

Political Science (POS) Program Assessment Plan

Program Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students should be able to explain an issue by using information to describe a problem or issue.
2. Students should be able to utilize context by evaluating the relevance of context when presenting a position, by identifying assumptions, and by analyzing one's own and other's assumptions.
3. Students should be able to understand implications and make conclusions by establishing a conclusion that is tied to the range of information presented and by reflecting on the implications and consequences of stated conclusions.

Institutional Learning Outcomes

A CCD graduate is a **Complex Thinker**. Students will explore and evaluate multiple sources of information, which they will synthesize to solve problems; they will extract meaning from texts, instruction, experience, and other relevant sources to construct new problem-solving approaches based on their insights. Students will make relevant connections between classroom and out-of-classroom learning.

A CCD graduate is **Globally Aware**. Students will consider the interconnectedness of our community and world; they will understand how cultural differences (such as beliefs, traditions, religion, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender) impact personal and community participation; they are aware of the social, environmental, and economic impacts of their actions; they evaluate how technology links individuals and communities and are aware of the social, environmental, technological, and economic impacts of their actions.

Schedule for Assessment

1. Explain an issue **FALL2017-SPR2019**
 - a. Using information to describe a problem or issue and/or articulate a question related to a topic.
2. Utilize Context **FALL2017-SPR2019**
 - a. Evaluate the relevance of context when presenting a position
 - b. Identify assumptions
 - c. Analyze assumptions (including one's own)
3. Formulate an Argument **FALL 2019-SPR2021**
 - a. Ask a relevant question
 - b. Synthesize perspectives that answer question
 - c. Take a specific position

4. Civic Knowledge **FALL2019-SPR2021**
 - a. Connect POS knowledge to civic engagement through one's one participation in civic life, politics and/or government.
5. Diversity of Communities and Cultures **FALL2021-SPR2023**
 - a. Discuss one's own attitudes and beliefs compared to those of other cultures and communities.
6. Civic Values and Commitment **FALL2021-SPR2023**
 - a. Create a personal value system that aligns with civic actions and address the responsibilities of an active citizen in society.
 - b. Examine the role of established systems and structures that reproduce patterns of support and/or patterns of inequity over time.
7. Civic Communication **FALL2023-SPR2025**
 - a. Express, listen, and adapt ideas and/or messages based on others' perspectives.
8. Civic Reflection through Civic Action **FALL2023-SPR2025**
 - a. Reflect on one's participation in and contribute to civic activity.

Timeline for Assessing Each Outcome:

We assess the outcomes in each political science course throughout the semester, ideally, no later than between weeks 13-15 of the semester. We do this to ensure that the data gleaned will be meaningful for future course-wide discussions and decisions. We offer the students some form of points so that the students will take the assessment seriously (again so that the data will be meaningful). We allow the students the same amount of time for the exercise (45 minutes) again for the same reason. Variance of times would not provide usable data. The artifacts are collected by the instructors, and forwarded to the department chair for storage.

Benchmarks for the outcomes to be assessed:

There are three levels of performance in our assessment, excellent, competent, and unsuccessful. While our goal is that each student is able to perform at least at the competent level, experience has taught that there will be some for a variety of reasons (tired, don't care, won't pass, test anxiety, learning disabilities, ill, apathy, lack of previous academic experience / success, etc.), that 20-25% at "unsuccessful" 35-40% "competent," 30-35% "excellent."

Description of How Data Will Be Used:

We meet as a department within the first week following the conclusion of the semester being assessed. We divide the artifacts amongst the faculty (full-time and part-time) no faculty is allowed to review artifacts from their own courses --- student information is redacted to allow for a blind reading of the artifacts. Each artifact is assigned a rating by the rating faculty member. If

there is doubt as to the placement of the artifact amongst the three categories, a second faculty member blindly reads and places their rating; If need be, a third member reads and rates the category determined by two of the rating members reveals where the artifact will be placed.

Once the artifacts have been rated, we as a department discuss what we have learned, what our students need (based on the findings) and what strategies, to meet those needs we may wish to implement, or whether or not we wish to gather more data (the following semester) to see whether or not a given semester is an outlier, or if it is a trend that we need to address.

Description of Continuous Process Improvement:

We meet together often, and assessment is always a topic of conversation and consideration. We care deeply about what our students are learning and how they are learning it. We assess regularly throughout the academic year and use the data to make informed, data-driven decisions about strategies to strengthen areas of instruction