

Program Student Learning Outcomes

1) Understand and apply theory frameworks

Political Science students should be able to

- A. recognize normative and ethical components of politics
- B. understand theoretical foundations of politics in the different subfields
- C. recognize the value of theories for making sense of the past and present
- D. apply theoretical arguments and concepts in the service of explanation or prediction of political phenomena

2) Understand and apply history as a lens of inquiry

Political Science students should be able to

- A. use history as a framework for understanding contemporary politics
- B. understand that discerning historical patterns and their disruption are critical parts of the discipline

3) Understand and explain contemporary politics

Political Science students should be able to

- A. demonstrate an understanding of current political debates and themes in the different subfields
- B. connect theory and history in the service of answering “big questions” facing contemporary polities

4) Engage locally and globally

Political Science students should be able to

- A. understand public policy and decision making processes
- B. evaluate the qualities required for effective global and democratic citizenship
- C. apply theories and strategies concerning political action (civic engagement, social movements, protest, voting, etc.)
- D. demonstrate capacity to lead and inform for the public good

5) Analyze and explain political behavior, patterns and events

Political Science students should be able to

- A. interpret and synthesize different forms of information (raw data, reports, texts, academic research, etc.)
- B. demonstrate awareness of the distinction between opinion and matters prone to evidentiary analysis and understand the value of evidence in constructing valid arguments
- C. utilize evidence in a variety of forms to construct arguments
- D. utilize statistical concepts and the elements of research design

6) Communicate effectively

Political Science students should be able to

- A. clearly and accurately present ideas and research effectively in a variety of formats
- B. accurately and fairly represent the analyses, arguments, and ideas of others
- C. recognize and use proper citation methods in academic work
- D. express information in ways accessible and appropriate to different audiences (peers, faculty, practitioners in the political science subfields, government officials, general public, etc.)

These learning outcomes are assessed using our Department of Political Science Core Competencies Rubric (attached as Appendix 1). The rubric is designed to help us identify learning progression across the six core goals. By the end of our 100-200 level courses we expect students to be in the “Basic Performer” category; and by graduation in the Solid to Advanced Performer categories as assessed in our capstone.