

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN OSHKOSH
Political Science Department Learning Goals

CORE COMPETENCIES	ADVANCED PERFORMER	SOLID PERFORMER	BASIC PERFORMER	UNDER-PERFORMER
STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS	Creative and critical thinker engaged in the application and synthesis of knowledge	Original thinker with a firm understanding of the discipline	Basic thinker knowledgeable about the broad outlines of the discipline	Simplistic thinker minimally competent in all aspects of the discipline
THEORETICAL CONTEXT OF POLITICS	Has an excellent grasp of theory in various contexts and can <i>apply</i> theory to understand past, present and possible future outcomes. Understands the importance of theory as a tool as well as the normative and ethical components of politics.	Has a solid understanding of the theoretical foundations of politics. Realizes the value of theory for making sense of the past and present and predicting future outcomes, and is aware of the normative and ethical components of political science.	Has a general sense of what theory in its various incarnations is and why it is important, but cannot understand or apply sophisticated theoretical arguments or concepts. Has vague sense of the normative and ethical components of the discipline.	Does not understand the content or the utility of theory. Cannot apply theoretical constructs to contemporary or historical problems. Does not understand normative or ethical components of the discipline.
HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF POLITICS	Uses history as a framework for understanding contemporary politics. Has a well-developed understanding of patterns and their disruption as a critical part of the discipline.	Comprehends historical trends in both American and international political life. Makes connections between contemporary political life and its historical antecedents.	Has a general understanding of history and its relevance to contemporary politics. Thinks of history in broad outlines instead of specific factors that contribute to contemporary political life.	Has little sense of historical trajectory and fails to make connections between the contemporary world and the past.
CONTEMPORARY POLITICS	Maintains knowledge of current political events, themes, and debates. Easily recognizes patterns in political rhetoric and behavior and is able to connect these patterns to competencies in theoretical and historical contexts.	Demonstrates an understanding of current political debates and themes. Connects current political events and arguments to competencies in theoretical and historical contexts.	Has a vague sense of contemporary political events, debates, and themes. Rarely connects contemporary politics to historical or theoretical competencies.	Is marginally aware of current political events, themes, and debates. Makes little or no effort to explain or engage contemporary politics.
CIVIC AND GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT	Has a strong understanding of the creation of public policy and the quality of global and democratic citizenship as well as theory and strategies concerning civic engagement, social movements, and protest. Demonstrates a solid capacity to lead and inform for the public good.	Understands the importance of civic engagement for the creation of public policy and the quality of global and democratic citizenship. Has general understanding of theories and strategies of political action. Has some capacity to lead and inform for the public good.	Demonstrates some understanding of civic engagement purposes and implications. Is aware of political activity and strategies of political involvement. Has a limited capacity to personally engage in civic activity for the public good.	Shows little evidence of civic engagement and limited awareness of how individual and group action can influence the public good

<p>ANALYTICAL ABILITY</p>	<p>Demonstrates ability to use and understand quantitative and qualitative data. Has mastered the art of research design at the undergraduate level and understands the logic of political science research. Readily interprets information. Understands the value of evidence in constructing valid arguments.</p>	<p>Has a solid grasp of basic statistical concepts and the elements of research design. Can usually interpret information. Is aware of the distinction between opinion and matters prone to evidentiary analysis. Usually uses evidence in constructing arguments.</p>	<p>Has basic facility with quantitative and qualitative data and does not fully understand the logic of political science research and design. Has some difficulty interpreting information. Often confuses opinion and fact.</p>	<p>Does not understand basic statistical concepts or qualitative reasoning. Cannot interpret information, or does so with considerable difficulty. Believes that opinions make a valid argument.</p>
<p>WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS</p>	<p>Writes at a level conducive to graduate work in the discipline. Expresses thoughts, results, and opinions with clarity and accuracy. Makes few grammatical errors and/or errors in citation. Is articulate and professional in oral presentations, and responds readily to questions about presented material.</p>	<p>Clearly and accurately expresses analyses, opinions, and other ideas in writing. Uses proper grammar and citation in academic work. Adheres to the structure and format of research in different subfields. Expresses information in a way that is accessible to a variety of listeners.</p>	<p>Expresses thoughts, results and opinions through writing in basic forms. Writing is mostly accurate and clear, but lacks an individual style. Expresses basic ideas to an audience, but perhaps lacks confidence when doing so. Relays information but not in a sophisticated or professional manner.</p>	<p>Writes at a remedial level. Some sentences are unintelligible. Papers exhibit a lack of style and substance and contain many errors. Fails to express ideas clearly and cannot explain basic concepts with confidence. Lacks professionalism and sophistication.</p>

Slagter, Scribner, Siemers, Simmons, Jasinski, and Krueger (2009-2010)