

**Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
Department of Politics
Master of Arts Program in Politics
Doctoral Program in Politics**

Key Assessment Findings AY 2009-2010

During the academic year 2009-2010, a total of fourteen students took the on-campus M.A. comprehensive examination in Politics. Thirteen students passed the M.A. comprehensive examination and one student failed the examination. Two of the fourteen students passed the examination with “Honors.”

During the academic year 2009-2010, nine students took the doctoral comprehensive examination. All nine of these students passed the doctoral examination. Two of the nine students passed the doctoral examination with “Honors.”

Master’s level comprehensive exam: Rubric and Key Assessment Findings

Each professor was asked to grade each question of the comprehensive MA examination in accordance with the Politics Department’s comprehensive exam rubric, which is based on the following 3 point scale: “exceeds expectations” (Pass with Honors) 3 points, “meets expectations” (Pass) 2 points, and “below expectations” (Fail) 1 point.

**Table of Results
Student Learning Assessment Rubric
Department of Politics
M.A. in Politics
AY 2009-2010**

Rubric for MA Comprehensive Exams

Trait	Level						Total N
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1) Critical Thinking /Analytical Skills	2	14	11	79	1	7	14
2) Knowledge of Literature	3	21	10	71	1	7	14
3) Clear/Effective Writing	2	14	10	71	2	14	14

Ph.D. level comprehensive exam: Rubric and Key Assessment Findings

Each professor was asked to grade each question of the comprehensive Ph.D. examination in accordance with the Politics Department’s comprehensive exam rubric, which is based on the following 3 point scale: “exceeds expectations” (Pass with Honors) 3 points, “meets expectations” (Pass) 2 points, and “below expectations” (Fail) 1 point.

Table of Results

Student Learning Assessment Rubric

Department of Politics

Ph.D. in Politics

AY 2009-2010

Rubric for Ph.D. Comprehensive Exams

Trait	Level						Total N
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1) Critical Thinking /Analytical Skills	3	33	6	67	0	0	9
2) Knowledge of Literature	2	22	6	67	1	11	9
3) Clear/Effective Writing	3	33	6	67	0	0	9

Curricular Improvements

Performance on the comprehensive examinations was satisfactory on both the M.A. and Ph.D. levels. Twenty-one out of the twenty-two students (95%) taking the M.A. and Ph.D. Comprehensive examinations passed the exams. The high pass rate indicates that graduate students in the Department of Politics have been adequately prepared for passing the examinations. 93% of M.A. students and 100% of Ph.D. students met or exceeded expectations concerning “Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills”; 93% of MA students and 89% of Ph.D. students met or exceeded expectations in individual “knowledge of the literature and concepts of the field”; and 85% of M.A. students and 100% of Ph.D. students met or exceeded expectations for “Writing Clearly and Systematically” about the field of political science. Although the results are satisfactory, the department will discuss efforts to improve writing skills of M.A. students in an exam setting. The rubric will be applied again during the 2010-2011 academic year.