**Assessment Plan for**

**Political Science**

**@**

**Cuyamaca College**

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Prepared for Comprehensive Program Review: Academic Year 2020-2021

# **Background**

SLOs need to be assessed once every 4 years (minimum). We encourage department chairs and coordinators to create an SLO Assessment Plan that maps onto your department’s comprehensive review cycle. One recommendation is to assess all SLOs in all courses in your department over a span of three years, and then use the fourth year to assess PLOs, reflect on data, and develop program adjustments in tandem with writing the comprehensive program review.

|  |
| --- |
| According to updated ACCJC guidelines and norms, is recommended that:   * Each course has a total of 2-5 SLOs. * All of a course’s SLOs are assessed in a given semester. * Holistic assessments are used, such as final essays, exams, projects or performances, in their entirety. * Students are given an opportunity to reflect on their learning and have a voice in the SLO process. |

# **About Political Science @ Cuyamaca College**

Political Science is a community and academic major within the Social and Behavioral Sciences Academic and Career Pathway at Cuyamaca College.

The motto of our program is: "With you every step of the way".

Our vision is to inspire publicly spirited and scholarly minded students, ensure every student enrolled at Cuyamaca College has the opportunity to successfully complete an introductory course in political science, U.S. politics, California politics, international politics, comparative politics, and political science research methods, and support every declared political science major to successfully earn their Associate of Arts-Transfer (AA-T) degree.

Our mission is to provide the highest quality instructional experience for all students in face-to-face, online, and hybrid settings; and serve as effective academic, co-curricular, extracurricular, and career mentors to students who are declared political science majors.

The program’s last Comprehensive Program Review, which was combined with Anthropology, was about five years ago and our next Comprehensive Program Review begins fall 2020.

# **Schedule for Assessing PLOs and CSLOs**

Below is the 4-year schedule for assessing course student learning outcomes (CSLOs) by course. This follows the 2-year rotation of course offerings, determined by the full-time faculty member starting fall 2020.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Course | FA20 | SP21 | FA21 | SP22 | FA22 | SP23 | FA23 | SP24 |
| POSC 120 | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 |  |
| POSC 121 | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 |  |
| POSC 124 |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 |
| POSC 130 | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 |  | 1 |  |
| POSC 140 |  | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 170 |  |  |  | 1 |  |  |  | 1 |

The POSC PLOs will be assessed, based on data from the CSLOs, in spring 2024 and every 4 years thereafter.

# **POSC Program Learning Outcomes**

The table below contains the five PLOs for the AA-T Political Science Program at Cuyamaca College. These PLOs were approved in spring 2020, as part of a comprehensive update to the AA-T in Political Science, along with an update of all six POSC course’s CSLOs. These PLOs will be assessed, based on data from the CSLOs, in spring 2024 and every 4 years thereafter.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| PLO # | PLO Description |
| 1 | Remember the major concepts of subfields of political science and their relevance to political behavior and political institutions across diverse communities and cultures |
| 2 | Understand the historical roots and major theories, conceptualizations, operationalizations, and measurements utilized in political science and its subfields from multiple perspectives |
| 3 | Apply the scientific method to explain political behavior and political institutions |
| 4 | Analyze the application of political science's abstract theories, empirical regularities, and public policy applications towards civic engagement domestically and internationally |
| 5 | Evaluate how concepts of political actors, networks, and status quo are theoretically and empirically analyzed and their application across diverse communities and cultures |
| 6 | Create a professional research project that uses the scientific method and follows ethical guidelines to analyze political phenomenon and/or a public policy project that utilizes data, geographic information systems, policy, and communication analysts' perspective |

# **POSC Course Student Learning Outcomes**

The table below contains all six POSC Courses’ Student Learning Outcomes, a description of each CSLO as listed in each Course Outline of Record, and a column for each assessment object type: quiz, discussion, or assignment. Explanations of these objects are provided in the next section.

| Course | CSLO # | CSLO Description | Quiz | Discussion | Assignments |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| POSC 120 | 1 | Define political science and describe its philosophical roots | 1 | 1 |  |
| POSC 120 | 2 | Identify and describe the traditional sub-fields of political science. Traditional sub-fields include political philosophy/theory, American politics, comparative politics, and international relations. | 1 | 1 |  |
| POSC 120 | 3 | Define and describe major political ideologies and governmental systems | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 121 | 1 | Identify the principles, governmental structures, and civil societal elements of American government and politics | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 121 | 2 | Summarize the historical roots and contemporary evolution of American government and politics | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 121 | 3 | Apply normative and positive approaches to the study of American government and politics |  | 1 |  |
| POSC 121 | 4 | Analyze existing applications of political science to topics such as American civil liberties, civil rights, governmental structure, and civil society |  |  | 1 |
| POSC 121 | 5 | Evaluate the similarities, differences, and relationships between the Senate, House of Representatives, the Presidency, the Bureaucracy, Judiciary, the Media, and the Public |  |  | 1 |
| POSC 124 | 1 | Identify the concepts of states, nations, society, economy, violence, and regimes and their utility in a comparative context | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 124 | 2 | Summarize the historical roots and contemporary evolution of comparative government and politics | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 124 | 3 | Apply normative and positive approaches to the study of comparative government and politics |  | 1 |  |
| POSC 124 | 4 | Analyze existing applications of political science to topics such as comparative institutions, behavior, institutional change, and public policy |  |  | 1 |
| POSC 124 | 5 | Evaluate the similarities, differences, and relationships between democratic regimes, developed democracies, nondemocratic remines, communism and postcommunism, and developing countries |  |  | 1 |
| POSC 130 | 1 | Identify the traditional concepts of realism, liberalism, and constructivism and contemporary framework of interest, interactions, and institutions | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 130 | 2 | Summarize the historical roots and contemporary evolution of international relations and politics | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 130 | 3 | Apply normative and positive approaches to the study of international relations and politics, particularly wealth and poverty, human rights, and the environment |  | 1 |  |
| POSC 130 | 4 | Analyze existing applications of political science to topics such as international institutions, state behavior, and international public policy |  |  | 1 |
| POSC 130 | 5 | Evaluate the similarities, differences, and relationships between international law and norms and international trade, finance, monetary relations |  |  | 1 |
| POSC 140 | 1 | Identify the principles, governmental structures, and civil societal elements of California government and politics | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 140 | 2 | Summarize the historical roots and contemporary evolution of California government and politics | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 140 | 3 | Apply normative and positive approaches to the study of California government and politics |  | 1 |  |
| POSC 140 | 4 | Analyze existing applications of political science to topics such as California civil liberties, civil rights, governmental structure, and civil society |  |  | 1 |
| POSC 140 | 5 | Evaluate the similarities, differences, and relationships between the State Senate, State Assembly, Governor, the Bureaucracy, the Judiciary, the Media, and the Public |  |  | 1 |
| POSC 170 | 1 | Formulate research questions, theories, and hypotheses for topics in political science |  | 1 | 1 |
| POSC 170 | 2 | Critique and evaluate political science research, with particular attention paid to the methodology and research design |  | 1 | 1 |
| POSC 170 | 3 | Identify, compare, and contrast differing methods used in political science | 1 | 1 | 1 |

# **Explanation of Assessment Object Types**

There are three general assessment mechanisms used: quizzes, discussions, and assignments. These mechanisms follow the assessment objects available in the Canvas LMS environment.

## Quizzes

Quizzes contains multiple choice, true false, fill in the blank, and/or matching questions that are based on the course readings and materials. For example, in POSC 121, Introduction to US Government and Politics, the full-time faculty member uses an Open Education Resource zero textbook cost (OER/ZTC) resources. Each chapter of the textbook contains questions that were converted from the textbook into Canvas quizzes. Students are allowed 3 attempts to complete a quiz with the highest grade possible. The instructions provided clearly state that “Remembering” is a meaningful cognitive process that students should seek to utilize during their 1st attempt at completing the quiz. In other words, students should not use the textbook or notes to aid them in completing the quiz. This strong recommendation is relaxed in the possible 2nd and 3rd attempts available to students

## Discussions

Discussions entails at least 1 post and 1 reply to a peer. Posts are typically 5 or more sentences, while replies can range from a minimum of 3 sentences to no upper bounds in the number of sentences, but generally 5 is the mode. Each Discussion includes an About, Estimated Time, Prompt, Instructions, Support, Frequently Asked Questions, and Rubric to aid the students to help them successfully complete and submit their post and reply.

## Assignments

Assignments can include Journal Article Analysis, Simulation, Public Policy Project, Reflections, or iPoliSci Workshops.

### Journal Article Analysis

Journal articles are peer-reviewed publications that help scholars communicate ideas, theories, empirical analyses, and conclusions.

The ability to critically read journal articles is a skill that is developed with practice. This skill is especially useful when you transfer to a 4-year college or university.

If you are contemplating attending graduate school to earn a Masters, professional, or Doctoral degree, then analyzing journal articles is an essential skill.

Analyzing a journal article is related to reading. Reading is a skill that is developed with practice and is important for your future academic, professional, and personal endeavors.

[Click here to view the Fall 2020 Journal Article Analysis Workbook.](https://1drv.ms/b/s!Akb5EAbojy2ChPUe8z-vlnOvT6GG7Q?e=uASmDi)

### Simulation

Simulations "are the imitative representation of the functioning of one system or process by means of the functioning of another or something that is made to look, feel, or behave like something else especially so that it can be studied or used to train people" (Merriam-Webster).

In political science (Links to an external site.), simulations are commonly used to teach students about operating a congressional committee hearing, hosting a Model Arab League, re-enacting a historical political event (like the Cuban Missile Crisis), or presenting oral arguments before the U.S. Supreme Court.

For our course, I want us to focus on the abstractions underlying simulations: levels, status quos, political actors, and networks. I have two reasons for centering our simulation on these abstractions.

First, these concepts serve as a general model that can be applied to political and seemingly apolitical matters. For example, if you are running a small business, there will be a status quo, business actors, and networks that shapes the revenues and expenditures of your small business. As we work through a political example for our course, you should be able to extend this model to other apolitical domains of your life.

The second reason I want us to focus on these abstractions is that political science is the study of who gets what, when, where, how, and why. For us to analytically and rigorously study politics, we need a general model to help us maintain clarity in a vast and complex political landscape. By simplifying this complexity to levels, status quos, political actors, and networks, we can achieve this clarity.

[Click here to view the Fall 2020 Simulation Workbook.](https://1drv.ms/b/s!Akb5EAbojy2ChPUU6qqNGy1Gdg3clA?e=E4AVa2)

### Public Policy Project

Public policy is the constitutional, legal, judicial, regulatory, or policy documents that are produced by governmental institutions at the international, national, and subnational levels. Now, you may be telling yourself, "whoa, that's a lot of stuff."

Yes, it is a lot, but we start with the “big picture” and then work our way into the “details.”

Public policies include amendments to a federal or state constitution; federal, state or local laws passed by legislative bodies and approved by executives; federal and state judicial rulings; regulations promulgated by federal, state or local governments; and policies adopted by federal, state, or local institutions, boards, commissions, or related entities. Again, you may be telling yourself, "whoa, that's a lot of stuff."

Yes, it is a lot, because we are now talking about the "details" of the "big picture."

The Public Policy Project encourages you to identify a public problem to focus on. After discussion with your peers, you are responsible for selecting the causes, effects, and solutions to the public problem you selected. After that, you will explore four different analyst roles: Data Analyst, Geographic Information Systems Analyst, Policy Analyst, or Communications Analyst.

While I will coach you as you go through each Analyst Workflow, recognize that in the real-world, analysts would work both individually and collaboratively.

Now, each Analyst has a set of tasks (what are called “Workflows”) to complete to adequately explore the public problem’s causes, effects, and solutions. Completion of these tasks result in you obtaining valuable knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the public problem, their role and role of other analysts.

So, let's begin our journey together in the Public Policy Project.

[Click here to view the Fall 2020 Public Policy Project Workbook.](https://1drv.ms/b/s!Akb5EAbojy2ChPUaGHiKqO0-Gpdm5A?e=7Kky9h)

### Reflections

Reflections are an opportunity for students to share with me, the professor, their thoughts about an Assignment (i.e. Journal Article Analysis, Simulation, or Public Policy Project). No other student reads their reflection.

### iPoliSci Workshops

iPoliSci Workshops are real-time, electronic meeting opportunities where you are welcomed to participate.

They are held Tuesday through Thursday in 30-minute blocks: 7:00pm-7:30pm, 7:30pm-8:00pm, and 8:00pm-8:30pm Pacific Time.

[Click here to learn more about iPoliSci Workshops](https://ipolisci.com/workshops).

## **Anonymous Feedback**

Students can provide anonymous feedback during a course. The first survey is available during week 3 of any course, whether it is a 6-week, 8-week, or 16-week term course. A second survey, only for students in 16-week courses, is available in week 8. The survey consists of 3 open-ended questions:

* What did you like MOST about the course so far?
* What did you like LEAST about the course so far?
* How can the course be improved going forward?

## **Anonymous Evaluation**

Students can provide an anonymous evaluation at the end of a course. The survey consists of 3 questions. The first two questions consist of 4 sub-questions that students rate on a 5-point (Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) scale. The 3rd question is an open-ended question.

* Please rate your response to each statement about the course.
  1. The course was organized in a way that supported my learning.
  2. There was an adequate variety of learning materials and resources to keep me engaged.
  3. Directions, both in general and for individual assignments, were clear. I knew what to do to be successful.
  4. There was a good balance between instruction and practice/application.
* Please rate your response to each statement about my instructional style.
  1. You presented the concepts and skills to be learned clearly.
  2. You did a good job of facilitating discussions and creating a sense of community.
  3. Your enthusiasm for the subject matter was clear and increased my own interest in the topic.
  4. I felt comfortable letting you know when I had a question or was challenged by the material. You were helpful.
  5. I found your feedback useful (the amount, the relevance, and the positive tone).
* What comments would you like to add to help me create a better course?

# **Student Learning and the Data Generating Process**

Student learning is the core function of any academic or career technical program. The data generating process is based on students, assessments, courses, and the program.

Students completion of assessments is the kernel of the data generating process. When a student marks a quiz question correct or incorrect, writes a response for a discussion, or completes formative components of a summative project, they are generating data. This data will be used to assess their learning directly in the forms of grades for individual assessments and their holistic grade for a given course.

These individual level actions can be viewed from the narrow lens of individual achievement and success. However, if we broaden our view, these individual level actions are elements of a dynamic process that will result in emergent patterns. The emergence of these patterns, coupled with student-level demographic data, informs analyses and eventual reflection. Demographic characteristics include age, gender, race, ethnicity, and first-generation status, among others.

Reflection of analyses can be an individually meaningful process. But, how can we transform this individual-level activity into program-level action that is responsive to the patterns that emerge?

To help answer this question, an Action Plan will be created that complements the Annual Program Review’s Goals Section. The Annual Program Review, as instituted by the Program Review Steering Committee, asks discipline faculty to review the prior year’s student success data, status of prior-year stated goals, and list of next-year stated goals.

The Action Plan will be a more detailed explanation of how next-year stated goals (whether they are new goals or continuing goals for prior-years) will be accomplished given the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and tactics available.

The figure below offers a visualization of these process based on courses, program, and the comprehensive program review.

## Process for Collecting Data

Each Assessment (i.e. Discussions and Assignments) has a Rubric associated with it. Quizzes are also a form of assessment, but they do not have Rubrics. At the end of each semester or session, the Gradebook for each course will be exported from Canvas and saved as a .CSV file.

## Measurement Models of CSLO Data

There are at least two measurement models for CSLO data, aggregate and disaggregate.

### Aggregate Measurement Model

The aggregate measurement model considers all assessments for a given CSLO and reports the class average by assessment type. For example, each course has 10-15 quizzes. Each quiz has 10 randomly drawn questions that are worth one point each. Thus, each quiz is worth 10 points. However, each quiz is worth 1% of the student’s overall course grade. Therefore, an aggregate measurement would be the average Quiz grouping score for all students in the course.

### Disaggregate Measurement Model

The disaggregate measurement model also considers all assessments for a given CSLO, but reports out the course average for each assessment, instead of grouping assessments into categories of Quizzes, Assignments, and Discussions. For example, instead of reporting the average Quiz grouping score for all students in the course, the average score for each Quiz for all students would be reported.

# Analysis and Action Plan

## Analysis

The key to any analysis is having the data presented in a cross-tabulation that accounts for demographic characteristics like age, gender, race, ethnicity, and 1st-generation status.

Analyses, at a minimum, need to include one-way, two-way, and three-way cross tabulations. Other statistical analysis, such as comparing between groups, can be useful as well, but not necessarily advocated here.

Below are three examples, one for each type of cross-tabulation that can be produced.

### One-Way Cross Tab

The utility of one-way cross tabs is that they can provide information along a single dimension. The example below shows the number of students in each type of program.

type of |

program | Freq. Percent Cum.

------------+-----------------------------------

general | 45 22.50 22.50

academic | 105 52.50 75.00

vocation | 50 25.00 100.00

------------+-----------------------------------

Total | 200 100.00

### Two-Way Cross Tab

A two-way cross tab is more useful because it provides information based on two dimensions. The example below shows the number of students, based socio-economic status, in each type of program. To compare with the one-way cross tab, we see that the “general program” has the larger proportion of “low ses” students.

type of | ses

program | low middle high | Total

-----------+---------------------------------+----------

general | 16 20 9 | 45

academic | 19 44 42 | 105

vocation | 12 31 7 | 50

-----------+---------------------------------+----------

Total | 47 95 58 | 200

### Three-Way Cross Tab

Finally, a three-way cross tab is the most useful because it offers information on three dimensions. The example below shows the number of students based on type of program, socio-economic status, and gender. Here we see that of the 16 “low ses” students in the “general program”, 9 identify as female as 7 identify as male.

------------------------------------------------------------

| female and ses

type of | -------- male -------- ------- female -------

program | low middle high low middle high

----------+-------------------------------------------------

general | 7 10 4 9 10 5

academic | 4 22 21 15 22 21

vocation | 4 15 4 8 16 3

------------------------------------------------------------

## Action Plan

An Action Plan will include the same information as an Annual Program Review: Goals, Rationale, Link to College Strategic Goal, Steps, and Measurement. However, an Action Plan goes one step further to specify student demographic groups and how the faculty, program, department, division, and student services can be leveraged to aid students in specific demographic groups.

# **How POSC’s PLOs map onto Cuyamaca College’s Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | **Cuyamaca College Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)** | | | |
|  |  |  | **1** | **2** | **3** | **4** |
|  | **PLO #** | **PLO Description** | Communication Competency | Critical Thinking Competency | Cultural Competency | Professional Responsibility |
| **Cuyamaca College's AA-T Political Science Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)** | **1** | Remember the major concepts of subfields of political science and their relevance to political behavior and political institutions across diverse communities and cultures |  | 1 | 1 |  |
| **2** | Understand the historical roots and major theories, conceptualizations, operationalizations, and measurements utilized in political science and its subfields from multiple perspectives |  | 1 | 1 |  |
| **3** | Apply the scientific method to explain political behavior and political institutions |  | 1 |  |  |
| **4** | Analyze the application of political science's abstract theories, empirical regularities, and public policy applications towards civic engagement domestically and internationally |  | 1 |  |  |
| **5** | Evaluate how concepts of political actors, networks, and status quo are theoretically and empirically analyzed and their application across diverse communities and cultures |  | 1 | 1 |  |
| **6** | Create a professional research project that uses the scientific method and follows ethical guidelines to analyze political phenomenon and/or a public policy project that utilizes data, geographic information systems, policy, and communication analysts' perspective | 1 | 1 |  | 1 |

# **How POSC’s CSLOs map onto PLOs**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Course | CSLO # | CSLO Description | PLO 1 | PLO 2 | PLO 3 | PLO 4 | PLO 5 | PLO 6 |
| POSC 120 | 1 | Define political science and describe its philosophical roots | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| POSC 120 | 2 | Identify and describe the traditional sub-fields of political science. Traditional sub-fields include political philosophy/theory, American politics, comparative politics, and international relations. | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| POSC 120 | 3 | Define and describe major political ideologies and governmental systems | 1 | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| POSC 121 | 1 | Identify the principles, governmental structures, and civil societal elements of American government and politics | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| POSC 121 | 2 | Summarize the historical roots and contemporary evolution of American government and politics |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| POSC 121 | 3 | Apply normative and positive approaches to the study of American government and politics |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |
| POSC 121 | 4 | Analyze existing applications of political science to topics such as American civil liberties, civil rights, governmental structure, and civil society |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 121 | 5 | Evaluate the similarities, differences, and relationships between the Senate, House of Representatives, the Presidency, the Bureaucracy, Judiciary, the Media, and the Public |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |
| POSC 124 | 1 | Identify the concepts of states, nations, society, economy, violence, and regimes and their utility in a comparative context | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| POSC 124 | 2 | Summarize the historical roots and contemporary evolution of comparative government and politics |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| POSC 124 | 3 | Apply normative and positive approaches to the study of comparative government and politics |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |
| POSC 124 | 4 | Analyze existing applications of political science to topics such as comparative institutions, behavior, institutional change, and public policy |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 124 | 5 | Evaluate the similarities, differences, and relationships between democratic regimes, developed democracies, nondemocratic remines, communism and postcommunism, and developing countries |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |
| POSC 130 | 1 | Identify the traditional concepts of realism, liberalism, and constructivism and contemporary framework of interest, interactions, and institutions | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| POSC 130 | 2 | Summarize the historical roots and contemporary evolution of international relations and politics |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| POSC 130 | 3 | Apply normative and positive approaches to the study of international relations and politics, particularly wealth and poverty, human rights, and the environment |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |
| POSC 130 | 4 | Analyze existing applications of political science to topics such as international institutions, state behavior, and international public policy |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 130 | 5 | Evaluate the similarities, differences, and relationships between international law and norms and international trade, finance, monetary relations |  |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |  |
| POSC 140 | 1 | Identify the principles, governmental structures, and civil societal elements of California government and politics | 1 |  |  |  |  |  |
| POSC 140 | 2 | Summarize the historical roots and contemporary evolution of California government and politics |  | 1 |  |  |  |  |
| POSC 140 | 3 | Apply normative and positive approaches to the study of California government and politics |  |  | 1 |  |  |  |
| POSC 140 | 4 | Analyze existing applications of political science to topics such as California civil liberties, civil rights, governmental structure, and civil society |  |  | 1 | 1 |  |  |
| POSC 140 | 5 | Evaluate the similarities, differences, and relationships between the State Senate, State Assembly, Governor, the Bureaucracy, the Judiciary, the Media, and the Public |  |  |  |  | 1 |  |
| POSC 170 | 1 | Formulate research questions, theories, and hypotheses for topics in political science |  |  | 1 |  |  | 1 |
| POSC 170 | 2 | Critique and evaluate political science research, with particular attention paid to the methodology and research design |  | 1 | 1 | 1 |  | 1 |
| POSC 170 | 3 | Identify, compare, and contrast differing methods used in political science | 1 |  | 1 |  |  | 1 |