

Appendix 1: Political Science Assessment Cycle Calendar

CYCLE STAGE	Fall 2011	Spring 2012	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Fall 2013	Spring 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Fall 2015
SLO Assessment	202 204	209		201	202 204 205	206 209		201	202 204 205
Analyze Results & Plan Improvements	201 205	202 204 206	209		201	202 204 205	206 209		201
Plan Implementation		201 205	202 204 206	209		201	202 204 206	206 209	
Post-Implementation SLO Assessment			<u>201</u> <u>205</u>	202 204 206	209		201	202 204 205	206 209

Appendix 2: CPAS Documents

Course or Program Assessment Summary [http://academic.cuesta.edu/sloa/docs/Course and Program Assessment Summary F 2011.docx](http://academic.cuesta.edu/sloa/docs/Course_and_Program_Assessment_Summary_F_2011.docx)

This form can be used to record SLO assessment plans and results for courses or programs. It is recommended that this document be stored on a group drive, or in MyCuesta.

Division: **Social Sciences**

Program: **Political Science**

Date: **February 2015**

v. 3 2012

Courses in program, or course: **POLS 201 – Introduction to Political Science**

Faculty involved with the assessment and analysis: **Aaron Rodrigues and Kathryn Logan**

Course-to-program outcome mapping document** is completed Yes No

1	<p>Student Learning Outcome Statements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Program</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To analyze the political nature and significance of current world events and personalities 2. To identify the vocabulary of political science in order to communicate political ideas with clarity and precision 3. Assess student's own life experiences in terms of the concepts of political power 4. Distinguish the functions, structures, and practices of the American political system with other democratic and non-democratic nation-states 5. Recognize normative theories in order to analyze the relationship between individuals' personal values and political attitudes 6. Differentiate between acceptable and non-acceptable political behavior 7. Appraise the relationship between economics and politics 8. To analyze the importance of international relations/comparative politics 9. To recognize the significance of cultural diversity and its impact on politics
2	<p>Assessment Methods Plan (identify assessment instruments, scoring rubrics, SLO mapping diagrams)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student self-assessment surveys administered at the end of the Fall 2014 semester • Student in-class essays administered in 2/3 of the examinations, graded according to a 10-point rubric for each essay (one course section) that assess SLO 1 • Objective examination questions that assess SLOs 5, 6, and 7 (one course section)
3	<p>Assessment Administration Plan (date(s), sample size or selection of course sections, scoring procedures, etc.)</p>	<p>Student self-assessment surveys were administered in Fall 2014. Assessment will be conducted every 2.5 years.</p>

4	Assessment Results Summary (summarize Data)	<p>39 students were assessed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SLO 1 – 76% of the students felt they did very well/fairly well (a combined average of SLO 1 and SLO 2 on the survey) ● SLO 2 – 67% of the students felt they did very well/fairly well ● SLO 3 – 75% of the students felt they did very well/fairly well ● SLO 4 – 79% of the students felt they did very well/fairly well ● SLO 5 – 74% of the students felt they did very well/fairly well ● SLO 6 – 85% of the students felt they did very well/fairly well ● SLO 7 – 85% of the students felt they did very well/fairly well ● SLO 8 – 82% of the students felt they did very well/fairly well ● SLO 9 – 82% of the students felt they did very well/fairly well
5	Discussion of Assessment Procedure and Results, and Effectiveness of Previous Improvement Plans	<p>The survey results for SLO 2 suggest that entering students are not familiar with key concepts, terminology, and vocabulary fundamental to the course; this is also an introductory course with no prerequisites.</p> <p>The survey results for the other SLOs suggest that ¾ of the students feel they have a strong grasp and comprehension of course material.</p> <p>For one course section (19 students), the previous improvement plan (4/30/12) was assessed, which addressed more specific, objective exam questions that incorporated SLOs. Three new, specific objective questions had been added that addressed (SLOs 6, 7, and 9). The results for SLO 6 was that 84% of the students got this question correct; for SLO 7, 84% of the students got this question correct; and for SLO 9, 79% of the students got this question correct.</p> <p>For one course section (20 students), students wrote brief, in-class essays, which were administered throughout the semester on 2/3 of the exams; students had to <i>analyze the nature and significance of current world events and personalities</i> (e.g. the Ebola Crisis, U.S. policy towards ISIS, student protests in Hong Kong, and Republican Party members’ reactions to President Obama’s executive order on immigration); each student chose two essay topics per exam (worth 10 points each), making up 25% of each exam; the <i>average score</i> on these essays was 70%, indicating that most students were able to demonstrate their ability to identify and examine the controversial nature of political events and the different personalities involved; on the survey for SLO1, 90% felt that they had the ability (very well/fairly well) to analyze current world events, and on the survey for SLO2, 80% felt that they had the ability (very well/fairly well) to analyze political personalities.</p>

6	Recommended Changes & Plans for Implementation of Improvements	To strengthen SLO 1 outcomes, both instructors will administer a vocabulary quiz before the first major exam that includes fundamental terminology. This will allow instructors to evaluate if students are/or not comprehending key terms essential for their success in the course.
7	Description or evidence of dialog among course or program-level faculty about assessment plan and results	On February 13, 2015, Kathryn Logan and Aaron Rodrigues met to assess and analyze the data, and make necessary adjustments to improve our student learning outcomes. We plan to reassess and measure our effectiveness in 2.5 years (Spring 2017).

**Course and program level outcomes are required by ACCJC to be aligned. Each program needs to complete a program map to show the alignment. See examples of completed CPAS and program mapping documents are available at <http://academic.cuesta.edu/sloa>

Introduction to Political Science (POLS 201)

Program Outcomes

Define core terminology integral to the study of politics

Analyze the roles of individuals, groups, and institution in political processes

Explain the interrelationships among political processes

Interpret empirical data and qualitative claims.

Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of descriptive and normative theories about politics

Formulate practical responses to political issues/problems

Recognize the wide array of political experiences and perspectives

Value the importance of increased knowledge of the political world

Course SLO's

Analyze the political nature and significance of current world events and personalities

Identify the vocabulary of political science in order to communicate political ideas with clarity and precision

Assess student's own life experiences in terms of the concepts of politics and power

Distinguish the functions, structures and practices of the American political system with other democratic and non-democratic nation-states

Recognize normative theories in order to analyze the relationship between individuals' personal values and political attitudes

Differentiate between acceptable and non-acceptable political behavior

Appraise the relationship of economics and politics

Analyze the importance of international relations/comparative politics

Recognize the significance of cultural diversity and its impact on politics

Course or Program Assessment Summary

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Division: **Social Sciences**

Program: **Political Science**

Date: **October 10, 2013**

v. 3 2012

Courses in program, or course: POLS 202 - Government and Politics in the United States

Faculty involved with the assessment and analysis: **Kathryn Logan**

Course-to-program outcome mapping document** is completed Yes X No _____

1	<p>Student Learning Outcome Statements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Program</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe the structure and function of U.S. and California governmental institutions and political processes 2. Generalize about the distribution of power in American politics 3. Appraise the extent of democratic participation in American politics 4. Explain how personal and group advantage is pursued in American politics 5. Analyze critically and objectively contemporary political issues and public policies 6. Explain the historical context of contemporary political issues and public policies (this SLO is a slight revision of SLO 6 in the Spring 2013 student self-assessment survey. The former SLO 6 read, "Explain the historical origins of contemporary governmental institutions and political issues" 7. Value informed democratic citizenship 8. Demonstrate empirically based political judgment
2	<p>Assessment Methods Plan (identify assessment instruments, scoring rubrics, SLO mapping diagrams)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student self-assessments administered at the end of the Spring 2013 semester • Examination questions pertaining to historical context of contemporary political issues and public policies (SLO 6)
3	<p>Assessment Administration Plan (date(s), sample size or selection of course sections, scoring procedures, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One course section was assessed in Spring 2013 with 18 students responding to the self-assessment surveys • Two examination essay questions were assessed for one course; they were based on film material and class discussions. Responses were collected among 21 students in the 8th week and among 19 students in the 13th week, and assessed using separate grading rubrics (essay questions directly assessed knowledge of current political issues and public policy responses)
4	<p>Assessment Results Summary (summarize Data)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the student self-assessment surveys, the mean response on the 8 items in the survey ranged from 3.61 to 4.56. The lowest item (3.61, SLO 6) relates to explaining the historical context of contemporary political issues and public policies, whereas the highest item (4.56, SLO 2) relates to generalizing about the distribution of power in American politics. • On the essay questions, students had a choice, so not all students were assessed on the same political issue or policy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Essay question (8th week) – 6/21 students answered this question on the 2008 financial crisis. They had to

		<p>demonstrate their understanding of the historical factors that led up to the crisis, the interests involved, and government response in the form of policy outcome. The average score was 16.6/20 (83%).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Essay question (13th week) – 7/19 students answered this question on the issue of the rising U.S. national debt. They had to demonstrate their understanding of the historical economic factors that have led to the accumulation of national debt and the role that both the president and Congress play in budgetary decisions. Students also needed to demonstrate their knowledge of policy outcomes over the course of different administrations. The average score was 14.3/20 (72%).
5	Discussion of Assessment Procedure and Results, and Effectiveness of Previous Improvement Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mean scores on all items within the student self-assessment survey suggest that the students feel they are learning the material effectively and would be prepared for further courses in the field. The item with the lowest score (SLO 6) is an area that requires students to demonstrate their understanding and knowledge of political issues and policies within an historical context. This is not surprising because this is an introductory course without prerequisites and many students entering this course generally have less knowledge of historical influences on contemporary issues and problems. That students assess themselves as they did for SLO 6 suggests that an adequate amount of them felt they learned the material well. The strong score for SLO 2 suggests that students feel very confident in making generalizations about the distribution of power in American politics. • The average score on the 8th week essay question (83%) indicates that the students had a good grasp of historical context of the issue and policy response. • The average score on the 13th week essay question was 72%, indicating that this question proved more challenging. The students who received a low score overall on this question did not adequately analyze the different policies of various presidents over history (since 1980s), even though the film and subsequent discussions covered this material. They also displayed lower scores on the various factors that influence government decisions to run deficits (wars, recessions, mandatory vs. non-mandatory spending). After analyzing the results of this question, it seems that the issue of the growing national debt is much a more complex issue for students to grasp. • The results from the two different essay questions portray the overall split among the student responses for SLO 6 (half feel they are doing well or fairly well in this area, whereas half feel they are doing somewhat well or slightly well. The plan has been effective in helping students to gain skills and abilities in this area. The inclusion of more data (more courses assessed instead of just one) would probably have provided stronger results when looking at historical data (In Spring 2010, out of six sections assessed, the former SLO 6 highest mean score was 4.44)
6	Recommended Changes & Plans for Implementation of Improvements	<p>There should be continued attention towards making sure that learning outcomes are informing the material in the course and that any new assignments that might be created concretely address those issues.</p> <p>With respect to the former SLO 6, the student self-assessment results from the Spring 2010 survey indicated a need in our course Plan for Improvement to focus more on the historical origins of contemporary governmental institutions and political issues. As a result, my focus this past assessment cycle had been on the historical influences of both political institutions and contemporary issues. The Spring 2013 assessment, with its revised SLO statement (SLO 6) indicates that there will need to be continued discussion and coverage of the historical factors that influence contemporary political issues and public policies. On my part, I will revise the essay question on the U.S. national debt issue so that students can focus more on how economic and political interests drive budgetary decisions over time.</p>

7	Description or evidence of dialog among course or program-level faculty about assessment plan and results	There was only one faculty member who assessed this course in Spring 2013. The results of the survey and the updated CPAS have been sent to course and program-level faculty.
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Course or Program Assessment Summary

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Division: **Social Science**

Program: **Political Science**

Date: **4/29/2012**

v. 3 2012

Courses in program, or course: POLS 204 _____

Faculty involved with the assessment and analysis: **Aaron Rodrigues, Kathryn Logan, Victor Krulikowski**

Course-to-program outcome mapping document** is completed Yes No

1	Student Learning Outcome Statements <input type="checkbox"/> Program <input type="checkbox"/> Course	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and explain concepts specific to understanding world politics. 2. Differentiate between the core philosophical approaches to understanding international relations. 3. Analyze the various objectives of nation-states. 4. Explain the role of sovereignty and how it impacts relations between different forms of political systems 5. Distinguish different types of actors that influence world affairs. 6. Describe the institutions and processes that create and implement US foreign policy. 7. Objectively evaluate the policies and actions of the US and other actors.
2	Assessment Methods Plan (identify assessment instruments, scoring rubrics, SLO mapping diagrams)	Student self-assessments administered at the end of the semester.
3	Assessment Administration Plan (date(s), sample size or selection of course sections, scoring procedures, etc.)	Course was assessed in Fall 2011 in one section (only one section is taught per semester) with approximately 30 students responding.
4	Assessment Results Summary (summarize Data)	The mean response on the seven items in the survey ranged from 4.00 to 4.48. The lowest item (4.00, SLO 6) relates to describing institutions and processes creating US foreign policy

		while the highest (4.48, SLO 4) refers to explaining the role of sovereignty and how it effects relations between states with different types of political systems.
5	Discussion of Assessment Procedure and Results, and Effectiveness of Previous Improvement Plans	The mean scores on all items suggest students are learning the material effectively and would be prepared for further courses in the field. The item with the lowest mean score is one of the areas that is the most detailed and nuanced and one with which students generally don't enter the class with much prior knowledge. That the students assess themselves as strongly as they did suggests they learned that material fairly well.
6	Recommended Changes & Plans for Implementation of Improvements	Continued attention should be paid to making sure the learning outcomes are informing the material covered in the class and that any new assignments that might be created concretely address those issues.
7	Description or evidence of dialog among course or program-level faculty about assessment plan and results	There is currently only one full-time instructor teaching this course and the course is not part of a formal sequence. In the past year a part-time instructor has had the opportunity to teach a few sections of this class. Victor Krulikowski and Kathryn Logan did meet to discuss the implications of the survey results.

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Division: **Social Sciences** Program: **Political Science** Date: **4/30/12**

v. 3 2012

Courses in program, or course: _____ POLS 205 Law and
 Politic _____

Faculty involved with the assessment and analysis: **Aaron Rodrigues**

Course-to-program outcome mapping document** is completed Yes _____ No _____

1	Student Learning Outcome Statements <input type="checkbox"/> Program <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course	<u>1. Describe the structure and function of the federal and state judiciaries</u> <u>2. Explain the political and non-political characteristics of federal courts</u> <u>3. Explain and evaluate arguments about the use of judicial review</u> <u>4. Apply philosophical and jurisprudential arguments incorporating liberty, government authority, individual responsibility and punishment</u> <u>5. Apply philosophical and jurisprudential arguments involving civil liberties and civil rights</u> <u>6. Describe the roles and obligations of the different actors within the legal system/process</u> <u>7. Explain the differences between original and appellate jurisdiction</u>
2	Assessment Methods Plan (identify assessment instruments, scoring rubrics, SLO mapping diagrams)	Student self assessment forms.
3	Assessment Administration Plan (date(s), sample size or selection of course sections, scoring procedures, etc.)	Student self assessment Fall 2011. Assessment will be conducted once every year, since this course is only taught once a year.
4	Assessment Results Summary	Survey data attached.

	(summarize Data)	<p>a. 16 students were surveyed.</p> <p>b. Students have a strong grasp of the structural, procedural, jurisdictional, institutional mechanisms, and the legal actors in the administration of justice in America.</p> <p>c. Students have a solid understanding of the importance of a legal education.</p> <p>d. Students' scores on specifically criminal law and civil law procedures, and the various types of laws and legal systems were the weakest.</p>
5	Discussion of Assessment Procedure and Results, and Effectiveness of Previous Improvement Plans	Assessment highlighted the strong areas of student performance and the weak areas that need to be strengthened. Overall, the assessment was positive. Will incorporate more specific objective questions on exams that incorporate our SLO outcomes.
6	Recommended Changes & Plans for Implementation of Improvements	Will spend more time on criminal law and civil procedures, and the various types of laws and legal systems; instead of two lectures for each specific topic, will increase it to three lectures; will assign more practical exercises in criminal law and civil law procedures to reinforce the lecture/theoretical material; will highlight and reinforce the differences amongst the various legal systems.
7	Description or evidence of dialog among course or program-level faculty about assessment plan and results	I am the only full-time faculty teaching this course. There is no pre-requisite sequential course before this course or no post sequential course after this course. Instructor has discussed the results with other full-time political science instructor.

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Division: **Social Sciences** Program: **Political Science** Date: **May 2012**

v. 3 2012

Courses in program, or course: **Comparative Government and Politics (POLS 206)**

Faculty involved with the assessment and analysis: Kathryn Logan, Aaron Rodrigues

Course-to-program outcome mapping document** is completed: Yes X No

1	Student Learning Outcome Statements ___ Program <u> X </u> Course	1. Identify and assess the Systems Analysis approach to political processes, structure, practices, and behavior 2. Compare and contrast the essential components and variations in foreign government systems 3. Identify and evaluate the core differences between democratic and non-democratic nation-states 4. Analyze and appraise the role that history and culture plays in the shaping of democratic and non-democratic nation-states 5. Recognize the current problems that democratic and non-democratic nation-states will have to confront 6. Construct and critique terms and concepts that are required for further study in comparative politics 7. Evaluate the impact that globalization is having on political and economic systems 8. Evaluate the impact that globalization is having on the information-age and technology 9. Recognize the importance of multiculturalism and diversity in analysis of foreign government systems
2	Assessment Methods Plan (identify assessment instruments, scoring rubrics, SLO mapping diagrams)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Student self-assessment surveys administered at the end of the semester o Term papers in which individual students had to write a research paper that explored a political system, while applying the Systems Analysis Model
3	Assessment Administration Plan (date(s), sample size or selection)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Course was assessed in the Spring 2012 semester (there is only one section taught per semester) with approximately 35 students responding to the student self-assessment surveys

	of course sections, scoring procedures, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Term papers were collected in the 14th week of the semester and assessed using a grading rubric (34 students turned them in)
4	Assessment Results Summary (summarize Data)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On the student self-assessment surveys, the mean response on the 9 items in the survey ranged from 4.00 to 4.69. The lowest item (4.00, SLO 6) relates to constructing and critiquing terms and concepts required for further study in comparative politics, whereas the highest item (4.69, SLO 3), refers to identifying and evaluating the core differences between democratic and non-democratic nation-states. The average grade on the term paper was 83% (34 students), indicating that students had a good understanding of the Systems Analysis model and were able to apply it to individual case studies. In the area of demonstrating an ability to critique terms and concepts (SLO 6), students were strong in most areas, such as <i>government institutions, policy making and policy outcomes</i>. However, I did find that students in general did not adequately critique the terms/concepts of <i>interest articulation and aggregation</i> when analyzing the party and interest group systems of their countries. Students clearly identified major group/party ideologies and policies, but not how effective these institutions articulated and aggregated interests within the system. This coincides with the assessment of SLO 6 on the student self-assessment survey, in that this is an area where students may feel they can improve.
5	Discussion of Assessment Procedure and Results, and Effectiveness of Previous Improvement Plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The mean scores on all items within the student assessment survey suggest that students feel they are learning the material effectively and would be prepared for further courses in the field. The item with the lowest score (SLO 6) is an area that challenges students to critique and construct terms and concepts that are required for further study in comparative politics. Since students entering this course generally do not have much prior knowledge of the Systems Analysis model used in the study of different political systems, and they are introduced to new terminology/concepts particular to this course, students may find it challenging to critique terms/concepts, and even more challenging, to construct terms/concepts on their own. That students assess themselves as strongly as they did for SLO 6 suggests that they learned the material fairly well. The strong score for SLO 3 suggests that students feel very confident in identifying and evaluating the core differences between democratic and non-democratic nation-

		<p>states. The case-study method applied in this course gave students many opportunities to compare and contrast different political regimes, both democratic and non-democratic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The average score of 83% on the term papers shows that students are able to demonstrate their knowledge of key concepts/terminology, and that they are confident in their ability to critique terms/concepts fundamental to the study of comparative politics. The concepts of <i>interest articulation</i> and <i>aggregation</i> can be more nuanced, as there are various institutions that carry out both of these processes, and in varying degrees (i.e. political parties). The ability to construct terms and concepts that are necessary for further study in comparative politics requires a higher level of critical thinking, and some students were able to demonstrate this effectively. For instance, one student referred to South Sudan as a “satellite” state, recognizing its historical legacy of colonialism and tethered relationship with the northern Sudanese government in Khartoum. Another student inquired why Iran was identified as the only theocracy in the world. This brought forth a critique of the term “theocracy”, and whether or not there should be newly constructed terminology to differentiate de facto theocracies from institutionalized theocratic regimes.
6	Recommended Changes & Plans for Implementation of Improvements	<p>There should be continued attention towards making sure that learning outcomes are informing the material in the course and that any new assignments that might be created concretely address those issues.</p> <p>With respect to SLO 6, giving students more opportunities to critique and construct terminology and concepts may help to improve learning outcomes in this area, as well as more emphasis on the effectiveness of the processes of interest articulation and aggregation.</p>
7	Description or evidence of dialog among course or program-level faculty about assessment plan and results	<p>This course is not part of a formal sequence and has been taught by one full-time instructor. However, a part-time instructor had the opportunity to teach the course in the Spring 2012 semester. The faculty discussed the results of the assessment and an assessment plan at an informal meeting at the end of the semester.</p>

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Division: **Social Science** Program: **Political Science** Date: **4/29/2012**

v. 3 2012

Courses in program, or course: POLS 209 Introduction to Political Theory _____

Faculty involved with the assessment and analysis: **Victor Krulikowski**

Course-to-program outcome mapping document** is completed Yes X No _____

1	<p>Student Learning Outcome Statements</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Program</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Course</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describe and differentiate among diverse approaches to major concepts in political theory and inquiry; for example, political obligation, liberty, authority, rights, and equality 2. Apply diverse approaches about major concepts in political thought to hypothetical and U.S. Supreme Court cases. 3. Understand and evaluate theoretical arguments about major concepts in political thought and inquiry. 4. Recognize the relationship between political thought and its political and historical context. 5. Recognize the theoretical foundations of my own political ideas and values.
2	<p>Assessment Methods Plan (identify assessment instruments, scoring rubrics, SLO mapping diagrams)</p>	<p>Student self-assessments administered at the end of the semester. A pilot version of a direct assessment is being planned for Spring 2013.</p>
3	<p>Assessment Administration Plan (date(s), sample size or selection of course sections, scoring procedures, etc.)</p>	<p>Course was assessed in Spring 2012 in one section. Only one section of this course is taught in an entire academic year. Data is, therefore, relatively limited.</p>
4	<p>Assessment Results Summary (summarize Data)</p>	<p>Three of the five items had a mean above 4.0 with the highest reaching 4.44. Both of the other two responses were near the 4.0 mark with scores of 3.81 and 3.96.</p>
5	<p>Discussion of Assessment</p>	<p>All of the question items received the highest number of</p>

	Procedure and Results, and Effectiveness of Previous Improvement Plans	scores in either the “fairly well” or “very well” categories suggesting that the students were learning effectively. This is arguably the most challenging Political Science course offered at Cuesta given the theoretical nature of the material and the limited exposure of many students to such high level abstract thinking at this level in their academic career. The item that got the lowest rating from the students pertained to historical context which was also the case for POLS 202 and isn’t surprising given the introductory nature of these classes. Still, more emphasis on making concrete historical connections could be made to help further fill in some of those gaps.
6	Recommended Changes & Plans for Implementation of Improvements	Attempt to more concretely and overtly link abstract theories to their historical context.
7	Description or evidence of dialog among course or program-level faculty about assessment plan and results	There is currently only one full-time instructor teaching this course and the course is not part of a formal sequence.

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