

Idaho State University

APPROVED General Education Assessment Plan

Course:	POLS 1101 2202	GERC Decision:	APPROVED	Date:	12/08/2015
Course Title:	Introduction to Politics: Critical Thinking and Analysis				
Objective:	7	Critical Thinking			
GERC Notes:	<i>Renumbered from 2202 to 1101 for Fall 2022 catalog.</i>				
Department:	Political Science	College:	Arts & Letters		
Submitted by:	Donna Lybecker				
Dept. Chair:	Donna Lybecker				

No changes are to be made above this line.

REVISIONS: by department chair or plan authors.

For Department's use:

- Use **"Suggesting"** mode from the drop-down button near the right margin in the toolbar above to modify this Google Doc.
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CHANGES MADE by Dept.?	Yes or No	Revised by: (Name)		Date:	
Description of Changes:					
Notify GERC Rep:		GERC Rep's Name:		Date:	

For GERC's use:

Need GERC Review?		Substantive changes requiring a new Assessment Plan?	
GERC Rec'd:		Processed by GERC:	
GERC Decision:		Date:	
UCC Proposal Required?		UCC Proposal Submitted:	

Assessment Schedule:

Scheduled Rotation		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	5-Year Report
Academic Reporting Year	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	
Assessment Scheduled							
Outcome(s) Scheduled							
Annual Report Filed							
Outcome(s) Assessed							
Dept. to review & use results?		By whom?					
5-Year Report Due							

A. Course: POLS 2202 (Introduction to Politics: Critical Thinking and Analysis)

Objective: 7

B. Assessment Method(s):

Objective 7 contains 6 learning outcomes, and all of these are relevant to POLS 1101. The Department of Political Science will assess each of these learning outcomes on a 3-year rotating basis— 2 per year.

(Fall 2016: outcomes i. and ii.; Fall 2017: outcomes iii. and iv.; Fall 2018: outcomes v. and vi.)

The following materials will be collected *annually* for the purpose of assessing each learning outcome:

- syllabus, final exam, and other main assignments from each instructor
- completed final exams and/or other main assignments from 3 randomly-chosen students of each instructor

The Department of Political Science will create a committee to assess the learning outcomes of our General Education classes (including POLS 2202). The committee will assess each learning outcome according to the following procedure:

--The committee will review course materials—syllabi, final exams, and other main assignments—from the past 3 years to ensure that all sections of the course are adequately teaching, and testing for, the learning outcomes under review.

--The committee will review the collected samples of student work from the past 3 years and assess them using the devised rubric (see “Assessment Rubric”). (The Appendix contains sample questions from exams and essay topics that will be used to assess each learning outcome.)

C. What is the method for compiling/tabulating assessment results?

The committee will review the samples of student work using the Assessment Rubric and tabulate the results—i.e., the numbers of students placed in each category.

D. What is the process for evaluating and interpreting those results?

The committee will meet each fall to discuss the results of the most recent assessment. If the review of student work indicates a problem with students achieving competency in one or more areas, the committee will devise a plan to address the problem.

E. How will the department translate the findings into curriculum changes or adjustments to the assessment process?

Based on the annual review, the committee will determine what, if any, curriculum changes or adjustments to the assessment process are appropriate. Curriculum changes will be implemented with oversight from the Chair of the committee. Where modifications to the assessment process are needed, the committee will submit a revised Assessment Plan to GERC for approval.

F. Do you have any suggestions for changes to the learning outcomes that would simplify their use in the assessment process while retaining their original intent?

Appendix

Sample Exam and Essay Questions

i. Formulate/frame problems and analyze how others do so.

Sample Questions:

-- Give 3 reasons why the government of Iran might support the use of The Comparative Framework to assess their politics and 3 reasons why they would not like it. (I.e., list 3 benefits of the Comparative Method and 3 drawbacks).

-- Describe different ways that political scientists study power.

ii. Recognize and apply appropriate practices for analyzing ambiguous problems.

Sample Questions:

-- The world has over-fished (depleted) many fish species in the oceans. How would a Realist explain the cause of this problem? How would a Radical explain the cause of this problem? What would an Idealist suggest as a solution?

--Provide two different decision making approaches that can be used in analyzing complex policy problems. Critique each approach.

iii. Identify and apply relevant information for problem solving.

Sample Questions:

-- Use a five step decision making model (define the problem, develop criteria, development alternatives, evaluate alternatives, make a recommendation) for a policy issue facing either the US or another country.

-- Which type of voting system (of the types we discussed in class/ that were discussed in the article "Are we using the worst voting procedure?") is most representative and why?

iv. Create, analyze, and evaluate/interpret diverse perspectives and solutions.

Sample Questions:

-- Use the case of government providing free needles to drug users to explore the value conflict inherent in public policy solutions. What does science say about the usefulness of this approach in reducing disease transmission? What values and ideologies come into play when the solution is discussed or implemented? What is your evaluation of the policy?

-- Briefly and generally list problems with clear-cut logging of forests. Use the four environmental worldviews (market liberal, institutionalist, social green, bio-environmentalist) to explain policy solutions to address the concern surrounding clear-cutting. (Give one solution for each of the four worldviews and briefly explain why it is a solution according to the given worldview.)

v. Establish a reasoned framework for drawing conclusions and/or recommending solutions.

Sample Questions:

-- Use the rational model of decision making (including cost-benefit analysis) to make a recommendation for a policy issue of your choice. After you make your recommendation, provide an analysis of the advantages of rationality and the also the inherent limitations of making rational decisions

-- How much should science be involved in policy making, and why? Refer one of the models of how science is used in the policy process (Two solutions model, Episodic model, Active adaptive management model) in your response.

vi. Effectively articulate the results of a thinking process

Sample Questions:

-- When we discussed Presidential systems and Parliamentary systems we described one as more concentrated and one as more separated. Which one is more concentrated and why? (Discuss all three branches of the central government)

-- Use a decision tree to show the thought processes and decision nodes behind a current issue that a government is dealing with. Provide your decision tree as an ideal. Then compare your ideal with how the government is dealing with the problem.

**Objective 7 Assess Plan
Assessment Rubric**

Using syllabi and samples of student work for the current year and two previous years, the Political Science Committee to assess learning outcomes of General Education classes will assess if learning outcomes have been met. Results will be recorded on the Assessment Rubric.

Learning outcomes for: POLS 2202	Learning outcome achieved:			Comments (including successes or points of improvement)
	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3 (current)	
i. Formulate/ frame problems and analyze how others do so.	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	
ii. Recognize and apply appropriate practices for analyzing ambiguous problems.	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	
iii. Identify and apply relevant information for problem solving.	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	

iv. Create, analyze, and evaluate/interpret diverse perspectives and solutions.	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	
v. Establish a reasoned framework for drawing conclusions and/or recommending solutions.	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	
vi. Effectively articulate the results of a thinking process	Yes / No	Yes / No	Yes / No	