



Academic Program Assessment Report for AY 2018-2019

(Due: May 1, 2019)

Program: Political Science

Date report completed: May 23, 2019

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Assessment contributors (other faculty involved): Colette Carter

Please describe the 2018-2019 assessment activities and follow-up for your program below. Please complete this form for each undergraduate major, minor, certificate, and graduate program (e.g., B.A., B.S., M.S.) in your department. Please copy any addenda (e.g., rubrics) and paste them in this document, save and submit it to both the Dean of your college/school and to the Assistant Provost as an email attachment before June 1, 2018. You'll also find this form on the assessment website at <https://www.csupueblo.edu/assessment-and-student-learning/resources.html>. Thank you.

Brief statement of Program mission and goals:

The major in political science leads to the degrees of Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BS). The political science curriculum focuses heavily on the development of analytical and communication skills - along with a comprehensive knowledge of public policy, politics, current events, and history - and as such prepares undergraduates for a wide range of in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. Courses in political science also serve to complement the liberal arts core at CSU-Pueblo and to prepare students for acceptance into graduate and professional programs.

Program Goals

To prepare students majoring in the discipline to:

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of historical, philosophical and empirical foundations of political science;
- Demonstrate a general command of knowledge about the American political system, global studies, the history of political thought, and standard political science research approaches; and
- Demonstrate an ability to continue personal study and learning on an independent basis about specific subjects in the discipline.

I. Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in this cycle. Including processes, results, and recommendations for improved student learning. Use Column H to describe improvements planned for 2018-2019 based on the assessment process.

A. Which of the program SLOs were assessed during this cycle? Please include the outcome(s) verbatim from the assessment plan.	B. When was this SLO <u>last</u> reported on prior to this cycle? (semester and year)	C. What method was used for assessing the SLO? Please include a copy of any rubrics used in the assessment process.	D. Who was assessed? Please fully describe the student group(s) and the number of students or artifacts involved (N).	E. What is the expected proficiency level and how many or what proportion of students should be at that level?	F. What were the results of the assessment? (Include the proportion of students meeting proficiency.)	G. What were the department's conclusions about student performance?	H. What changes/improvements to the <u>program</u> are planned based on this assessment?
Writing SLO: Students should be able to write papers on topics in political science that (a) exhibit clear prose and correct grammar and (b) present a central argument in a clear and coherent structure or fashion.	Spring 2015	Appears below (p. 5)	Direct measure: assessment of papers submitted in POLSC 493, a capstone course required for seniors. There were 7 students in the course, each of whom wrote several papers. All papers were used for assessment.	80% of students will score on the assessment rubric at the competent (proficient) level.	5 students (71%) were deemed proficient overall, the remainder were deemed acceptable overall. By "overall", we mean an average across the 4 categories in the rubric. So, a student who averaged 2.5 points or higher was "proficient."	We think that assessment was below our goal for one key and simple reason: a very small sample size (N=7). If the probability that each student is proficient is .8, then it is essentially equally likely that we would have 5/7 proficient (and thus <80%) as we would have 6/7 proficient (and thus >80%).	No specific program changes are planned at this time. Almost every course in the program (except statistics) already includes a hefty writing component, precisely because the faculty consider strong writing abilities to be of utmost importance to our students' careers. As such, the writing SLO receives great attention in the program. Still, our faculty routinely evaluate how we might improve our program, and we will discuss how we can do more to improve students' writing skills.

Comments on part I:

II. Closing the Loop. Describe at least one data-informed change to your curriculum during the 2018-2019 cycle. These are those that were based on, or implemented to address, the results of assessment from previous cycles.

A. What SLO(s) or other issues did you address in this cycle? Please include the outcome(s) verbatim from the assessment plan.	B. When was this SLO last assessed to generate the data which informed the change? Please indicate the semester and year.	C. What were the recommendations for change from the previous assessment column H and/or feedback?	D. How were the recommendations for change acted upon?	E. What were the results of the changes? If the changes were not effective, what are the next steps or the new recommendations?
Writing SLO	2014	(a) Clarify writing expectations, (b) work on issues of documentation, language, and mechanics, and (c) encourage students to utilize the Writing Room.	The program has not taken formal action to address these issues, but the faculty do actively seek to address each of those issues. Most notably, paper assignments in several courses (a) provide lengthy descriptions of expectations, (b) discuss and provide resources for documentation. And faculty do frequently point students to the Writing Room.	Unknown; the recommendations have not been formally assessed. This assessment cycle the writing issues that were identified were primarily in the area of providing a clear and central message. Documentation, mechanics, and language were not cited as the primary areas to improve. Therefore, there perhaps has been some improvement in the issues that were noted in the last Writing assessment cycle.

Comments on part II:

The following includes recent, SLO-related changes to the Political Science Program that are designed for student success in the university and beyond.

- 2019-2020: New courses are being added to the PS Program to reflect the expertise of Prof. Strickler. In particular, two new courses will be offered: Media & Politics and Political Attitudes & Behavior.
- 2019 (Spring): The PS Program updated all of its program SLOs and its assessment methods. Assessment rubrics and the assessment plan were updated accordingly, and to be modeled after the "best practices" that were discussed in an early-Spring 2019 seminar on campus.
- 2018-2019: POLSC 250 now includes a module on professional development and career and graduate school preparation. Students have responded very positively to this addition to the curriculum.
- 2017-2018: The PS Program was modified to (a) require an internship or a research project and (b) require some sub-field diversity among political science electives (specifically, students are required to at least one of their electives in each of the four main subfields).

Writing Outcome: Students should be able to write papers on topics in political science that (a) exhibit clear prose and correct grammar and (b) present a central argument in a clear and coherent structure or fashion.

The following rubric is to assess papers submitted in courses, especially in POLSC 493 Senior Seminar. |

Criteria	1. Needs Improvement	2. Acceptable	3 - Proficient	4 -Advanced	Score
Central message - clarity	Central message may be deduced, but it is difficult to discern, not prominent, or unclear.	Central message is discernible, but it is not sufficiently prominent or clear.	Central message is prominent and precisely stated.	Central message is prominent and precisely stated, as well as compelling and well-situated.	
Essay organization	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is poorly constructed. The flow of points across and within paragraphs is rarely logical or artful.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is adequately constructed. The flow of points across and within paragraphs is somewhat logical or artful.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is well constructed. The flow of points across and within paragraphs is logical or artful.	Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is very well constructed. The flow of points across and within paragraphs is highly skilled and artful.	
Clear prose	Many sentences are difficult to understand, or the writing style is basic and unsophisticated, with little variance in structure.	Some sentences are poorly constructed and difficult to understand, or the writing style is not very sophisticated, with only some variance in structure.	Sentences are well constructed and convey a clear meaning, and the writing style is engaging, with a good degree of variance in sentence structure.	Sentences are very well constructed and convey a clear meaning, and the writing style is very engaging and artful.	
Grammar	The paper contains several grammatical or punctuation errors	The paper contains a small number of grammatical or punctuation errors.	The paper contains no egregious grammatical or punctuation errors.	The paper contains no grammatical or punctuation errors.	