

**Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements  
Department of Politics: Undergraduate Seniors  
B.A. in Politics**

**Key Assessment Findings**

***Undergraduate senior comprehensive exam: Introduction***

The comprehensive exams in American Government, World Politics and Political Theory are capstone requirements for these Bachelor's degree programs. All Bachelors' students in the Politics Department must take and pass the comprehensive exam in order to earn the degree. Students take this exam within the last year of coursework. If a student fails his or her first exam, then he or she may retake the exam once per semester until he or she passes, before he or she may earn the degree.

***Bachelor's level comprehensive exam: Rubric and Key Assessment Findings***

Each comprehensive exam question is graded by the professor who wrote the question. Each professor grades each question in accordance with the 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. The rubrics examine three key areas: Critical Thinking/Analytical Skills, Knowledge of Literature and Concepts, and Clear/Effective Writing. Each of the three key areas are graded on the same 3-point scale.

**Table of Results  
Student Learning Assessment Rubric  
Department of Politics  
B.A. in Politics  
AY 2010-2011**

**Rubric for BA Comprehensive Exams**

Trait	Level						Mean	SD	Total N
	Exceeding Expectations (3pts)		Meeting Expectations (2pts)		Below Expectations (1pt)				
	N	%	N	%	N	%			
<b>1) Critical Thinking /Analytical Skills</b>	51	20.48%	151	60.64%	47	18.87%	2.01	0.40	249
<b>2) Knowledge of Literature</b>	48	19.27%	149	59.83%	52	20.88%	1.58	0.40	249
<b>3) Clear/Effective Writing</b>	42	16.68%	180	72.28%	27	10.84%	2.06	0.40	249

The table above reflects the results of the B.A. Senior comprehensive exams during AY 2010-2011. In AY 2010-2011, 87 students took comprehensive exams. 1 earned "Pass with Honors," 86 earned "Pass," and 0 earned a "Fail." Over the last year, 87 out of 87 comprehensive exam takers have met or exceeded expectations. Over the last academic year, the program's comprehensive exam performance average has been approximately 2.05, based on the 3 point

rubric described above. After reviewing the B.A. exams, the Department of Politics feels confident that students are meeting and even exceeding departmental expectations.

***Bachelor's level comprehensive exam: Curricular Improvements***

No major changes to the exam format have been made during the 2010-2011 academic year. Student achievement has met or exceeded expectations, and students, faculty, and the department all believe that the exam is designed in such a way that it measures accurately and fairly student learning in the B.A. program. The rubric will continue to be used during AY 2011-2012, and it will be revised and improved as necessary.