



Political Science | 2013-2014 Assessment Report

Please answer the following two questions based on the data you collected as part of your Programmatic Assessment Plan, which is provided below for your reference.

1. Please give a brief overview of the data you collected. This can be in any form you feel is appropriate, such as a table, a short narrative of results, statistical analysis, highlighting findings that were of particular interest, etc. In short, it doesn't matter how you submit your findings.

Please see tables below for the annual results of our assessments. The tables demonstrate that the vast majority of our students meet the basic learning outcomes in all three categories of required UL courses with about a third of them exceeding the basic benchmarks and about 5 percent failing to meet our learning outcomes.

This academic year, we assessed the following outcomes (depending on the content of assessed courses)

For American politics content courses (in 2013-2014 academic year, these courses included Pol Sci 318: Political Behavior and Pol Sci 316: Congress) numbers are as follows:

Learning Outcome	Learning outcome is not met (Level One)	Learning outcome is met (Level Two)	Learning outcome is exceeded (Level Three)
Students will demonstrate knowledge of and ability to analyze U.S. government institutions, political processes, and behavior.	0	22	6
Students will exhibit an ability to evaluate political institutions and processes from the perspective of democratic principles, including majority politics, the protection of minority rights, and the value of due process.	0	22	6
Students will show an ability to think critically and a capacity to use political science research. This includes an understanding of social science research methods and elementary statistical concepts, and the ability to use professional resources such as journals, indexes, and government documents.	0	20	8
Students will be able to qualify for graduate study in political science, public policy, public administration, law, international affairs, or related fields or to qualify for entry level employment requiring competence in governmental and political processes, or for teaching government.	0	20	8
Students will demonstrate ability to write clearly and effectively.	0	20	8

For international politics content courses (in 2013-2014 academic year, these courses included 2 sections of Pol Sci 351: Comparative Politics, Pol Sci 360: International Relations and Pol Sci 370: Foreign and Defense Policies) the numbers are as follows:

Learning Outcome	Learning outcome is not met (Level One)	Learning outcome is met (Level Two)	Learning outcome is exceeded (Level Three)
Students will exhibit knowledge of and ability to analyze government institutions, political processes, and behavior in select Western and non-Western countries.	2	38	18
Students will show an ability to evaluate variables essential for transition to and consolidation of democracy, including historical, institutional, political cultural, and behavioral factors, as well as structural obstacles to democratization.	2	40	16
Students will demonstrate an ability to think critically and a capacity to use political science research. This includes an understanding of social science research methods and elementary statistical concepts, and the ability to use professional resources such as journals, indexes, and government documents.	2	40	16
Students will be able to qualify for entry level employment requiring competence in governmental and political processes.	3	39	16
Students will demonstrate the ability to write clearly and effectively.	3	39	16

For political theory content courses:

Learning Outcome	Learning outcome is not met (Level One)	Learning outcome is met (Level Two)	Learning outcome is exceeded (Level Three)
Students will exhibit knowledge of and ability to analyze and critique the history of political theory, including ancient, modern and contemporary thinkers	0	10	11
Students will demonstrate an ability to approach political questions from a theoretical and historical perspective, including discussing questions of method, form and context	2	11	8
Students will show an ability to think critically and a capacity to use political theory research. This includes an understanding of the core questions and approaches, as well as key figures in political theory as a part of political science	2	5	14
Students will be able to qualify for entry level employment requiring competence in governmental and political processes.	2	7	12
Students will demonstrate the ability to write clearly and effectively.	2	6	13

We performed embedded assessments of all written work students produced in our required UL courses for the major (research papers, debate papers, reaction papers, policy memoranda, legal briefs, etc.). We assessed enrolled political science majors only.

These classes, collectively, represent all required Political Science classes taught during the past academic year, so we have assessed most of our students this academic year.

2. How will you use what you've learned from the data that was collected? Some examples are: a change in assessment plan for the following year because you want to drill down deeper to find more or better information, faculty will discuss the data to decide what to do with it, curricular changes, faculty development, etc.

We are scheduled to hold our Fall faculty meeting in September and will discuss the results then to determine what to do with the collected data. My initial reaction is to examine the reasons why some students might be failing in our program and also to see if our assessment is too crude and we need to establish more nuanced category to capture truly exceptional student achievement (instead of essentially dividing our students into 1/3 of students who exceed expectations, 2/3 who do not and 5% who fail). Perhaps we need to establish a more sensitive scale of assessment. Another idea is to track the progress of our students as they progress through our program and possibly assess students in our newly developed senior seminar to gauge improvement (or lack thereof).