

Law & Constitutional Studies Undergraduate **Data-Based Decisions**

Learning Objective 1

To demonstrate knowledge about the structure of the American legal system, and how it affects law, politics and public policy.

We collected information from course syllabi for POLS 3120, Law and Politics, 5130, Law and Policy and 5140, Law Policy and War. We determined these courses would fulfill Learning Objective 1. We undertook an analysis of grades for these courses beginning with the Fall 2013 semester and gathered data up to the Fall 2016 semester. We found that more than 95% of our students earned a grade of C- or above. This suggested that the majority of our students were meeting or close to meeting Learning Objective 1.

We also looked at statistics from the IDEA surveys that were sent to our students beginning with the Fall 2013 semester and collected data up to the Fall 2016 semester. The analysis of that data indicated that our department rated Higher or Much Higher than peers in our comparison group. (See outcomes data <http://politicalscience.usu.edu/about/assessment>)

Based on comments made by students from the IDEA surveys, the exam formats for both POLS 5130 and POLS 5140 were changed. These courses are the "capstone" courses for the Law and Constitutional Studies major. The course content of those courses has also changed significantly as a result of the assessment process.

Learning Objective 2

To demonstrate understanding of fundamental principles and theories of American constitutional law and politics.

We collected information from course syllabi for POLS 4120, American Constitutional Law and 4130, Constitutional Theory. We determined these courses would fulfill Learning Objective 2. We undertook an analysis of grades for these courses beginning with the Fall 2013 semester and gathered data up to the Fall 2016 semester. We found that more than 95% of our students earned a grade of C- or above. This again suggested that the majority of our students were meeting or close to meeting Learning Objective 2.

We also looked at statistics from the IDEA surveys that were sent to our students beginning with the Fall 2013 semester and collected data up to the Fall 2016 semester. The analysis provided shows that our department rates were again Higher or Much

Higher than peers in our comparison group. (See outcomes data <http://politicalscience.usu.edu/about/assessment>)

Based on student comments from the IDEA survey more articles and other materials that can be accessed through the library have been assigned. This has been in response to student concerns over the high cost of textbooks.

Learning Objective 3

To demonstrate an ability to critically evaluate ideas and arguments relevant to the founding of American constitutionalism.

We collected information from course syllabi for POLS 3320, Foundations of the American Constitution, 4130, Constitutional Theory and 4140, Political Organizations. We determined these courses would fulfill Learning Objective 3. We undertook an analysis of grades for these courses beginning with the Fall 2013 semester and gathered data up to the Fall 2016 semester. We found that more than 95% of our students earned a grade of C- or above. This again suggested that a majority of our students were meeting or close to meeting Learning Objective 3.

We also looked at statistics from the IDEA surveys that were sent to our students beginning with the Fall 2013 semester and collected data up to the Fall 2016 semester. The analysis provided showed that our department rated Similar, Higher or Much Higher than peers in our comparison group. (See outcomes data <http://politicalscience.usu.edu/about/assessment>)

Based on student comments regarding grading process, particularly for essay questions, we made the grading process in POLS 4130 more transparent by providing a detailed rubric on how the essays would be assessed.

Learning Objective 4

To demonstrate an ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing in the context of addressing significant issues in American law and politics.

We collected information from course syllabi for POLS 3120, Law and Politics. We determined this course would fulfill Learning Objective 4. We undertook an analysis of grades for this course beginning with the Fall 2013 semester and gathered data up to the Fall 2016 semester. We found that more than 90% of our students earned a grade of C- or above. This again suggested that the majority of our students were able to fulfill Learning Objective 4.

We also looked at statistics from the IDEA surveys that were sent to our students beginning with the Fall 2013 semester and collect data up to the Fall 2016 semester.

The analysis provided shows that our department rates Higher or Much Higher than peers in our comparison group. (See outcomes data <http://politicalscience.usu.edu/about/assessment>)