Program: **Government Major**

Department: **Government**

Number of students enrolled in the program in Fall, 2011: **279**

Faculty member completing template: **David Andersen, James Cox, Buzz Fozouni, Andrew Hertzoff, and Nancy Lapp (Date: 2/12/ 22012)**

**Period of reference in the template: 2006-07 to present**

1. Please describe your program’s learning-outcomes trajectory since 2006-07: Has there been a transformation of organizational culture regarding the establishment of learning outcomes and the capacity to assess progress toward their achievement? If so, during which academic year would you say the transformation became noticeable? What lies ahead; what is the next likely step in developing a learning-outcomes organizational culture within the program? [Please limit your response to 200 words or less]

The Government Department’s learning-outcomes trajectory has followed a steady and carefully considered course. Departmental efforts at identifying and assessing goals began a decade ago, and the department has continued to regularly examine its goals and efforts. Since 2006-2007, the department and its assessment committee have continued to implement and evaluate the department’s assessment plan, including using surveys and rubrics to gather data. Although this process has followed an evolutionary direction rather than an abrupt transformation, 2010 marks an important point. As part of its self-study, the department conducted a faculty survey of its entire undergraduate curriculum, extensively discussed the results, and began making revisions to procedures, curriculum, and assessment. Furthermore, last year the assessment committee proposed a new three-year plan for assessing the department’s learning goals which make significant changes in the implementation plan and the rubrics used for assessment. Addressing the issues raised by the self-study and implementing this three-year plan will likely occupy the department in the next few years.

2. Please list in prioritized order (or indicate no prioritization regarding) up to four desired learning outcomes (“takeaways” concerning such elements of curriculum as perspectives, specific content knowledge, skill sets, confidence levels) for students completing the program. For each stated outcome, please provide the reason that it was designated as desired by the faculty associated with the program.
   a)
Without any particular prioritization, the Department of Government has identified three general intellectual skills that we seek to develop in our students (a, b, c), as well as a substantial competence in the study of government (d).

a) **Knowledge Acquisition**—The Government Department seeks to strengthen the abilities of students to acquire and understand information, facts, and theories. It is well-established that participation in politics, whether in domestic policy analysis or foreign affairs, requires students, analysts and citizens to become familiar with topics and ideas in a wide variety of areas. This ability includes the familiarity with library research and use of web resources; acquaintance with standard government and political resources; and use of statistical databases. It also involves analytic skills of concept formation; analysis of situations; recognition of statistical significance and the ability to interpret written and verbal arguments.

b) **Evaluation and Judgment**—Students need to be able to critically examine arguments, claims, and alternative explanations. They should be able to understand the significance of claims, identify obvious objections, and evaluate the validity of arguments. In order to fully participate as citizens and as leaders, students need to be able to rationally adjudicate between competing claims and see the implications, positive and negative, of both theoretical and practical statements. This includes mastering quantitative methodology; understanding scientific reasoning; and becoming familiar with evidence-based argumentation, logic, reading comprehension skills, and philosophical and legal analysis.

c) **Presentation of ideas and student engagement**—Being actors in a democratic arena, students need to become comfortable with presenting facts, arguments, research results, and debates to others in both verbal and written form. Students should be able to express themselves coherently and clearly in writing and oral presentations. They should be able to respond to questions, and advocate in a variety of ways for their views. We expect students to learn ways to participate in the political process, becoming more active as citizens.

d) **Knowledge of the study of politics**—Although there is less agreement about a core of knowledge in the ecumenical study of politics than in some other disciplines, there is strong agreement in the department that students should have a
background in fundamental political and legal ideas; familiarity with American political institutions, Constitutional Law, Federalism, and the unique aspects of California state politics; a knowledge of other nations and cultures; awareness of ways in which international relations are carried out and understood; comprehension of political processes and factors, both in domestic and international politics; and basic knowledge of the methods and goals of political science.

3. For undergraduate programs only, in what ways are the set of desired learning outcomes described above aligned with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals? Please be as specific as possible.

[Please limit your response to 400 words or less]

The Government department’s desired learning outcomes align substantially with the University’s Baccalaureate Learning Goals.

Nearly all the department’s learning outcomes relate to Competence in the Disciplines. This university goal expects that students demonstrate “informed understandings” of a major field, and the “ability to demonstrate the competencies and values listed below.” The department’s “knowledge of the study of politics” goal expects students acquire a strong background in the fundamentals of the study of politics that spans the major subfields of the discipline.

The subject matter of the department’s Knowledge of the study of politics outcome pertains primarily to the social sciences criteria listed in the university’s goal of Knowledge of Human Cultures and the Physical and Natural World. The study of fundamental political and legal ideas, institutions, cultures, and political processes inexorably encompasses “engagement with big questions, contemporary and enduring.” Subjects include concepts such as freedom, equality, justice, as well as questions regarding the desired kind of political structures necessary to achieve the well-being of the whole of society.

The department’s Knowledge Acquisition, Evaluation and Judgment, and Presentation of ideas and student engagement outcomes coincide with the university goals listed under Intellectual and Practical Skills, which includes “inquiry and analysis, critical and philosophical thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy... and “problem solving.” The Government department’s Knowledge Acquisition goals include information acquisition (ability to properly use appropriate library, government, and internet resources), conceptual thinking and identification of theories (including the ability to interpret written and verbal arguments), and recognition of statistical inference. The department’s Evaluation and Judgment outcomes pertain to inquiry and analysis and critical and philosophical thinking – department outcomes include
being able to evaluate arguments. “Written and oral communication” are found in the department’s **Presentation of ideas and student engagement** outcome, which is our expectation that students learn to express themselves clearly and coherently and participate in the community effectively. As the department has verified in its self-study, these skills are emphasized throughout the courses offered by the department, and the courses become progressively more challenging.

The department’s outcomes also align with **Personal and Social Responsibility**. It is important to note that the department has delineated specific learning outcomes for its majors (discussed in answer #2), but also has broader goals for our department. The department has been clear that “we see our goal as creating an intellectual environment where students can develop their academic skills, think more critically about their world, and prepare to become citizens and productive members of society” (department memo, 2001). To this end, the department strives to create opportunities for our students to participate politically. Thus, with regard to the goal of “civic knowledge and engagement – local and global, “as well as “active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges,” the department promotes internships, clubs, and activities such as the Model United Nations. More precisely, the department’s **Knowledge of the Study of Politics** goal includes knowledge of other cultures and engagement with “big questions” that ultimately include “ethical reasoning and action.” Put together, the department’s learning outcomes provide strong “foundations and skills for lifelong learning.”

4. **For each** desired outcome indicated in item 2 above, please:
   a) Describe the method(s) by which its ongoing pursuit is monitored and measured.
   b) Include a description of the sample of students (e.g., random sample of transfer students declaring the major; graduating seniors) from whom data were/will be collected and the frequency and schedule with which the data in question were/will be collected.
   c) Describe and append a sample (or samples) of the “instrument” (e.g., survey or test), “artifact” (e.g., writing sample and evaluative protocol, performance review sheet), or other device used to assess the status of the learning outcomes desired by the program.
   d) Explain how the program faculty analyzed and evaluated (will analyze and evaluate) the data to reach conclusions about each desired student learning outcome.

   **[Please limit your response to 200 words or less per learning outcome]**

   *(If the requested data and/or analysis are not yet available for any of the learning outcomes, please explain why and describe the plan by which these will occur. **Please limit your response to 500 words or less.**)*

Since we have used the same instruments to assess more than one goal, and we are in the process of changing our assessment procedures, it will be useful to provide a quick history of our assessment methods. We have measured our goals directly by developing a writing rubric and collecting papers from our upper division courses. We asked several instructors
to randomly select three to five papers from their class. The courses we selected included all our required major courses that assigned papers as well as other upper division courses with paper assignments. We then used these papers to assess several of our goals. This was useful in many ways, but we found that different courses emphasized different goals and it was difficult to apply the rubric consistently. For example, some papers asked students to analyze texts assigned in class while others asked students to formulate their own questions and find their own sources. We also had limited data about how far each student had progressed through the major, so we were evaluating both juniors who might be taking their first Government course along with students who were graduating seniors. Two years ago, as part of our self-study, we conducted a focused inquiry of our courses. We surveyed faculty members asking them what goals they focused on and whether they considered their courses basic, intermediate or advanced. These results have made it easier to choose the courses where we assess papers and to improve our writing rubric. We have also conducted a senior survey where we ask students about their experience at Sacramento State and some of the same questions were included on an alumni survey.

**Goal 1: Knowledge Acquisition** – We focused on this goal in our 2010-11 annual assessment. The first step in this process was to survey faculty about the use of outside sources in their class. We asked faculty if they assigned papers that required outside sources, whether they gave them any help in finding those sources and what policies they had regarding citation of the sources. We found that many course require students to do research outside of class. With this information we decided to examine two broad questions: 1.) what sources are students using in their papers? and 2.) how are students citing those sources? We also used these open-ended questions to help us develop a better rubric for this goal.

To answer these questions, the Government Department assessment committee surveyed 26 papers from six upper-division courses to determine the quality and types of sources that were being used in assigned research papers. These papers came from a combination of required and elective courses. Different courses had different requirements regarding both the types of sources to be used and the type of citation method. We examined whether students were citing papers correctly and we calculated the number and types of sources for papers. We also applied our rubric to assess how well students acquired information.

**Goal 2: Evaluation and Judgment** – This goal has been assessed both directly and indirectly. We believe that the best way to develop evaluation and judgment skills is though reading and writing. Therefore, we conducted a survey of our seniors asking them how much writing they did in their courses and whether they believe their critical thinking skills have improved. Some of these questions overlap with questions we ask our alumni and our faculty. From these three surveys we can assess to what extent our major is focusing on the core skills related to evaluation and judgment. The survey of seniors was
done by going to upper division courses and asking government majors to fill out the survey. We surveyed all students, but separated out seniors. Although this was not a random sample, in a given year we surveyed the vast majority of our seniors taking upper division courses.

We have also assessed this goal directly by developing a writing rubric and reading papers from several of our required and elective upper division courses. We asked instructors in several of our courses to randomly select three papers and we generally ended up with around 20 papers. The writing rubric, which is attached, separates the evaluation and judgment goal into two parts. The first has to do with conceptual thinking and the second with application of evidence. The rubric contains four categories including inadequate, needs work, meets requirements, and excellent work. A committee of three faculty read through the 20 or so papers and assigned a score to each one. When there was disagreement about the category, we would discuss the paper and come to an agreement about where it fit. This type of assessment has been done several times, and as described above we found the rubric hard to apply to all papers. In our most recent assessments we have been working on improving our sampling and instrument.

**Goal 3: Presentation of ideas and student engagement** – The presentation of ideas was assessed using the same rubric and paper sample described above. Student engagement was assessed through our senior survey. We asked students whether they felt they are “more likely to participate in political and community activities” since being a government major. We also ask student whether they participated in an internship.

**Goal 4: Knowledge of the study of politics** – This goal has been assessed indirectly through our senior survey. Most of our assessment focus has been on critical thinking skills, but we are presently working on an instrument to assess substantive learning that will be incorporated into our assessment.

5. Regarding each outcome and method discussed in items 2 and 4 above, please provide examples of how findings from the learning outcomes process have been utilized to address decisions to revise or maintain elements of the curriculum (including decisions to alter the program’s desired outcomes). If such decision-making has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less per item]

a)

b)

c)

d)
Goal 1: Knowledge Acquisition – Our most recent assessment focused on this goal and found that most or our students generally did a good job citing information and were drawing on a wide variety of sources to make their arguments. However, we also found that many students did not know how to properly cite sources and often relied on weak sources that were probably easily accessed through Google. During our faculty retreat, we discussed this issue and agreed that we would create a department wide policy to require Chicago citation format so students would have one format they would need to learn. We also discussed how to help students find and use better sources for their research papers. Faculty agreed that we emphasize library skill and quality sources for papers requiring outside research. We will assess this goal again in a few years to see if these actions have helped.

Goal 2: Evaluation and Judgment – In our senior survey we found that about 70% of our students report writing more than one paper per course and almost all report writing at least one paper per course. Our survey of faculty found students write on average 13.94 pages in intermediate course and 19.37 pages in advanced courses. In our direct assessment of student papers, we examined conceptual thinking and the application of evidence using our writing rubric. We found that overall our students did well in both, with the average scores in the meets expectation range, but they were generally better at applying evidence than in explaining concepts.

There are several changes in our curriculum that have been made to enhance student evaluation skills. One change that we made to our curriculum to enhance student learning was to implement a methods requirement for all students. Before 2008, only our International Relations major had to take this course. We also changed the course to focus more on quantitative skills and have students work with data. Although our students apply evidence well, we felt like we could strengthen this skill. A second change we are making is to improve our advising in light of the focused inquiry we did as part of our self-study. We are trying to do a better job of directing students to intermediate course before they take more advanced courses. Finally, our department has also tried to protect what we are doing well in the face of declining resources and demands for larger class sizes. As part of the discussion of how much writing our students do and the importance to our curricular goals, the department has made an effort to keep the size of our upper division advanced courses from rising too much. When the department was faced with the alternative to increasing upper division class sizes or eliminating our graduate International Affairs program, we chose to eliminate the graduate program. We are also currently discussing how we can revamp our other graduate program to reduce graduate offerings.

Goal 3: Presentation of ideas and student engagement – The changes we made to the curriculum discussed above also apply to presentation of ideas as well. As part of student engagement our departments want to encourage students to engage with their
campus and larger community and provide opportunities for them to do so. According to our senior survey, about a third of our majors do an internship. A large number of them end up working for the state legislature. We also created our Odyssey Mentor Program as a way for more advanced students to mentor newer students. This program has been a great success both for mentors and mentees. Unfortunately, both our internship program and Odyssey Mentor Program will be difficult to sustain in the future if resources continue to diminish. We may face difficult choices in the future to put faculty time into these programs or maintain class sizes for our more advanced upper division courses.

**Goal 4: Knowledge of the study of politics** – We are currently developing an instrument to assess substantive learning. However, we constantly discuss our curriculum and whether we have the right mix of required and elective courses. We have discussed adding a small seminar that would act as a capstone course, but limited resources make this impossible.

6. Has the program systematically sought data from alumni to measure the longer-term effects of accomplishment of the program’s learning outcomes? If so, please describe the approach to this information-gathering and the ways in which the information will be applied to the program’s curriculum. If such activity has not yet occurred, please describe the plan by which it will occur.

[Please limit your response to 300 words or less]

There have been two surveys of Government alumni. The first was administered in 2002. It consisted of a total of 22 closed-ended (forced-choice) questions, of which 16 directly related to alumni’s views on the major’s curriculum and how well it prepared them toward their career paths. There were also three open-ended questions inquiring about the most useful courses and suggestions for improvements. The second survey, conducted in 2009, consisted of a total of 36 closed-ended questions, of which 30 directly related to the curriculum and how well it prepared the majors for their careers.

Although for assessment purposes surveys such as the above are regarded as indirect measures, nevertheless, they can often provide very useful information. In particular, there are at least four questions in the 2009 survey that would allow us to generate some quasi-experimental data in the future to assess the impact of changes in our curriculum. One of these changes involved making GOVT 100, “Introduction to Research Methods in Political Science,” a requirement for the regular government majors, thus raising the total units for the major to 39. This requirement was put into effect beginning fall 2008. The 2009 Alumni Survey can
serve as a good baseline, since all these alumni had catalog rights and were not required to take GOVT 100. Thus, in the next alumni survey, hopefully at the end of 2013, virtually all government majors who graduated after 2011 would have completed GOVT 100. We should, therefore, be able to compare the results from Questions 17 (“Needed technical skills”), 19 (“Needed research skills”), and 21 (“Needed critical thinking skills”) before and after making GOVT 100 a major requirement. (See the last paragraph on potential issues related to future surveys).

The second change that we should be able to study using the alumni survey is in academic advising. Although we have always strongly encouraged all majors to seek advising from Government faculty members, beginning in August 2010 all incoming freshmen and transfer students have been assigned a Government faculty advisor by Barbara Kelly, Enrollment Systems Analyst, Advisement/Graduation, using a quota system to achieve an equitable distribution of advisees among the full-time faculty members. In almost all cases, undeclared students and students changing majors will receive advising from the Chair, and occasionally from a faculty member chosen by students. Academic advising is now mandatory prior to approving of the declaration of major form by the Chair. Advisements are documented on advising forms and scanned to the shared drive under the name of each advisor, with the original advising form given to students. It would be very useful to compare the 2009 responses to Question 8, “The quality of advising received by the department” with virtually the same set of questions in the new alumni survey (see below).

This year the Office of Institutional Research has completed work on a draft of a 34-item generic battery of questions. These items are being currently reviewed and their final version will be used for all future alumni surveys. This change in survey instruments could pose a challenge in comparing the new data with those from the prior years, especially with regard to assessing the impact of GOVT 100. In the new alumni survey, the questions that most closely match questions 19 and 21 of the 2009 survey are Question 14 (“Information literacy and research skills”) and Question 11 (“Critical thinking”) respectively. Question 17 (“Needed technical skills”) has been dropped from the new set, and instead there is Question 13 (“Understanding and using quantitative information”) which directly relates to the main theme of GOVT 100. Moreover, it is our understanding that, once the new survey questions are adopted, each department will be allowed to add up to five additional questions to address their specific needs. Our department plans to carefully review the responses of the previous alumni survey in the light of our learning outcomes and the university’s baccalaureate goals, and to generate up to five additional questions to make better use of the information from future alumni surveys to assess achievement of our learning goals.
7. Does the program pursue learning outcomes identified by an accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization as important? Does the set of outcomes pursued by your program exceed those identified as important by your accrediting or other professional discipline-related organization?

[Please limit your response to 300 words or less]

The discipline of political science does not have any formal accrediting association nor have the discipline's major associations created any universally agreed upon learning outcomes.

8. Finally, what additional information would you like to share with the Senate Committee on Instructional Program Priorities regarding the program’s desired learning outcomes and assessment of their accomplishment?

[Please limit your response to 200 words or less]

The Government Department considers assessment a long-term project that will have to be undertaken in many stages. Each assessment step is provisional and careful as we try to wrestle with the following problems: How do we balance the need for institutional and department oversight with our desire to preserve faculty autonomy, creativity, and diversity of approaches? How do we assess general critical skills in the midst of substantive courses? What factual knowledge and objective content can be assessed, and which content makes up the solid core of what we believe a major in Government should stand for? Throughout this process, as we take up individual parts of the major we have continued to evaluate our assessment tools; reconsidered what it is we hope to assess; and continued a dialogue about exactly what we believe is the core of our department. As such, this project has been helpful in focusing us as a department. Although the department has always engaged in these discussions, assessment has helped make these more focused and given them a structure they lacked before.
GOVERNMENT MAJOR SURVEY

Please assist the Government Department in assessing our program by responding to this survey. We will be grateful for your response and will consider it carefully. **The survey is meant for Government majors, so please do not fill it out if you are not a Government major.** Your responses will be completely anonymous and the answers will help us in assessing and improving the Department. Please pick only one answer for each question unless asked otherwise.

1.) Which of the following best describes your participation in a typical Government course? Participation would include answering faculty questions or participating in class discussions.

   A.) I participated during almost every class period  
   B.) I participated during most class periods  
   C.) I occasionally participated during class  
   D.) I rarely participated during class  
   E.) I never participated in class

2.) Which of the following best describes how many papers you wrote for your Government courses?

   A.) I wrote more than one paper in most of my courses  
   B.) I wrote about one paper for every course  
   C.) I wrote a paper for most of my courses but not all of them  
   D.) I wrote papers for a few of my courses  
   E.) I rarely wrote papers for my courses

3.) Which of the following best describes how quickly your government professors gave back graded assignments?

   A.) Almost always within one week  
   B.) Usually within one week  
   C.) Usually within two weeks  
   D.) Usually longer than two weeks

4.) Which of the following best describes how often your Government professors discussed how to improve your critical thinking skills? This would include how to assess and develop arguments and using evidence to make your arguments.

   A.) Every course  
   B.) Most courses  
   C.) Some courses  
   D.) Very few courses  
   E.) No courses
5.) How many research papers did you write in the government department? A research paper is where you gather information from the library or other places and put together an original argument or analysis.

A.) 0  
B.) 1  
C.) 2  
D.) 3  
E.) 4 or more

6.) Which of the following best describes your typical contact with your Government professors outside of class? Communicating with professors would include visiting their office hours, talking after class, or discussions on the phone or through email.

A.) I typically communicated with my professors many times outside of class  
B.) I typically communicated with my professors once or twice per semester  
C.) I communicated with a professor a few times in my career  
D.) I never communicated with my professors outside of class

7.) Which of the following best describes how often your professors were available to answer questions?

A.) Professors were always available to answer questions  
B.) Professors were usually available to answer questions  
C.) Professors were sometimes available to answer questions  
D.) Professors were hardly ever available to answer questions

8.) What percentage of the reading would you say you did in your average Government course?

A.) 90-100%  
B.) 75-89%  
C.) 50-74%  
D.) 25-49%  
E.) Less than 25%

9.) The expectation is that students will study 6 hours per week for every 3-unit class they take. How many hours a week would you say you studied for a typical 3-unit Government course?

A.) 1-2 hours per week for each class  
B.) 2-3 hours per week for each class  
C.) 3-4 hours per week for each class  
D.) 4-5 hours per week for each class  
E.) 5-6 hours per week for each class

10.) Did you participate in an internship while you were a Government major?

A.) Yes  
B.) No
11.) Which of the following best describes your career plans over the next few years? (Leave blank if none of the above).

A.) Work in private sector  
B.) Work in political job  
C.) Work for state, local or federal government  
D.) Go to law school  
E.) Go to graduate school in government, political science, public policy or public administration

Read each statement and tell us which of the following best explains your reaction. Would you say that you strongly agree (SA), agree (A), are neutral (N), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD) with the statement?

12.) I feel that I am more likely to participate in political and community activities such as voting, joining a group or volunteering after having been a student in the Government Department.

A.) SA  B.) A  C.) N  D.) D  E.) SD

13.) I am satisfied with the quality of instruction I received from the Government Department.

A.) SA  B.) A  C.) N  D.) D  E.) SD

14.) I am satisfied with the course selection provided by the Government Department.

A.) SA  B.) A  C.) N  D.) D  E.) SD

15.) I am satisfied with the advising I received from the Government Department.

A.) SA  B.) A  C.) N  D.) D  E.) SD

16.) I am satisfied with the knowledge my Government major provided me.

A.) SA  B.) A  C.) N  D.) D  E.) SD

17.) I am satisfied with the critical thinking skills my Government major provided me.

A.) SA  B.) A  C.) N  D.) D  E.) SD

18.) I feel that my Government courses helped me critically analyze the moral and ethical components of policy and political questions.

A.) SA  B.) A  C.) N  D.) D  E.) SD

19.) I feel that my Government courses helped me critically analyze political and policy arguments.

A.) SA  B.) A  C.) N  D.) D  E.) SD
20.) I feel the Government Department helped me through my courses, advising, or internships in thinking about my graduate or law school choices.

A.) SA  B.) A  C.) N  D.) D  E.) SD

21.) I feel the Government Department’s courses, advising, and internships helped me in thinking about my career choices.

A.) SA  B.) A  C.) N  D.) D  E.) SD

22.) If I had to do it over again, I would major in Government again.

A.) SA  B.) A  C.) N  D.) D  E.) SD

23.) What was your GPA in your Government classes?

- A.) 2.0-2.75
- B.) 2.76-2.99
- C.) 3.0-3.25
- D.) 3.26-3.49
- E.) 3.5-4.0

24.) How many hours a week did you work?

- A.) 0-10
- B.) 10-15
- C.) 15-20
- D.) 20-30
- E.) 30 or more

25.) How old are you?

- A.) Under 21
- B.) 21-22
- C.) 23-24
- D.) 24-25
- E.) Over 25

What year are you in school?

A.) Freshman  B.) Sophomore  C.) Junior  D.) Senior

Looking back on your experiences in the Government Department do you have any suggestions for how we can improve the experience of future students? Please write your comments in the designated area of your bubble form.
Government Department Paper Grading Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Inadequate</th>
<th>Needs Work/Shows Promise</th>
<th>Meet requirements/ Shows Competency</th>
<th>Excellent Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information Acquisition</td>
<td>Student is able to use information from the library and other outside sources to address a topic in political science. The student’s research should incorporate high quality sources that reflect the different perspectives that exist on the issue.</td>
<td>Student uses too few sources and/or relies too much on low-quality or secondary sources. The main support for the student’s argument is based on low-quality sources.</td>
<td>Student uses some high quality sources, but the research does not consistently reflect the best sources available and/or too much of the paper’s main arguments are based on low quality sources.</td>
<td>Student uses mostly high quality sources and the main parts of the argument are built on those sources.</td>
<td>All sources are high quality sources and are successfully used to develop his or her argument.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptual Thinking</td>
<td>Part of a liberal arts education is moving from learning facts to thinking more abstractly. Students should be able to recognize, breakdown, and apply complex concepts and ideas.</td>
<td>The student’s work does not demonstrate a clear understanding of concepts needed to address paper topic. Key concepts are left out of the paper altogether.</td>
<td>Student attempts to explain important concepts, but they are not fully developed. Evidence of an underdeveloped concept includes mistating ideas or leaving out key components of those ideas.</td>
<td>The student’s work demonstrates a basic understanding of concepts needed to address their paper topic. The student describes the relevant concept completely and clearly.</td>
<td>The student’s work provides a deep understanding of concepts by using meaningful examples or explaining how the concept fits into broader historical and political contexts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of Relationships</td>
<td>The next step in the learning process is understanding how concepts and ideas relate to one another in the form of theories. Student understands relevant theories and underlying assumptions.</td>
<td>Student demonstrated little understanding of how key concepts relate to one another. For example, student may apply the wrong theory to a particular case.</td>
<td>Student conveys an incomplete explanation of relevant theories. For example, underlying assumptions are not identified.</td>
<td>Student fully explains relevant theories. This entails explaining how key concepts fit together.</td>
<td>Student demonstrates an exceptional understanding of relevant theories. For example, the student may provide evidence or an example we did not discuss in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and Theories</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application of Evidence</td>
<td>Student is able to recognize and provide appropriate evidence to support theoretical claims and arguments.</td>
<td>Little evidence exists to back up student’s claims or argument. Evidence is used poorly or is irrelevant to the argument.</td>
<td>Student uses some evidence, but it is insufficient or inappropriate. Main points of the paper are poorly supported.</td>
<td>Student provides sufficient and appropriate evidence to back up their argument.</td>
<td>Student provides compelling evidence to back up argument. Student also considers conflicting evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation of Ideas</td>
<td>The presentation of ideas affects all other categories. Student papers should have a clear thesis, be organized, and not have distracting grammatical errors.</td>
<td>Paper provides no thesis or argument. The argument is so poorly organized or contains so many writing errors that it is hard to follow.</td>
<td>The paper has too little structure and too many writing errors. However these writing problems do not completely obscure the student’s points.</td>
<td>Student’s paper has a thesis, adequate organization, and few writing errors. The student’s argument is not obscured by writing problems.</td>
<td>Paper has a clear thesis, is well organized and crisply written. Student’s points or arguments are clear.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Government Curriculum Survey

1. Name:

2. Are you:
   - Full time faculty
   - Part time faculty

3. Course Number

4. Course Title

5. This course is a:
   - undergraduate course
   - graduate course

6. This course is taught during (check all that apply):
   - Spring
   - Fall
   - Summer
   Not regularly offered. Last time it was offered was:

7. Do you teach all offered sections for this course:
   - Yes
   - No
8. This course was (check one):
   Developed by me after starting employment at CSUS.
   Developed prior to my hire and then subsequently taken over by me.

9. By your best estimation, how many students that wanted to enroll in this course were ultimately turned away the last semester it was taught?

   [Blank space for input]

10. This course requires the following prerequisite course(s) to have been taken prior to enrollment (check all that apply):
    
    None
    Government 1
    Writing Intensive Course
    Other (please specify)

    [Blank space for input]

11. Ideally, I would like an enrolled student to have taken the following courses, although they are not prerequisites:

    [Blank space for input]

12. Does this course have a service learning component?
    
    Yes
    No

13. This course would best be described as being part of which sub-discipline (choose one)?
    
    American Government
    State and Local Politics
    International Relations
    Comparative Politics
    Political Theory
14. Other sub-disciplines that this course addresses (check all that apply):

- American Government
- State and Local Politics
- International Relations
- Comparative Politics
- Political Theory
- Public Law and Judicial Studies
- Methodology

15. This course fulfills non-elective requirements for the following programs (check all that apply):

- General Education Lower Division
- General Education Upper Division
- Government Major
- Government-International Relations Major
- Government-Journalism Major
- Government Masters Program
- International Affairs Masters Program
- Government Minor
- African Studies Minor
- California Studies Minor
- Middle East and Islamic Studies Minor
- Peace and Conflict Resolution Minor
- Writing Intensive
- Other (please specify)

16. This course assigns readings from the following sources (check all that apply):

Public Law and Judicial Studies
Methodology
17. What percentage of your assigned readings fall into each of the following categories? (Total should equal 100 percent.)

Easily understood by an average lower division undergraduate student: 

Difficult for an average lower division undergraduate student, but understood by an average upper-division undergraduate student: 

Difficult for an average-upper division undergraduate student, but understood by a graduate student: 

Textbook (i.e. Patterson’s American Government, Goldstein and Pevehouse’s International Relations)

Classic text (i.e. Plato, Rousseau, Locke, etc.)

Peer Reviewed Journal Article (i.e. APSR, JOP, ISQ, etc.)

Book published by an academic press (Cambridge University Press, University of Michigan Press, etc.)

Book published by popular press (i.e. Random House, Penguin, etc.)

U.S. Government published documents (i.e. Congressional Research Service reports, Government Printing Office, etc.)

Intergovernmental Organization documents (United Nations, European Union, etc.)

Non-Governmental Organization documents (Amnesty International, Heritage Foundation, etc.)

Newspaper or News Magazine articles (New York Times, Newsweek, etc.)

Web content not available in print form (Youtube, Blogs, etc.)

Other (please specify): 


18. How many total pages (double-spaced) of take home writing were assigned for this course (i.e. research papers, out of class reflection papers, take home midterms, etc.)?

Total: _______________

19. How many hours of this course were dedicated to in-class writing (essay exams, reflection pieces, etc.)?

Total hours (use decimals for fractions): _______________

20. What percentage of out of class writing was dedicated to (total should equal 100 percent):

Answering a question given by the professor using assigned materials and lecture. _______________

Answering a question given by the professor using unassigned materials. _______________

Answering a question developed by the student using assigned materials and lecture. _______________

Answering a question developed by the student using unassigned materials. _______________

21. The following writing assignments are assigned for this course (check all that apply):

- Research paper under 5 pages (double-space)
- Research paper between 5 and 10 pages (double-space)
22. Which of the following teaching methods do you use in this class?

- Lecture
- Discussion
- Debates
- Small group discussion
- Student presentation of the reading
- Student presentation of their research
- Group assignments
- In class writing exercises
- Video or audio presentation
- Student critique of other student's work
- Other (please specify)

23. What level of preparation should students have upon entering this class for each of the following departmental learning goals?

- Research paper between 10 and 15 pages (double-space)
- Research paper over 15 pages (double-space)
- Lab reports
- One or two page reflection papers
- Reflection paper that is 3-10 pages long
- Short position/issue paper (about 1 to 2 pages long)
- Longer position/issue paper (3 pages or longer)
- Outline writing
- Collaborative project
- Impromptu in-class writing
- Summaries and/or abstracts
- Professional letters
- Other (please specify)
Basic (No prior college level knowledge expected and this skill is taught at the introductory level.)

Intermediate (This course expects basic skills and assignments are designed for students beginning upper-division work.)

Advanced (This course expects students to have advanced skills in this area and the focus is on honing the skills that would be expected of a college graduate.)

Graduate Level (This course expects students to be beyond an undergraduate set of skills and capable of doing graduate level work.)

Information Acquisition (Student uses the information needed to address paper topic. Information may come from assigned readings, class lectures and discussion, student research from the library, or other sources.)

Conceptual Thinking (Part of a liberal arts education is moving from learning facts to thinking more abstractly. Students should be able to recognize, breakdown, and apply complex concepts and ideas.)

Analysis of Relationships and Theories (The next step in the learning process is understanding how concepts and ideas relate to one another in the form of theories. Student understands relevant theories and underlying...
assumptions.)
Application of Evidence (Student is able to recognize and provide appropriate evidence to support theoretical claims and arguments.)

Presentation of Ideas (The presentation of ideas affects all other categories. Student papers should have a clear thesis, be organized, and not have distracting grammatical errors.)

24. What specific in-class methods or tools do you use to help students achieve the above learning goals? Please be as specific as possible. If you have any handouts that you use, please forward them to David Andersen.

25. Overall, this course's difficulty would rank as:

Basic (lower division)

Intermediate (a good course for a student that is just beginning to take upper division courses)

Advanced (a student should have taken at least some intermediate upper division courses, especially in the same subject area, before enrolling in this course.)

Graduate Level (This course is designed for graduate students or a very advanced undergraduate.)

Thank you for completing this survey. Please forward the most recent syllabus for this course to David Andersen (david.andersen@csus.edu).