

SUNY Potsdam
Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan- Politics Department

Department Mission Statement and Assessment Plan SUNY Potsdam, 2011-12

I. Politics Department Mission Statement

The Politics Department aims to teach, energize, support, and inspire students. The facts, theories, and skills we ask students to learn are designed to help them succeed personally, professionally, and as community members and citizens of the world. The subject matter is politics, and so our goal is that every graduating Politics Major is knowledgeable about politics and political study, as well as skilled in information gathering, analysis, research, critical thinking, conceptual comprehension, and written and verbal communication.

II. Programmatic Learning Outcomes

The Program of Study required of Politics Majors lives up to the departmental mission by aiming to graduate students who:

1. **Comprehend Complex Arguments:** Upon completion of the Politics Major, students will be able to comprehend complex and competing arguments about politics.
2. **Analyze and Think Critically:** Upon completion of the Politics Major, students will possess critical thinking skills, including skills of analysis and synthesis.
3. **Effectively Communicate:** Upon completion of the Politics Major, students will be able to communicate complex ideas clearly both in writing and in speech.
4. **Possess Informational and Disciplinary Literacy:** Upon completion of the Politics Major, students will be able to gather political facts and ideas and will have mastered basic methods and concepts of social science inquiry.
5. **Grasp Essential Political Ideas:** Upon completion of the Politics Major, students will understand multiple perspectives on a range of political issues and grasp competing theories of politics and political behavior.
6. **Know Essential Political Facts:** Upon completion of the Politics Major, students will know basic concepts at work in the political world and possess significant knowledge of government institutions, political behavior, and political actors.
7. **Know the Discipline:** Upon completion of the Politics Major, students will grasp the basic history, vocabulary, key concepts, and competing concepts at work in four of the major disciplinary subfields of political science and have successfully engaged in more advanced work in more than one those same subfields: political theory, comparative politics, international relations, and U.S. politics.

III. Serving the College Mission and the Goals of General Education

The SUNY Potsdam web site declares, under the heading of General Education, that each “Potsdam College Graduate” possesses a range of skills, forms of knowledge, and experiences that make that individual well-rounded, liberally educated, and ready for wide range of careers and for public service. This vision – in essence both the SUNY Potsdam educational mission statement and the mission of the State University of New York taken as a whole – is matched almost item-for-item by the Politics Department Program of Study

(See http://www.potsdam.edu/academics/general_education/potsdamgradute.cfm). Specifically, the Department’s commitment to teaching critical thinking skills, advanced literacy in comprehension and communication, and basic facts, concepts, theories, and forms of analysis of the political world finds counterparts in many attributes of “the Potsdam College Graduate,” as indicated below.

SUNY Potsdam General Education Skills Taught by the Politics Program

- The ability to judge, appraise and evaluate, in matters ethical, empirical, and logical
- The ability to reason analytically, formally, symbolically and quantitatively,
- The ability to solve problems by creative synthesis of knowledge,
- The ability to organize thought and communicate in written and oral form.

SUNY Potsdam General Education Forms of Knowledge Taught by the Politics Program

- Knowledge of the heritage of Western civilization, including major artistic, scientific, technological, philosophical and social developments,
- Knowledge of a non-Western culture and an understanding of the interaction of cultures,
- Knowledge of twentieth century social institutions.

SUNY Potsdam General Education Experiences Provided by the Politics Program

- An experience of the way [social] science generates, organizes and verifies knowledge,
- An experience using a computer in an academic setting to facilitate learning.

The primary way that the Politics Department pursues these General Education goals is by means of its course offerings. For example, the Comparative, International, and American introductory courses provide basic facts that all citizens should have when they go out into the world. Also, the Politics Department teaches a host of courses that meet specific General Education requirements and/or serve the needs of several interdisciplinary programs of study. These include courses in Philosophical Inquiry, Critical Thinking, Social Analysis, American History, Western Civilization, Cross-Cultural Studies, Environmental Studies, Women's and Gender Studies, Criminal Justice, and Human Services. In addition to its academic offerings, the Department of Politics contributes to college-wide goals by offering students (not just Politics Majors) the opportunity to directly develop professional and other vocational skills by engaging in various workplace internships, including, but not limited to, placement in government and legal offices.

IV. Four Essential Learning Outcomes Linked to Measures of Assessment in this Plan

1. **Comprehend Complex Arguments:** Upon completion of the Politics Major, students will be able to comprehend complex and competing arguments about politics.
2. **Analyze and Think Critically:** Upon completion of the Politics Major, students will possess critical thinking skills, including skills of analysis and synthesis.
3. **Effectively Communicate:** Upon completion of the Politics Major, students will be able to communicate complex ideas clearly both in writing and in speech.
4. **Possess Informational and Disciplinary Literacy:** Upon completion of the Politics Major, students will be able to gather political facts and ideas and will have mastered basic methods and concepts of social science inquiry.

V. Procedures Used to Measure Student Achievement of the Four Essential Learning Outcomes

Learning Outcome #1, Comprehend Complex and Competing Arguments about Politics.

IAa. Learning Outcome #1, Complex Argument, First Measure *The final paper assignment in POLS 200 (Political Ideas).* In the final paper assignment the students must compare and contrast different ideas offered by political theorists and also critically assess those ideas.

1Ab. Learning Outcome #1, Complex Argument Assessment Rubric: Each time POLS 200 is taught the instructor will score the final papers using the following rubric and will prepare a summary of the scores and of overall student performance.

Table 1, Rubric for Complex Argument

Grade Levels	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Failing to Meet	Also Failing to Meet
Organization	Clear organization; Stays focused throughout.	Mostly organized, but loses focus once or twice.	Somewhat organized, but loses focus 3 or more times.	Has a few moments of purpose and appropriate ordering of ideas.	No clear organization; hard to follow.
Grasp of Ideas and Clarity of Presentation	Clearly summarizes the arguments of each author, covers key points, shows a solid grasp of each author's central idea and of the gist of the opposing arguments each author engages.	Is fairly clear in its summary of the arguments, covers most key points, shows a solid grasp of central claims or of most arguments made; has something clear to say about the opposing arguments engaged.	Summarizes something from the argument of each author but leaves out needed elements, is correct about at least half of claims discussed, covers a few key points but misses others, shows some grasp of at least one central claim or idea.	Mentions the arguments of each author but misses key points or mostly fails to communicate; manages to little that's clear, is sloppy in presentation, marked by frequent writing errors, and/or slightly under the minimum word requirement.	Gets very little right about most of the arguments of each author; fails to communicate anything clear; sloppy in presentation and marked by ubiquitous writing errors; and/or considerably under the minimum word requirement.
Comparison of Ideas	Clearly explains all key differences and similarities between the arguments being considered with regard to reasoning, premises, goals, questions asked, and conclusions.	Clearly explains key differences and similarities between the arguments being considered with regard to some of the following: reasoning, premises, goals, questions asked, and conclusions.	Poorly explains but identifies key differences and similarities between the arguments being considered with regard to reasoning, premises, goals, questions asked, and conclusions.	Identifies at least one key difference or similarity between the arguments with regard to some of the following: reasoning, premises, goals, questions asked, and conclusions.	Fails to identify or explain key differences or similarities between the arguments being considered.
Assessment of Ideas Presented	Asks hard questions about reasoning used by each author and takes a stand, with cogent relevant reasons provided, on which arguments are better.	Asks hard questions about the reasoning used by at least one author and takes a stand, with reasons provided, on which arguments are better.	Asks questions about the reasoning used by at least one author and takes a stand on how and why at least one argument is solid or not.	Takes a stand on the validity of arguments made, but with few or no reasons given.	Fails to takes a stand on the validity of arguments made, or takes on arguments that are not, in fact, made.
Conclusion	Has a clear, organized conclusion that wraps up the topic well and flows smoothly from the rest of the paper.	Conclusion is somewhat organized and somewhat clear; wraps up the topic well.	Disconcerting in its flow into conclusion but conclusion makes some sense relative to the rest of the paper.	Has a conclusion that is not complete or is poorly organized.	The paper just ends abruptly or its final words make no sense in connection to the rest of the paper.
Quality of Writing	Excellent.	Good.	Fair.	Rises to clarity here and there.	Remedial or worse.
Overall					

1Ac. Table 2; Reporting for Understanding Complex Argument, First Measure, Political Ideas

Complex Argument, Political Ideas	FALL N=			
	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Not Meeting
Organization				
Grasp of Ideas & Clarity of Presentation				
Comparison of Ideas				
Assessment of Ideas Presented				
Conclusion				
Quality of Writing				
Overall				

1Ba. Learning Outcome #1, Complex Argument, Second Measure *The research paper assignment in POLS 400 (Senior Seminar):* POLS 400 (Senior Seminar) is a capstone course in which each student writes a lengthy research paper based on their own research. Students have to gather, study, and summarize the contents of an extensive bibliography that provides information and competing theories on a subject of the student’s choosing. The students must also craft and assess the validity of a hypotheses based on that literature review.

1Bb. Learning Outcome #1, Complex Argument, Assessment Rubric for Second Measure

Each time POLS 400 is taught the instructor will score all of the final papers using the following rubric. Also every faculty member will score the five lowest scoring (but 2.0-or-better) papers (or will score all of the papers, if there are less than five) using the same rubric.

Table 3, Rubric for Complex Argument

Learning Outcomes	Exceeding	Meeting	Meeting	Failing to Meet
Understands existing political science theories and is able to critique them	Has correctly identified the main scholarly schools of thought, accurately summarized them, and identified their important strengths and weaknesses. Provides meaningful insights and critiques on the literature, and has sound reasons for favoring one school over another.	Has identified more than one scholarly school of thought, summarized them and identified some strengths and weakness. Demonstrates a clear understanding of the main arguments, is able to critique them, and clearly favors one school over another.	Identifies plausible schools of thought, but without demonstrating a solid understanding of the underlying arguments, or clearly stating the strengths and weaknesses of each. Reasons for choosing one school over another are vague.	Schools of thought which are identified are not scholarly, lend little insight, or are poorly conceived. Schools are not effectively summarized, and strengths and weaknesses are unconvincing. Not clear why one school is favored over another.
Shows capacity for reasoned argument	Argument clearly stated in the introduction, sustained throughout, and reinforced in the conclusion. Argument or hypothesis is innovative and compelling. Counterargument acknowledged, but makes a strong case for one argument.	Argument clearly stated, but not always sustained throughout. Argument or hypothesis is interesting and reasonable. Counterarguments acknowledged, but prove difficult to refute.	Argument only partially thought out, and/or not sustained through the narrative. Argument is plausible, if not refined. Some counterarguments acknowledged, but full implications not considered.	Argument poorly thought out, and not sustained through the narrative. Argument is not plausible, nor refined. Counterarguments largely ignored.
Produces good quality research and grasps implications	Has well-chosen cases or evidence to support thesis. Shows knowledge of cases and maintains focus on relevant evidence. Case research provides groundwork for generalizable conclusions. Summarizes implications	Has good reasons for choosing specific cases to support thesis or hypothesis. Shows knowledge of cases, but may stray from the relevant evidence. Case research provides strong conclusions. Implications	Has cases, but merits of them for studying the thesis unclear. Shows only partial knowledge of cases, omitting relevant evidence. Case research provides weak conclusions. Partial understanding of	Has cases of dubious relevance to the thesis. Knowledge of cases limited and/or evidence presented is incomplete. Unable to effectively draw conclusions from the evidence. Important implications ignored.

	of the research project without over- or understating them.	summarized adequately.	implications, only.	
Overall				

1Bc. Table 4, Reporting for Understanding Complex Ideas, Second Measure, Senior Seminar

Complex Argument, Senior Seminar	FALL N=			
CATEGORY	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Not Meeting
Understands existing political science theories				
Shows capacity for reasoned argument				
Produces good quality research				
Overall				

2. Learning Outcome #2, Analyze and Think Critically:

2Aa. Learning Outcome #2, Think Critically, First Measure; Students in two sections of POLS 110 (Introduction to U.S. Politics) will be asked to write an essay in response to a selection from “Federalist Paper #10,” by James Madison, in which they respond to the following:

- What is a faction, according to Madison?
- Identify two causes of a faction in a democracy, according to Madison.
- What is the difference between a democracy and a republic, according to Madison?
- What is the main problem with modern government identified by Madison and what solution does he offer?

2Ab. Learning Outcome #2, Think Critically, Assessment Rubric for First Measure; The instructors of POLS 110 will score student responses using the following rubric.

Table 5, Rubric for Thinking Critically

CATEGORY	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Failing to Meet
Identifies faction as Madison identifies it	Student accurately defines faction in his/her own words and provides a relevant example.	Student defines faction in his/her own words but could have provided a better example.	Student somewhat accurately defines faction but does so using text’s words; doesn’t provide a good relevant example	Student incorrectly defines faction and doesn’t provide a relevant example.
Identifies supposed causes of factions.	Student accurately identifies all the causes of faction listed and gives a clear explanation of why they are important.	Student accurately locates 2 causes of faction and gives a reasonable explanation of why they are important.	Student accurately identifies 2 causes of faction. The explanation of their importance is weak.	Student identifies 1 cause of faction, if any, and inadequately explains its/their importance.
Distinguishing a democracy and a republic.	Using their own words the student accurately distinguishes the important differences and gives a clear explanation of why the distinctions are important.	Using their own words the student accurately distinguishes the differences but provides an unclear / weak explanation of why the distinctions are important.	The student inaccurately distinguishes the differences and provides an unclear explanation of why the distinctions are important.	The student fails to accurately distinguish the differences and doesn’t provide a clear explanation of why the distinctions are important.
Summarization	Clearly and accurately identifies the main idea(s), and includes most of the relevant, supporting details. Response is written in the student's own words.	Identifies the main idea(s) correctly, and includes many supporting details. Response is written mostly in the student's own words. May contain minor inaccuracies.	Identifies the main idea(s), and includes some supporting details. Much of the response is copied directly from the text. May contain major inaccuracies.	The main idea is stated incorrectly or may be missing; contains few, incorrect, or irrelevant details, or none.
Overall				

2Ac. Table 6, Reporting for Thinking Critically, First Measure, Intro to U.S. Politics:

Critical Thinking, U.S. Politics	FALL 2010 N=			
CATEGORY	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Not Meeting
Defines: Faction				
Identifies causes of factions				
Distinguishing democracy & republic				
Summarization				
Overall				

2Ba. Learning Outcome #2, Think Critically, Second Measure; Senior Seminar Paper: POLS 400 (Senior Seminar) is a capstone course in which each student writes a lengthy research paper based on their own research. Students have to gather, study, and summarize the contents of an extensive bibliography that provides information and competing theories on a subject of the student’s choosing. The students must also craft and assess the validity of a hypotheses based on that literature review. This project requires extensive critical thinking skills.

2Bb. Learning Outcome #2, Think Critically, Assessment Rubric for Second Measure; Each time POLS 400 is taught the instructor will score all of the final papers using the rubric above (Table 5).

2Bc. Table 7, Reporting for Thinking Critically, Second Measure, Senior Seminar

Critical Thinking, Senior Seminar FALL	N=			
CATEGORY	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Not Meeting
Understands existing political science theories				
Shows capacity for reasoned argument				
Produces good quality research				
Overall				

3. Learning Outcome #3, Effectively Communicate

3Aa. Learning Outcome #3, Communicate, First Measure; Students in POLS 200 (Political Ideas) will make an oral presentation (“Be Political”) near the end of the semester in which they take the class, and those presentations will be scored based on how effectively the student communicates clear and appropriate ideas.

3Ab. Learning Outcome #3, Effectively Communicate, Assessment Rubric for First Measure

Table 8, Rubric for Effectively Communicate

Desiderata	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Failing to Meet
Organization	Clear organization, reinforced by media. Stays focused throughout.	Mostly organized, but loses focus once or twice.	Somewhat organized, but loses focus 3 or more times.	No clear organization to the presentation.
Content	Incorporates relevant concepts into presentation where appropriate; explains conceptual and factual content accurately and clearly.	Incorporates several needed concepts but fails to incorporate others; explains some concepts well and explains other poorly.	Incorporates relevant concepts but also spends time on irrelevant concepts; some concepts and facts are explained inaccurately.	Key concepts are not integrated into presentation or are badly misunderstood; the content is either not there or does not come across.
Conclusion	A clearly organized conclusion wraps up the topic well, ties the speech together, and has a note of finality, and the transition into the conclusion is	The conclusion is not complete or fully organized, or does not sum up all that was said. The transition to the conclusion is not entirely smooth.	The transition to the conclusion is disconcerting and the content seems not to fit with what came before.	The conclusion is omitted. The essay just ends.

	smooth.			
Delivery	Author's voice is always clear and easy to understand. It is always clear whose views are being given and why.	Author's voice is often clear and easy to understand. It is often clear whose views are being given and why.	The essay is often hard to follow. It is often not clear whose views are being given, much less why.	The essay does not communicate clear messages.
Overall				

3Ac. Table 9, Reporting for Effective Communication, Political Ideas

Effectively Communicate, Political Ideas FALL N=				
CATEGORY	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Not Meeting
Organization				
Content				
Slides/Media				
Conclusion				
Delivery				

3Ba. Learning Outcome #3, Communicate, Second Measure; Senior Seminar Oral Presentations:

Each time POLS 400 is taught each Politics faculty member will attend the class session during which the students make their final presentations.

3Bb. Learning Outcome #3, Communicate, Assessment Rubric for Second Measure; Each student presentation will be scored by each faculty member using the following rubric. The results will be discussed by the Department during the annual “close the circle” meeting.

Table 10, Rubric for Effectively Communicate in an Oral Presentation

Desiderata	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Failing to Meet
Organization	Clear organization, reinforced by media. Stays focused throughout.	Mostly organized, but loses focus once or twice.	Somewhat organized, but loses focus 3 or more times.	No clear organization to the presentation.
Content	Incorporates relevant concepts into presentation where appropriate; explains conceptual and factual content accurately and clearly.	Incorporates several needed concepts but fails to incorporate others; explains some concepts well and explains other poorly.	Incorporates relevant concepts but also spends time on irrelevant concepts; some concepts and facts are explained inaccurately.	Key concepts are not integrated into presentation or are badly misunderstood; the content is either not there or does not come across.
Slides/Media	Slides/media support the presentation, are easy to read and understand and are to the point. Slides contain no spelling or grammatical errors.	80% of the slides/media are easy to read and understand and are to the point. Others contain too much information, are unclear, or are off-track. Slides contain 1-2 spelling or grammatical errors.	50% of the slides/media are easy to read and understand and to the point. Slides contain 3-5 spelling or grammatical errors.	80% of the slides/media are difficult to read and understand. Slides contain more than five spelling and grammar errors.
Conclusion	A clearly organized conclusion wraps up the topic well, ties the speech together, and has a note of finality, and the transition into the conclusion is smooth.	The conclusion is not complete or fully organized, or does not sum up all that was said. The transition to the conclusion is not entirely smooth.	The transition to the conclusion is disconcerting and the content seems not to fit with what came before.	The conclusion is omitted. The speech just ends.
Delivery	Voice is clear, easy to hear and understand. The speaker enunciates. The pace is neither too fast nor too slow.	Problems exist with either enunciation or pace, but these problems occur during less than 20% of the speech.	Problems exist with either enunciation or pace. These problems occur during more than 50% of the speech, but not during more than 80% of the speech.	The speaker’s voice is hard to hear and understand. The speaker mumbles. The pace is either too fast or too slow.
Overall				

3Bb. Table 11, Reporting for Effective Communication, Second Measure, Senior Seminar

Effectively Communicate, Senior Seminar FALL N =				
CATEGORY	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Not Meeting
Organization				
Content				

Slides/Media				
Conclusion				
Delivery				
Overall				

4. Learning Outcome #4, Possess Informational and Disciplinary Literacy

4Aa. Learning Outcome #4, Informational and Disciplinary Literacy, First Measure: Methodology Exercise #5 from POLS 140 (Intro to International Relations): The student has to accomplish four tasks: 1) Provide a paraphrase that captures the meaning of a piece of text using own words and proper citation; 2) Provide a direct citation using the exact words of the source and proper citation; further, the citation needs to be embedded in a broader thought to avoid mere repetition; 3) List the names of two scholarly journals in the field of International Relations and give evidence as to why these journals are considered scholarly (e.g.: length or articles; peer review system; frequency of publication; absence of catchy photos; etc.); 4) Provide publisher, place of publication, and year of first publication for one of the two journals as well as information on the current issue.

4Ab. Learning Outcome #4, Informational and Disciplinary Literacy, Assessment Rubric for First Measure

The Methodology exercise will be scored using the following rubric. The Politics faculty will consider the aggregate results, rather than the grades which the students receive, during the Department’s annual “close the circle” assessment meeting

Table 12, Rubric for Informational and Disciplinary Literacy; Emphasis on Informational Literacy

Exceeding	1) Consistent paraphrase using own words, source is cited; 2) direct citation is embedded in a broader context and formally correct; 3) two scholarly journals are listed, a reasonable explanation is given as to why these seem to be scholarly; 4) publisher, place of publication and first year of publication are correctly listed; information on last issue is provided
Exceeding	One minor mistake in any category
Exceeding	Two minor mistakes
Meeting	Three minor or one major mistake
Meeting	Four minor or one major/ one minor mistake
Approaching	Five minor or one major/ two minor
Approaching	Six minor or two major mistakes (or on major three minor)
Not Meeting	Seven minor or ... mistakes
Not Meeting	Eight minor or ... mistakes
Not Meeting	Nine minor/ three major mistakes
Not Meeting	More mistakes than in 1.0

Table 13, Reporting Table for I and D Literacy, First Measure, Intro to International Relations

Overall	Excellent	Meeting	Approaching	Not Meeting

Examples for minor mistakes: Name of the author or year of publication is missing in direct citation or paraphrase; page number is missing in direct citation; one journal is not in the field of International Relations; place of publication or first year of publication is wrong.

Examples for major mistakes: Paraphrase does not represent content of original source; direct citation is not well embedded; instead of journals, articles are provided.

In the grading scale, one major mistake is equivalent to three minor mistakes.

4Ba. Learning Outcome #4, Informational and Disciplinary Literacy, Second Measure

Paper #1 from POLS 342 (Approaching Political Puzzles):

Politics Majors are required to take POLS 342, Approaching Political Puzzles. Students learn of the various research tools political scientists use to explore political questions and study the competing epistemological perspectives that guide thinkers and researchers when they design and/or choose among these tools. Students also study the history of political science; e.g. Popper’s falsification, Kuhn’s revolution in science, and the difficulty the social sciences have in trying to find a niche between the humanities and physical sciences. Different professors teach the course in different ways but in all cases the students are required to learn to formulate and test hypotheses, interpret and critically assess political data, state a research problem, conduct a literature review and bibliography, devise testable hypotheses, operationalize political concepts, present findings, and grasp basic forms of statistical analysis as might be found in an article in a political science journal.

4Bb. Learning Outcome #4, Informational and Disciplinary Literacy, Assessment Rubric for Second Measure
One of the POLS 342 paper submissions will be scored using the following rubric.

Table 14, Rubric for Informational and Disciplinary Literacy (with the Emphasis on “Disciplinary”)

	Exceeding	Meeting	Approaching	Faili
Understanding of Variables and Grasp of Ideas Expressed and Assumed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Excellent description of concepts, variables, & proposed relationships -Excellent discussion of theoretical relationship between the concepts & variables. - Good explanation of reasons why relationships are expected to occur. -Excellent discussion of theoretical weaknesses. -Clearly explained operationalization of variables, concept validity, & weaknesses in operationalization. -Excellent discussion of substantive & empirical results. -Excellent discussion / critique of article & author’s justifications, explanations, & conclusions. -Excellent discussion the ontological & epistemological assumptions of the authors &/or tradition. -Distinguished b/w viewpoints of author & those the author described. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good description of concepts & variables & proposed relationships -Good discussion of theoretical relationship between the concepts & variables. - Provided reasons why relationships are expected to occur. -Some discussion of theoretical weaknesses. -Good explanation of variable’s operationalization, concept validity, & weaknesses in operationalization. -Good discussion of substantive & empirical results. -Good discussion/ critique of article & author’s justifications, explanations, & conclusions. -Good discussion of ontological & epistemological assumptions of the authors &/or tradition. -Distinguished b/w viewpoints of author & those the author described. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfactory description of concepts, variables, & the proposed relationships -Satisfactory discussion of the theoretical relationships b/w concepts/variables. -Provided some reason for relationships. -Adequate discussion of theoretical weaknesses. -Some explanation of variable operationalization, concept validity & weaknesses in operationalization. -Satisfactory but little discussion of substantive & empirical results. -Adequate discussion but weak critique of article & author’s justifications, explanations, & conclusions. -Adequate discussion of ontological & epistemological assumptions of the authors &/or tradition. -Missing some important points. - Difficulty distinguishing b/w viewpoints of author & those the author describes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor vari relat -We relat conc - Pro relat -Poc wea -Litt oper conc oper -We subs -Poc of an expl -Poc & ep the a -Ina or no -Did view auth
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Correctly identified paradigm/tradition of the article. -Excellent support for argument by discussing the premises of theory -Excellent explanation of how premises fit with assumptions of tradition. Excellent discussion of how the research is progressive (or not) & considered >2 viewpoints of progress & applied them to the research -Excellent demonstration of how the research is explanatory (or not) by considering >2 conceptions & applied them to the article -Excellent or special attention is given to the theoretical relationship component of the paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly identified paradigm/tradition of the article. -Good support for argument by discussing some premises of theory -Good explanation of how premises fit with assumptions of tradition. -Good discussion of how the research is progressive (or not) & considered 2 viewpoints of progress & applied them to the research -Good demonstration of how the research is explanatory (or not) by considering 2 conceptions & applied them to the article -Good attention is given to the theoretical relationship component of the paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly identified paradigm/tradition of the article. -Some support, but not convincing evidence, is given for premises of theory -Satisfactory examination of how premises fit with assumptions of tradition. -Adequate discussion how the research is progressive (or not) & considered >2 viewpoints of progress & applied them to the research -Satisfactory demonstration of how the research is explanatory: didn’t consider 2 conceptions or apply them fully to the article -Some attention given to the theoretical relationship component of the paper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inco para artic -Litt theo -Litt prem tradi rese - Lit & he pher -Litt the t com

Organization	Very well organized. Logical sequencing & excellent transitions of ideas.	Well organized, w/ some trouble in sequencing &/or transitions.	Fairly well organized , but w/ some trouble w/ sequencing & transitions.	Poor diffi
Writing	Free from grammar, spelling, mechanical writing mistakes. Proper format & sources properly cited.	Few grammar, spelling & mechanical writing mistakes. Proper format & sources cited properly.	Several grammar, spelling & mechanical writing mistakes. Some sources improperly cited & or improper format.	An u gram writ citat form
w/in limit: Yes/ No If no, n words: _____ = --% _____				
Overall				

4Bc. Table 15, Reporting for I and D Literacy, Second Measure, Approaching Political Puzzles

Informational and Disciplinary Literacy (Approaching Political Puzzles) SPRING N=			
Excellent	Meeting	Approaching	Not Meeting

VI. Closing the Circle

“Closing the Circle refers to the regular and routine departmental use of assessment results to collectively consider how the Program of Study and Instruction is faring when it comes to the achievement of departmental Learning Outcomes and to adjust the Program of Study and Instruction accordingly (and, of course, to perhaps adjust the Learning Outcomes as well).

Procedure #1: Each semester the faculty of the Department will attend (and already do attend) the Senior Seminar Classes in which the students make their final presentations. This process is described above because the attending professors score the presentations using a common rubric linked to Learning Outcomes. The process is described here because the practice of bringing together the faculty in this way supports the already impressive culture of assessment and program reevaluation in the Department.

Procedure #2: The Politics faculty will take time at least once a year to gather and collectively consider the effectiveness of the Department’s programming and curriculum, in the light of the learning outcomes that have been specified, the data that has been gathered from the faculty’s observation of Senior Seminar performance, and of course the data that has been gathered using the measured specified above.
