category, five categories).

The thought papers asked students to take an idea or argument from their readings and to use that idea or argument as a jumping-off point – they could critique the idea/argument, extend it or apply it to new cases/situations, or find some other way to grapple with the idea or argument in ways that

demonstrated that they understood the idea/argument and could discuss it in the context of our discipline.

Students write three of these.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Free response thought papers

Summary of Findings: One student did not turn in written work, and so results are reported for only eight students.

The results for these papers varied: some students learned to write good thought papers while others could only summarize the ideas/arguments in the readings and could add no value of their own to what the author had already expressed.

Combining the three thought papers, written communication assessment scores ranged from 25/60 to 47/60. Broken into groups, the scores were:
21-25 out of 60: 1
26-30 out of 60: 0
31-35 out of 60: 2
36-40 out of 60: 2

In reviewing these results, we have some students who are just barely making the 50% level of the assessment rubric scores. Many are performing at a moderate level of writing proficiency, and only a small number are performing at a high level of proficiency. This was true for both the thought papers and the research paper.
41-45 out of 60: 2
46-50 out of 60: 1

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes : We have a few decisions we need to make as a department:
• Is the UDIE Written Communication rubric a good one for the department to use?
• Whether using this rubric or a different one, what level should we consider to be a minimally acceptable level of proficiency in written communication?
• What level should we consider to be our goal level for students' effective written communication?
• If our students are not achieving the desired level of proficiency, what can we do to increase their writing abilities? Should we revise our curriculum to add more intensive writing to help them improve their proficiency?

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Departmental Decisions
(Action Plan; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Each paper was assessed using ISU's UDIE Written Communication Rubric, which is a modified version of the AAC&U rubric. For each paper, students could earn a total of 20 points (four points per category, five categories).

Students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research papers

Summary of Findings: One student did not turn in written work, and so results are reported for only eight students.

Scores were the following:
5-10 out of 20: 2 (both were 10 out of 20)
11-15 out of 20: 4
16-20 out of 20: 2

In reviewing these results, we have some students who are just barely making the 50% level of the assessment rubric scores. Many are performing at a moderate level of writing proficiency, and only a small number are performing at a high level of proficiency. This was true for both the thought papers and the research paper.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes : We have a few decisions we need to make as a department:
• Is the UDIE Written Communication rubric a good one for the department to use?
• Whether using this rubric or a different one, what level should we consider to be a minimally acceptable level of proficiency in written communication?
• What level should we consider to be our goal level for students' effective written communication?
• If our students are not achieving the desired level of proficiency, what can we do to increase their writing abilities? Should we revise our curriculum to add more intensive writing to help them improve their proficiency?

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Departmental Decisions
(Action Plan; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

▼ **Measure:** Summary-reaction-connection papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Summary-reaction-connection papers

No Findings Added

2.3: Appropriate citation methods for papers

Students will learn appropriate citation methods for papers in Political Science. Different faculty may prefer different citation methods; the important objective is that students learn how to properly cite in their written work.

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Papers

No Findings Added

2.4: Different styles of papers in Political Science

Students will develop a facility with different styles of papers in Political Science, including but not limited to analytical, persuasive, and research papers.

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Papers

No Findings Added

3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research papers

Summary of Findings: These findings apply to the Research papers and Free thought papers measures for outcomes 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5.

High level: 0
Moderate/High level: 4
Moderate level: 2
Low/Moderate level: 1
Low level: 1

Of the students at the Moderate/High level, one had a poor first thought paper that prevented her from achieving a High level; her papers were usually quite insightful, applied ideas and concepts from other classes or theories from other authors to the work at hand, and showed the ability to extend or synthesize arguments. The other three at this level frequently demonstrated these types of abilities but not consistently. The two students at the Moderate level either had a wide range of ability exhibited across their papers or within each paper such that there was a stronger lack of consistency in their critical thinking and analysis. Those at the Low or Low/Moderate level submitted papers that usually needed much more development of their ideas and analyses. These two students were the two weakest students in the class.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes : As with last year, we appear to have helped our students to develop their critical thinking and analytical skills to at least a moderate level. This assessment is corroborated by the Analytical & Critical Thinking indicator in the MFT results: for the past two years, our students have scored at the 82% level. Despite having these MFT results, we should still develop a rubric that we can apply to the papers of our students to help us with our assessment.

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Develop Rubric

(Action Plan; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

Measure: Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three thought papers

Summary of Findings: See outcome 3.1, Findings for Research papers

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Develop Rubric
(Action Plan; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies

Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors

Measure: Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research papers

Summary of Findings: See outcome 3.1, Findings for Research papers

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

Measure: Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three thought papers

Summary of Findings: See outcome 3.1, Findings for Research papers

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works

Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues

Measure: Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research papers

Summary of Findings: See outcome 3.1, Findings for Research papers

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

Measure: Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three thought papers

Summary of Findings: See outcome 3.1, Findings for Research papers

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations

Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations

Measure: Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research papers

Summary of Findings: See outcome 3.1, Findings for Research papers

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

▼ **Measure:** Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three thought papers

Summary of Findings: See outcome 3.1, Findings for Research papers

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events

Identifying appropriate social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Analytical and Critical Thinking Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Analytical and Critical Thinking Indicator

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research papers

Summary of Findings: See outcome 3.1, Findings for Research papers

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

▼ **Measure:** Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: A combination of our stated objectives plus the AAC&U Critical Thinking Value Rubric and Inquiry & Analysis Value Rubric is used. Students are assessed as having either a low, low-to-moderate, moderate, moderate-to-high, or high level of achievement in this area.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three thought papers

Summary of Findings: See outcome 3.1, Findings for Research papers

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research

Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

Summary of Findings: These findings apply to the Evaluation of final research papers measure for outcomes 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5

Of the eight students assessed, seven wrote traditional research papers and one wrote a policy analysis paper. One student conducted some elementary quantitative analysis; the other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects. I did not have a formal research skills rubric to use when evaluating their papers, so I drafted an informal rubric based on our objectives for this learning outcome and then assessed whether the students achieved a high, moderate/high, moderate, low-moderate, or low level of proficiency for each category. I then averaged across the categories to derive an overall assessment of their research skills. The results are as follows:

High level: 1
Moderate/High level: 1
Moderate level: 3
Low/Moderate level: 0
Low level: 3

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes : This year's cohort was not as strong as last year's cohort, perhaps in part because a couple of the students had taken PSCI 245 the previous semester and therefore had not practiced their research skills in other papers prior to the research paper in PSCI 499. One of the students who had a moderate level of skill generally wrote good thought papers but had trouble with writing a longer research paper. Two of the students who demonstrated a low level of research skills were the two weakest students in the class; the third one derailed his research paper by not thinking through his research question and argument clearly enough and by getting mired in normative arguments rather than focusing on empirical analysis.

Despite the lower assessment of research skills compared to last year, the Methodology indicator score on the MFT was better this year than last year. Last year, our mean percentage correct was at the 48% level, and this year it was at the 86% level.

4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - Methodology Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Methodology Indicator

Summary of Findings: The Methodology indicator score on the MFT was better this year than last year. Last year, our mean percentage correct was at the 48% level, and this year it was at the 86% level.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

Measure: Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

Summary of Findings: See outcome 4.1, Findings for Evaluation of final research papers.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research

Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately

Measure: Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

Summary of Findings: See outcome 4.1, Findings for Evaluation of final research papers.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research

Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.

Measure: Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

Summary of Findings: See outcome 4.1, Findings for Evaluation of final research papers.

Recommendations :

Reflections/Notes :

4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings

Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.

Measure: Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

> **Summary of Findings:** See outcome 4.1, Findings for Evaluation of final research papers.
>
> **Recommendations :**
>
> **Reflections/Notes :**

5. Political Science Content Knowledge

5.1 American political system

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore

Summary of Findings: We did not develop any specific objectives for this learning outcome in our assessment plan, nor have we specified what scores on the MFT should be the minimally acceptable or desired level of proficiency.

Here is a summary of the scores for each of the students who took the MFT in spring 2013 as well as departmental means for the overall score, subfield subscores, and the three assessment indicators.

Student: Score (% Below)
1: 154 (51%)
2: 153 (47%)
3: 162 (71%)
4: 155 (53%)
5: 155 (53%)
6: 164 (78%)
7: 153 (47%)
8: 146 (30%)
9: 167 (83%)
Dept. Mean: 157 (81%)

Student: Am Pol Subscore
1: 54 (47%)
2: 55 (51%)
3: 68 (86%)
4: 60 (65%)
5: 47 (32%)
6: 63 (74%)
7: 54 (47%)
8: 49 (35%)
9: 70 (89%)
Dept. Mean 58 (81%)

N.B.:
1) Student 5 took the MFT last year and performed a little lower this year.
2) Student 2 did not successfully complete the course and will need to retake it.

Dept. Means on Assessment Indicators (Mean % Correct)
Analytical and Critical Thinking: 66 (82% below)
Methodology: 52 (86% below)
Political Thought: 52 (37% below)

Recommendations : We should review the scores on the MFT and decide what will be a minimally acceptable score and what will be the desired score level.

Reflections/Notes : Our students' performance on the Analytical and Critical Thinking is the same as last year, and they were significantly better this year than last year in Methodology.

Their score on Political Thought this year is significantly lower than last year, which appears to be an outlier at the high end of the scale for the four years we have been using the MFT.

Our students' performance in Comparative Politics continues to be quite strong despite the relatively few courses we offer in that subfield.

Overall, based on the department means, our students are demonstrating a very solid understanding of the content of our discipline through this national exam.

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels
(Action Plan; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

Measure: Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Student Survey

No Findings Added

5.2 Comparative politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield

Summary of Findings: We did not develop any specific objectives for this learning outcome in our assessment plan, nor have we specified what scores on the MFT should be the minimally acceptable or desired level of proficiency.

Here is a summary of the scores for each of the students who took the MFT in spring 2013 as well as departmental means for the overall score, subfield subscores, and the three assessment indicators.

Student: Score (% Below)
1: 154 (51%)
2: 153 (47%)
3: 162 (71%)
4: 155 (53%)
5: 155 (53%)
6: 164 (78%)
7: 153 (47%)
8: 146 (30%)
9: 167 (83%)
Dept. Mean: 157 (81%)

Student: CP Subscore
1: 37 (11%)
2: 50 (40%)
3: 70 (85%)
4: 47 (31%)
5: 70 (85%)
6: 66 (78%)
7: 53 (48%)
8: 40 (16%)
9: 66 (78%)
Dept. Mean 55 (68%)

N.B.:
1) Student 5 took the MFT last year and performed a little lower this year.
2) Student 2 did not successfully complete the course and will need to retake it.

Dept. Means on Assessment Indicators (Mean % Correct)
Analytical and Critical Thinking: 66 (82% below)
Methodology: 52 (86% below)
Political Thought: 52 (37% below)

Recommendations : We should review the scores on the MFT and decide what will be a minimally acceptable score and what will be the desired score level.

Reflections/Notes : Our students' performance on the Analytical and Critical Thinking is the same as last year, and they were significantly better this year than last year in Methodology. Their score on Political Thought this year is significantly lower than last year, which appears to be an outlier at the high end of the scale for the four years we have been using the MFT.

Our students' performance in Comparative Politics continues to be quite strong despite the relatively few courses we offer in that subfield.

Overall, based on the department means, our students are demonstrating a very solid understanding of the content of our discipline through this national exam.

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels
(Action Plan; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

5.3 International politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore

Summary of Findings: We did not develop any specific objectives for this learning outcome in our assessment plan, nor have we specified what scores on the MFT should be the minimally acceptable or desired level of proficiency.

Here is a summary of the scores for each of the students who took the MFT in spring 2013 as well as departmental means for the overall score, subfield subscores, and the three assessment indicators.

Student: Score (% Below)
1: 154 (51%)
2: 153 (47%)
3: 162 (71%)
4: 155 (53%)
5: 155 (53%)
6: 164 (78%)

7: 153 (47%)
8: 146 (30%)
9: 167 (83%)
Dept. Mean: 157 (81%)

Student: IR Subscore
1: 69 (84%)
2: 49 (35%)
3: 52 (42%)
4: 60 (65%)
5: 54 (50%)
6: 54 (50%)
7: 52 (42%)
8: 52 (42%)
9: 66 (79%)
Dept. Mean: 56 (72%)

N.B.:
1) Student 5 took the MFT last year and performed a little lower this year.
2) Student 2 did not successfully complete the course and will need to retake it.

Dept. Means on Assessment Indicators (Mean % Correct)
Analytical and Critical Thinking: 66 (82% below)
Methodology: 52 (86% below)
Political Thought: 52 (37% below)

Recommendations : We should review the scores on the MFT and decide what will be a minimally acceptable score and what will be the desired score level.

Reflections/Notes : Our students' performance on the Analytical and Critical Thinking is the same as last year, and they were significantly better this year than last year in Methodology. Their score on Political Thought this year is significantly lower than last year, which appears to be an outlier at the high end of the scale for the four years we have been using the MFT.

Our students' performance in Comparative Politics continues to be quite strong despite the relatively few courses we offer in that subfield.

Overall, based on the department means, our students are demonstrating a very solid understanding of the content of our discipline through this national exam.

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels
(Action Plan; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator

Summary of Findings: Political Thought: 52 (37% below)

Recommendations : We should review the scores on the MFT and decide what will be a minimally acceptable score and what will be the desired score level.

Reflections/Notes : Their score on Political Thought this year is significantly lower than last year, which appears to be an outlier at the high end of the scale for the four years we have been using the MFT.

These Findings are associated with the following Actions:

> **Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels**
> (Action Plan; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

Overall Recommendations

No text specified

Overall Reflection

No text specified

◈ Action Plan

Actions

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication
Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

1.2: Effective oral presentations

Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.

▼ **Action:** Decide on a rubric and level for floor of acceptability

This Action is associated with the following Findings

Findings for Presentation
(Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: All nine students made oral presentations of their research projects. Using the AAC&U Oral Communication Value Rubric, no one was assessed at less than 11 out of 20 points (there are five categories, with top score in each category earning four points) on their presentation. Four of the nine students scored in the 11-15 range of moderate ability in oral presentations and the other five were assessed in the 16-20 range of a high level of effectiveness in their oral presentation.

Action Details: We need to decide whether the AAC&U rubric is an appropriate tool, and what level we will deem as the floor of acceptability for demonstrating proficiency in this learning outcome.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

2. Effective Written Communication
Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with

▼ **Action:** Departmental Decisions

This Action is associated with the following Findings

minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful proofreading.

Findings for Free response thought papers
(Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: One student did not turn in written work, and so results are reported for only eight students.

The results for these papers varied: some students learned to write good thought papers while others could only summarize the ideas/arguments in the readings and could add no value of their own to what the author had already expressed.

Combining the three thought papers, written communication assessment scores ranged from 25/60 to 47/60. Broken into groups, the scores were:
21-25 out of 60: 1
26-30 out of 60: 0
31-35 out of 60: 2
36-40 out of 60: 2

In reviewing these results, we have some students who are just barely making the 50% level of the assessment rubric scores. Many are performing at a moderate level of writing proficiency, and only a small number are performing at a high level of proficiency. This was true for both the thought papers and the research paper.
41-45 out of 60: 2
46-50 out of 60: 1

Findings for Research papers
(Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: One student did not turn in written work, and so results are reported for only eight students.

Scores were the following:
5-10 out of 20: 2 (both were 10 out of 20)
11-15 out of 20: 4
16-20 out of 20: 2

In reviewing these results, we have some students who are just barely making the 50% level of the assessment rubric scores. Many are performing at a moderate level of writing proficiency, and only a small number are performing at a high level of proficiency. This was true for both the thought papers and the research paper.

Action Details: We have a few decisions we need to make as a department:
• Is the UDIE Written Communication rubric a good one for the department to use?
• Whether using this rubric or a different one, what level should we consider to be a minimally acceptable level of proficiency in written communication?
• What level should we consider to be our goal level for students' effective written communication?
• If our students are not achieving the desired level of proficiency, what can we do to increase their writing abilities? Should we revise our curriculum to add more intensive writing to help them improve their proficiency?

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

▼ **Action:** Develop Rubric

This Action is associated with the following Findings

Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues	**Findings for Research papers** (Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: These findings apply to the Research papers and Free thought papers measures for outcomes 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5.

High level: 0
Moderate/High level: 4
Moderate level: 2
Low/Moderate level: 1
Low level: 1

Of the students at the Moderate/High level, one had a poor first thought paper that prevented her from achieving a High level; her papers were usually quite insightful, applied ideas and concepts from other classes or theories from other authors to the work at hand, and showed the ability to extend or synthesize arguments. The other three at this level frequently demonstrated these types of abilities but not consistently. The two students at the Moderate level either had a wide range of ability exhibited across their papers or within each paper such that there was a stronger lack of consistency in their critical thinking and analysis. Those at the Low or Low/Moderate level submitted papers that usually needed much more development of their ideas and analyses. These two students were the two weakest students in the class.

Findings for Three thought papers
(Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: See outcome 3.1, Findings for Research papers

Action Details: We should develop a rubric that we can apply to the papers of our students to help us with our assessment.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

5. Political Science Content Knowledge

5.1 American political system	▼ **Action:** Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels
Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system	**This Action is associated with the following Findings**

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore
(Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: We did not develop any specific objectives for this learning outcome in our assessment plan, nor have we specified what scores on the MFT should be the minimally acceptable or desired level of proficiency.

Here is a summary of the scores for each of the students who took the MFT in spring 2013 as well as departmental means for the overall score, subfield subscores, and the three assessment indicators.

Student: Score (% Below)
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2: 153 (47%)
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4: 155 (53%)
5: 155 (53%)
6: 164 (78%)
7: 153 (47%)
8: 146 (30%)

9: 167 (83%)
Dept. Mean: 157 (81%)

Student: Am Pol Subscore
1: 54 (47%)
2: 55 (51%)
3: 68 (86%)
4: 60 (65%)
5: 47 (32%)
6: 63 (74%)
7: 54 (47%)
8: 49 (35%)
9: 70 (89%)
Dept. Mean 58 (81%)

N.B.:
1) Student 5 took the MFT last year and performed a little lower this year.
2) Student 2 did not successfully complete the course and will need to retake it.

Dept. Means on Assessment Indicators (Mean % Correct)
Analytical and Critical Thinking: 66 (82% below)
Methodology: 52 (86% below)
Political Thought: 52 (37% below)

Action Details: We should review the scores on the MFT and decide what will be a minimally acceptable score and what will be the desired score level.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

5.2 Comparative politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them

▼ **Action:** Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels

This Action is associated with the following Findings

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield
(Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: We did not develop any specific objectives for this learning outcome in our assessment plan, nor have we specified what scores on the MFT should be the minimally acceptable or desired level of proficiency.

Here is a summary of the scores for each of the students who took the MFT in spring 2013 as well as departmental means for the overall score, subfield subscores, and the three assessment indicators.

Student: Score (% Below)
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2: 153 (47%)
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4: 155 (53%)
5: 155 (53%)
6: 164 (78%)
7: 153 (47%)
8: 146 (30%)
9: 167 (83%)
Dept. Mean: 157 (81%)

Student: CP Subscore
1: 37 (11%)

2: 50 (40%)
3: 70 (85%)
4: 47 (31%)
5: 70 (85%)
6: 66 (78%)
7: 53 (48%)
8: 40 (16%)
9: 66 (78%)
Dept. Mean 55 (68%)

N.B.:
1) Student 5 took the MFT last year and performed a little lower this year.
2) Student 2 did not successfully complete the course and will need to retake it.

Dept. Means on Assessment Indicators (Mean % Correct)
Analytical and Critical Thinking: 66 (82% below)
Methodology: 52 (86% below)
Political Thought: 52 (37% below)

Action Details: We should review the scores on the MFT and decide what will be a minimally acceptable score and what will be the desired score level.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

5.3 International politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

▼ **Action:** Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels

This Action is associated with the following Findings

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore
(Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle)

Summary of Findings: We did not develop any specific objectives for this learning outcome in our assessment plan, nor have we specified what scores on the MFT should be the minimally acceptable or desired level of proficiency.

Here is a summary of the scores for each of the students who took the MFT in spring 2013 as well as departmental means for the overall score, subfield subscores, and the three assessment indicators.

Student: Score (% Below)
1: 154 (51%)
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3: 162 (71%)
4: 155 (53%)
5: 155 (53%)
6: 164 (78%)
7: 153 (47%)
8: 146 (30%)
9: 167 (83%)
Dept. Mean: 157 (81%)

Student: IR Subscore
1: 69 (84%)
2: 49 (35%)
3: 52 (42%)
4: 60 (65%)
5: 54 (50%)
6: 54 (50%)
7: 52 (42%)

8: 52 (42%)
9: 66 (79%)
Dept. Mean: 56 (72%)

N.B.:
1) Student 5 took the MFT last year and performed a little lower this year.
2) Student 2 did not successfully complete the course and will need to retake it.

Dept. Means on Assessment Indicators (Mean % Correct)
Analytical and Critical Thinking: 66 (82% below)
Methodology: 52 (86% below)
Political Thought: 52 (37% below)

Action Details: We should review the scores on the MFT and decide what will be a minimally acceptable score and what will be the desired score level.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science	▼ **Action:** Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels
Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science	**This Action is associated with the following Findings** **Findings for ETS Major Field Test – Politcal Thought Indicator** (Assessment Plan and Assessment Findings; 2012-2013 Assessment Cycle) **Summary of Findings:** Political Thought: 52 (37% below) **Action Details:** We should review the scores on the MFT and decide what will be a minimally acceptable score and what will be the desired score level. **Implementation Plan (timeline):** **Key/Responsible Personnel:** **Measures:** **Resource Allocations:** **Priority:**

◈ **Status Report**

Action Statuses

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication
Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

1.2: Effective oral presentations

Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.

▼ **Action:** Decide on a rubric and level for floor of acceptability

Action Details: We need to decide whether the AAC&U rubric is an appropriate tool, and what level we will deem as the floor of acceptability for demonstrating proficiency in this learning outcome.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for Decide on a rubric and level for floor of acceptability

No Status Added

2. Effective Written Communication

Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful proofreading.

▼ **Action:** Departmental Decisions

Action Details: We have a few decisions we need to make as a department:
• Is the UDIE Written Communication rubric a good one for the department to use?
• Whether using this rubric or a different one, what level should we consider to be a minimally acceptable level of proficiency in written communication?
• What level should we consider to be our goal level for students' effective written communication?
• If our students are not achieving the desired level of proficiency, what can we do to increase their writing abilities? Should we revise our curriculum to add more intensive writing to help them improve their proficiency?

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for Departmental Decisions

No Status Added

3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on

▼ **Action:** Develop Rubric

Action Details: We should develop a rubric that we can apply to the papers of our students to help us with our assessment.

politics and policy issues

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for Develop Rubric

No Status Added

5. Political Science Content Knowledge

5.1 American political system

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system

▼ **Action:** Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels

Action Details: We should review the scores on the MFT and decide what will be a minimally acceptable score and what will be the desired score level.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels

No Status Added

5.2 Comparative politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them

▼ **Action:** Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels

Action Details: We should review the scores on the MFT and decide what will be a minimally acceptable score and what will be the desired score level.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels

No Status Added

5.3 International politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

▼ **Action:** Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels

Action Details: We should review the scores on the MFT and decide what will be a minimally acceptable score and what will be the desired score level.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels

No Status Added

5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

▼ **Action:** Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels

Action Details: We should review the scores on the MFT and decide what will be a minimally acceptable score and what will be the desired score level.

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Key/Responsible Personnel:

Measures:

Resource Allocations:

Priority:

Status for Decide minimally acceptable and desired score levels

No Status Added

Status Summary

No text specified

Summary of Next Steps

No text specified

2013-2014 Assessment Cycle

◆ **Assessment Plan**

Outcomes and Measures

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication
Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

1.1: Engage in civil discussions

Students will be able to effectively engage in disciplinarily informed civil discussions on complex, contentious topics.

▼ **Measure:** Class Discussion
Direct - Other

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

1.2: Effective oral presentations

Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.

▼ **Measure:** Presentation
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: the students were required to make a formal presentation of their research project

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2. Effective Written Communication
Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.1: Persuasive essay

Students will develop the skill of writing a persuasive argument supported by relevant evidence. Included here are the presentation of a clear argument, logical flow of the argument, good organizational structure to the whole essay, and comprehension of primary documents or data.

No measures specified

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful

▼ **Measure:** Free response thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

proofreading.

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Summary-reaction-connection papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2.3: Appropriate citation methods for papers

Students will learn appropriate citation methods for papers in Political Science. Different faculty may prefer different citation methods; the important objective is that students learn how to properly cite in their written work.

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2.4: Different styles of papers in Political Science

Students will develop a facility with different styles of papers in Political Science, including but not limited to analytical, persuasive, and research papers.

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

---

3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Measure: Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies

Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors

Measure: Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Measure: Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works

Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues

Measure: Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Measure: Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations

Applying theory from

Measure: Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events

Identifying appropriate social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Analytical and Critical Thinking Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

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4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research

Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Methodology Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research

Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research

Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings

Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

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5. Political Science Content Knowledge

5.1 American political system

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

5.2 Comparative politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

5.3 International politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

international political system	**Target:**
	Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring
	Responsible Individual(s):

5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science	▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator Direct - Exam
	Details/Description: **Target:** **Implementation Plan (timeline):** annually **Responsible Individual(s):**

◈ Assessment Findings

Finding per Measure

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication
Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

1.1: Engage in civil discussions Students will be able to effectively engage in disciplinarily informed civil discussions on complex, contentious topics.	▼ **Measure:** Class Discussion Direct - Other
	Details/Description: **Target:** **Implementation Plan (timeline):** **Responsible Individual(s):**
	Findings for Class Discussion
	No Findings Added

1.2: Effective oral presentations Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.	▼ **Measure:** Presentation Direct - Student Artifact
	Details/Description: the students were required to make a formal presentation of their research project **Target:** **Implementation Plan (timeline):** **Responsible Individual(s):**
	Findings for Presentation
	No Findings Added

2. Effective Written Communication

Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.1: Persuasive essay

Students will develop the skill of writing a persuasive argument supported by relevant evidence. Included here are the presentation of a clear argument, logical flow of the argument, good organizational structure to the whole essay, and comprehension of primary documents or data.

No measures specified

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful proofreading.

▼ **Measure:** Free response thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Free response thought papers

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research papers

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Summary-reaction-connection papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Summary-reaction-connection papers

No Findings Added

2.3: Appropriate citation methods for papers

Students will learn appropriate citation methods for papers in Political Science. Different faculty may prefer different citation methods; the important objective is that students learn how to properly cite in their written work.

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Papers

No Findings Added

2.4: Different styles of papers in Political Science

Students will develop a facility with different styles of papers in Political Science, including but not limited to analytical, persuasive, and research papers.

▼ **Measure:** Papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers)

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Papers

No Findings Added

3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research papers

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three thought papers

No Findings Added

3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies

Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline):
Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research papers

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline):
Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three thought papers

No Findings Added

3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works

Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline):
Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research papers

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:
Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three thought papers

No Findings Added

3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations

Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research papers

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three thought papers

No Findings Added

3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events

Identifying appropriate social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Analytical and Critical Thinking Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Analytical and Critical Thinking Indicator

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research papers

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Three thought papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three thought papers

No Findings Added

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4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research

Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

No Findings Added

4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Methodology Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Methodology Indicator

to their research projects.

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

No Findings Added

4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research

Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

No Findings Added

4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research

Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

No Findings Added

4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings

Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.

▼ **Measure:** Evaluation of final research papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, their final research papers were evaluated.The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Evaluation of final research papers

No Findings Added

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5. Political Science Content Knowledge

5.1 American political system

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Student Survey

No Findings Added

5.2 Comparative politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield

No Findings Added

5.3 International politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore

No Findings Added

5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator

No Findings Added

Overall Recommendations

No text specified

Overall Reflection

No text specified

◈ **Action Plan**

◈ Status Report

2014-2015 Assessment Cycle

◈ **Assessment Plan**

Outcomes and Measures

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication
Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

1.1: Engage in civil discussions
Students will be able to effectively engage in disciplinarily informed civil discussions on complex, contentious topics.

▼ **Measure:** Class Discussion
Direct - Other

Details/Description: PSCI 499: Students will be assessed in the weekly discussions on their ability to conduct disciplinarily informed civil discussion on various topics in this course.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

1.2: Effective oral presentations
Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.

▼ **Measure:** Presentation PSCI 499
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: PSCI 499: In PSCI 499, students will orally present their research project to the class. Students will also be assessed on their oral communication skills in this presentation.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2. Effective Written Communication
Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.1: Persuasive essay
Students will develop the skill of writing a persuasive argument supported by relevant evidence. Included here are the presentation of a clear argument, logical flow of the argument, good organizational structure to the whole essay, and comprehension of primary documents or data.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful proofreading.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2.3: Appropriate citation methods for papers

Students will learn appropriate citation methods for papers in Political Science. Different faculty may prefer different citation methods; the important objective is that students learn how to properly cite in their written work.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2.4: Different styles of papers in Political Science

Students will develop a

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

facility with different styles of papers in Political Science, including but not limited to analytical, persuasive, and research papers.

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

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3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies

Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works

Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations

Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events

Identifying appropriate

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research

Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research

Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research

Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings

Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

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5. Political Science Content Knowledge

5.1 American political system

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

5.2 Comparative politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

<table>
<tr><td>

5.3 International politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

</td><td>

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

</td></tr>
<tr><td>

5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

</td><td>

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

</td></tr>
</table>

◈ Assessment Findings

Finding per Measure

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication
Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

<table>
<tr><td>

1.1: Engage in civil discussions

Students will be able to effectively engage in disciplinarily informed civil discussions on complex, contentious topics.

</td><td>

▼ **Measure:** Class Discussion
Direct - Other

Details/Description: PSCI 499: Students will be assessed in the weekly discussions on their ability to conduct disciplinarily informed civil discussion on various topics in this course.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Class Discussion

No Findings Added

</td></tr>
<tr><td>

1.2: Effective oral presentations

Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.

</td><td>

▼ **Measure:** Presentation PSCI 499
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: PSCI 499: In PSCI 499, students will orally present their research project to the class. Students will also be assessed on their oral communication skills in this presentation.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

</td></tr>
</table>

Findings for Presentation PSCI 499

Summary of Findings: Question 15 in Table 1 asks students their capabilities of recognizing various kinds of political arguments and analysis, and this question is associated with strong mean scores of 4.27 in 2014 and 4.37 in 2015. Critical thinking and analysis is also assessed in the Political Science Major Field Test and reported in Table 13. Here, once again, strong scores are seen in 2012-2014 with a drop in 2015.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1. Further, closely monitoring Major Field Test scores in the future will better tell us if the 2015 is a start of a new trend in scoring results or if it is an anomaly.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

   PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

2. Effective Written Communication

Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.1: Persuasive essay

Students will develop the skill of writing a persuasive argument supported by relevant evidence. Included here are the presentation of a clear argument, logical flow of the argument, good organizational structure to the whole essay, and comprehension of primary documents or data.

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

   PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

Measure: Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful proofreading.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

📎 PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

2.3: Appropriate citation methods for papers

Students will learn appropriate citation methods for papers in Political Science. Different faculty may prefer different citation methods; the important objective is that students learn how to

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

properly cite in their written work.

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

2.4: Different styles of papers in Political Science

Students will develop a facility with different styles of papers in Political Science, including but not limited to analytical, persuasive, and research papers.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

📎 PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies

Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

📎 PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

Measure: Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works

Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

Measure: Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations

Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

Measure: Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events

Identifying appropriate social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

  PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

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4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research

Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:
📎 PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:
📎 PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research

Students will understand

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice

the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately

and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

  PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research

Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

  PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings

Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.

Findings for Research project and paper

Summary of Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.

Recommendations : Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

   PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

5. Political Science Content Knowledge

5.1 American political system

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring
Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore

Summary of Findings: The Major Field Test is another assessment feature that allows the department to evaluate its students' comprehensive knowledge. These results demonstrate strong scores for 2012-2014 in the categories of American government, comparative politics, and international relations (see Table 12). However, in 2015 there is a drop in scores across these three sub-disciplines. Overall, the 2015 class scores are around 7 percent lower than seen in previous years. The Table 16 lists individual scores for the 2015 senior class. This "seminar" PSCI 499 class was significantly larger than what the department has experienced in the past. Furthermore, approximately 4 students who failed PSCI 499 during the Spring 2014 semester retook the class during the Spring 2015 semester. Their scores are included in these 2015 Major Field Test results. The lowest possible overall score for the Major Field Test is a 120, and some 2015 students scored near the bottom on this exam. Of those five students who have an overall score between 120-129, three have not graduated from the program yet. Overall, the 2015 class has reported lower GPA scores compared to the 2014 class as well. Student self-reported GPAs from PSCI 499 are listed in Table 8 and Table 9. Approximately 18 percent of students from the 2014 class had under a 3.0 GPA but over 33 percent of students from the 2015 class had under a 3.0 GPA.

Recommendations : closely monitoring Major Field Test scores in the future will better tell us if the 2015 is a start of a new trend in scoring results or if it is an anomal

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

   PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

Measure: Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their

understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Student Survey

Summary of Findings: Questions 6-9 in Table 1 directly address student self-evaluations on comprehensive knowledge across the many sub-disciplines within political science. Students rated their knowledge gains highly across 2014 and 2015, with many means above 4.0

Recommendations : If the PSCI 499 continues to have large class sizes, then the "seminar" nature of the course will need reexamined.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

   PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

5.2 Comparative politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield

Summary of Findings: The Major Field Test is another assessment feature that allows the department to evaluate its students' comprehensive knowledge. These results demonstrate strong scores for 2012-2014 in the categories of American government, comparative politics, and international relations (see Table 12). However, in 2015 there is a drop in scores across these three sub-disciplines. Overall, the 2015 class scores are around 7 percent lower than seen in previous years. The Table 16 lists individual scores for the 2015 senior class. This "seminar" PSCI 499 class was significantly larger than what the department has experienced in the past. Furthermore, approximately 4 students who failed PSCI 499 during the Spring 2014 semester retook the class during the Spring 2015 semester. Their scores are included in these 2015 Major Field Test results. The lowest possible overall score for the Major Field Test is a 120, and some 2015 students scored near the bottom on this exam. Of those five students who have an overall score between 120-129, three have not graduated from the program yet. Overall, the 2015 class has reported lower GPA scores compared to the 2014 class as well. Student self-reported GPAs from PSCI 499 are listed in Table 8 and Table 9. Approximately 18 percent of students from the 2014 class had under a 3.0 GPA but over 33 percent of students from the 2015 class had under a 3.0 GPA.

Recommendations : closely monitoring Major Field Test scores in the future will better tell us if the 2015 is a start of a new trend in scoring results or if it is an anomal

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

   PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

5.3 International politics Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system	▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore

Summary of Findings: The Major Field Test is another assessment feature that allows the department to evaluate its students' comprehensive knowledge. These results demonstrate strong scores for 2012-2014 in the categories of American government, comparative politics, and international relations (see Table 12). However, in 2015 there is a drop in scores across these three sub-disciplines. Overall, the 2015 class scores are around 7 percent lower than seen in previous years. The Table 16 lists individual scores for the 2015 senior class. This "seminar" PSCI 499 class was significantly larger than what the department has experienced in the past. Furthermore, approximately 4 students who failed PSCI 499 during the Spring 2014 semester retook the class during the Spring 2015 semester. Their scores are included in these 2015 Major Field Test results. The lowest possible overall score for the Major Field Test is a 120, and some 2015 students scored near the bottom on this exam. Of those five students who have an overall score between 120-129, three have not graduated from the program yet. Overall, the 2015 class has reported lower GPA scores compared to the 2014 class as well. Student self-reported GPAs from PSCI 499 are listed in Table 8 and Table 9. Approximately 18 percent of students from the 2014 class had under a 3.0 GPA but over 33 percent of students from the 2015 class had under a 3.0 GPA.

Recommendations : closely monitoring Major Field Test scores in the future will better tell us if the 2015 is a start of a new trend in scoring results or if it is an anomaly.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

📎 PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science	▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator

Summary of Findings: The Major Field Test is another assessment feature that allows the department to evaluate its students' comprehensive knowledge. These results demonstrate strong scores for 2012-2014 in the categories of American government, comparative politics, and international relations (see Table 12). However, in 2015 there is a drop in scores across these three sub-disciplines. Overall, the 2015 class scores are around 7 percent lower than seen in previous years. The Table 16 lists individual scores for the 2015 senior class. This "seminar" PSCI 499 class was significantly larger than what the department has experienced in the past. Furthermore, approximately 4 students who failed PSCI 499 during the Spring 2014 semester retook the class during the Spring 2015 semester. Their scores are included in these 2015 Major Field Test results. The lowest possible overall score for the Major Field Test is a 120, and some 2015 students scored near the bottom on this exam. Of those five students who have an overall score between 120-129, three have not graduated from the program yet. Overall, the 2015 class

has reported lower GPA scores compared to the 2014 class as well. Student self-reported GPAs from PSCI 499 are listed in Table 8 and Table 9. Approximately 18 percent of students from the 2014 class had under a 3.0 GPA but over 33 percent of students from the 2015 class had under a 3.0 GPA.

Recommendations : closely monitoring Major Field Test scores in the future will better tell us if the 2015 is a start of a new trend in scoring results or if it is an anomaly.

Reflections/Notes :

Substantiating Evidence:

    PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx (Word Document (Open XML)) (See appendix)

Overall Recommendations

No text specified

Overall Reflection

No text specified

◈ Action Plan

◈ Status Report

2015-2016 Assessment Cycle

◈ Assessment Plan

Outcomes and Measures

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication
Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

1.1: Engage in civil discussions

Students will be able to effectively engage in disciplinarily informed civil discussions on complex, contentious topics.

▼ **Measure:** Class Discussion
Direct - Other

Details/Description: PSCI 499: Students will be assessed in the weekly discussions on their ability to conduct disciplinarily informed civil discussion on various topics in this course.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

1.2: Effective oral presentations

Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.

▼ **Measure:** Presentation PSCI 499
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: PSCI 499: In PSCI 499, students will orally present their research project to the class. Students will also be assessed on their oral communication skills in this presentation.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2. Effective Written Communication
Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.1: Persuasive essay

Students will develop the skill of writing a persuasive argument supported by relevant evidence. Included here are the presentation of a clear argument, logical flow of the argument, good organizational structure to the whole essay, and comprehension of primary documents or data.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful proofreading.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2.3: Appropriate citation methods for papers

Students will learn appropriate citation methods for papers in Political Science. Different faculty may prefer different citation methods; the important objective is that students learn how to properly cite in their written work.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

2.4: Different styles of papers in Political Science

Students will develop a

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

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facility with different styles of papers in Political Science, including but not limited to analytical, persuasive, and research papers.

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

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3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies

Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works

Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations

Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events

Identifying appropriate

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

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4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research

Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research

Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research

Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings

Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

5. Political Science Content Knowledge

5.1 American political system

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

5.2 Comparative politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

5.3 International politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

Measure: ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

◈ Assessment Findings

Finding per Measure

BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

1. Oral Communication

Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.

1.1: Engage in civil discussions

Students will be able to effectively engage in disciplinarily informed civil discussions on complex, contentious topics.

Measure: Class Discussion
Direct - Other

Details/Description: PSCI 499: Students will be assessed in the weekly discussions on their ability to conduct disciplinarily informed civil discussion on various topics in this course.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Class Discussion

No Findings Added

1.2: Effective oral presentations

Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations, either as part of a group or individually, and either using Powerpoint or similar visual aids or not using such aids.

Measure: Presentation PSCI 499
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: PSCI 499: In PSCI 499, students will orally present their research project to the class. Students will also be assessed on their oral communication skills in this presentation.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Presentation PSCI 499

No Findings Added

2. Effective Written Communication

Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.

2.1: Persuasive essay

Students will develop the skill of writing a persuasive argument supported by relevant evidence. Included here are the presentation of a clear argument, logical flow of the argument, good organizational structure to the whole essay, and comprehension of primary documents or data.

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline):
Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

Measure: Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline):
Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

2.2: Papers

Students will develop the ability to write essays/papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors. This may be done through revisions or through learning careful proofreading.

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).
Target:
Implementation Plan (timeline):
Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

Measure: Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

2.3: Appropriate citation methods for papers

Students will learn appropriate citation methods for papers in Political Science. Different faculty may prefer different citation methods; the important objective is that students learn how to properly cite in their written work.

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

Measure: Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

2.4: Different styles of papers in Political Science

Students will develop a facility with different styles of papers in Political Science, including but not limited to analytical, persuasive, and research papers.

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

Measure: Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

3. Critical Thinking and Analysis

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be demonstrated by the following outcomes.

3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives

Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

Measure: Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies

Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works

Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations

Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

Measure: Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events

Identifying appropriate social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

Measure: Three short papers
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students are required to write 3-4 shorter (c. 5 pages) papers that are used to assess the students' written communication abilities. Students analyze readings based around a

theme (e.g., democracy and democratization), write three papers analyzing these readings.

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Three short papers

No Findings Added

4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research

Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research

Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately

Measure: Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research

Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings

Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.

▼ **Measure:** Research project and paper
Direct - Student Artifact

Details/Description: Students develop a culminating research project on a topic of their choice and write an 18-20 page paper (either traditional research paper or policy analysis paper).

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline):

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Research project and paper

No Findings Added

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5. Political Science Content Knowledge

5.1 American political system

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - American Politics Subscore

No Findings Added

▼ **Measure:** Student Survey
Indirect - Survey

Details/Description: Questions in this survey ask students to state whether they think their understanding of politics in the different subfields has improved.

Administered in PSCI 499

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for Student Survey

No Findings Added

5.2 Comparative politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Comparative Politics subfield

No Findings Added

5.3 International politics

Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): Annually in spring

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - IR Subscore

No Findings Added

5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

▼ **Measure:** ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator
Direct - Exam

Details/Description:

Target:

Implementation Plan (timeline): annually

Responsible Individual(s):

Findings for ETS Major Field Test - Politcal Thought Indicator

No Findings Added

Overall Recommendations

No text specified

Overall Reflection

No text specified

◈ Action Plan

◈ Status Report

2016-2017 Assessment Cycle

◈ **Assessment Plan**

◈ **Assessment Findings**

2017-2018 Assessment Cycle

◈ **Assessment Plan**

◈ **Assessment Findings**

2018-2019 Assessment Cycle

◈ **Assessment Plan**

◈ **Assessment Findings**

2019-2020 Assessment Cycle

◈ Assessment Plan

◈ Assessment Findings

Appendix

A. **Political Science** (Curriculum Map)
B. **Annual_Student_Assessment_Results_2010.xlsx** (Excel Workbook (Open XML))
C. **Assessment_Plan_for_2010-2011.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
D. **Communication_of_Outcomes_Statement_for_Task_Stream.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
E. **Curriculum Map explanation for Task Stream - 1-20-15.pdf** (Adobe Acrobat Document)
F. **Curriculum_Map_explanation_for_Task_Stream_11-3-10.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
G. **Exit_Interview_2010_with_student_responses.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
H. **Exit_Interview_Results.doc** (Microsoft Word)
I. **Final_Assessment_of_Students_Spring_2009.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
J. **Final_Assessment_of_Students_Spring_2010.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
K. **Poli_Sci_Mission_Statement_--_final.doc** (Microsoft Word)
L. **Student_Learning_Outcomes_in_Curriculum_Revision_forms.doc** (Microsoft Word)
M. **Results from ETS Major Field Test, Spring 2010** (Word Document (Open XML))
N. **Results from ETS Major Field Test, Spring 2010** (Word Document (Open XML))
O. **Results from ETS Major Field Test, Spring 2010** (Word Document (Open XML))
P. **Results from ETS Major Field Test, Spring 2010** (Word Document (Open XML))
Q. **Assessment of PSCI 499 Students 2012 (2).pdf** (Adobe Acrobat Document)
R. **Assessment of PSCI 499 Students 2012 (2).pdf** (Adobe Acrobat Document)

S. **Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx** (Excel Workbook (Open XML))
T. **Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx** (Excel Workbook (Open XML))
U. **Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx** (Excel Workbook (Open XML))
V. **Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx** (Excel Workbook (Open XML))
W. **Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx** (Excel Workbook (Open XML))
X. **Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx** (Excel Workbook (Open XML))
Y. **Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx** (Excel Workbook (Open XML))
Z. **Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx** (Excel Workbook (Open XML))
AA. **Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx** (Excel Workbook (Open XML))
AB. **PoliticalScienceDept Meeting 9-24-12 minutes.pdf** (Adobe Acrobat Document)
AC. **PoliticalScienceDept Meeting 9-24-12 minutes.pdf** (Adobe Acrobat Document)
AD. **Political Science MFT Results 2012.xlsx** (Excel Workbook (Open XML))
AE. **Assessment of PSCI 499 Students 2012 (2).pdf** (Adobe Acrobat Document)
AF. **Political Science Annual Student Survey Results 2012.xlsx** (Excel Workbook (Open XML))
AG. **Department Meeting 8-26-13 Minutes** (Word Document (Open XML))
AH. **PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
AI. **PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
AJ. **PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
AK. **PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
AL. **PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
AM. **PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
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AV. **PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
AW. **PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
AX. **PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
AY. **PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx** (Word Document (Open XML))
AZ. **PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx** (Word

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BA. **PSCI major assessment Draft 1. 9.28.15.1-1.docx** (Word
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Department of Political Science

Academic Program Assessment Plan Findings for Political Science Major

Submitted by: Gaston A. Fernandez, Interim Chair

This document presents student response summary data and other data on a variety of metrics related to their political science education at ISU. For Tables 1-11, data comes from political science self-assessment survey. Most responses are from seniors and all responses are from political science majors. The surveys were distributed in PSCI 499. Table 1 presents data on those questions with Likert scaled eligible responses. The responses demonstrate strong results, as the mean responses for 2014 and 2015 are typically over 4 (Agree to Strong Agree responses). For those questions with a mean below a 4, many are related to legal studies questions. However, these questions are not entirely appropriate because political science majors do not have to take any public law classes in order to graduate with their degree. Thus, many students either did not respond to the legal studies related questions or simply scored it with a moderate response. Some of the highest scores come from questions related to a positive learning environment, the diversity of topics being addressed in political science classes, knowledge gains of political processes, and increases in writing proficiency.

The remaining tables seen in this document tackle a host of other metrics relating to our students. For example, only a few of our students have a second major (Table 3), but many have a minor (Table 4). Some data from 2014 to 2015 is more mixed. For example, internship experience is low for the 2014 class but relatively high for the 2015 class. Similar conclusions can be drawn from the data on study abroad, GPAs, and student concentrations. Finally, we should recognize that many of our students are employed, some with a large amount of hours being logged per week.

Categorized Rubrics:
a. Comprehensive Knowledge: Student attainment of comprehensive knowledge is measured using the Major Field Test and a survey instrument developed by the department for students in the culminating senior seminar experience.

   1. Target thresholds: The department seeks to maintain strong student responses to Questions 6-9 in Table 1 and increase the student Major Field Test overall scores back to its 2012-2014 level.
   2. Person Responsible: All undergraduate affiliated department faculty contribute to comprehensive knowledge growth among political science students. Instructor of PSCI 499 tracks responses to the student self-assessment survey and scores from the Major Field Test.
   3. Findings: Questions 6-9 in Table 1 directly address student self-evaluations on comprehensive knowledge across the many sub-disciplines within political science. Students rated their knowledge gains highly across 2014 and 2015, with many means above 4.0. The Major Field Test is another assessment feature that allows the department to evaluate its students' comprehensive knowledge. These results demonstrate strong scores for 2012-2014 in the categories of American government, comparative politics, and international relations (see Table 12). However, in 2015 there is a drop in scores across these three sub-disciplines. Overall, the 2015 class scores are around 7 percent lower than seen in previous years. The Table 16 lists individual scores for the 2015 senior class. This "seminar" PSCI 499 class was significantly larger than what the department has experienced in the past. Furthermore, approximately 4 students who failed PSCI 499 during the Spring 2014 semester retook the class during the Spring 2015 semester. Their scores are included in these 2015 Major Field Test results. The lowest possible overall score for the Major Field Test is a 120, and some 2015 students scored near the bottom on this exam. Of those five students who have an overall score between 120-129, three have not graduated from the program yet. Overall, the 2015 class has reported lower GPA scores compared to the 2014 class as well. Student self-reported GPAs from

PSCI 499 are listed in Table 8 and Table 9. Approximately 18 percent of students from the 2014 class had under a 3.0 GPA but over 33 percent of students from the 2015 class had under a 3.0 GPA.

4. Recommendations: If the PSCI 499 continues to have large class sizes, then the "seminar" nature of the course will need reexamined. Further, closely monitoring Major Field Test scores in the future will better tell us if the 2015 is a start of a new trend in scoring results or if it is an anomaly.

b. <u>Effective Written Communication Skills</u>: Student attainment of effective writing and communication skills is measured using survey instrument developed by the department for students in the culminating senior seminar experience and throughout the curriculum. Nearly every course within political science, if not every course within political science, requires research and writing assignments. PSCI 245, and 400 level PSCI courses emphasize these skills particularly.

1. Target threshold: Student successfully develop empirical research skills in PSCI 245 and 400 level PSCI courses.
2. Collections of evidence: See Table 1 and Table 16.
3. Person Responsible: All department faculty contribute to the development of effective written communication skills. Instructor of PSCI 499 tracks responses to the student self-assessment and scores from the Major Field Test.
4. Findings: Individual grades on research and writing assignments within the many PSCI courses is a better assessment tool of these skills (departmental discussion – ongoing). Furthermore, questions 1, 3, 10, 11, and 12 in Table 1 report strong student self-evaluations on effectiveness in written communication skills based on the political science education received.
5. Recommendations: Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1.

c. <u>Critical Thinking and Analysis</u>: Student attainment of effective critical thinking and analysis skills is measured using survey instrument developed by the department for students in the culminating senior seminar experience and by faculty throughout the curriculum.

1. Target threshold: The department seeks to maintain a strong score on question 15 of the senior assessment survey (see Table 1) and increase critical thinking and analysis scores from the Major Field Test to 2012-2014 levels.
2. Collections of evidence: See Table 1 and Table 13.
3. Person Responsible: All undergraduate affiliated department faculty contribute to the development of critical thinking and analysis skills. Instructor of PSCI 499 tracks responses to the student self-assessment and scores from the Major Field Test.
4. Findings: Question 15 in Table 1 asks students their capabilities of recognizing various kinds of political arguments and analysis, and this question is associated with strong mean scores of 4.27 in 2014 and 4.37 in 2015. Critical thinking and analysis is also assessed in the Political Science Major Field Test and reported in Table 13. Here, once again, strong scores are seen in 2012-2014 with a drop in 2015.
5. Recommendations: Maintain strong scores on student self-evaluations seen in Table 1. Further, closely monitoring Major Field Test scores in the future will better tell us if the 2015 is a start of a new trend in scoring results or if it is an anomaly.

d. <u>Qualitative and Quantitative Skills</u>: Student attainment of qualitative and quantitative skills is measured using survey instrument developed by the department for students in the culminating senior seminar experience and by faculty in this area concentrated in PSCI 245, but also frequently seen in 400 level PSCI courses.

1. Target threshold: Decrease DWF rates in PSCI 245.
2. Collections of evidence: See Table 16 and Department Student Success Plan for more details.

3. Person Responsible: All undergraduate affiliated departmental faculty contribute to the development of qualitative and quantitative skills. Instructor of PSCI 245 monitors empirical research skills and grade distribution for the course.
4. Findings Grade distributions in PSCI 245 is one good measure of how students fair on understanding qualitative and quantitative skills. This is seen in Table 16. The Political Science Major Field Test is another good metric to understand ISU student skills on qualitative and quantitative skills. As seen in Table 13, strong scores are seen in 2012-2014 with a drop in 2015.
5. Recommendations: Move PSCI 245 to a course recommended for juniors, not seniors. Add prerequisites to PSCI 245 (see Department Student Success Plan for more details).

Table 1: Political Science Student Assessment of Department

0 = Strongly Disagree
5 = Strongly Agree

	2014 Mean	2015 Mean
1. My vocabulary and use of language has been enhanced through my study of Pol Sci.	4.36	4.68
2. I experienced diverse subject matter and wide array of thoughts about important political/ social issues.	4.45	4.44
3. I can easily read arguments in Political Science based on empirical findings.	4.09	4.12
4. I can easily read legal arguments based upon my understanding of judicial opinions.	3.81	3.84
5. Professors sometimes used class to debate important normative topics. Those debates made me think more	3.81	4.12
6. My knowledge of political process is much better than before I began my studies.	4.36	4.6
7. My knowledge of American Legal System/Judicial Process is much better than before I began my studies.	3.90	4.44
8. My knowledge of international relations is much better than before I began my studies.	4.36	4.28
9. My knowledge of politics in countries other than the US is much better than before I began my studies.	3.81	4.04
10. I have become more adept/proficient as a writer because of my training in Pol Science/Legal Studies.	4.45	4.44
11. I have become more proficient at writing essays on political/ policy issues because of training in Pol Sci.	4.45	4.44
12. I have become more proficient at constructing a research proposal/design because of my training in Pol Sci.	4.09	4.28
13. I have become more proficient in briefing judicial opinions/cases because of my training in Legal Studies.	3.5	3.88
14. I have become more proficient at writing a judicial opinion/appellate brief because of training in Legal Studies.	3.11	3.55
15. I am capable of recognizing various kinds of political arguments and analysis.	4.27	4.37
16. I am capable of recognizing various kinds of legal arguments and analysis.	3.90	3.77
17. I did not experience hostile learning environments caused by my Political Science professors.	4.54	4.56
18. I did not experience hostile learning environment caused by other students in my Political Science classes.	4.63	4.08
19. My PS professors worked to establish and preserve learning environments suitable to course objectives and conducive to learning, participation, and achievement.	4.36	4.36
N	11	25

Data from PSCI 499 students. Some non-responses for the Legal Studies related questions.
0 = Strongly Disagree
1 = Disagree
2 = Slightly Disagree
3 = Slightly Agree
4 = Agree
5 = Strongly Agree

Table 2: Student concentrations

	2014	2015
General	4	10
International Relations/Comparative	3	7
Public Administration	0	0
American/Public Policy	3	8
Legal Studies	1	0

Table 3: Number of students with a second major

2014	2015
4 / 11 (36.3 %)	3 / 25 (12.0%)

Table 4: Number of students with a minor

2014	2015
9 / 11 (81.8 %)	14 / 25 (56.0%)

Table 5: Did you participate in a PS internship while at ISU?

2014	2015
2 / 11 (18.1 %)	10 / 25 (40.0%)

Table 6: Did you study abroad while at ISU?

2014	2015
5 / 11 (45.4 %)	3 / 25 (12.0%)

Table 7: Did you participate in faculty-directed research while at ISU?

2014	2015
2 / 11 (18.1 %)	6 / 25 (24.0%)

Table 8: Student cumulative GPA

	2014	2015[*]
3.50 – 4.00	6	5
3.00 – 3.49	2	7
2.50 – 2.99	3	9
2.00 – 2.49	0	3
Less than 2.0	0	0

[*] One non response for 2015.

Table 9: GPA in the PS major

	2014	2015[*]
3.50 – 4.00	6	4
3.00 – 3.49	3	12
2.50 – 2.99	2	6
2.00 – 2.49	0	2
Less than 2.0	0	0

[*] One non response for 2015.

Table 10: How many hours per week did you work at a job during last two years at ISU?

	2014	2015
Didn't work	2	3
1-10 hours	2	0
11-20 hours	5	15
20-30 hours	0	0
30-39 hours	2	5
40 or more hours	0	2

Table 11: What degree of effort did you put forward toward matriculating through PS program?

	2014	2015
High degree of effort	3	6
Above Average	5	13
Average	3	5
Below Average	0	1
No Effort	0	0

Table 12: Class Average Scores on the Major Field Test – Topical (2012-1014)

	Overall	American Gov.	Comparative Politics	International Relations
2015 class average	146	47	46	49
2014 class average	156	56	56	58
2013 class average	157	58	55	56
2012 class average	159	59	59	58

*Percentiles in parentheses and should be interpreted as the student scored higher than xx percent of all the people who took the same exam.

Table 13: Class Average Scores on the Major Field Test – Assessment Indicators (2012-2014)

	Analytical & Critical Thinking Questions	Methodology Questions	Political Thought Questions
2015 class average	55	36	46
2014 class average	66	44	56
2013 class average	67	45	58
2012 class average	67	45	58

*Percentile data not available.

Table 14: Comparing ISU Political Science Results to Other Universities

	Overall	American Gov.	Comparative Politics	International Relations
2015 class average	146	47	46	49
Peer Public Institutions [a]	151	51	52	50
Private Institutions [b]	153	53	53	54

[a] Public Institutions include scores from 2011 to 2015 for the following colleges/universities: Austin Peay State University, Ball State University, Clemson University, Missouri State University, Murray State University, University of Missouri-Kansas City, University of Nebraska-Omaha, University of Southern Indiana, University of Tennessee at Martin, and Wichita State University.
[b] Private Institutions include scores from 2011 to 2015 for the following colleges/universities: American University (DC), Berry College, Brigham Young University, Eckerd College, Lake Forest College, Loyola University New Orleans, Quincy University (IL), University of St. Thomas (MN), Westminster College (MO), and Xavier University of Louisiana.

Table 15: Class Scores on the Major Field Test Per Student (2015)

Students (last 3 digits of 991 #)	Overall	American Gov.	Comparative Politics	International Relations
719	146	45	37	54
193	157	57	66	54
661	142	32	50	54
894	141	49	47	34
182	167	68	73	57
196	123	21	30	34
150	120	20	20	34
178	157	58	60	63
390	159	68	53	46
689	129	29	30	40
605	136	39	43	37
253	154	65	47	43
749	123	27	27	31
988	146	40	43	54
215	152	47	53	63
460	156	54	50	63
974	143	45	30	52
673	160	58	56	63
370	156	54	56	54
076	139	40	43	40
041	143	49	47	43
194	139	47	27	40
642	151	58	50	49
520	121	22	27	23
066	161	63	53	63
666	173	62	79	83
267	144	47	40	46

*Total score and subscores are reported as scale scores. The scale range for the total score is 120-200.

Assessment Indicators are reported only for **groups** of students. Assessment Indicators report the average percent of correct answers, in a particular subject area, for all students tested so you can determine if your students are having difficulty with specific clusters of questions. Content areas for which assessment indicator scores are reported typically have approximately 15 questions on the exam.

Subscores are reported for **individual** students on most Major Field Tests, on a scale of 20–100. For every major there are subfields. The number of questions on the exam and the breadth of the subfield determine if a reliable subscore can be reported for an individual. Because subscores require 30 questions for a specific subfield to be completed, not all Major Field Tests provide subscores.

How scores for the Major Field Test in Political Science are reported
- Total Score – Reported for each student and summarized for the group
- Subscores – Reported for each student and summarized for the group
  – Comparative Government and Politics (22–30)
      – International Relations (22–30)
      – United States Government and Politics (48–56)
- Assessment Indicators – Reported for the group* only
  – Analytical and Critical Thinking (20–26)
      – Methodology (7–14)
      – Political Thought (11–20)

Numbers in parentheses are the approximate number of questions in each category.

Table 16: 2015 Grades for PSCI 245

	Fall 2014
A	2
B	9
C	6
D	4
F	4
DP/WP	4
DF/WF	0
Total	29

*Data includes majors and non-majors.

Political Science Department Meeting
September 24, 2012

Agenda
• Announcements
• Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes for AY 2011-12

Attendance
Present: Buchanan, Butwin, Chambers, Fernandez, Myers, Rashid, Van Sickel
Absent: Bergbower, Klarner, Schmitt

Minutes

I) Announcements

A) Chambers updated faculty on status of the search request. We are in the top tier of the Dean's list sent to the Provost.

B) Van Sickel asked about willingness to sponsor a post-election roundtable discussion as part of the Community Semester in the spring. Suggestion that we do it in January around the time of the inauguration. Topics to be included could be presidential election, state & local elections, foreign policy under new administration, and possibly the economy (invite an economist for this part). Van Sickel will send out an email seeking specific contributions from the faculty.

II) Assessment Discussions

A) MPA Program

Buchanan introduced the assessment information for the MPA students. He noted a correction to the mode for Outcome 5, which should have been 2 instead of 3. He explained that Outcomes 1, 4, and 5 were based on student capstone presentations, while Outcomes 2 and 3 came from discussions in PA 601 and PA 606 (Outcome 2) and PA 609 (Outcome 3). Outcome 1 is required by NASPAA, even though it is not fully clear how to operationalize this outcome.

Buchanan noted that the correction to the mode for Outcome 5 indicates possible need for improving the abilities of students in terms of critical thinking and analytical skills – although the lower score here could also be based on the specific data collected (related to quantitative analytical skills that students still struggle with). He noted that the scores in 2A and 2B, and in 2C and 2D, indicate improvement in communications effectiveness over the course of the two classes.

Buchanan asked the faculty whether they see a need to tweak the assessment document, or should there be some changes to what is being assessed? And should more than one person be reviewing the material as part of the assessment process? There was some sense expressed by some faculty that more than one person should be reviewing as much of the material as possible.

B) Legal Studies Program

Van Sickel introduced the latest version of the Legal Studies assessment document/plan, and noted that the seven outcomes draw from the requirements of the ABA and American Bar Foundation. Outcome 7 is one that he added, since there needs to be substantive knowledge demonstrated by students. This assessment plan is still being fine-tuned.

Assessment in Legal Studies is based on the following documents: a diagnostic exam, student assessment of the program, and an information sheet on student plans post-graduation.

Van Sickel introduced his analysis of the results of the 2010 assessment cycle, which is the latest for which he has data. He noted that students did not do well on the diagnostic exam despite having good GPAs and expecting to do well in PSCI 419 (the culminating course for Legal Studies). He discussed some ideas for revising the Legal Studies curriculum based on this data, but also noted that we have already instituted some curricular changes to the program, including better sequencing of courses and moving to use prerequisites for some courses.

There was some discussion about the fact that the Legal Studies major is not designed to prepare students to take the LSATs, which are the main obstacle for our students to gain admission to law school. However, the major prepares students to do well in law school because they will already have a solid understanding of the legal and judicial systems and will know how to brief cases. The suggestion was made that perhaps we need to do a better job getting information to students (both via the web and via handouts) on what the Legal Studies major will do for them and what it will not do for them, and how they should prepare to take the LSATs if they want to go to law school.

Van Sickel noted that he will be collecting data for assessment again in PSCI 419 this fall.

C) Poli Sci Major

Chambers introduced the various documents that he had either emailed to the faculty over the last few days or had provided at the meeting. These included student exit interviews and a self-assessment, both of which ask students to provide feedback on the program and department. The documents also included results from the ETS Major Field Test and the actual assessment of student learning based on our assessment document.

Chambers then provided an overview of the assessment report, noting the need to develop more clear and specific rubrics for assessing student work in terms of our outcomes. In particular, he expressed some concern about whether we were assessing student writing and critical thinking &

analysis adequately (having rubrics would help with this). Van Sickel asked about the existence of rubrics that we can use, or whether there is a "rubric guru" we can turn to. Chambers responded that we had some rubrics from AAC&U that we could use, and we could also look at the rubrics used by History, English, or other departments to develop our own without completely inventing the wheel again.

Fernandez suggested we think about using a portfolio of student papers (3-4 of their best papers, chosen from courses at different levels) rather than use the thought papers in PSCI 499 as a way to assess the development of student critical thinking skills. Chambers said this could be done, but would have to be done by a committee over the summer. Rashid asked about ways to better link the senior seminar writing to writing assignments in other classes; to some extent this could be achieved through the portfolios, but it might also include more conversation between the instructor for PSCI 499 and instructors for other courses.

Assessment of PSCI 499 Students, Spring 2012

Course Overview

PSCI 499 during Spring 2012 followed the general theme of democracy and democratization, as we have the past few years. The first part of the course focused on democracy, how we define it, and the state of it in the US. Our readings included several articles defining democracy, Putnam's work on declining social capital and a critique of his arguments, and a pair of articles on the impact of technology and cyberspace on democracy, followed by Dahl's *How Democratic is the American Constitution?*. We then read Huntington's *The Third Wave,* followed by a several news stories on the uprisings in northern Africa (Egypt, Tunisia, Libya) as mini-case studies in current events to apply Huntington's arguments. In addition, we attended Human Rights Day and we engaged in a service activity. We also spent a week on professional development, including a presentation on writing resumes, and taking the ETS Major Field Test.

Requirements for the course included the following:
• Writing a 15-20 page research paper
• An oral presentation of the research paper
• One 4-5 page "thought paper" on the Dahl book and two on Huntington
• Weekly submission of 2-3 discussion questions based on the readings
• Two summary-reaction-connection papers relating to Human Rights Day and the service project
• A resume

Eight students took this course. The final grade distribution was: 1 A, 1 A-, 1 B+, 3 B's, 1 C+, and 1 C-.

This assessment of the senior students will follow the new departmental student outcomes assessment plan finalized in May 2012.

Effective Oral Communication

We desire that students develop effective oral communication skills so that: 1) they can effectively engage in disciplinarily informed civil discussions on complex, contentious topics; and 2) be able to deliver effective oral presentations either individually or as part of a group.

In addition to regular class discussions, several of which included some contentious topics, the students were required to make a formal presentation of their research project. Of the eight students, two were normally very quiet in class, two spoke up frequently, and four were regular participants in our discussions. All of them handled themselves rather well in terms of engaging in civil discourse. In terms of the research presentations, one student failed to present, and one student had a not very strong presentation. The other six had presentations that were

good to excellent, including all required elements and staying reasonably close to the allotted time.

Overall, using a three-tier model of low, moderate, an high levels of competence in this learning outcome, and with moderate being our target level, **I rated four students at a high level of effective oral communications, three at a moderate level, and one at a low-to-moderate level** (since they did not make the oral presentation so I had little on which to base my judgment).

While these results appear to be satisfactory, we should probably develop some more specific rubrics for assessing the students so that we can be more certain of their level of achievements over time.

Effective Written Communication

We have four objectives for this category:
1) Students learn to write a persuasive essay supported by relevant evidence, including a clear argument, logical flow of the argument, good organizational structure, and comprehension of primary documents or data.
2) Students will write papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors.
3) Students will learn appropriate citation methods for papers in Political Science.
4) Students will develop a facility with different styles of papers in Political Science, including but not limited to analytical, persuasive, and research papers.

In the context of PSCI 499, student writing was assessed in three different styles of papers: summary-reaction-connection papers, free response thought papers, and research papers (students could choose either traditional research papers or policy analysis papers). Out of the eight students, **I rated two students at a high level of proficiency in their writing, four students at a moderate level of proficiency, and two at a low level**.
- For a high level, these students wrote clearly, had well organized and structured papers, typically very few grammatical or typographical errors, developed their ideas well and supported them with relevant evidence, and had appropriate citations in their papers.
- For those with a moderate level of proficiency, these students did not consistently have all of these elements but usually had many of them. I also found that these students sometimes had troubles developing their ideas or had gaps in the logical progression of their ideas, often had more than just a minimal number of typographical or grammatical errors, and in some of their papers needed stronger analysis and better use of evidence.
- For those students with a low level of proficiency, they usually had lots of grammatical and typographical errors, had gaps in the logical progression of their ideas and were lacking deep analysis, and often lacked clear arguments and focus in their papers.

The two students at the lower level of proficiency in writing were the two weakest students in the class. The others achieved at least a moderate level of proficiency. However, having more formal rubrics for assessing student writing abilities would be helpful to confirm

this assessment over time. Also, we should discuss whether achieving a moderate level of proficiency (as described immediately above) is an acceptable level of writing for our graduates.

Critical Thinking and Analysis

In the area of critical thinking and analysis, the department has enunciated the following objectives for our students:

Students will demonstrate the ability to not only articulate political theories and concepts, but to apply these ideas to "real world" scenarios for evaluative purposes. This will be done by:
1) Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues
2) Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors
3) Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues
4) Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations
5) Identifying appropriate social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events

To assess the students in terms of these learning outcomes, I evaluated their three thought papers as well as their research papers.

I have rated two students as performing at a high level of critical thinking and analysis, one student at a high-moderate level, three at a moderate level, and two at a low level of proficiency. The two students at a high level regularly turned in papers that were very insightful and that applied ideas from other classes and areas to the paper at hand. The student at the high-moderate level usually turned in papers that had strong analytical and critical thinking levels, but their research paper was not at a high level. Those students at the moderate level either were inconsistent in the strength of their critical thinking and analysis, or submitted papers that exhibited strong levels in some sections of the paper but weaker levels in other sections. Those rated at a low level usually submitted papers that needed much more development of their ideas and analysis.

The two students at the low level of performance were the two weakest students in the class overall. It would appear that we are getting our students at least to a moderate level of critical thinking skills over the course of the major. However, developing more precise rubrics based on our student learning outcomes would be helpful to ensure that this is the case.

Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills

We have several objectives as part of this student learning outcome:

• Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.
• Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.
• Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately
• Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.
• Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.

To assess the research skills of the PSCI 499 students, I evaluated their final research papers. The students were given the option of writing either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the eight students, five wrote traditional research papers and three wrote policy analysis papers. Two students conducted original research for their papers, and one combined analysis of existing data with a little of their own research and even conducted some elementary quantitative analysis. The other seven students performed qualitative analysis in their research projects.

My evaluation of the research skills of these students is as follows: **two students demonstrated a high level of research skills, two demonstrated a high-moderate level of research skills, one student demonstrated a moderate level, and three students demonstrated a low level of research skills**. For one of the three students demonstrating a low level of research skill, the basic structure and approach to the project/paper was good, but the execution was lousy (and this is generally a good student who simply rushed the paper).

The other two students with a low level of research skills were the two weakest students in the class. While we probably need to work on reinforcing the basic research skills taught in PSCI 245 in other upper-level courses, it appears that our majors are understanding at least the basics of what they were taught about research and presenting it.

Content Knowledge

In our Departmental Assessment Plan, we did not develop any specific levels of proficiency for our students. We should probably do so, and can perhaps use the MFT scores for this purpose. While I provided separately a comparison of the aggregate scores for this year compared to the two previous years, let me provide some data about each specific student, as I did in 2010.

Student	Score (Percentile)	Am Pol Subscore	CP Subscore	IR Subscore
1	144 (28%)	52 (51%)	43 (28%)	37 (19%)
2	157 (60%)	58 (61%)	66 (83%)	54 (56%)
3	176 (97%)	72 (93%)	63 (76%)	80 (96%)
4	148 (32%)	50 (42%)	40 (21%)	54 (56%)
5	160 (69%)	68 (87%)	53 (52%)	54 (56%)
6	163 (75%)	57 (61%)	73 (93%)	69 (82%)
7	161 (71%)	62 (75%)	60 (68%)	57 (56%)
8	160 (69%)	52 (51%)	70 (88%)	60 (65%)
Dept Means	159 (84%)	59 (90%)	59 (90%)	58 (81%)

NB:
1) Student 4 took the MFT last year, and improved her scores
2) Student 8 did not successfully complete the course, and will be repeating it next spring

Dept. Means on Assessment Indicators (Mean % Correct)

Analytical and Critical Thinking	67 (26% below)
Methodology	45 (9% below)
Political Thought	58 (93% below)

This data indicates that we may need to work on the critical thinking skills of our students in a more systematic way. The department means for the overall MFT score and the three subfield scores are rather good compared to other institutions taking the MFT, but CP continues to be strong despite the relative lack of courses we offer in this subfield (particularly compared to IR).

Results from ETS Major Field Test, Spring 2010

Student	Score (Percentile)	AP Subscore	CP Subscore	IR Subscore
1	130 (5%)	25 (1%)	47 (35%)	32 (5%)
2	174 (90%)	78 (95%)	82 (95%)	57 (55%)
3	158 (60%)	61 (70%)	61 (65%)	41 (20%)
4	159 (60%)	57 (60%)	72 (85%)	45 (25%)
5	172 (90%)	70 (90%)	75 (90%)	61 (65%)
6	171 (90%)	68 (85%)	72 (85%)	77 (90%)
7	153 (45%)	59 (65%)	54 (50%)	45 (25%)
8	169 (85%)	76 (95%)	68 (80%)	49 (35%)
9	147 (35%)	40 (20%)	61 (65%)	53 (45%)
Dept Means:	159 (80%)	59 (90%)	66 (95%)	51 (50%)

NB: Two students did not take the test, and two students only took part of the test. Student #9 is a non-traditional student who has come back to complete the degree after a couple of decades away from college. Student #1 is an international student.

Student Learning Outcomes for Revised Political Science Major Curriculum, Fall 2009

Student learning will also be enhanced through these revisions because the Political Science Department is reexamining its student learning outcomes and assessment plan in light of these curricular changes. Student learning outcomes for the new Political Science major curriculum are:

Competencies:
   • Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues
   • Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers

Skills:
   • Critical thinking and analysis
   • Quantitative and qualitative research methods skills

Knowledge:
   • Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system
   • Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them
   • Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system
   • Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

The Department is in the process of mapping these student learning outcomes onto the revised curriculum, which will allow us to better assess achievement of the student learning outcomes

Mission Statement for Poli Sci, Nov. 3, 2008

The Department of Political Science is committed to providing a high-quality academic experience both in and out of the classroom for its undergraduate and graduate students. Our curriculum integrates exposure to theory, method, and practice – particularly through experiential learning – with critical thinking, effective communication, and a global perspective. In this way, we prepare our students for productive careers in public service or in the private sector, and for lives of active citizenship.

Approved 12/1/08, 9-0-1

Assessment of PSCI 499 Students, Spring 2010

Course Overview

       PSCI 499 during Spring 2010 was conducted partly in conjunction with PSCI 496 (the Legal Studies Capstone) and partly separately. We read some common texts at the beginning of the semester (several articles defining democracy, Putnam's work on declining social capital and a critique of his arguments, and a pair of articles on the impact of technology and cyberspace on democracy, followed by Dahl's *How Democratic is the American Constitution?*), and then read Huntington's *The Third Wave* by ourselves. We also read some articles on the political crisis in Thailand as a mini-case study in current events of Huntington's arguments about the troubles with democratic consolidation. In addition, we attended Human Rights Day and we engaged in a service activity. We also spent a week on professional development, which included a presentation by Kent Waggoner on writing resumes and attending the Networking and Etiquette Workshop.

       Requirements for the course included the following:
            • Writing a 15-20 page research paper
            • An oral presentation of the research paper
            • One 4-5 page "thought paper" on the Dahl book and two on Huntington
            • Weekly submission of 2-3 discussion questions based on the readings
            • Two summary-reaction-connection papers relating to Human Rights Day and the service project
            • A resume

       Thirteen students took this course. The final grade distribution was: 1 A, 1 A-, 4 B+'s, 1 B-, 2 C+'s, 1 C-, 1 D+, and 2 F's.

Content-based Knowledge

       To assess the content knowledge of the students in Political Science, two different instruments were used. The first was a class discussion on the first day that drew on several news stories regarding the health care bill. Students were asked to draw from the readings some of the basic concepts of Political Science and American government/politics, such as power, authority, legitimacy, separation of powers, federalism, the notion of representation in our democracy, partisanship and the role of political parties, and the notions of equality and opportunity. (Students were not told which concepts to draw from the readings, but were told to find the basic concepts, so they had to remember what several of these concepts were.)

       This exercise was conducted in conjunction with PSCI 496, which meant that we had upwards of 25 students in the classroom for the exercise. Because of the number of students,

some students dominated the discussion while others did their best to hide, and several of the better Legal Studies majors were quite vocal. Overall, the students who spoke up (and some who were called on) were able to demonstrate both familiarity and facility with most of these concepts. A few of the better students were able to pull some of the more difficult concepts from this case. The exercise did not work as well this year as last because of the larger number of students.

Second, I had the students take the ETS Major Field Test in political science. This was a two-hour test that assessed their knowledge of various fields within the discipline, and we are able to compare our students' scores against results from other schools. The results of this test are appended to the end of this report, but the comparative data looks fairly good. Comparatively speaking our students did well overall, and in both the American politics and comparative politics subfields. (Why they did so well in CP when we offer few courses in the subfield is something to ponder.) They also did well in the analytical & critical thinking assessment. With only one course each in political thought and intro to research methodology, the middle-of-the-pack scores in these areas is not much of a surprise. However, the 50th percentile for our scores in the IR subfield is surprising due to the fact this is an area of strength within the department. We will have to watch these scores over the next few years to see how our students do, particularly with the new curriculum.

Analytical Abilities

The analytical skills of the students ranged from excellent to poor. Based on class discussions, the thought papers, and the weekly discussion questions that the students submitted, I would say that of the thirteen students, three were very strong/excellent in their analytical abilities, three were good (but one of these was lazy/erratic and ended up flunking the course), three were moderate or sporadically good, and four were poor. For the three who were very good/excellent, they could easily tease assumptions out of the arguments in the readings, and apply the arguments to new cases. This was quite evident in the thought papers and discussion questions: the weaker students would regurgitate main points of the authors in their discussion questions, and their thought papers merely summarized the main arguments of the authors and posed a couple of questions about them. The better students asked questions that probed the assumptions of the authors or posed new situations in their discussion questions, and their thought papers analyzed the arguments in the readings, criticized and challenged the arguments of the authors, and really grappled with the ideas. The students in the middle typically did more than just recite the arguments of authors, but did not always answer with any depth the good questions that they raised (although sometimes they did).

Research Skills

Students wrote a research paper on a topic of their choice. They were able to write either a traditional research paper or a policy analysis paper. Of the 11 students who actually submitted research papers, six wrote traditional research papers and five wrote policy analysis papers. My objective with these papers, which was conveyed in the instructions to the students for writing

these papers, was to assess their ability to formulate a research question, decide whether their question required a more traditional research design or a policy analysis research design to answer it, locate and discuss relevant existing literature on their question, and then collect data, analyze/assess it, and then write up the results of their research/analysis.

Of the eleven students who wrote research papers, five students demonstrated very strong research skills in terms of formulating a research question, deciding on the appropriate design, reviewing existing literature, gathering appropriate data and analyzing it, and then presenting the results in a clear manner. Three students demonstrated a more intermediate level of skills in these areas, and three demonstrated a poor level of skills (one of these still had trouble identifying independent and dependent variables in his research).

Communication Skills: Written and Oral

In addition to the regular class discussions, in which the students had to formulate their points for oral communication, this course required a formal presentation of the research paper that was scheduled for 5-7 minutes (guidelines for the presentations were provided to all students). Most students took 9-10 minutes. Of the eleven students who presented, five did very good or excellent jobs of presenting their research, which included organizing their thoughts and points for oral presentation and delivering them in a way that was clear and effective. Two other students did a good job, but had some troubles organizing their presentation and in presenting the material in a clear and effective manner. The other four students had greater trouble with the presentation. These troubles typically included omission of required major elements of the presentation, significant problems with the organization of the presentation, and highly problematic delivery of the presentation (getting lost a couple of times in the middle of the presentation, reading from the paper and in a monotone voice, etc.).

With regard to written communication, six of the thirteen students consistently wrote papers that clearly and effectively got their ideas across. They sometimes had a few problems with typos or grammatical errors, but these were not prevalent for these six students. The organization of their papers was generally quite good. For the other students, two submitted papers that were reasonably well-written but had more grammatical, typographical, or similar errors. The ideas of these two students also needed to be fleshed out more and better developed than for the first six. The remaining five students who submitted papers had greater trouble, either with grammatical and typographical errors, or with staying on topic, or with developing their ideas and arguments with any degree of depth. Some of them would occasionally overcome these issues, but too often they did not.

Overall Assessment

The thirteen students in PSCI 499 in Spring 2010 had a good handle on the basic concepts of Political Science and the nine who completed the ETS Major Field Test did reasonably well on it as a group. Since this is the first year that we used this assessment tool, we will have to wait a couple of years for comparative data among our own students. The one area

that appeared to be a weakness is IR, which is an area of strength among our faculty and course offerings. Unfortunately, I did not collect data on which courses the students had taken prior to Spring 2010, and so perhaps they had not taken many IR classes. The analytical abilities of nine of the thirteen students were at least moderate/adequate if not sporadically good, and three students had very good/excellent analytical skills. The research skills of the students as evidenced in the research papers were not bad, with five of the eleven who wrote research papers demonstrating strong research skills. The oral communication skills of the students were generally fine, and the written communication skills of six of the thirteen were quite strong.

Compared to the eight students that I had in PSCI 499 in Spring 2003 and the six students who completed the course in 2009, the group this year was comparable in terms of the range of skills and abilities. With the larger number of students in Spring 2010, there were a couple more at the top of the range and an additional one or two at the bottom of the range (poor/unsatisfactory).

Results from ETS Major Field Test, Spring 2010

Student	Score (Percentile)	AP Subscore	CP Subscore	IR Subscore
1	130 (5%)	25 (1%)	47 (35%)	32 (5%)
2	174 (90%)	78 (95%)	82 (95%)	57 (55%)
3	158 (60%)	61 (70%)	61 (65%)	41 (20%)
4	159 (60%)	57 (60%)	72 (85%)	45 (25%)
5	172 (90%)	70 (90%)	75 (90%)	61 (65%)
6	171 (90%)	68 (85%)	72 (85%)	77 (90%)
7	153 (45%)	59 (65%)	54 (50%)	45 (25%)
8	169 (85%)	76 (95%)	68 (80%)	49 (35%)
9	147 (35%)	40 (20%)	61 (65%)	53 (45%)
Dept Means:	159 (80%)	59 (90%)	66 (95%)	51 (50%)

NB: Two students did not take the test, and two students only took part of the test. Student #9 is a non-traditional student who has come back to complete the degree after a couple of decades away from college. Student #1 is an international student.

Dept Means on Assessment Indicators:

Analytical & Critical Thinking	81 (90%)
Methodology	69 (65%)
Political Thought	48 (45%)

All comparative data is for results from this exam form 2005-2009; data from Spring 2010 was not yet added to the website as of 9/25/10.

Assessment of PSCI 499 Students, Spring 2009

Course Overview

PSCI 499 during Spring 2009 was conducted partly in conjunction with PSCI 496 (the Legal Studies Capstone) and partly separately. We read some common texts at the beginning of the semester (several articles defining democracy, Putnam's work on declining social capital and a critique of his arguments, and a pair of articles on the impact of technology and cyberspace on democracy, followed by Dahl's *How Democratic is the American Constitution?*), and then read Huntington's *The Third Wave* by ourselves. We also read some articles on the political crisis in Thailand as a mini-case study in current events of Huntington's arguments about the troubles with democratic consolidation. In addition, we attended Human Rights Day and the Indiana Court of Appeals visit, and we engaged in a service activity. We also spent a week on professional development, which included a presentation by Kent Waggoner on writing resumes and attending the Networking and Etiquette Workshop.

Requirements for the course included the following:
- Writing a 12-15 page research proposal
- An oral presentation of the proposed research
- One 4-5 page "thought paper" on the Dahl book and two on Huntington
- Weekly submission of 2-3 discussion questions based on the readings
- Two summary-reaction-connection papers relating to Human Rights Day and the service project
- A resume

Eight students started this course in January, but only six completed it in May. The final grade distribution was: 2 A's, 1 B+, 1 C+, 1 C, 1 D, 1 F, and 1 DF. The D was based less on intellectual and analytical ability than on inability to submit a number of required writing assignments.

Content-based Knowledge

To assess the content knowledge of the students in Political Science, two different instruments were used. The first was a class discussion on the first day that drew on several news stories regarding the Illinois saga of replacing Barak Obama with Roland Burris as U.S. Senator. Students were asked to draw from the readings some of the basic concepts of Political Science and American government/politics, such as power, authority, legitimacy, separation of powers, federalism, the notion of representation in our democracy, partisanship and the role of political parties, and the notions of equality and opportunity. (Students were not told which concepts to draw from the readings, but were told to find the basic concepts, so they had to remember what several of these concepts were.) Overall, most of the students seemed able to

analyze this case in a way that demonstrated both familiarity and facility with most of these concepts. A few of the better students were able to pull some of the more difficult concepts from this case, while weaker students seemed less able to do so.

Second, I used a practice GRE – Political Science exam from several years ago as an objective assessment tool. This exam has 36 questions from across the discipline. The scores on this assessment were: 32, 27, 26, 25, 24, 22, 21, and 20. (When I used this same tool in 2003, the scores were one 29, three in the 21-22 range, two at 18 and 19, and two at 13-14.) In examining the questions that gave students the most trouble (half or more answered incorrectly), five were in the area of political theory, two were in American gov't, and there were one each in the areas of IR, CP, political economy, and analyzing simple tables. There was also a question on political socialization that gave a lot of trouble. I can provide more detailed results to anyone interested.

Because this is an off-the-shelf exam rather than one designed ourselves in light of what we teach (and is rather short), I take these results with a grain of salt. A decade ago, a few department members developed a 100-question objective test, and I believe Linda has used this as an assessment tool when she has taught PSCI 499. I have refrained from using this exam because it primarily covers American gov't and public law, and thus does not adequately cover IR and Comparative. ***We need to come up with a better assessment tool that we can use consistently in PSCI 499.*** I see two possible options. The first is to use the departmental exam that has already been developed and modify it to include questions drawn from all of our required courses. The second is to use an off-the-shelf exam, such as the political science major field exam offered by ETS at a cost of $25 per student. While such an exam would ask questions on a broader range of topics than we cover in our major (e.g., questions on IPE), it would have the benefit of comparing the results of our students to those at over 100 institutions across the country. I don't care which option we choose, but I think we need to fix this component in our assessment.

Analytical Abilities

The analytical skills of the students ranged from excellent to poor. Based on class discussions, the thought papers, and the weekly discussion questions that the students submitted, I would say that of the seven students who received grades for the course, two were very strong/excellent in their analytical abilities, one was good, three were moderate or sporadically good, and one was poor. For the two who were very good/excellent, they could easily tease assumptions out of the arguments in the readings, and apply the arguments to new cases. This was quite evident in the thought papers and discussion questions: the weaker students would regurgitate main points of the authors in their discussion questions, and their thought papers merely summarized the main arguments of the authors and posed a couple of questions about them. The better students asked questions that probed the assumptions of the authors or posed new situations in their discussion questions, and their thought papers analyzed the arguments in the readings, criticized and challenged the arguments of the authors, and really grappled with the ideas.

Research Skills

As noted, I required a research proposal paper rather than a complete research paper. This has been standard practice over the past few years in this course. My objective with these papers, which was conveyed in the instructions to the students for writing these papers, was to assess their ability to formulate a research question, develop a tentative hypothesis answering that question, critically review and discuss some scholarly works that relate to their topic and situate their own project within the existing literature, and then to discuss the design of the research to answer their question. It should be noted that four of the six students who wrote the research proposal papers did not take PSCI 245 until the prior semester (i.e., Fall 2008).

In terms of presenting a research question and a clear tentative answer/hypothesis, two students did an excellent job of this, two did a good job but had some minor clarity issues, and two did not do an adequate job of this (one had PSCI 245 in Fall 2008, the other had taken it earlier). In terms of discussing and critically reviewing the existing literature on their topic to contextualize their own project, three did an excellent job of this, one made a half-hearted effort and used only two scholarly sources, one merely gave some historical background lacking real scholarly argument, and one massively plagiarized from a couple of scholarly sources off the Internet.

In terms of laying out analytical questions to guide their research, operationalizing their independent and dependent variables, and describing a credible research design, again the results were mixed. Several of the students (three or four) discussed data sources before they had adequately addressed operationalization of their variables. Four of the six presented good and appropriate research designs for their project, and another student demonstrated a good sense of research design but the design presented was for a related but different research question than the one posed. The other student had trouble with designing an appropriate research strategy. Only two of the six did a good job clearly specifying and operationalizing their variables, although two others were close.

Because four of the six took PSCI 245 the semester prior to the Senior Seminar, they did not have adequate practice writing research papers and designing research projects in other 400-level courses. *The Department should move to a curriculum model that strongly encourages students to take PSCI 245 no later than the fall of their junior year*. This will allow them time to use these research skills in other 400-level courses prior to this final assessment.

Communication Skills: Written and Oral

In addition to the regular class discussions, in which the students had to formulate their points for oral communication, this course required a formal presentation of the research proposal that was scheduled for 7-8 minutes. The closest any student came was 10 minutes. Of the six students who presented, three did very good or excellent jobs of presenting their proposals, which included organizing their thoughts and points for oral presentation and delivering them in a way that was clear and effective. Two other students did a good job, but had some troubles organizing their presentation and in presenting the material in a clear and

effective manner. The sixth student had significant trouble with the presentation: it was rambling and not well organized, the oral delivery of the information was flawed but continual dropping off in voice at the end of sentences so that the audience could not hear what was being said, and the student got lost in the process of delivering the presentation on one occasion.

With regard to written communication, three of the students consistently wrote papers that clearly and effectively got their ideas across. They sometimes had a few problems with typos or grammatical errors, but these were not prevalent for these three students. The organization of their papers was generally quite good. For the other students, one submitted papers that were reasonably well-written but had more grammatical, typographical, or similar errors. The ideas of this student also needed to be fleshed out more and better developed than for the first three. The remaining three students who submitted papers had greater trouble, either with grammatical and typographical errors, or with staying on topic, or with developing their ideas and arguments with any degree of depth.

Overall Assessment

The seven students who completed PSCI 499 (or at least received final grades for the course) in Spring 2009 had a good handle on the basic concepts of Political Science and did significantly better as a group on the concepts exam than their counterparts in Spring 2003. The analytical abilities of all but one of the seven students were at least moderate/adequate if not sporadically good, and two students had very good/excellent analytical skills. The research skills of the students as evidenced in the research proposal papers was not as strong as I had hoped, and perhaps they need more practice with these skills. The oral communication skills of the students was generally fine, and the written communication skills of four of the seven was fine.

Compared to the eight students that I had in PSCI 499 in Spring 2003, the group this year was comparable in terms of the range of skills and abilities, with a similar two or three at the top of the range and only one or two at the bottom of the range (poor/unsatisfactory).

Political Science Graduate Exit Interview: Results, May 2009

These are the collection of answers from six Poli Sci seniors who graduated in either May or August 2009. Interviews were conducted as a discussion in a small group format; did not cover every question with every group since answers were sometimes covered in response to other questions.

1) What are your thoughts on the strengths of the Political Science Dept and major?

• Advising: good advisors, flexible to changes, willing to chat with students and give advice beyond courses
• Department faculty: breadth of their expertise; depth of their individual expertise (really know their stuff); and are helpful, encouraging, and engaging with the students
• Small size of the program: allows students to be familiar with other students as well as the faculty, and allows students the opportunity to become a big fish in a small pond
• Movement through the program essentially as a cohort: simulates the Learning Community experience, which is good for transfer students who didn't start with the Learning Community
• Seeing professors for more than one course, which allows students and faculty to get to know each other

2) What are your thoughts on the weaknesses of the Dept and major?

• Do a better job of exposing first year and sophomore students to all of the faculty and course areas, even if only in a meeting
• Talk up graduate school earlier in career, not just in Senior Seminar
• Need for better structure to the major in terms of course sequencing; provide a pamphlet recommending sequencing of Poli Sci major, and one on course sequencing for combining Poli Sci and Legal Studies majors
• 300 and 400 level courses don't do enough in terms of emphasizing the *development* of research and research skills; research skills introduced in PSCI 245, but need further development and reinforcement in 300 and 400 level courses
• Provide more essay-based exams, and fewer multiple choice-based exams
• Provide more course work on public policy
• Provide courses on more advanced analytical techniques to follow up on what is introduced in PSCI 245 [NB: this sentiment was balanced by another which felt that PSCI 245 would involve too much math, leading them to turn towards Legal Studies]
• Courses were not always challenging enough: didn't always feel a need to study; tests and assignments also not always challenging
• Between the first-year Learning Community and the senior seminar, there needs to be more opportunities for critical analysis and for discussion among students of issues and material, and less lecture (admittedly, students don't always participate in the discussions, which can be problematic)

3) What did you enjoy the most?

   • The faculty (see #1 for reasons)
   • Internships: able to get academic credit as well as important experience
   • Program was challenging
   • Program provided the ability to reflect on own politics and views of government, especially at the upper levels

4) What did you enjoy the least?

   • Not directly addressed – can glean from answers to other questions

5) Do you feel that you were adequately exposed to the broad range of the discipline, including American gov't (including law and PA), IR, CP, and Theory?

   • Yes (majority answer)
   • Would prefer more American politics, less IR and CP (although recognize the need to broaden their horizons)

6) Experiential Learning: Did you do an internship? Did you assist any faculty in research? Do you feel there were adequate opportunities for internships or research assistance? Do you feel there was adequate support for these opportunities?

   • Two of the six had no experiential learning because they worked full time and/or started major late and needed to complete required courses
   • Three had internships, and one did study abroad
   • None had research assistance experience, although interest in doing this and would like more info about how to become involved in this
   • Do better job pushing information on internship opportunities beyond State House Internships (mass e-mailings, professors talking up in class), better advertising of opportunities that are available
   • Do better job of linking importance of internships to grad school and careers, especially how internships can be a way to get your career started while still in school
   • Provide a pamphlet listing internship opportunities and students who have availed themselves of each opportunity

7) What are your thoughts on advising? Were you given adequate advice on courses to take to finish the major? Were you given adequate advice to help you prepare for possible careers?

   • Students with McDowell felt they did not get much advising, did academic planning on their own

• Students with Maule and Van Sickel felt they received good advising, felt their advisor was accessible and helpful, willing to chat with students and give advice beyond courses
• Advisors should push students to fulfill their Gen Ed requirements during their first and sophomore years, especially the math requirement (despite the resistance of students); don't worry so much about

8) How accessible were the Dept faculty?

   • Accessible
   • Very accessible

9) How many different Poli Sci faculty did you have courses from? 2-3, or 4 or more?

   • All had courses with five or more department faculty members

10) What suggestions do you have for improvement of the major and Dept?

   • Find ways to involve students more in what is going on beyond courses: students want to feel more involved in the Department
   • Emphasize Pi Sigma Alpha and the Pre-Law Society better, especially to younger students so that they will know about these groups and want to join
   • Provide more courses on public policy
   • Provide more courses on advanced analytical techniques
   • Fix the Department web site
   • Provide a Department calendar of events on the Department website
   • Provide a master list of courses and the rotation of courses each semester
   • Provide more courses in public administration, even a major
   • Provide more Honors sections for courses
   • Provide more and better information on internship opportunities and how to take advantage of them
   • Provide clearer sequencing for the major courses
   • Use 300 and 400 level courses to better emphasize the development of research skills
   • Strengthen inclusion of critical analysis and student discussion in 300 and 400 level courses
   • For Legal Studies: provide more opportunities for argumentation and debate; can Poli Sci revive the old COMM 356 Argument and Debate course?

Political Science Graduate Exit Interview, 2010

8 of 12 students responding (course had 13 students, but one was a returnee after 20+ years, and her responses were not reflective of the current program and so were not included here)

1) What are your thoughts on the strengths of the Political Science Dept and major?

• I think the greatest strength of the program is our professors. Many of our profs are open-minded politically, and encourage open participation and debate in class. They are also not afraid to challenge your opinions which helps open the minds of students and creates a more interesting educational atmosphere.

• Professors seem knowledgeable on topic.

• I think that the department is strong when trying to give a wide array of optional courses and being flexible when offering those classes.

• Strong analytical focus (courses and faculty); great analytical writing; Klarner – his statistical knowledge is priceless; good integration with campus events.

• I believe the department has helped its students in a variety of ways and experiences. We strive for hard work and a yearning for knowledge and involvement.

• No answer

• Great professors who have a lot of knowledge.

• Dr. Van Sickel and Dr. Chambers are huge strengths to the department. I really enjoyed my courses they taught. Dr. Klarner's elections class was also great. Legal Studies is by far the strength of the department.

2) What are your thoughts on the weaknesses of the Dept and major?

• I would like to see the possibility of more specialization within the major. I would like to see more emphasis placed on both looking at the operation of state and federal legislatures, essentially the legislative process, as well as more classes on campaigning, campaign work, and elections.

• There is no focus in the major as few of the required courses correlate to each other. It's all a little of this and a little of that. Also considering the small number of required hours, I'd require some sort of internship as other departments do. Practical, and less theory. Chemists can play with chemicals, why can't we play with things?

• I think many of the classes are all lecture based and fail to give hands-on learning or other means of receiving education other than lecture.

• I felt there were too many international courses. Also, there was lots on theory, and less on practical aspects. Need more integration with other PSCI majors (Legal Studies seemed much more cohesive).

• A few faculty members were out-dated, so to speak. They did not change their styles to meet the technological advances that society has offered in education.

• More specific courses are needed, i.e., European politics or Southeast Asian politics. Otherwise, was solid.

• No weaknesses, but it would be better if the students could work in their field.

• Public Administration and Comparative Politics: I barely learned anything from the PA course and various comparative politics courses I've taken.

3) What did you enjoy the most?

• Discussing the issues of the day through a political science lens. It is interesting, for instance, to look at the 2008 presidential election not from a partisan viewpoint but through the eye of a political analyst.

• PSCI 107: The course forced students to address issues that we were unfamiliar with and sometimes uncomfortable with – at least when Dr. Maule taught it.

• I enjoyed PSCI 400 and PSCI 245 the most because they were so different from all the other classes – the various ways of learning helped to keep me from getting bored.

• Classes with discussion and less about lectures (even on days when I didn't contribute much).

• Discussions and formulating opinions on important national and global issues.

• African Politics provided a depth I enjoyed.

• Learning from professional people.

• I enjoyed any course I took with Dr. Van Sickel. Dr. Chambers was also excellent. These courses were stimulating and thought provoking.

4) What did you enjoy the least?

• Public Administration

• Most classes in international relations (I learned little). PSCI 245 also didn't teach me much. My Public Administration course was horrible. I think PSCI 319 also deserves some work.

• I least enjoyed all of the hours of lectures with very little mind stimulation. Talking at me is not going to make me remember anything; discussion and involvement will.

• Got next to nothing out of some classes (Public Administration especially). International was also not great.

• The amount of reading.

• The intro courses are mind-numbing.

• A lot reading and there was no real time to study for other classes.

• Comparative Politics of Europe and Comparative Politics of the Middle East. I was looking forward to these courses greatly but the content and the professor wasn't stimulating and I felt it was a waste of time. Grad student-taught classes like Public Administration.

5) Do you feel that you were adequately exposed to the broad range of the discipline, including American gov't (including law and PA), IR, CP, and Theory?

• Yes

• I was not. Everything was sporadic and nothing came together. A little of this and a little of that… no sustained consistency.

• Yes

• Yes, but I think Theory could use some work (better collection of authors and examples)

• Yes, I believe I received a balanced learning experience on all these topics.

• No, Theory was lacking. Other areas were just introductory and didn't give much context.

• No

• Yes, I got a taste of everything, but it was all separated with no real concentrations. There needs to be several concentrations and outlined specific courses for concentrations.

6) Were there adequate upper-level courses for your interests?
7) If not, what areas were lacking?

• Yes

• No: the topical courses were mostly on law or IR. More on American politics and government would be nice.

• For the most part, yes. At times they were not in the time frames that worked for me though – they overlapped with other requirements.

• Somewhat. Would like more on Congress, parties, policy making.

• Yes, but I wish there were more offered, such as on domestic and local areas of politics.

• No: Virtually everything was lacking, especially theory. More Public Administration would have been valuable.

•No answer

• One – Comparative Politics of the Middle East, but it turned out to be terrible. I would like to see more concentration on the Middle East or other regions.

8) Which courses did you think were the most useful for you, and why?

• State and Local Government, and Campaigns and Elections (however may have been more interesting with another prof). They seemed the most practical for my future career.

• PSCI 107 gave me exposure to different types of thought and challenged me. PSCI 305 was good as well as it fed an interest for state and local politics.

• I would again say PSCI 245 and 400. The hands on approach made me feel so much better prepared for being able to go into future research work.

• Research: beneficial for grad school. Am Gov't: great overview. Campaigns: good tie to Am Gov't.

• PSCI 319: learned about important and relevant political theory. PSCI 400 (Topics in Legal Profession): enjoyed job shadowing. PSCI 464, American Foreign Policy.

• Political Theory and African Politics: These courses allowed for normative questions to be asked.

• International Relations and International Law

• The Poli Sci Capstone (499) was a great challenge to prepare me to use my major. Legal Studies courses like Civil Liberties and Civil Rights was also great to see an inside look at the rights we have.

9) Experiential Learning: Did you do an internship? Did you assist any faculty in research? Do you feel there were adequate opportunities for internships or research assistance? Do you feel there was adequate support for these opportunities?

• I did an internship with the Indiana Republican Party in 2008. There were adequate opportunities.

• I did an internship with SGA. I do not feel there were adequate opportunities and would like to see it as a requirement.

• I did do job shadowing through the department and interned before switching my major. I think the opportunities were there, just maybe not advertised enough.

• I wish we had better advertised opportunities for research. I really wanted to do work with someone doing statistical research or policy analysis, but I understand the limitations possible. For me personally, research with a faculty member would have been invaluable. I share part of the blame for not seeking it out better.

• I did a job shadow experience and learned more by doing that then reading any book.

• I should have taken more advantage of these options, but they seemed lacking. But research opportunities were especially lacking.

• No

• I didn't really do any of these nor was I approached or knew about very many. The few I did know about were highly competitive or a huge investment of time. There needs to be more support for this.

10) What are your thoughts on advising? Were you given adequate advice on courses to take to finish the major? Were you given adequate advice to help you prepare for possible careers?

• Yes

• Yes, my advising was fine

• I think advising was fabulous! Especially compared to my last major. I was always listened to and never judged and I was always given critical feedback. I have been to three different advisors – McDowell, Van Sickel, and Chambers, and not one complaint.

• Honestly, I was never advised what classes I should specifically take, but I think my path was unique (no law school or PSCI master's program). It was difficult to find someone to figure out what I should be doing for grad school. I did enjoy my advisor, however!

• Advising was fine, but must let students know their options to choose on own.

• Advising was scant, and difficult to come by. Should have had profs inserting themselves more.

• I was helped by my advisor a lot.

• Yes, my advisement was great with Dr. Van Sickel. He really took an interest in my future.

11) How accessible were the Dept faculty?

• Very accessible

• When I needed them, they were there.

• For the most part all faculty have been kind and available

• No problems

• The department faculty were very accessible and helped in any way possible.

• Varied with each prof. Some didn't seem entirely interested in time outside of class.

• They all were very kind and helpful

• Always available if I needed them.

12) How many different Poli Sci faculty did you have courses from? 2-3, or 4 or more?

• Four or more (5 or so?)

• Nine

• Five or more

• Maule, Van Sickel, Klarner

• Over four

• Five

• More than four

• More than four: Klarner, Van Sickel, Chambers, Erisman, Perry, and two horrid grad students.

13) What suggestions do you have for improvement of the major and Dept?

• More encouragement for experiential learning, and more focus on the practice of politics. Perhaps require an internship.

• A more defined and narrowed purpose would be great. Also, please institute some practical experience. Internship would be great and should be required, or some form of independent study.

• Learn student names. It is the biggest sign of respect. If you call me the wrong name don't expect me to respect you.

• We need a required internship or research opportunity to combine the theoretical with the practical. It could help us with a path for the future (campaigns, government, law school, grad school, etc.).

• Set up specific areas of study like Legal Studies: PSCI – IR major? PSCI – American Politics major?

• More courses. We need more internships or practicums!

• No answer

• The grad students teaching courses I took were large detractors as they were both terrible courses. There needs to be more of a focus on international studies.

Curriculum Map, Political Science Major Program

The Political Science Department is in the process of mapping our student learning outcomes onto the revised major curriculum (which went into effect Fall 2010). Below is an example of how we are engaging in this activity; this is a draft of our mapping the Effective Written Communication outcome. We hope to complete the mapping of our student learning outcomes onto the curriculum by May 2011.

****

PSCI Student Learning Outcomes: Effective Written Communication

Assumptions:

• We desire our PSCI majors to be able to effectively communicate in writing on political ideas and issues.
• We are focused on students being able to clearly communicate their ideas in shorter essays and longer research papers and policy analysis papers. Thus, we are building on the composition and communication objectives of the Foundational Studies Program rather than duplicate them.
• We must work on writing in a developmental fashion. This means that we develop writing from lower-level courses to upper-level courses, and within a course by giving students feedback on drafts that can then be revised and improved.
• At all levels of courses, faculty will distribute to students guidelines on how they want students to structure and write the essays and/or papers assigned in the course.

Potential Mapping of Outcome onto Curriculum:

PSCI 201

> This is typically the first course in the major that students take, and thus should lay the groundwork. Course should require 2-3 shorter essay writing assignments (c. 3-5 pages); these could be in the form of persuasive/argument essays on exams or short papers. Students are provided appropriate guidelines for writing these essays, and are given a chance to make revisions after comments and feedback (need not happen on all of the assignments, but at least one).

PSCI 270 and 280

> These courses should also be taken early in the students' time in the major. Writing assignments in these courses would follow those of PSCI 201.

PSCI 245

As the course in which students are introduced to research methods, students should learn how to write research papers (and perhaps policy analysis papers). Students will be instructed on the structure of such papers, the style, etc. Students should be given a chance to make revisions after feedback from instructor in order to improve their writing of these types of papers.

PSCI 319

Students are required to expand the length of their essays, writing an 8-10 page paper. Additional writing assignments of shorter lengths.

300-Level PSCI Courses

Students are required to write 2-4 assignments, with papers being in the 5-10 page range. On at least some of these assignments, students should be provided a chance to revise their work after receiving comments and feedback from the instructor.

400-Level PSCI Courses

Student should hone their research paper writing skills, with a research paper of c. 20 pages required in these courses.

PSCI 499

Students' writing skills are assessed in this course. Students write a 20-25 page research paper that is used to assess their research skills as well as their writing. Students are also required to write 1 or 2 shorter (5-10 pages) papers that are also used to assess the students' written communication abilities.

Political Science
Courses and Activities Mapped to BA/BS in Political Science Outcome Set

Outcome	Description
1. Oral Communication	Effective oral communication of ideas and views on political issues.
2. Effective Written Communication	Effective written communication of ideas and views on political issues, both in shorter essays and longer research or policy analysis papers.
3. Critical Thinking and Analysis	
4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills	
5. Political Science Content Knowledge	

Column headings:

- **1.1: Engage in civil discussions** — Effectively engage in disciplinarily informed civil discussions on complex, contentious topics
- **1.2: Effective oral presentations** — Students will be able to deliver effective oral presentations either individually or as part of a group.
- **2.1: Persuasive essay** — Students learn to write a persuasive essay supported by relevant evidence, including a clear argument, logical flow of the argument, good organizational structure, and comprehension of primary documents or data.
- **2.2: Papers** — Students will write papers with minimal grammatical and typographical errors.
- **2.3: Appropriate citation methods for papers** — Students will learn appropriate citation methods for papers in Political Science
- **2.4: Different styles of papers in Political Science** — Students will develop a facility with different styles of papers in Political Science, including but not limited to analytical, persuasive, and research papers.
- **3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives** — Comparing and contrasting different perspectives on politics and policy issues
- **3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies** — Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies or political practices/behaviors
- **3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works** — Drawing connections between scholarly works addressing different facets of political issues
- **3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations** — Applying theory from scholarly books/articles to current political events and situations
- **3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events** — Identifying appropriate social science methods to analyze specific political issues or events
- **4.1: understand the importance of theory in guiding research** — Students will understand the importance of theory in guiding research by developing well-thought-out explanations of expected findings.
- **4.2: Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.** — Students will be introduced to a variety of ways of analyzing information, including case study, statistical analysis, and qualitative analysis. Students will also be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects.
- **4.3: Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research** — Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research (e.g., independent and dependent variables, unit of analysis, hypothesis) and be able to use these terms appropriately
- **4.4: Students will understand the importance of prior research** — Students will understand the importance of prior research for informing their own project, and will demonstrate an understanding of existing Political Science literature relevant to their research projects.
- **4.5: Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings** — Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings in tables, text, or other appropriate formats. The presentation of the research should be understandable to non-specialists.
- **5.1 American political system** — Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the American political system
- **5.2 Comparative politics** — Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the political systems of other countries and be able to compare them
- **5.3 International politics** — Demonstrate an understanding of the institutions and processes of politics in the international political system
- **5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science** — Demonstrate an understanding of classic and contemporary intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science

Courses and Learning Activities

Course	1.1	1.2	2.1	2.2	2.3	2.4	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	5.1	5.2	5.3	5.4
PSCI 105 Issues of Our Times																				
PSCI 107 Leadership, Ethics, and Democracy	I																			
PSCI 130 Introduction to Political Science																				
PSCI 199 Honors Summer Seminar for High School Students	I		I	I	I															
PSCI 201 Introduction to American Politics	P I		P	P	P	P	P I	P I	P	P	P I						P			P
PSCI 211 Legal Research																				
PSCI 245 Political Inquiry	P I	P	P	P	P	P	P	P I	P I	P I	P I	P I	P I	P I	P I	P				
PSCI 271 Introduction to International Relations		P	P	P	P	P	P I	P I	P I	P I	P							P I	P I	P
PSCI 280 Introduction to Comparative Politics	P	P	P	P	P	P I	P I	P I	P I	P I	P I	P I	P I	P I	P I		P I	P I	P	
PSCI 305 State and Local Government							P	P	P	P	P						P			
PSCI 308 The Judicial Process							P	P	P	P	P						P			
PSCI 315 Working in Politics																				
PSCI 317 American Constitutional Law I: An Introduction							P	P	P	P	P						P			

Handwritten annotations in margin: "N.A. for 5.2 + 5.3", "N.A. for 5.1", "N.A. for 5.1"

Political Science Curriculum Map

Course	1. Oral Communication		2. Effective Written Communication				3. Critical Thinking and Analysis					4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills					5. Political Science Content Knowledge				Notes
	1.1: Engage in civil discussions	1.2: Effective oral presentations	2.1: Persuasive essay	2.2: Papers	2.3: Appropriate citation methods for papers	2.4: Different styles of papers in Political Science	3.1: Comparing and contrasting different perspectives	3.2: Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies	3.3: Drawing connections between scholarly works	3.4: Applying theory to current political events and situations	3.5: Analyze specific political issues or events	4.1	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.5	5.1 American political system	5.2 Comparative politics	5.3 International politics	5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories	
PSCI 319 Survey of Political Thought	P	P	P	P	P	P	P/I	P/I	P/I	P/I	P/I							P/I	I	P/I	N.A. for 5.1 + 5.3; N.A. for 5.2
PSCI 330 Introduction to Public Administration							P	P	P	P	P						P				
PSCI 360 American Foreign Policy							P	P	P	P	P						P		P	P	
PSCI 372 Conflict and Cooperation in International Politics							P	P	P	P	P						P	P	P	P	
PSCI 400							P	P	P	P	P	R	R	R	R	R					
PSCI 400A-L Topics in American Government and Politics							P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			P	
PSCI 404 Indiana Politics																	P			P	
PSCI 409 The United States Congress							P	P	P	P	P						P			P	
PSCI 410 Campaigns and Elections							P	P	P	P	P						P			P	
PSCI 414 The American Presidency							P	P	P	P	P	R	R	R	R	R	P			P	
PSCI 418 American Constitutional Law II: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties							P	P	P	P	P						P			P	
PSCI 419 Law and American Society							P	P	P	P	P	R	R	R	R	R	P			P	
PSCI 421 Topics in Legal Studies																	P			P	
PSCI 425 Policy Implications of Genomic Science							P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			P	
PSCI 464 Contested Issues in Political Science																					
PSCI 465 United Stated Diplomacy							P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			P	
PSCI 470 Topics in International Politics																					
PSCI 471																					

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Curriculum Map — Political Science

Course	1. Oral Communication		2. Effective Written Communication				3. Critical Thinking and Analysis					4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills					5. Political Science Content Knowledge			
	1.1 Engage in civil discussions	1.2 Effective oral presentations	2.1 Persuasive essay	2.2 Papers	2.3 Appropriate citation methods for papers	2.4 Different styles of papers in Political Science	3.1 Comparing and contrasting different perspectives	3.2 Identifying the strengths/weaknesses of policies	3.3 Drawing connections between scholarly works	3.4 Applying theory to current political events and situations	3.5 Analyze specific political issues or events	4.1 understand the importance of theory in guiding research	4.2 Students will be expected to apply an appropriate methodology to their research projects	4.3 Students will understand the basic terms associated with empirical research	4.4 Students will understand the importance of prior research	4.5 Students will understand the importance of organizing and presenting their research findings	5.1 American political system	5.2 Comparative politics	5.3 International politics	5.4 Intellectual frameworks, concepts, and theories in political science
The United Nations and World Order	P																			P
PSCI 473 International Law							P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			R	R
PSCI 476 Politics of Globalization							P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	R	R	R	R
PSCI 479 The Rise of China							P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P
PSCI 480 Topics in Comparative Politics							P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P		P
PSCI 483 Politics in Latin America							P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P
PSCI 488 African Politics							P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P
PSCI 490 Politics in the Middle Ease							P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P		P	P	P
PSCI 495 Internship in Political Science																				
PSCI 496 Capstone Course in Legal Studies																				
PSCI 497 Field Work in Political Science																				
PSCI 498 Readings in Political Science																				
PSCI 499 Senior Seminar in Political Science	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R	R

Legend: I Introduced   P Practiced   R Reinforced

Last Modified: 11/12/2014 04:21:31 PM EST

Handwritten note (right margin): 5.1 + NA for 5.2

Handwritten note (bottom left): P and R occur in many 400-level courses

Handwritten note (bottom): P + R occur in many 300- and 400-level courses, but not necessarily all of them — or different aspects/objectives in different courses (eg: Research papers in 400-level courses)

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Communication of Outcomes Statement

Currently, the Political Science Department only communicates our student learning outcomes to university offices that specifically request this information from us. It is our hope to have this information posted onto our website in the near future.

Assessment Plan for 2010-2011, Political Science Major Curriculum

With the completion of the revisions to our Political Science major curriculum in Fall 2009 and their approval during the 2009-2010 academic year, the department is now in the process of mapping our student learning outcomes onto the new curriculum. As we complete that task, we will create a new assessment plan. We hope to have that plan in place by Spring 2011.

If we are unable to meet that target, then we will continue with the assessment plan that we have used for the past few years, which is to assess the students in our senior seminar (PSCI 499) in terms of their content-based knowledge, their analytical abilities, their research skills, and their written and oral communication skills. In addition, we will continue to administer our Annual Student Assessment Survey, and some version of our Exit Interview (this past year it was in written form, but in 2009 it was done through oral interviews in small group sessions which were then summarized).

Assessment Summary

My vocabulary and use of language has been enhanced through my study of Pol Sci.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
strongly agree: 14		strongly agree: 15		strongly agree: 7	strongly agree: 3
agree: 10		agree: 9		agree: 9	agree: 2
slightly agree: 2				slightly agree: 3	

I experienced diverse subject matter and wide array of thoughts about important political/ social issues.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
strongly agree: 17		strongly agree: 16		strongly agree: 8	strongly agree: 3
agree: 7		agree: 8		agree: 9	agree: 1
slightly agree: 2				slightly agree: 1	slightly agree:1
				disagree: 1	

I can easily read arguments in Political Science based on empirical findings.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
strongly agree: 7		strongly agree: 8		strongly agree: 6	strongly agree: 5
agree: 12		agree: 12		agree: 11	
slightly agree: 7		slightly agree: 4		slightly agree: 2	

I can easily read legal arguments based upon my understanding of judicial opinions.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
		strongly agree: 5		strongly agree: 5	strongly agree: 1
		agree: 11		agree: 10	agree: 2
		slightly agree: 7		slightly agree: 2	slightly agree: 1
		slightly disagree: 1		n/a: 2	n/a: 1

Professors sometimes used class to debate important normative topics.
Those debates made me think more deeply about good policy and good government.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
strongly agree: 17		strongly agree: 15		strongly agree: 5	strongly agree: 4
agree: 8		agree: 7		agree: 8	slightly agree: 1
slightly agree: 1		slightly agree: 2		slightly agree: 4	
				disagree: 1	

strongly disagree: 1

My knowledge of political process is much better than before I began my studies.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
strongly agree: 16		strongly agree: 18		strongly agree: 9	strongly agree: 5
agree: 9		agree: 5		agree: 4	
slightly agree: 1		slightly agree: 1		slightly agree: 4	
				slightly disagree: 1	
				no response: 1	

My knowledge of American Legal System/Judicial Process is much better than before I began my studies.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
		strongly agree: 18		strongly agree: 6	strongly agree: 3
		agree: 5		agree: 7	agree: 2
		slightly agree: 1		slightly agree: 2	
				n/a: 3	
				no response: 1	

My knowledge of international relations is much better than before I began my studies.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
		strongly agree: 14		strongly agree: 4	strongly agree: 4
		agree: 4		agree: 7	agree: 1
		slightly agree:5		slightly agree: 5	
		disagree: 1		strongly disagree: 2	
				no response: 1	

My knowledge of politics in countries other than the US is much better than before I began my studies.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
		strongly agree: 14		strongly agree: 7	strongly agree: 4
		agree: 6		agree: 7	agree: 1
		slightly agree: 4		slightly agree: 4	
				no response: 1	

I have become more adept/proficient as a writer because of my training in Pol Science/Legal Studies.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
strongly agree: 14		strongly agree: 10		strongly agree: 7	strongly agree: 5

agree: 9
slightly agree: 3

agree: 10
slightly agree: 3
slightly disagree: 1

agree: 7
slightly agree: 2
slightly disagree: 1
strongly disagree: 1
no response: 1

I have become more proficient at writing essays on political/ policy issues because of training in Pol Sci.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
		strongly agree: 12		strongly agree: 10	strongly agree: 4
		agree: 8		agree: 7	agree: 1
		slightly agree 3		slightly agree: 1	
		slightly disagree: 1		no response: 1	

I have become more proficient at constructing a research proposal/design because of my training in Pol Sci.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
		strongly agree: 13		strongly agree: 7	strongly agree: 2
		agree: 6		agree: 8	agree: 1
		slightly agree: 3		slightly agree: 2	slightly agree: 2
		slightly disagree: 1		n/a: 1	
		n/a: 1		no response: 1	

I have become more proficient in briefing judicial opinions/cases because of my training in Legal Studies.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
		strongly agree: 11		strongly agree: 8	strongly agree: 2
		agree: 6		agree: 6	agree: 1
		slightly agree: 2		slightly agree: 3	slightly agree: 2
		slightly disagree: 2		n/a: 1	
		disagree: 1		no response: 1	
		n/a: 3			

I have become more proficient at writing a judicial opinion/appellate brief because of training in Legal Studies.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
		strongly agree: 10		strongly agree: 4	strongly agree: 1
		agree: 2		agree: 7	slightly agree: 2
		slightly agree: 6		slightly agree: 3	n/a: 2

disagree: 1				strongly disagree: 1	
n/a: 5				n/a: 3	
				no response: 1	

I am capable of recognizing various kinds of political arguments and analysis.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
strongly agree: 10		strongly agree: 11		strongly agree: 7	strongly agree: 4
agree: 12		agree: 10		agree: 5	agree: 1
slightly agree: 4		slightly agree: 3		slightly agree: 1	
				slightly disagree: 1	
				strongly disagree: 1	
				n/a: 3	
				no response: 1	

I am capable of recognizing various kinds of legal arguments and analysis.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
		strongly agree : 11		strongly agree: 5	strongly agree: 2
		agree: 8		agree: 6	agree: 1
		slightly agree: 1		slightly disagree: 1	slightly agree: 1
		slightly disagree: 1		strongly disagree: 2	n/a: 1
		n/a: 3		n/a: 4	
				no response: 1	

I did not experience hostile learning environments caused by my Political Science professors.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
strongly agree: 15		strongly agree: 15		strongly agree: 9	strongly agree: 5
agree: 8		agree: 6		agree: 6	
slightly disagree: 2		slightly agree: 2		slightly agree: 1	
disagree: 1		disagree: 1		slightly disagree: 1	
				strongly disagree: 1	
				no response: 1	

I did not experience hostile learning environment caused by other students in my Political Science classes.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
strongly agree: 12		strongly agree: 15		strongly agree: 7	strongly agree: 1

agree: 12	agree: 7	agree: 9	agree: 2
slightly agree: 2	slightly agree: 2	slightly disagree: 1	slightly agree: 2
		strongly disagree: 1	
		no response: 1	

My PS professors worked to establish and preserve learning environments suitable to course objectives
and conducive to learning, participation, and achievement.

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
strongly agree: 17		strongly agree: 15		strongly agree: 3	
Agree: 6		agree: 9		agree: 13	strongly agree: 2
slightly agree: 2				slightly agree: 2	agree: 3
slightly disagree: 1				no response: 1	

In which area did you concentrate your study?

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
general: 5		general: 5		general: 5	general: 3
IR/CP: 4		IR/CP: 6		IR/CP: 2	IR/CP: 2
Public Ad: 0		Public Ad: 0		Public Ad: 1	
Amer/Pub Pol: 1		American: Pub Pol: 2		American/Pub Pol: 2	
Legal Studies: 16		Legal Studies: 11		Legal Studies: 8	
		(one person chose 3)		no response: 1	

Did you double major?

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
		yes: 11		yes: 6	yes: 1
		no: 13		no: 12	no: 4
				no response: 1	

Did you enroll in a minor?

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
		yes: 10		yes: 12	yes: 3
		no: 14		no: 6	no: 2
				no response: 1	

How many years did you study Political Science/Legal Studies at ISU?

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
1 yr: 1		1 yr: 0		1 yr: 0	1 yr: 0
2 yr: 4		2 yr: 2		2 yr: 3	2 yr: 2
3 yr: 8		3 yr: 14		3 yr: 5	3 yr: 1
4 yr: 9		4 yr: 5		4 yr: 8	4 yr: 1
5 yr: 2		5 yr: 3		5 yr: 2	5 yr: 0
6 yr: 1		more than 5: 0		more than 5: 0	more than 5: 1
				no response: 1	

Did you have an internship while at ISU?

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
yes: 6		yes: 6		yes: 2	yes: 0
no: 20		no: 18		no: 16	no: 5

Did you participate in the Study Abroad program while at ISU?

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
		yes: 0		yes: 2	yes: 1
		no: 24		no: 16	no: 4

Were you involved in a service learning project while at ISU?

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
yes: 4		yes: 4		yes: 5	yes: 4
no: 21		no: 20		no: 13	no: 1
no response: 1				no response: 1	

Did you participate in faculty directed research while at ISU?

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
yes: 6		yes: 4		yes: 2	yes: 0
no: 19		no: 20		no: 16	no: 5
no response: 1				no response: 1	

Did you present a research paper at local, regional, or national conference while at ISU?

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
yes: 3		yes: 2		yes: 1	yes: 0
no: 22		no: 22		no: 17	no: 5

no response: 1   no response: 1

Did you participate in a experiential learning exercise or curricular experience while at ISU?

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
yes: 6		yes: 5		yes: 5	yes: 1
no: 19		no: 19		no: 13	no: 4
no response: 1				no response: 1	

What will be your GPA at graduation?   What is your current cumulative GPA?

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
3.5 -4.0: 8		3.5-4.0: 6		3.5-4.0: 3	3.5-4.0: 2
3.0 -3.49: 6		3.0-3.49: 10		3.0-3.49: 7	3.0-3.49: 0
2.5-2.99: 9		2.5-2.99: 6		2.5-2.99: 5	2.5-2.99: 2
2.00-2.49: 2		2.00-2.49: 1		2.00-2.49: 3	2.0-2.49: 0
less than 2.0: 0		less than 2.0: 0		less than 2.0: 0	Less than 2.0: 1
no response: 1		no response: 1		no response: 1	

What is your GPA in Political Science?

2004	2005	2006	20007	2008	2009
		3.5-4.0: 9		3.5-4.0: 4	3.5-4.0: 2
		3.00-3.49: 9		3.00-3.49: 8	3.0-3.49: 1
		2.50-2.99: 5		2.50-2.99: 3	2.5-2.99: 1
		2.00-2.49: 0		2.00-2.49: 3	2.0-2.49: 0
		less than 2.0: 0		less than 2.0: 0	Less than 2.0: 0
		no response: 1		no response: 1	

What degree of effort did you put toward matriculating through the Political Science/Legal Studies program?

high degree of effort: 12	high degree of effort: 7	high degree of effort: 6	2009
above average: 11	above average: 11	above average: 8	high degree of effort: 0
average: 3	average: 5	average: 3	above average: 1
below average: 0	below average: 0	below average: 1	average: 3
no effort: 0	no effort: 0	no effort: 0	below average: 1
		no response: 1	no effort: 0

On average, how many hours per week did you work at a job during your experience at ISU?

2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
didn't work: 1		didn't work: 3		didn't work: 1	didn't work: 0
0-19 hrs: 8		1-10 hrs: 5		1-10 hrs: 2	1-10 hrs: 0
20-29 hrs: 9		11-20 hrs: 8		11-20 hrs: 7	11-20 hrs: 3
30-39 hrs: 7		30-39 hrs: 5		30-39 hrs: 6	30-29 hrs: 1
40+ hrs: 0		40+ hrs: 2		40+ hrs: 2	40+hrs: 1
40 or more hrs: 0		no response: 1		no response: 1	
no response: 1					

Did you take at least one Practice LSAT?

2004	2005	2006		2008	2009
		yes: 14		yes: 11	yes: 1
		no: 8		no: 7	no: 2
					n/a: 2

Did you take the LSAT?

2004	2005	2006		2008	2009
		yes: 2:		yes: 1	yes: 0
		no, I'm a junior: 10		no, I'm a junior: 8	no, I'm a junior: 0
		n/a: 12		n/a: 9	n/a: 5

Did you take the GRE?

2004	2005	2006		2008	2009
		yes: 1		yes: 0	yes: 1
		no, I'm a junior: 10		no, I'm a junior: 6	no, I'm a junior: 1
		n/a: 13		n/a: 12	n/a: 3

Have you been accepted into a Law School or Graduate Program?

2004	2005	2006		2008	2009
		yes: 2		yes: 0	yes: 1
		applied, not accepted yet: 1		applied, not accepted yet: 3	applied, not accepted y
		no, I'm a junior: 9		no, I'm a junior: 6	no, I'm a junior: 0
		n/a: 12		n/a: 9	n/a: 4

Have you secured future employment?

2004	2005	2006	2008	2009
		yes: 7	yes: 2	yes: 0
		applying, but not yet hired: 4	applying, but not yet hired: 5	applying, but not yet hi
		no, I'm a junior: 6	no, I'm a junior, 3	no, I'm a junior: 0
		n/a: 7	n/a: 8	n/a: 3

How would you shape the department's culture, curriculum, and commitment to the well being of its students?

2006

*better advising
*more elective classes
*make other areas required of political science; Asian is weak and Slavic is nonexistent
*cover classes that deal with the Cold War era
*revise the advising program
*have more interaction/cross courses with political science and legal studies
*provide more of a variety of classes
*more classes geared towards domestic policy and political philosophy
*academic advising needs improvement
*encourage grad students to teach lower level poli sci classes to free up room for professors to teach more upper level courses
*do mock trials
*more classes need to be available every semester
*focus more on court procedure/laws/mock trials
*more courses in the legal studies program/more classes are needed for students to fully grasp information
*professors needs to enjoy teaching and be more helpful to students rather than so wrapped up in their research

2008

*more array of classes/more variety
*more legal writings/research
*add diversity to stuff
*more discussion
*reasonable paper assignments taking into consideration many senior have multiple 400 level courses as well as full time jobs in addition to a capstone
*add more hands on course and more classes offered during both semesters instead of every other spring or fall
*add more hands on activities
*change how students register for classes
*more emphasis put on local/state issues

2009
*offering concentrations will provide a great way for students to focus/think about the future
*offer more ways for Honors students, or simply accelerated students, to do additional work such as readings, projects, research, etc

2010
*knowledge of current events
*bring in guest lecturers
*more specific courses
* less lectures, more experiential learning
*more postitive professors
*more hands on learning
*wider variety of classes
*job shadowing opportunities
*more preperation for law school

2010
strongly agree: 13
agree: 8
slightly agree: 1

2010
strongly agree: 16
agree: 5
slightly agree: 1

2010
strongly agree: 7
agree: 13
slightly agree: 1
disagree: 1

2010
strongly agree: 11
agree: 6
slightly agree: 2
slightly disagree: 1
n/a: 2

2010
strongly agree: 15
agree: 3
slightly agree: 4

2010
strongly agree: 16
agree: 4
slightly agree: 1
slightly disagree: 1

2010
strongly agree: 16
agree: 2
slightly disagree: 1
n/a: 3

2010
strongly agree: 8
agree: 6
slightly agree: 4
slightly disagree: 3
disagree: 1

2010
strongly agree: 7
agree: 7
slightly agree: 6
slightly disagree: 2

2010
strongly agree: 12

sagree: 8
slightly agree: 1
slightly disagree: 1

2010
strongly agree: 16
agree: 2
slightly agree: 4

2010
strongly agree: 9
agree: 8
slightly agree: 3
slightly disagree: 1
disagree: 1

2010
strongly agree: 13
agree: 4
 slightly agree: 1
slightly disagree: 1
disagree: 1
n/a: 2

2010
strongly agree: 10
agree: 6
slightly agree: 1

slightly disagree: 2
n/a: 3

2010
strongly agree: 10
agree: 11
slightly agree: 1

2010
strongly agree: 12
agree: 8
n/a: 2

2010
strongly agree: 14
agree: 5
slightly agree: 1
slightly disagree: 1
disagree: 1

2010
strongly agree: 11

agree: 8
 slightly agree: 1
disagree: 2

2010
strongly agree: 16
agree: 5
slightly diagree: 1

2010
general: 5
IR/CP: 1
Public Ad: 1
Amer/Pub Pol: 3
Legal Studies: 12

2010
yes: 7
no: 15

2010
yes: 15
no: 6
no response: 1

2010
1 yr: 1
2 yr: 2
3 yr: 7
4 yr: 10
5 yr: 1
more than 5: 1

2010
yes: 10
no: 12

2010
yes: 3
no: 19

2010
yes: 15
no: 6
no response: 1

2010
yes: 3
no: 19

2010
yes: 4
no: 18

2010

yes: 6
no: 16

2010

3.5-4.0: 11
3.00-3.49: 9
2.50-2.99: 1
2.00-2.49: 1
less than 2.0: 0

2010

3.5-4.0: 12
3.0-3.49: 8
2.50-2.99: 1
2.0-2.49: 1
less than 2.0: 0

2010

high degree: 12
above average: 8
average: 2

2010
didn't work: 5
1-10 hrs: 2
11-20 hrs: 8
30-39 hrs: 5
40+ hrs: 2

2010
yes: 9
no: 12
n/a: 1

2010
yes: 2
no, I'm a junior: 11
n/a: 9

2010
yes: 3
no, I'm a junior: 6
n/a: 13

2010
yes: 2
et: 0   no, not yet accepted: 2
no, I'm a junior: 8
n/a: 10

2010

yes: 4

red: 2   applying, not yet hired: 5

no, I'm a junior: 4

n/a: 8

no response: 1