

Assessment Rubric for Political Science Program Learning Outcome #1

Students who complete the program in political science will be able to: **Develop an appreciation of the field of politics.** This PLO #1 aligns with core competency N/A (the AACU rubric for “civic engagement” was used).

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

Criterion	Capstone (4)	Milestones (3)	Milestones (2)	Benchmark (1)
Diversity of Communities and Cultures	Demonstrates evidence of adjustment in own attitudes and beliefs because of working within and learning from diversity of communities and cultures. Promotes others' engagement with diversity.	Reflects on how own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities. Exhibits curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.	Has awareness that own attitudes and beliefs are different from those of other cultures and communities. Exhibits little curiosity about what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.	Expresses attitudes and beliefs as an individual, from a one-sided view. Is indifferent or resistant to what can be learned from diversity of communities and cultures.
Analysis of Knowledge	Connects and extends knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline to civic engagement and to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government.	Analyzes knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline making relevant connections to civic engagement and to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government.	Begins to connect knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline to civic engagement and to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government.	Begins to identify knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline that is relevant to civic engagement and to one's own participation in civic life, politics, and government.
Civic Identity and Commitment	Provides evidence of experience in civic-engagement activities and describes what she/he has learned about her or himself as it relates to a reinforced and clarified sense of civic identity and continued commitment to public action.	Provides evidence of experience in civic-engagement activities and describes what she/he has learned about her or himself as it relates to a growing sense of civic identity and commitment.	Evidence suggests involvement in civic-engagement activities is generated from expectations or course requirements rather than from a sense of civic identity.	Provides little evidence of her/his experience in civic-engagement activities and does not connect experiences to civic identity.

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Civic Communication	Tailors communication strategies to effectively express, listen, and adapt to others to establish relationships to further civic action	Effectively communicates in civic context, showing ability to do all of the following: express, listen, and adapt ideas and messages based on others' perspectives.	Communicates in civic context, showing ability to do more than one of the following: express, listen, and adapt ideas and messages based on others' perspectives.	Communicates in civic context, showing ability to do one of the following: express, listen, and adapt ideas and messages based on others' perspectives.
Civic Action and Reflection	Demonstrates independent experience and <i>shows initiative in team leadership</i> of complex or multiple civic engagement activities, accompanied by reflective insights or analysis about the aims and accomplishments of one's actions.	Demonstrates independent experience and <i>team leadership of</i> civic action, with reflective insights or analysis about the aims and accomplishments of one's actions.	Has clearly <i>participated</i> in civically focused actions and begins to reflect or describe how these actions may benefit individual(s) or communities.	Has <i>experimented</i> with some civic activities but shows little internalized understanding of their aims or effects and little commitment to future action.
Civic Contexts/Structures	Demonstrates ability and commitment to <i>collaboratively work across and within</i> community contexts and structures <i>to achieve a civic aim.</i>	Demonstrates ability and commitment to work actively <i>within</i> community contexts and structures <i>to achieve a civic aim.</i>	Demonstrates experience identifying intentional ways to <i>participate in</i> civic contexts and structures.	Experiments with civic contexts and structures, <i>tries out a few to see what fits.</i>

Assessment Rubric for Political Science Program Learning Outcome #2

Students who complete the program in political science will be able to: **Evaluate, design, and apply social science research with respect to political phenomena.** This PLO #2 aligns with core competency #5 (Quantitative Reasoning).

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

Criterion	Capstone (4)	Milestones (3)	Milestones (2)	Benchmark (1)
Interpretation <i>Ability to explain information presented in mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, words)</i>	Provides accurate explanations of information presented in mathematical forms. Makes appropriate inferences based on that information. <i>For example, accurately explains the trend data shown in a graph and makes reasonable predictions regarding what the data suggest about future events.</i>	Provides accurate explanations of information presented in mathematical forms. <i>For instance, accurately explains the trend data shown in a graph.</i>	Provides somewhat accurate explanations of information presented in mathematical forms, but occasionally makes minor errors related to computations or units. <i>For instance, accurately explains trend data shown in a graph, but may miscalculate the slope of the trend line.</i>	Attempts to explain information presented in mathematical forms, but draws incorrect conclusions about what the information means. <i>For example, attempts to explain the trend data shown in a graph, but will frequently misinterpret the nature of that trend, perhaps by confusing positive and negative trends.</i>
Representation <i>Ability to convert relevant information into various mathematical forms (e.g., equations, graphs, diagrams, tables, words)</i>	Skillfully converts relevant information into an insightful mathematical portrayal in a way that contributes to a further or deeper understanding.	Competently converts relevant information into an appropriate and desired mathematical portrayal.	Completes conversion of information but resulting mathematical portrayal is only partially appropriate or accurate.	Completes conversion of information but resulting mathematical portrayal is inappropriate or inaccurate.
Calculation	Calculations attempted are essentially all successful and sufficiently comprehensive to solve the problem. Calculations are also presented elegantly (clearly, concisely, etc.)	Calculations attempted are essentially all successful and sufficiently comprehensive to solve the problem.	Calculations attempted are either unsuccessful or represent only a portion of the calculations required to comprehensively solve the problem.	Calculations are attempted but are both unsuccessful and are not comprehensive.
Application / Analysis <i>Ability to make judgments and draw appropriate conclusions based on the quantitative analysis of data, while recognizing the limits of this analysis</i>	Uses the quantitative analysis of data as the basis for deep and thoughtful judgments, drawing insightful, carefully qualified conclusions from this work.	Uses the quantitative analysis of data as the basis for competent judgments, drawing reasonable and appropriately qualified conclusions from this work.	Uses the quantitative analysis of data as the basis for workmanlike (without inspiration or nuance, ordinary) judgments, drawing plausible conclusions from this work.	Uses the quantitative analysis of data as the basis for tentative, basic judgments, although is hesitant or uncertain about drawing conclusions from this work.
Assumptions <i>Ability to make and evaluate important assumptions in estimation, modeling, and data analysis</i>	Explicitly describes assumptions and provides compelling rationale for why each assumption is appropriate. Shows awareness that confidence	Explicitly describes assumptions and provides compelling rationale for why assumptions are appropriate.	Explicitly describes assumptions.	Attempts to describe assumptions.

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	in final conclusions is limited by the accuracy of the assumptions.			
Communication <i>Expressing quantitative evidence in support of the argument or purpose of the work (in terms of what evidence is used and how it is formatted, presented, and contextualized)</i>	Uses quantitative information in connection with the argument or purpose of the work, presents it in an effective format, and explicates it with consistently high quality.	Uses quantitative information in connection with the argument or purpose of the work, though data may be presented in a less than completely effective format or some parts of the explication may be uneven.	Uses quantitative information, but does not effectively connect it to the argument or purpose of the work.	Presents an argument for which quantitative evidence is pertinent, but does not provide adequate explicit numerical support. (May use quasi-quantitative words such as "many," "few," "increasing," "small," and the like in place of actual quantities.)

Assessment Rubric for Political Science Program Learning Outcome #3

Students who complete the program in political science will be able to: **Understand and critically assess the processes, theories, and outcomes of political institutions and political behavior.** This PLO #3 aligns with core competency #4 (Critical Thinking).

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

Criterion	Capstone (4)	Milestones (3)	Milestones (2)	Benchmark (1)
Explanation of issues	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated clearly and described comprehensively, delivering all relevant information necessary for full understanding.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated, described, and clarified so that understanding is not seriously impeded by omissions.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated but description leaves some terms undefined, ambiguities unexplored, boundaries undetermined, and/or backgrounds unknown.	Issue/problem to be considered critically is stated without clarification or description.
Evidence <i>Selecting and using information to investigate a point of view or conclusion</i>	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a comprehensive analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are questioned thoroughly.	Information is taken from source(s) with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are subject to questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) with some interpretation/evaluation, but not enough to develop a coherent analysis or synthesis. Viewpoints of experts are taken as mostly fact, with little questioning.	Information is taken from source(s) without any interpretation/evaluation. Viewpoints of experts are taken as fact, without question.
Influence of context and assumptions	Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).	Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.

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<p>Student's position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis)</p>	<p>Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is imaginative, taking into account the complexities of an issue. Limits of position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) are acknowledged. Others' points of view are synthesized within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis).</p>	<p>Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) takes into account the complexities of an issue. Others' points of view are acknowledged within position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis).</p>	<p>Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) acknowledges different sides of an issue.</p>	<p>Specific position (perspective, thesis/hypothesis) is stated, but is simplistic and obvious.</p>
<p>Conclusions and related outcomes (implications and consequences)</p>	<p>Conclusions and related outcomes (consequences and implications) are logical and reflect student's informed evaluation and ability to place evidence and perspectives discussed in priority order.</p>	<p>Conclusion is logically tied to a range of information, including opposing viewpoints; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.</p>	<p>Conclusion is logically tied to information (because information is chosen to fit the desired conclusion); some related outcomes (consequences and implications) are identified clearly.</p>	<p>Conclusion is inconsistently tied to some of the information discussed; related outcomes (consequences and implications) are oversimplified.</p>

Assessment Rubric for Political Science Program Learning Outcome #4

Students who complete the program in political science will be able to: **Demonstrate Social Scientific Information Literacy.**

This PLO #4 aligns with core competency #3 (Information Literacy).

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

Criterion	Capstone (4)	Milestones (3)	Milestones (2)	Benchmark (1)
Determine the Extent of Information Needed	Effectively defines the scope of the research question or thesis. Effectively determines key concepts. Types of information (sources) selected directly relate to concepts or answer research question.	Defines the scope of the research question or thesis completely. Can determine key concepts. Types of information (sources) selected relate to concepts or answer research question.	Defines the scope of the research question or thesis incompletely (parts are missing, remains too broad or too narrow, etc.). Can determine key concepts. Types of information (sources) selected partially relate to concepts or answer research question.	Has difficulty defining the scope of the research question or thesis. Has difficulty determining key concepts. Types of information (sources) selected do not relate to concepts or answer research question.
Access the Needed Information	Accesses information using effective, well-designed search strategies and most appropriate information sources.	Accesses information using variety of search strategies and some relevant information sources. Demonstrates ability to refine search.	Accesses information using simple search strategies, retrieves information from limited and similar sources.	Accesses information randomly, retrieves information that lacks relevance and quality.
Evaluate Information and its Sources Critically	Thoroughly (systematically and methodically) analyzes own and others' assumptions and carefully evaluates the relevance of contexts when presenting a position.	Identifies own and others' assumptions and several relevant contexts when presenting a position.	Questions some assumptions. Identifies several relevant contexts when presenting a position. May be more aware of others' assumptions than one's own (or vice versa).	Shows an emerging awareness of present assumptions (sometimes labels assertions as assumptions). Begins to identify some contexts when presenting a position.
Use Information Effectively to Accomplish a Specific Purpose	Communicates, organizes and synthesizes information from sources to fully achieve a specific purpose, with clarity and depth	Communicates, organizes and synthesizes information from sources. Intended purpose is achieved.	Communicates and organizes information from sources. The information is not yet synthesized, so the intended purpose is not fully achieved.	Communicates information from sources. The information is fragmented and/or used inappropriately (misquoted, taken out of context, or incorrectly paraphrased, etc.), so the intended purpose is not achieved.
Access and Use Information Ethically and Legally	Students use correctly all of the following information use strategies (use of citations and	Students use correctly three of the following information use strategies (use of citations and	Students use correctly two of the following information use strategies (use of citations and	Students use correctly one of the following information use strategies (use of citations and references;

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	references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrate a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information.	and references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrates a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information.	references; choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrates a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information.	choice of paraphrasing, summary, or quoting; using information in ways that are true to original context; distinguishing between common knowledge and ideas requiring attribution) and demonstrates a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of published, confidential, and/or proprietary information.

Assessment Rubric for Political Science Program Learning Outcome #5

Students who complete the program in political science will be able to: **Develop and express ideas in written communication in an effective and scholarly manner.** This PLO #5 aligns with core competency #1 (Written communication).

Evaluators are encouraged to assign a zero to any work sample or collection of work that does not meet benchmark (cell one) level performance.

Criterion	Capstone (4)	Milestones (3)	Milestones (2)	Benchmark (1)
Context of and Purpose for Writing <i>Includes considerations of audience, purpose, whether or not they did the assignment as asked in the prompt, and the circumstances surrounding the writing task(s).</i>	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.	Demonstrates adequate consideration of context, audience, and purpose and a clear focus on the assigned task(s) (e.g., the task aligns with audience, purpose, and context).	Demonstrates awareness of context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., begins to show awareness of audience's perceptions and assumptions).	Demonstrates minimal attention to context, audience, purpose, and to the assigned tasks(s) (e.g., expectation of instructor or self as audience).
Argument Development	Offers a sophisticated, relevant, and compelling argument to illustrate mastery of the subject, conveying the writer's deep understanding	Offers a sophisticated, relevant, and compelling argument that explores ideas within the subject matter	Offers an appropriate and relevant argument	Offers an appropriate but simple argument
Genre and Disciplinary Conventions <i>Formal and informal rules inherent in the expectations for writing in political science</i>	Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to political science, including organization, content, presentation, formatting, proper citation, and stylistic choices	Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to political science, including organization, content, presentation, citation, and stylistic choices	Follows expectations appropriate to political science, including basic organization, content, and presentation	Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organization and presentation.

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Sources and Evidence	Demonstrates skillful use of high-quality, credible, relevant sources to develop ideas that are appropriate for political science and genre of the writing	Demonstrates consistent use of credible and relevant sources to support ideas that are situated within political science and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use credible and/or relevant sources to support ideas that are appropriate for political science and genre of the writing.	Demonstrates an attempt to use sources to support ideas in the writing.
Control of Syntax, Grammar, and Mechanics	Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error-free.	Uses straightforward language that generally conveys meaning to readers. The language in the portfolio has few errors.	Uses language that generally conveys meaning to readers with clarity, although writing may include some errors.	Uses language that sometimes impedes meaning because of errors in usage.

Assessment Rubric for Political Science Program Learning Outcome #7

Students who complete the program in political science will be able to: **Construct and evaluate analytical, comprehensive arguments.** This PLO #7 aligns with core competency #4 (Critical Thinking).

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