

**OUTCOME ASSESSMENT**  
**DEPARTMENT**  
**of**  
**HISTORY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE**  
Political Science Discipline  
(Academic Department Name)

Fall 2015 & Spring 2016

(Period Covered)

April 2016

(Date Submitted)

Political Science

(Instructional Degree Program)

Bachelor of Arts Major/Minor

(Degree Level)

**MISSION AND GOALS**

**Mission of the Department of History & Political Science**

Historical and political awareness and understanding constitutes one of the chief attributes of a functional and involved citizen of the United States. It is the mission of this department to provide an education that will contribute to the realization of this ideal by every student. We also seek to train graduates to work in a variety of public and private sector jobs, utilizing their historical and political skills and knowledge. Finally, the department is committed to preserving, interpreting, and promoting the unique multicultural heritage of the region.

**Department's/Program's Goal(s) in Support of Institutional Mission:**

Political science, in the broadest sense, is the study of governments, governing procedures, and political processes. The political science faculty encourages students to make connections between the theoretical (or textbook) study of government/politics and the application of how government affects their lives in contemporary times through educational simulations, civic-engagement projects, and internships designed to extend students' learning opportunities beyond the traditional classroom setting.

Students in political science may seek careers in government, NGOs (non-governmental organizations), teaching, or private industry. The political science major is an excellent preparation for law school or other academic pursuits such as graduate study. It provides pre-professional training for governmental or public sector positions involving policy-making or

administration. Representative employers include government agencies at the national, state, or local levels, nonprofit organizations, corporations, and research institutions.

### **Program (Student) Outcomes:**

- I. **Disciplinary knowledge:** Upon completion of the political science major, students will have learned or strengthened their knowledge of essential concepts of American governmental institutions, political processes and-or international politics and-or law.
- II. **Analytical/Critical Thinking skills:** Upon completion of the political science major, students will be able to reflect, evaluate and analyze data/information, recognize trends or changes over time on a broad range of political issues and concepts.
- III. **Civic Engagement Activities:** Upon completion of the political science major, students will have participated in civic engagement activities to develop a better understanding of community issues and resources, thus cultivating a connection between students and community, whereby students develop a sense of social and political responsibility.
- IV. **Research and Writing Skills:** Upon completion of the political science major, students will be able to write a well-organized and technically correct political science paper that applies relevant theories and concepts, and defends a thesis statement through the process of discovery and application of scholarly evidence.

### **Student Learning Outcome 1:**

Students will have learned or strengthened their knowledge of essential concepts of American governmental institutions, political processes and-or international politics and-or the law.

### **NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 1:**

1. Mastery of content knowledge and skills

### **Means of Assessment for Outcome 1:**

Grades from a randomly selected 300 and 400-level Political Science class. Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 50% of political science majors receiving a “C” or above in each of the courses.

**Summary of Data:**

**Political Science 312: Political Parties and Elections**

**Majors**

Total number of students assessed	8		
Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	8	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	0

**Minors**

Total number of students assessed	3		
Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	3	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	0

**Political Science 460 American and Russian Systems**

**Majors**

Total number of students assessed	10		
Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	10	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	0

**Minors**

Total number of students assessed	4		
Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	4	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	0

**Interpretation of Results for Outcome 1:**

Political Science majors and minors were selected from two courses—POLS312 and POLS460—to assess learning outcome 1. POLS312 is a required course for the Political Science Liberal Arts concentration, and POLS460 serves as an elective course for majors or minors in Political Science. For the combined courses, a total of 18 Political Science majors and 7 Political Science minors were assessed, and 100% of the students received a “C” or above in each of the courses. Well over 80% of total students assessed received a grade of an “A” or “B.”

## **Student Learning Outcome 2**

Students will be able to reflect, evaluate and analyze data/information, recognize trends or changes over time on a broad range of political issues and/or concepts.

### **NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 2**

1. Mastery of content knowledge and skills
2. Effective communication skills
3. Critical and reflective thinking skills

### **Means of Assessment for Outcome 2:**

Political Science faculty will evaluate essays written by political science majors from one randomly selected 300 and 400-level political science class. The essays will be assessed by the accuracy and application of the data/information, and the development or progression of the political issue or concept. A grade of “C” or above will indicate a successful completion of this outcome.

### **Summary of Data:**

#### **Political Science 410: American Constitutional Law**

##### **Majors**

Total number of students assessed	12		
Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	6	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	6

##### **Minors**

Total number of students assessed	4		
Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	4	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	0

#### **Political Science 463 Political Economy**

##### **Majors**

Total number of students assessed	17		
Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	17	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	0

**Minor**

Total number of students assessed	4		
Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	4	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	0

**Interpretation of Results for Outcome 2:**

Political Science majors and minors were selected from two courses—POLS410 and POLS463—to assess learning outcome 2. POLS410 is a required course for the Political Science Liberal Arts and Pre-Law concentration, and POLS463 serves as an elective course for majors or minors in Political Science. A total of 29 Political Science majors were assessed, over three-quarters (79 percent) of the students received a “C” or above in the courses. Of the total number of students minoring in political science, 100% received a grade of “C” or better. One-half of the majors in the POLS410 (a required course for Political Science) met the criteria for a grade of “C” or above. The six students who did not meet the criteria was due to low class attendance or just stopped attending the class.

**Student Learning Outcome 3:**

Students will have participated in civic engagement activities to develop a better understanding of community issues and resources, thus cultivating a connection between students and community, whereby students develop a sense of social and political responsibility.

**NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 3:**

1. Mastery of content knowledge and skills
2. Effective communication skills
3. Critical and reflective thinking skills

**Means of Assessment for Outcome 3:**

Successful completion of this outcome will be indicated by at least 50% of political science majors attending at least one civic engagement activity.

**Summary of Data:****Majors**

Total number of students assessed	18		
Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	14	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	4

**Interpretation of Results for Outcome 3:**

Only Political Science majors were assessed for learning outcome 3. Over three-quarters (78%) of the 18 Political Science majors assessed attended at least one civic engagement activity, thus meeting the criteria for learning outcome 3.

**Student Learning Outcome 4**

Students will be able to write a well-organized and technically correct political science paper that applies relevant theories and concepts, and defends a thesis statement through the process of discovery and application of scholarly evidence.

**NMHU Traits Specifically Linked to Student Learning Outcome 4:**

1. Mastery of content knowledge and skills
2. Effective communication skills
3. Critical and reflective thinking skills
4. Effective use of technology

**Means of Assessment for Outcome 4:**

The final research project in POLS 410 American Constitution or POLS 419 Public Administration or POLS 417 Congress and The Legislative Process and POLS 458 Political Theory and Philosophy or POLS 453 International Relations and Human Rights or POLS 463 Political Economy will be used for this assessment. Political Science faculty will evaluate the final research project by the accuracy of the date/information, the progression of the argument is logical and coherent, the applicability of the concepts and the use of relevant sources to support the thesis/argument, and the writing is technically correct (minimal mistakes involving grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure, and references are cited (format/ uniformity/ appropriateness). A grade of “C” or above will indicate a successful completion of this outcome.

**Summary of Data:**

**Political Science 417: Congress and the Legislative Process**

**Majors**

Total number of students assessed	6		
Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	5	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	1

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**Minors**

Total number of students assessed	3		
Number of Students Meeting Criterion:	3	Number of Students Not Meeting Criterion:	0

**Political Science 453 International Relations, Human Rights and international Law****Majors**

Number of students assessed	8		
Number of students meeting criterion	8	Number of students not meeting criterion	0

**Minors**

Number of students assessed	1		
Number of students meeting criterion	1	Number of students not meeting criterion	0

**Interpretation of Results for Outcome 4:**

Majors and minors were selected from two courses—POLS417 and POLS453—to assess learning outcome 4. POLS417 is a required course for the Political Science Liberal Arts and Pre-Law concentration, and POLS463 is a required course for the Pre-Law concentration. A total of 14 Political Science majors were assessed, 93 percent of the students received a “C” or above in the courses. The one student who did not meet the criteria stopped attending class due to a family emergency and received a retroactive withdrawal from the course.