



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Department Writing Plan

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Submitted to:
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December 16, 2019

Summary

Initial meetings with Dr. Bryna Siegel Finer were held with Dr. David Chambers, Dr. Dighton Fiddner, and Dr. Rachel Sternfeld to explain the concepts of Writing to Learn and Writing to Communicate, as well as to share information about Writing Across the Curriculum and other departments' writing plans. Dr. Siegel Finer also attended an informal lunch session with Dr. Chambers, Dr. Alea Perry, and Dr. Gwen Torges to describe the Department Writing Plan (DWP) process.

In spring 2017, Dr. Alea Perry met with Dr. Siegel Finer to work on the initial conceptualization of the Department of Political Science's Writing Plan. Dr. Perry then worked with her colleagues in the Department to collect syllabi from all courses taught at the undergraduate level in the Department of Political Science. In May 2017, Dr. Perry attended the Writing Across the Curriculum Two-Day Writing Workshop.

In Fall 2019, the Department of Political Science developed a statement of commitment to the writing plan to be included in all syllabi, effective Spring 2020. This statement can be viewed on page 4-5 of this document.

At a meeting on November 15, 2019, the Department of Political Science voted to support the Department Writing Plan in addition to the WAC Director's recommendations for continuing program facilitation on page 5 and 19 of this document.

POLITICAL SCIENCE Department Writing Plan Rollout Spring 2020

Professional and Academic Genres in Political Science

Professionals in Political Science must have the ability to write and to synthesize government documents, news articles, and scholarly work; to think critically about news, statistics, policies, budgets, and various governmental, private, and nonprofit documents; to present material to an audience and use discipline-specific knowledge to actively participate in society and employment. The IUP Department of Political Science is committed to helping students in improving their writing skills towards the goal of being able to communicate as professionals in the field are required to do so and/or prepare the necessary essays, personal statements, resumes, and cover letters needed to enter the workforce or graduate school.

Student Writing Skills and Abilities

Students in the Department of Political Science need a variety of writing skills and abilities upon completion of their degree. These include:

- Synthesizing policy documents, government reports, budget documents, news articles, actions by the three branches of government & bureaucracy;
- Applying critical thinking and political concepts to evaluate current events, political developments, actions by all three branches of government;
- Thinking critically and ask questions about policies, budgets, cases, and reports;
- Using discipline-specific content knowledge to participate as a member of the discipline at the entry level;
- Expressing opinions informed by news and scholarly articles to develop and/or improve policies;
- Presenting information clearly in oral presentations that include slides and in properly cited research documents to inform the public, interested stakeholders, and elected officials of current topics of interest. These presentations may include planning documents, budgetary documents, proposed policies, and upcoming legislative or executive actions.

The IUP Department of Political Science is committed to introducing, emphasizing, and reinforcing these skills and abilities throughout the curriculum, and does so through the purposeful mapping of writing assignments and activities that follows at the end of this document.

Integration of Writing into Undergraduate Curriculum

Department faculty have participated in professional development training in writing-to-learn pedagogy¹ through writing workshops with the WAC director, participation in the end-of-the-year Liberal Studies writing workshop, and in full department faculty meetings that the WAC Director has visited.

Writing instruction in the Department of Political Science is integrated in these two ways:

Writing-to-learn: Students receive instruction to critically consider, evaluate, answer questions, or communicate an idea in writing, in an ungraded format to develop skills in communication of ideas, critical thinking, and/or evaluation. These formats might include journals, in-class free writing, current event questions, online discussion board responses, and in-class reflective writing.

Writing to Communicate: Students receive direct instruction in disciplinary genres such as policy documents, government reports, budget documents, briefing documents, and oral presentations.

Communicating Writing Expectations to Students

Students are introduced to disciplinary genres by review and modeling by faculty in the Department of Political Science. Upon introduction to the genre, students are asked to write in the mode of the genre through Writing-to-Learn and Writing-to-Communicate exercises in 100- and 200-level classes. Students are provided with writing models from political figures, public (government) sources, non-profit sources, and private-sector sources. Faculty for these classes provide rubrics, guidelines, and models for students to follow to guide them in learning the genre. At the 200-level and 300-level, the disciplinary genre is modeled by faculty, and reinforced through writing assignments, exercises, and in-class activities. At the 300- and 400-levels, writing in the disciplinary genre is emphasized through faculty modeling, writing assignments, exercises, and in-class activities.

As of fall 2020, department syllabi will include the following statement as a way to communicate writing expectations to students consistently throughout the curriculum:

Statement of Commitment to the Writing Plan/ Syllabus Statement

The Department of Political Science is committed to ensuring its graduates will communicate effectively in written and oral communications. As such, each course in the Department of Political Science will include assignments, activities, and objectives designed to introduce, emphasize, or reinforce our students' abilities to synthesize scholarly works,

¹ "What is Writing to Learn?" *Writing Across the Curriculum Clearinghouse*. Colorado State University. 2015. <http://wac.colostate.edu/intro/pop2d.cfm>

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government documents, and news articles; think critically about scholarly work, news, statistics, policies, budgets, and various governmental, private, and nonprofit documents; present material to an audience; and use discipline-specific knowledge to actively participate in society and employment as a member of the discipline.

Implementation of Department Writing Plan

The WAC Director recommends the following action items for continuing program facilitation:

- Elect at least one faculty member to continue to be the WAC/DEPT liaison (this should count as department service)
- Provide all newly hired faculty a copy of the Department Writing Plan, and recommending attendance at least two WAC workshops or the May 2-day workshop for Liberal Studies faculty
- All faculty should add “Statement of Commitment to Writing” to syllabi as appropriate.
- Administer assessment of senior writing samples every two years and share results with the WAC Director and as part of the 5-year program review process; review feedback from assessment (see page 20-21) with department to close the loop between assessment and pedagogy
- Add areas for teaching and assessment of writing as goals on department and faculty five-year review documents.
- Continue to update the writing outcomes curriculum map as courses are added, removed, and revised in the Department of Political Science curriculum (and communicate these changes to the WAC Director).

Writing Outcomes Curriculum Map

The Writing Outcomes Curriculum Map demonstrates:

- Conscious effort on the part of Department of Political Science faculty at placing core disciplinary genres at appropriate levels of the curriculum, scaffolding, and reinforcing the writing skills necessary for students to succeed in writing those genres (for example: policy briefs, budget documents, project summaries).
- Thoughtful integration of writing-to-learn activities in most courses in the curriculum (for example: chapter questions, guest speaker questions, reflection exercises).
- Balanced measures for assessing writing as a process and product, that is, writing is graded for demonstrating mastery of course content as well as improvement of writing skills over time (for example: outlines, first drafts, second drafts, and final product, with suggestions for each of the former three to improve the latter).

Course Number Course Name	Writing Activities (Write to Learn [WTL] and Write to Communicate [WTC]) & Teaching Activities Designed to Teach the Skills	Expected Writing Skills	Introduced, Reinforced, or Emphasized	Genres modeled through Reading
PLSC 101 World Politics	Short answer exam questions (WTC); News Essay (WTC); Poster presentation (WTC); International event case study (WTC); Essay exam questions (WTC)	Practice expressing themselves critically, use writing as a tool to think critically. Synthesize materials and apply class concepts in an essay format.	Introduced	Websites; textbooks; current events and news websites; scholarly articles.

<p>PLSC 111 Power and Democracy in America</p>	<p>Online discussion board responses to questions (WTL); Political Movie essays (WTC); Short answer exam questions (WTC); Letter to elected representative (WTC); Essay answer exam questions (WTC); In-class short-answer notecards (WTL)</p>	<p>Practice asking questions about material & current events; Practice expressing themselves critically; Use writing as a tool to think critically. Synthesize materials and apply class concepts in essay format.</p>	<p>Introduced</p>	<p>Websites; textbooks; news articles; scholarly articles; op-ed columns</p>
<p>PLSC 250 Public Policy</p>	<p>Policy analysis memo progress report (WTC); Policy analysis memo final project (WTC); Policy analysis memo presentation (WTC); In-class reflective writing (WTL);</p>	<p>Clearly describe and summarize contemporary public policy issues; Analyze a specific public policy problem; explain and apply key evaluative frameworks to assess public policy.</p>	<p>Reinforced</p>	<p>Textbooks; current events and news articles; scholarly articles.</p>
<p>PLSC 251 State and Local Political Systems</p>	<p>Chapter questions (WTL); Guest Speaker Questions (WTL); Public Meeting Observation Reports (WTC); Essay exam questions (WTC); State and Local Policy Paper (WTC)</p> <p>PowerPoint Presentation & Slides in Chapter Presentations & Slides (WTC); PowerPoint Presentation & Slides in State & Local Policy Presentation (WTC)</p>	<p>Synthesize materials and apply class concepts with in- class presentations & in essay format; Use state and local politics knowledge in exam answers; Express individual opinions utilizing scholarly information; Use writing as a tool to think critically; Cite sources effectively and use a standard citation model.</p> <p>Communicate ideas & key points effectively using PowerPoint</p>	<p>Reinforced</p> <p>Introduced</p>	<p>Textbooks; scholarly articles; government websites; current events and news articles.</p>

PLSC 260 Contemporary Political Ideas	Take home essay exams (WTC); Quizzes (WTC); Critical Definitions assignment (WTC); In-class writing exercises reinforcing previous topics/readings (WTL)	Analyze and discuss the relationship between politics and moral ideas; reflect critically of political and social ideas.	Reinforced (essay exam answers)	Textbooks; news articles.
PLSC 270 Fundamentals of Homeland Security	In-class exercises (WTL); Emergency Simulation Paper (WTC); Critical Essays (WTC); Group Q&As (WTL); Tests (WTC); Current events exercises (WTL); Emergency Simulation strategy with classmates (WTL)	Describe and analyze the Department of Homeland Security's mission of prevention, protection, response, and recovery; identification of legal and public policy implications of homeland security strategies; Analyze the history of homeland security and apply it to current events	Reinforced.	Textbooks; news articles; scholarly journal articles; news websites; government websites.
PLSC 280 Comparative Government I: Western Political Systems	PowerPoint presentation on various countries in material (WTC); Essay quiz questions (WTC); PowerPoint presentation on adopted country (WTC)	Communicate ideas & key points using PowerPoints; Synthesize materials and apply class concepts with in-class presentations & in essay format; Use political science knowledge in exam answers; Express individual opinions utilizing scholarly information; Use writing as a tool to think critically; Cite sources effectively and use a standard citation model.	Introduced (PowerPoint) Reinforced (exam answers, and synthesized material)	Textbooks; news articles; news websites
PLSC 282 International Relations	Tests (WTC); Case Studies and quizzes (WTC); Human Rights Issue Report	Understand sovereignty, nationalism, power, security, dispute	Reinforced	Textbook; case studies; scholarly articles;

	(WTC); Human Rights Project Paper (WTC); Human Rights Project Presentation (WTC)	settlement, and diplomatic, legal, economic, and military relations of nation-states. Demonstrate linkages between economic, social, cultural, and political variables at the national and international levels.		government websites; news websites.
PLSC 283 American Foreign Policy	Essay exam questions (WTC); Written analysis (WTC); American values analysis (WTC)	Synthesize materials and apply class concepts with in-class presentations & in essay format; Use American foreign policy knowledge in exam answers; Express individual opinions utilizing scholarly information; Use writing as a tool to think critically; Cite sources effectively and use a standard citation model.	Reinforced	Textbook; scholarly articles; news articles; news websites; government websites
PLSC 285 Comparative Government II: Non-Western Political Systems	Exam essay questions (WTC), Short answer exam questions (WTC); Project proposal (WTC); Project presentation (WTC); Reflection Essay (WTC); Subject presentation team assignment (WTC); Adopted Country Presentation (WTC)	Synthesize materials and apply class concepts with in-class presentations & in essay format; Use information about non-western political systems knowledge in exam answers; Express individual opinions utilizing scholarly information; Use writing as a tool to think critically; Synthesize information about course materials and information.; PowerPoint	Reinforced	Textbook; news websites; government websites; scholarly articles

		presentation of research		
PLSC 300 Research Methods in Political Science	Writing/analysis exercises (WTC); Research Roundtables (WTL); Development of Research Question (WTC); Abbreviated Literature Review (WTC);	Apply and understand the basic logic of applying the Scientific Method to research; Develop a research design; Research a topic thoroughly in preparation for full research development.	Introduced (logic of Scientific Method, development of research design); Reinforced (research and writing skills for clarity and content)	Textbooks; scholarly articles; news articles.
PLSC 344 Terrorism	Short answer exam questions (WTC); essay exam questions (WTC); Class discussion questions (WTL); Autobiography paper (WTC); Research project (WTC); PowerPoint presentation (WTC)	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Research skills are demonstrated by research project; PowerPoint presentation on research project	Emphasized	Textbook; scholarly articles; news websites; government websites; autobiography
PLSC 348 Top Secret America: The Rise and Reach of the National Security State	Cross listed with HIST 348. Currently taught by History (see History Department Writing plan).			
PLSC 350 The Presidency	Reflection essays (WTC); Critiques (WTC); PowerPoint Presentation (WTC); Executive Order essay (WTC)	Critically review and evaluate readings and an executive order; Research skills are demonstrated by development of a PowerPoint presentation on Executive Order and critical review of an executive order.	Emphasized	Textbooks.
PLSC 354 Metropolitan Problems	Metropolitan issues essays (WTC); Metropolitan area issues paper (WTC); Metropolitan area issues presentation	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Ability to	Emphasized	Textbooks; news websites; scholarly articles;

	(WTC); Online discussion boards (WTL)	summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize political science & metropolitan issues knowledge in writing		government websites
PLSC 355 Intergovernmental Relations	Online discussion board (WTL); Intergovernmental issues paper (WTC); Essay exam questions (WTC)	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Ability to summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize political science & intergovernmental issues knowledge in writing	Emphasized	Textbook; news articles; videos; podcasts; scholarly articles; news websites; government websites
PLSC 358 Judicial Process	Online discussion posts in response to questions and in response to comments from other students (WTL); Supreme Court oral argument essays (WTC); Court observation essay (WTL)	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Summarize readings and make connections between class content and real-world observations; Demonstrate judicial process knowledge in writing	Emphasized	Textbooks; scholarly articles; news articles; transcripts of oral arguments
PLSC 359 Constitutional Law and Civil Liberties	Short answer exam questions (WTC); Essay exam (WTC); In-class reflective writings (WTL); Case Briefs (WTC); Supreme Court Oral Argument Essay (WTC)	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize constitutional law and civil liberties knowledge in writing	Emphasized	Textbooks; written opinions of the Supreme Court; scholarly articles; news articles
PLSC 360 Classical Political Thought	Written and documented take home exams (WTL & WTC); Short research	Explore ethical/political questions of the good through Socratic	Introduced.	Ancient & Medieval genres: political

	papers (WTC); In-class exercises (WTL)	Inquiry. Negotiate conventions of ancient writing. Delineate abstract concepts with logical precision and communicate them in concrete language		drama, philosophical dialogue, treatise, and disputation. Scholarly articles.
PLSC 370 The Practice of Public Administration	Guest speaker questions (WTL); Public Meetings Observation Reports (WTC); Public Administration Agencies & Issues Paper (WTC); Public Administration Agencies & Issues Presentation (WTC); Essay exam questions (WTC)	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize public administration knowledge in writing; PowerPoint presentation on agencies & issues paper.	Emphasized	Textbook; scholarly articles; news websites; government websites;
PLSC 372 Constitutional Issues in Homeland Security	Take home exams (WTC); Case briefs (WTC); Summaries of readings (WTL); Reflective Writing (WTL)	Read and analyze statutes and appellate judicial opinions; Demonstrate an understanding of basic concepts of constitutional law related to individual liberties and national security; Explain the interplay between law and societal attitudes regarding the “liberty vs. security” debate; Describe the evolution of constitutional doctrine related to the protection of individual liberties during times of threat to national security; Application	Emphasized	Scholarly articles; news articles; Supreme Court opinions; Textbooks

		of legal reasoning and jurisprudential doctrine to novel factual scenarios; Integrate and synthesize complex information.		
PLSC 376 Public Sector Budgeting and Financial Management	Personal Spending Diary (WTL); Resident Estimation Worksheets (WTC); Essay Exam Questions (WTC); Municipal Budget Maker (WTC); Budget Paper (WTC); Budget Presentation (WTC)	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Ability to summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize budgeting knowledge in writing; PowerPoint presentation on budget	Emphasized	Textbooks; scholarly articles; news websites; government websites
PLSC 383 Political Systems: Asia	Research paper (WTC); Short answer quiz questions (WTL); Short papers (WTC); Essay exam questions (WTL)	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize political science knowledge and knowledge of Asia in writing	Emphasized	Textbook; news articles; scholarly articles; government websites; news websites
PLSC 383 Political Systems: Asia	Research paper (WTC); Short answer quiz questions (WTL); Short papers (WTC); Essay exam questions (WTL)	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize political science knowledge and knowledge of Asia in writing	Emphasized	Textbook; news articles; scholarly articles; government websites; news websites
PLSC 384	In-class writing assignments (WTL);	Demonstrate knowledge of course	Emphasized	Textbook; news articles;

Political Systems: Middle East	Contrast presentations (WTC); Short answer exam questions (WTC); Essay exam questions (WTC); Research Project, proposal (WTC); Research project, paper (WTC); Research project, presentation (WTC)	material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize political science knowledge and Middle East knowledge in writing; PowerPoint presentation research project; PowerPoint presentation on Contrast		scholarly articles; news websites; personal essays by people from the Middle East
PLSC 387 Political Systems: Latin America	Book review (WTC); Current event report (WTC); essay exams (WTC); book review (WTC)	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize political science knowledge and Latin American knowledge in writing; PowerPoint presentation on a country; PowerPoint presentation on current event	Emphasized	Textbook; news articles; scholarly articles; government websites; news websites
PLSC 388 Dimensions of National Security	National Security Strategy write-up (WTC); Essay exam questions (WTC); Cold War analysis (WTC)	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize political science knowledge and national security knowledge in writing	Emphasized	Textbooks; news articles; scholarly articles; government websites; news websites
PLSC 389	Structured essays on questions posed on writings (WTC);	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical	Emphasized	Textbooks; news articles; scholarly

International Development Strategies	essay exams (WTC); book reviews (WTC)	thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize political science knowledge and international development strategies knowledge in writing		articles; government websites; news websites
PLSC 404 Women & Politics	Current events article (WTC); Book review (WTC); Book review presentation (WTC); essay exams (WTC); book review (WTC)	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize political science knowledge and gender knowledge in writing; PowerPoint presentation on a book review	Emphasized	Textbook; news articles; scholarly articles; government websites; news websites
PLSC 405 Sexuality & Law	Essay exam questions (WTC); Case briefs (WTC); Research topic write-ups (WTC); In-class reflective writing (WTC)	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize political science knowledge and knowledge of the law in writing	Emphasized	Scholarly articles; Supreme Court Opinions; news articles
PLSC 422 International Law and Organizations	In-class reflective writing (WTL); International organization presentation (WTC); Short answer exam questions (WTC); Research project, proposal (WTC); Research project, annotated	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize political science knowledge and gender	Emphasized	Textbook; scholarly articles; news articles

	bibliography (WTC); Research project, paper (WTC)	knowledge in writing; PowerPoint presentation on a research project		
PLSC 465 Intelligence Process and Policy	Class Intelligence Estimate write-up (WTC); Essay exam answers (WTC); National Security Risk analysis (WTC); Class Intelligence Estimate presentation (WTC)	Demonstrate knowledge of course material and critical thinking; Clear and logical construction of essays; Summarize readings and make connections to texts; Utilize political science knowledge and knowledge of intelligence process and policy in writing; Demonstrate presentation skills	Emphasized	Textbooks; scholarly articles; news articles; government websites; news websites

Appendix A –Assessment of Student Writing

Protocol

WAC student learning outcome – Critical thinking/writing

Outcome

Students should be able to use critical thinking skills to formulate logical, cogent analysis of political ideas and phenomenon, and effectively communicate those ideas in written form.

Methods of Assessment

Each semester, the students in two courses (any courses other than PLSC101 OR PLSC111) will be identified by the Dept. WAC liaison (subject to consent of instructor) and will be rated on a 3-point scale (weak, adequate, or strong) regarding “critical thinking/writing” using a writing assignment or question(s) embedded in exams (at the instructor’s discretion). Only a single writing assignment/embedded question will be evaluated from each of the two selected courses. The written assignments/embedded questions will be collected and rated by the Dept. WAC Committee using a critical thinking/writing assessment rubric developed by the department.

Measures/Levels of Expectation

75% of students meet the benchmark for adequate or strong writing in each of the three featured areas.

Assessment Results

Results will be gathered and reported to the WAC liaison no later than one week after the last day of finals biannually.

Use of Results for WAC Improvement

The WAC Director will write recommendations biannually in the WAC plan based on assessment results. Once each semester, the Dept. will hold a meeting in which results of the assessment will be considered and discussed, along with discussion of possible changes/improvements to the Department’s WAC plan using the course outcomes map above.

Critical Thinking/Writing Rubric

Feature	Criteria – WEAK (1 point)	Criteria – ADEQUATE (2 points)	Criteria – STRONG (3 points)
Identification and explanation of issue(s)	Fails to identify, summarize or explain the main problem or question. OR Represents the issues inaccurately or inappropriately.	Successfully identifies and summarizes the main issue(s) but provides limited explanation of why/how the issues are problems, or boundaries of issues are ambiguous.	Clearly identifies and summarizes main issues and successfully explain why/how they are problems or questions. If appropriate, identifies implicit issues, and addresses their relationship to each other.
Selection, use, and evaluation of evidence	Doesn't include supporting evidence. OR Incompletely or inaccurately summarizes evidence. OR Information is used from sources without interpretation or evaluation, and/or viewpoints of experts taken as fact with little or no questioning.	Completely and accurately summarizes evidence. Includes at least some attempt at interpretation/evaluation.	Completely and accurately summarizes evidence with enough interpretation/evaluation to develop a full analysis or synthesis. Compares different pieces of evidence and arrives at appropriate conclusions.
Communicates effectively	In several places, language obscures meaning. Grammar, syntax or other errors are distracting or repeated. Little evidence of proofreading. Style is inconsistent or inappropriate. Work is unfocused and poorly organized; lacks logical connection of ideas. Format is absent, inconsistent or distracting. Few sources are cited or used correctly.	In general, language does not interfere with communication. Errors are not overly distracting nor frequent, although there may be some problems with more difficult aspects of style. Basic organization is apparent; transitions are there, though they might be mechanical. Format is generally appropriate, though might have inconsistencies. Most sources are cited and are generally correct.	Language clearly and effectively communicates ideas. May at times be nuanced and eloquent. Errors are minimal. Style is appropriate for audience. Organization is clear; transitions between ideas enhance the work. Consistent use of appropriate format. Sources are cited and used correctly.

Appendix B – Baseline Results of Student Writing Assessment

These are considered “baseline” survey results: perceptions of students before the writing-enriched curriculum was rolled out.

Response rate: 100% of students in PLSC481 (22 of 22)

Target: 75% of students meet the criteria

Areas in which student writing is ABOVE expectations: 75+

None

Areas in which student writing is MEETING expectations: 68-74

Identify/explain Problem			
year(s)	weak	adequate	strong
2019 n=22	5 (23%)	13 (59%)	4 (18%)

Effective Communication			
year(s)	weak	adequate	strong
2019 n=22	3 (14%)	18 (82%)	1 (.5%)

Areas in which student writing is BELOW expectations below 67 and below

Selection and Evaluation of Evidence			
year(s)	weak	adequate	strong
2019 n=22	14 (64%)	7 (32%)	1 (.5%)

WAC Director Recommendations Based on Assessment Results

The WAC Director recommends the following in order to “close the loop” between the assessment results, the outcomes map, and other features of the writing plan (i.e., classroom writing pedagogy):

- Consider two revisions to the assessment rubric: (1) divide the rubric into four levels instead of three so that there is more differentiation in the high and low end of “adequacy”; this makes the results more actionable, and (2) add a holistic measure to the rubric in order to corroborate some of the individual criteria and achieve an overall sense of the individual and collective portfolio writing.
- “Selection and evaluation of evidence” is an area of struggle identified in the assessment; consider professional development opportunities as a way to share teaching strategies, and use the outcomes map above as a way to guide the department curriculum committee in scaffolding that skill purposefully throughout courses over the next two years (through the next WAC assessment).
- In the next WAC assessment (2021-2022) use a full year of students or students in more than one course in order to achieve a larger sample size and possibly acquire samples from all/most graduating seniors.