Overview:

The expertise of the University of Cincinnati’s Department of Political Science is oriented to challenge our understanding of politics in fundamental ways and is positioned to translate new discoveries about those fundamentals into practical analysis that advances thinking in the political world. The department’s faculty and students, thus, engage in pursuit of knowledge at the nexus of theory and policy, advancing UC’s overall institutional strengths in applied learning and discovery. Currently the department has research foci in two critical areas: 1) the conceptualization of security and its effect on national and international politics; 2) the formation of public opinion and its effect on public policy. The Political Science PhD program equips students with the theoretical and methodological training needed to develop an advanced understanding of politics and public affairs. The program prepares students for success in both academic and non-academic careers and provides the foundation and motivation for engaged citizenship and problem solving in our local and global communities.
I. Program Outcomes

*Please include in this section your program learning outcomes as they are listed in the P-1 form in eCurriculum. If you are already planning to revise those program learning outcomes, indicate in this section which ones might be changed, and what the new program learning outcomes are likely to be. In general, learning outcomes should be measurable, assessable, or observable in some way and aligned with national standards.*

At the conclusion of the program, Political Science doctoral students will be able to...

1) Design and conduct empirical research studies that conform to professional standards for methodology and ethics.

2) Disseminate research findings in the form of oral presentations and written research papers suitable for submission to a professional conference or publication.

3) Write research proposals such as those required to obtain external funding for research.

4) Demonstrate ability to summarize and synthesize scholarly literature through completion of comprehensive exams in two major fields of political science (American politics, comparative politics, international relations, research methodology).

5) Demonstrate ability to independently plan and execute a large, original research project by writing and defending a dissertation.

6) Teach a college-level political science class.

7) Deliver presentations such as those required for job interviews and professional conferences.
II. Curriculum/Program Map

Please include in this section a grid that identifies connections that exist between required courses in this program and the corresponding program-level learning outcomes. In other words: how will program outcomes be met? This grid should further indicate the expected levels of learning at each level (whether emerging, strengthening, or achieved). The CET&L web site includes templates that you might find useful in completed this grid.
## Curriculum Mapping Matrix: Linking Program Outcomes to Curriculum

### Key

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>E</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emerging</td>
<td>Developing</td>
<td>Achieved</td>
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### PhD in Political Science

#### Program Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Courses Identified in P-1 or Other Experiences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POL 7005</td>
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<tr>
<td>E D</td>
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<tr>
<td>1) Design and conduct empirical research studies that conform to professional standards for methodology and ethics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5) Demonstrate ability to independently plan and execute a large, original research project by writing and defending a dissertation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6) Teach a college-level political science class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Deliver presentations such as those required for job interviews and professional conferences.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
III. Methods and Measures

Please include in this section a description of the assessment methods that your program plans to use in assessing each of its program learning outcomes. These methods ideally include both direct and indirect examples of student learning, with authentic, performance-based assessment performed at all levels. You may find it helpful to include the "Assessment Measures Alignment Matrix" from Activity 5.

Note: In several places in this section, reference is made to standardized rubrics that will be used for assessment purposes. Specific rubrics and expectation levels for student achievement will need to be discussed and developed collaboratively by department faculty. Until these rubrics are fully developed, we cannot specify what an acceptable level of achievement might be for particular program outcomes because we do not yet know the structure or scale of the rubrics. Faculty will pilot test rubrics in AY 2014-15. It is likely that a year or two of data will need to be gathered before we can refine expectations for achievement across the various levels and modes of assessment.

Program Outcome #1: Design and conduct empirical research studies that conform to professional standards for methodology and ethics.

Assessment measures:

- Artifacts from required courses
  - An assignment in POL 7050, Research Methods & Design, is a term paper that presents a research design on a topic of the student’s choosing. This paper is assessed using a rubric agreed upon by the course instructor(s).
  - An assignment in POL 7051, Statistics for Political Science, is to produce a statistical analysis suitable for inclusion in a journal article. This paper is assessed using a rubric agreed upon by the course instructor(s).
  - Goals for student performance
    - Because the department has not yet approved the specific assessment rubrics, it is not possible to indicate exactly what the goal should be for student performance. This will be determined as rubrics are developed.

- Dissertation proposal
  - The dissertation proposal is evaluated by three or more faculty members who are experts in the relevant field. The proposal is not approved until it meets professional standards for research design.
  - Goal for student performance: 95% of post-comps students successfully complete a dissertation proposal.

- Dissertation
The dissertation is evaluated by three or more faculty members who are experts in the relevant field. The dissertation is not approved until it meets professional standards for the conduct of original research.

Goal for student performance: 100% of doctoral candidates successfully complete a dissertation.

Program Outcome #2: Disseminate research findings in the form of oral presentations and written research papers suitable for submission to a professional conference or publication.

Assessment measures:

- Artifacts from courses
  - An assignment in POL 7050, Research Methods & Design, is a term paper that presents a research design on a topic of the student’s choosing. Students make oral presentations of their designs. The presentation is assessed using a rubric agreed upon by the course instructor(s).
  - Goals for student performance
    - Because the department has not yet approved the specific assessment rubrics, it is not possible to indicate exactly what the goal should be for student performance. This will be determined as rubrics are developed.

- Dissertation
  - The dissertation is evaluated by three or more faculty members who are experts in the relevant field. The dissertation is not approved until it meets professional standards for the presentation of original research findings.
  - Goal for student performance: 100% of doctoral candidates successfully complete a dissertation.

- Dissertation defense
  - The dissertation defense is evaluated by three or more faculty members who are experts in the relevant field. It is also open to the public and provides an opportunity for the committee to assess the student’s ability to make a presentation that conforms to professional norms and standards.
  - Goal for student performance: 100% of doctoral candidates successfully defend a dissertation.

Program Outcome #3: Write research proposals such as those required to obtain external funding for research.

Assessment measures:

- Artifacts from courses
An assignment in POL 7005, Graduate Colloquium, requires students to identify a grant opportunity and draft a proposal for funding of their research. The proposal is assessed using a rubric agreed upon by the course instructor(s).

An assignment in POL 7050, Research Methods & Design, is a term paper that presents a research design on a topic of the student’s choosing. This paper is assessed using a rubric agreed upon by the course instructor(s).

Goals for student performance

- Because the department has not yet approved the specific assessment rubrics, it is not possible to indicate exactly what the goal should be for student performance. This will be determined as rubrics are developed.

Dissertation proposal

- The dissertation proposal is evaluated by three or more faculty members who are experts in the relevant field. The proposal is not approved until it meets professional standards for research design.

- Goal for student performance: 95% of post-comps students successfully complete a dissertation proposal.

Program Outcome #4: Demonstrate ability to summarize and synthesize scholarly literature through completion of comprehensive exams in two major fields of political science (American politics, comparative politics, international relations, research methodology).

Assessment measures:

- Comprehensive exams
  - As part of the comprehensive exam process students write essays in response to questions that require them to address major themes, debates, and controversies in the scholarly literature within their major fields of study. The exam is evaluated by three or more faculty members who are experts in the relevant fields using an agreed upon rubric.
  - Goals for student performance
    - The expectation would be that 90% of students who reach the stage of taking comprehensive exams will earn passing grades.
    - Because the department has not yet approved the specific assessment rubrics, it is not possible to indicate exactly what the goal should be for student performance. This will be determined as rubrics are developed.

- Dissertation proposal
  - The dissertation proposal is evaluated by three or more faculty members who are experts in the relevant field. The proposal is not approved unless it accurately summarizes the scholarly literature and identifies the contribution the proposed dissertation can make to that literature.
Goal for student performance: 95% of post-comps students successfully complete a dissertation proposal.

Dissertation

- The dissertation is evaluated by three or more faculty members who are experts in the relevant field. The dissertation is not approved until it meets professional standards for the design, conduct, and presentation of original research. This includes an accurate depiction of previous research literature.
- Goal for student performance: 100% of doctoral candidates successfully complete a dissertation.

Program Outcome #5: Demonstrate ability to independently plan and execute a large, original research project by writing and defending a dissertation.

Assessment measures:

- Artifacts from courses
  - An assignment in POL 7050, Research Methods & Design, is a term paper that presents a research design on a topic of the student’s choosing. This paper can serve as the first draft of a research design for a dissertation. This paper is assessed using a rubric agreed upon by the course instructor(s).
  - Goals for student performance
    - Because the department has not yet approved the specific assessment rubrics, it is not possible to indicate exactly what the goal should be for student performance. This will be determined as rubrics are developed.

- Comprehensive exams
  - As part of the comprehensive exam process students write an essay in their area of focus. This essay is a “pre-proposal” that identifies research questions worthy of further study in a dissertation or other research project. The exam essay is evaluated by three or more faculty members who are experts in the relevant field. The essay is not approved until it meets professional standards for research design.
  - Goal for student performance: 90% of students write a comprehensive exam essay that is approved by the faculty committee.

- Dissertation proposal
  - The dissertation proposal is evaluated by three or more faculty members who are experts in the relevant field. The proposal is not approved until it meets professional standards for research design.
  - Goal for student performance: 95% of post-comps students successfully write a dissertation proposal.

- Dissertation
  - The dissertation is evaluated by three or more faculty members who are experts in the relevant field. The dissertation is not approved until it meets professional standards for the design, conduct, and presentation of original research.


Program outcome #6: Teach a college-level political science class.

Assessment measures:

- Artifacts from courses
  - An assignment in POL 7005, Graduate Colloquium, is to construct a detailed course syllabus. The syllabus is assessed using a rubric agreed upon by the course instructor(s).
  - Goals for student performance
    - Because the department has not yet approved the specific assessment rubrics, it is not possible to indicate exactly what the goal should be for student performance. This will be determined as rubrics are developed.

- Comprehensive exams
  - The comprehensive exam process concludes with an oral exam. The oral exam is evaluated by at least three faculty members who are experts in the relevant fields. The oral exam provides an opportunity for the committee to assess the student’s ability to verbally present material from his/her fields of study. The oral exam is assessed using a rubric agreed upon by the faculty.
  - Goals for student performance
    - The expectation would be that 90% of students who reach the stage of taking the oral exam will earn passing grades.
    - Because the department has not yet approved the specific assessment rubrics, it is not possible to indicate exactly what the goal should be for student performance. This will be determined as rubrics are developed.

- Dissertation defense
  - The dissertation defense is evaluated by three or more faculty members who are experts in the relevant field. It is also open to the public and provides an opportunity for the committee to assess the student’s ability to verbally present material from his/her fields of study.
  - Goal for student performance: 100% of doctoral candidates successfully defend a dissertation.

Program outcome #7: Deliver presentations such as those required for job interviews and professional conferences.

Assessment measures:

- Artifacts from courses
An assignment in POL 7005, Graduate Colloquium, requires students to present their research in a department colloquium or research brownbag. The presentation is assessed using a rubric agreed upon by the course instructor(s).

Goals for student performance

- Because the department has not yet approved the specific assessment rubrics, it is not possible to indicate exactly what the goal should be for student performance. This will be determined as rubrics are developed.

Comprehensive exams

- The comprehensive exam process concludes with an oral exam. The oral exam is evaluated by at least three faculty members who are experts in the relevant fields. The oral exam provides an opportunity for the committee to assess the student’s ability to verbally present material from his/her fields of study. The oral exam is assessed using a rubric agreed upon by the faculty.

Goals for student performance

- The expectation would be that 90% of students who reach the stage of taking the oral exam will earn passing grades.
- Because the department has not yet approved the specific assessment rubrics, it is not possible to indicate exactly what the goal should be for student performance. This will be determined as rubrics are developed.

Dissertation defense

- The dissertation defense is evaluated by three or more faculty members who are experts in the relevant field. It is also open to the public and provides an opportunity for the committee to assess the student’s ability to make a presentation that conforms to professional norms and standards.

Goal for student performance: 100% of doctoral candidates successfully defend a dissertation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Outcome</th>
<th>Assessment Tools</th>
<th>Course/ Experience</th>
<th>Time Line</th>
<th>Responsible Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Design and conduct empirical research studies that conform to professional standards for methodology and ethics.</td>
<td>Course paper evaluated using agreed-upon rubric; Dissertation</td>
<td>POL 7050 (Research Methods &amp; Design); Dissertation</td>
<td>Research design course taken in first year; dissertation in 4th or 5th year</td>
<td>Course instructor for POL 7050; dissertation committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disseminate research findings in the form of oral presentations and written research papers suitable for submission to a professional conference or publication.</td>
<td>Presentation in a course, evaluated using agreed-upon rubric; Dissertation evaluated by faculty committee</td>
<td>POL 7005 (Graduate Colloquium); Dissertation and defense</td>
<td>POL 7005 course taken in first year; Dissertation defended in 4th or 5th year</td>
<td>Course instructor for POL 7005; Dissertation committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write research proposals such as those required to obtain external funding for research.</td>
<td>Research proposals written for courses and assessed using rubrics; Dissertation proposal</td>
<td>POL 7005 (Graduate Colloquium); Dissertation proposal</td>
<td>POL course taken in first year; Dissertation proposal by 4th year</td>
<td>Course instructor for POL 7005; Dissertation committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate ability to summarize and synthesize scholarly literature through completion of comprehensive exams in two major fields of political science (American politics, comparative politics, international relations, research methodology).</td>
<td>Written and oral comprehensive exams evaluated by faculty committees using agreed-upon rubric</td>
<td>Written and oral comprehensive exams</td>
<td>Third year in program</td>
<td>Graduate Program Director (schedules and assembles exams); Field committees (evaluate written exams); oral exam committee (evaluate oral exam)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate ability to independently plan and execute a large, original research project by writing and defending a dissertation.</td>
<td>Dissertation evaluated by faculty committee.</td>
<td>Dissertation and Dissertation defense</td>
<td>Fourth or fifth year in program</td>
<td>Dissertation committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach a college-level political science class.</td>
<td>Teaching observed and assessed by faculty mentor; student evaluations of teaching</td>
<td>Teaching assistant; teaching a course independently</td>
<td>Teaching assistant roles begin in first or second year; independent teaching only after passing comps in third year.</td>
<td>Faculty members who supervise TAs; student’s faculty mentor; Grad Program Director</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deliver presentations such as those required for job interviews and professional conferences.</td>
<td>Presentations for courses assessed by faculty using rubric; Dissertation Defense evaluated by faculty committee</td>
<td>POL 7005 (Graduate Colloquium); Dissertation Defense</td>
<td>POL 7005 course taken in first year; Dissertation defended in 4th or 5th year</td>
<td>Course instructor for POL 7005; Dissertation committee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Assessment Infrastructure

Please include in this section a description of the process by which your program intends to assess its learning outcomes.

- Describe which program faculty will be charged with overseeing the execution of the assessment plan as well as the ways in which they will carry out that charge, including a description of the planned timeline for assessment.
- Identify what kinds of administrative support will be available for those faculty

Please note that assessment plans should be capable of producing reports annually based on their review of the relevant data from their programs. The work of your faculty might also be coordinated and aligned with similar assessment efforts at the college and institutional levels.

The department will utilize a standing committee structure to insure continued oversight of the assessment process. The assessment committee for the PhD program outcomes will be comprised of the Graduate Studies Committee, which is chaired by the Graduate Program Director and typically includes faculty representatives from each of the four major fields of study (American politics, comparative politics, international relations, political research methodology). The Department Head is an ex officio member of the committee. An advantage of this approach is stability and efficiency; the Graduate Committee is a standing committee created in the department by-laws so there is no need to form a new committee or to convince faculty to join it.

The committee will begin its work by reviewing and approving this assessment plan document, with particular attention to the learning outcomes and assessment methods proposed herein. Once the plan has been approved by the committee, it will be presented to the department for approval. The committee will review the assessment plan document annually and will recommend alterations to the department as needed.

Following approval of the assessment plan, the committee will request relevant data from the instructors of required courses. The Graduate Program Director will provide the committee with data on doctoral students’ progress through the program and their achievement of milestones such as passing comprehensive exams, entering into doctoral candidacy by having a dissertation proposal approved, and so forth. The department's Program Coordinator will assist in this data collection process, particularly over the summer. Prior to the start of each fall semester the committee will evaluate the data from the previous academic year (and several years prior, once the data become available) and will make an annual report to the department at the first or second department faculty meeting of the semester. After multiple years of data collection, the assessment committee’s report will address trends in achievement as well as outcomes from individual years. The committee’s report to the department will include recommendations regarding strategies for measuring and assessing learning outcomes in the future.
IV. Findings

*Here you will describe and explain in this section any multi-year patterns and trends that your assessment efforts have identified, including a description of any relevant relationships to national standards.*

Not yet applicable, as we have yet to collect multiple years of data.

V. Use of Findings

*In this final section, you will describe how your program intends to make use of the program-level assessment data it has gathered.*

- How will this information be presented to and discussed among the faculty?
- How might this data or these discussions result in review and possible revision of course or program learning outcomes and pedagogical strategies?

Not yet applicable, as we have yet to collect multiple years of data.