



Program Name	Date Completed
Political Science	May 29, 2025
Report Completed By	Report Contributors
Joel Johnson	
Brief Statement of Program Mission and Goals	
The Political Science BA/BS program prepares students to examine the power behind the policies and politics of the U.S. government and international relations. Our program provides students with a basic understanding of American politics and policies as well as courses designed to enhance critical thinking, analytic skills, improve research practices, and communication skills, both oral and written.	

Table I Closing the Loop

Report on at least one data-informed change to your curriculum during AY 2024-2025 that was implemented to improve student learning, in response to prior assessments or other data.

A. Describe issues or SLOs addressed in the AY 2024-2025 cycle. Paste SLOs verbatim below.
Knowledge outcomes (KO1) Students should have factual knowledge of many aspects of politics and government that are central objects of study in each of the subfields in political science (American politics, comparative politics, international relations, and political theory). (KO2) Students should be able to explain core debates (or scholarly theories and perspectives) in the subfields of political science. Critical Thinking Outcomes: (CTO1) Students should be able to identify and critique the assumptions, logic, and evidence in both scholarly and lay political arguments. (CTO2) Students should be able to use empirical observations and analytical reasoning to articulate and defend compelling, non-fallacious arguments.
B. In which academic year and semester was this SLO last assessed to generate data that informed the change(s)?
C. What were the recommendations for change in the previous cycle? (See Column H in the previous cycle's report.)
Knowledge 1 & 2: faculty will discuss how to better assist non-POLS students Critical thinking 1 & 2: no recommendations were made

D. How were the recommendations for change acted upon?
Knowledge 1 & 2: during 2024-2025, a few changes were made to help students in POLS 101. One was the discontinuation of the online section for another face-to-face section. Although the former was popular, it is difficult to engage non-POLS students in an online class format. The second change is that one of the regular sections of POLS 101 was converted to a half-semester, eight-week course. Although this change was not for the purpose of improving student learning, it proved effective at that outcome, so it will be continued in the future.
Critical thinking 1 & 2: n/a
E. How did the change(s) impact student learning? If the change was not effective, what are the next steps or new recommendations?
We do not have any data that speak directly to the changes noted above, we believe that they did assist student knowledge.

Enter Table I Closing the Loop Comments Below



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Table II Annual assessment of Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) in AY 2024-25

1. Include information to share assessment processes, results, and recommendations for improved student learning. Copy this table for each assessed outcome.

A. Program SLO assessed in this cycle. Copy the SLOs verbatim from the assessment plan.
(KO1) Students should have factual knowledge of many aspects of politics and government that are central objects of study in each of the subfields in political science (American politics, comparative politics, international relations, and political theory). (WO1) 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.
B. Semester and year this SLO was reported on prior to this cycle.
Knowledge 1: 2023-2024 Writing: 2022-2023
C. Describe the assessment method for this SLO.
The assessment methods used this cycle are the following: Knowledge 1: There are two measures. Direct measure 1: one or more ranked faculty member(s) will assess the SLO in one (or more) course per academic year via a comparison of a pre-test and a post-test that are offered to the same students. The assessment standard is that the average post-test score will exceed the average pre-test score. Indirect measure 1: From students' anonymous course evaluations of at least one core course per year. In particular, aggregate responses to Q18: "Learned from the course" will be reported. The expected level of proficiency is that at least 50% of enrolled students (or respondents) respond "Strongly Agree" or "Agree," and we expect that at least 75% of students respond "Strongly Agree," "Agree," or "Neutral." (The response "Neutral" may indicate to a student that a course is on par with other courses.) Writing: Direct measure 1: students' papers in the POLSC 493 capstone are assessed according to the writing assessment rubric. Direct measure 1: At least 80% of students will receive an average score of 2.5 or above, signifying that they are proficient across the four categories in the rubric.
D. Described student group(s) assessed. Provide the number of students or number of artifacts assessed.
For the knowledge metric, we report data from 4 classes: three sections of POLS 101 and one section of POLS 202.



For the writing metric, we report data from students in Spring 2025's POLS 440
E. Expected proficiency level and proportion of students who should reach this level.
See section C above.
F. Assessment results and number of students who met proficiency level.
<p>Knowledge assessment: Direct measure #1: Post-test vs. pre-test, results: POLS 101, Spring 2025, Prof. Johnson: average test gain = 22pts (n=21) POLS 101 Hyflex, Fall 2025, Prof. Johnson: average test gain = 28pts (n=12) POLS 101, Fall 2025, Prof. Strickler: average test gain = 17pts POLS 202, Fall 2024, Prof. Johnson: average test gain = 12pts (n=8)</p> <p>Indirect measure #1: responses to anonymous course reviews, Q18: POLS 101, Spring 2025, Prof. Johnson: 100% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they learned from the course (n=6) POLS 251, Spring 2025, Prof. Johnson: 100% of students agreed or strongly agreed that they learned from the course (n=4)</p> <p>Writing assessment: 100% of students received a composite score of 2.5 or above. However, two students were not assessed because they did not complete the course. That means that the statistic could be affected by selection bias.</p>
G. Describe what results indicate about student performance.
Students are performing well, and our program is effective in fostering student learning.
H. Describe program level changes/improvements planned for AY 2025-2025 informed by this assessment.
<p>Knowledge: no specific changes are planned at this time, but the program is always changing its courses to improve student success. Given the increasing reach and power of AI, we have a particular adjustment in the works: our classes will be reducing their online components (assignments, etc.) and shifting ever more into classroom exercises and assignments.</p> <p>Writing: given the increasing reach and power of AI, our classes are shifting from standard writing assignments to other types of in-class exercises that improve written communication skills and analytical/reading skills. For example, our writing seminar class, POLS 251, has placed less emphasis on standard writing assignments and more emphasis on content analysis, grammatical editing, and reading comprehension as a way to improve writing proficiency. Our classes will continue to shift in directions like these in order to provide student learning in a way that avoids AI cheating and that can also harness the power of AI for student productivity.</p>



Enter Table II AY 2025 Assessment Comments Below