

International Studies Program, Department of Political Science
Assessment Outcomes Data
10-31-2024

The Department of Political Science is committed to delivering an excellent learning experience in the fundamentals of our discipline. We regularly evaluate how our students are performing in our classes and in our programs more broadly. This particular document considers the undergraduate bachelor's degree in International Studies offered by our department.

In this iteration of our assessment process, we have reviewed the learning objectives and our measures of those objectives. In reviewing them, we have found they remain appropriate objectives and measures for the current cycle, though we will continue to review and discuss ways to improve our programs and our assessment of them.

In the pages that follow, you will find a summary of the learning objectives of this program as well as a strategy for measuring how the department performs on those objectives. We rely on course grades as one measure. Course grades reported in the pages ahead are reported as the distribution of grades for all classes identified on the chart in the given academic year.

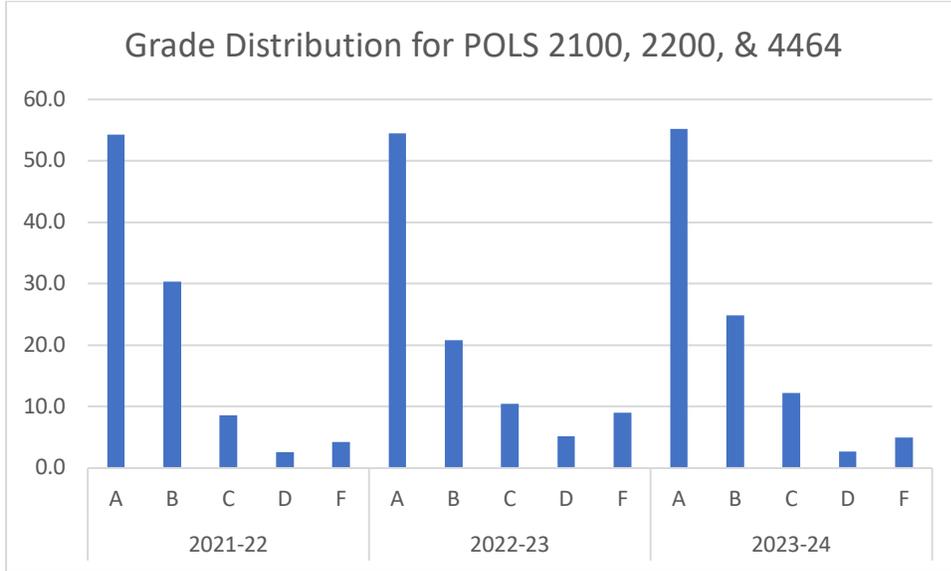
As a second measure, we also rely on specific student responses to the IDEA assessment. These are not general measures of student satisfaction. Rather, they are specific indicators of self-reported progress students have made on learning objectives that are foundational to our program. As a result, we will consider different IDEA indicators that have particular bearing on the objective at hand. For this purpose, we have sampled one course for which the learning objective is assessed per semester and then we average those scores across the two semesters in an academic year as a summary measure.

As a third measure, we evaluate pass/fail rates for students engaging in their "international experience" as required by this degree. Students can take this experience for credit, doing internships, service-learning experiences, and more.

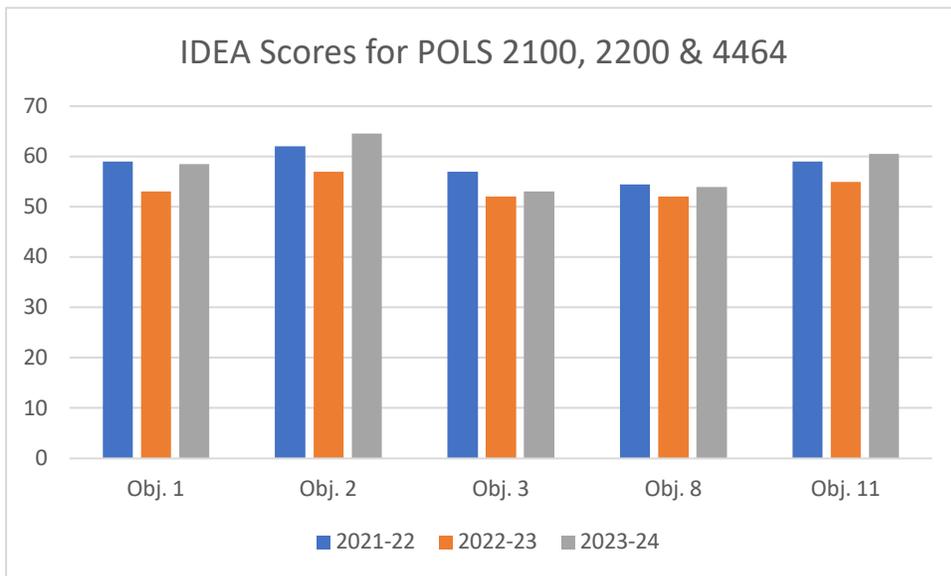
Please reach out to the Department of Political Science with any questions about our assessment data.

Learning Objective 1: To demonstrate knowledge of international relations, international security, and political systems around the world.

Measure 1: Grade Distribution for POLS 2100, 2200, and 4464, which cover this material.



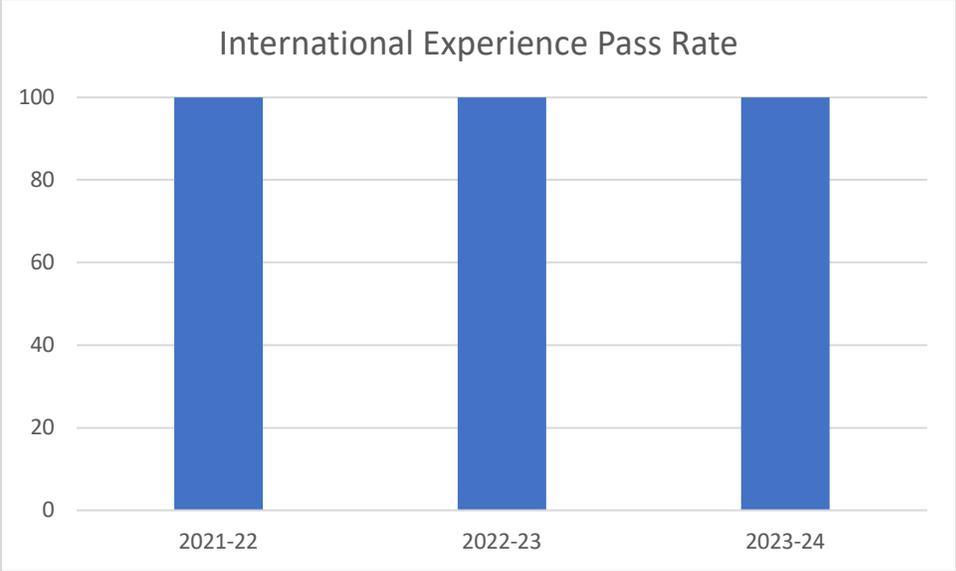
Measure 2: IDEA Student Evaluations for POLS 2100, 2200, and 4464.¹



¹ Note: We selected IDEA learning objectives relevant to assessing factual knowledge on the subject. Specifically, Objective 1 is Gaining a basic understanding of the subject, Objective 2 is Developing knowledge and understanding of diverse perspectives, global awareness, or other cultures, Objective 3 is Learning to apply course material, Objective 8 is Developing skill in expressing myself orally or in writing, and Objective 11 is Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.

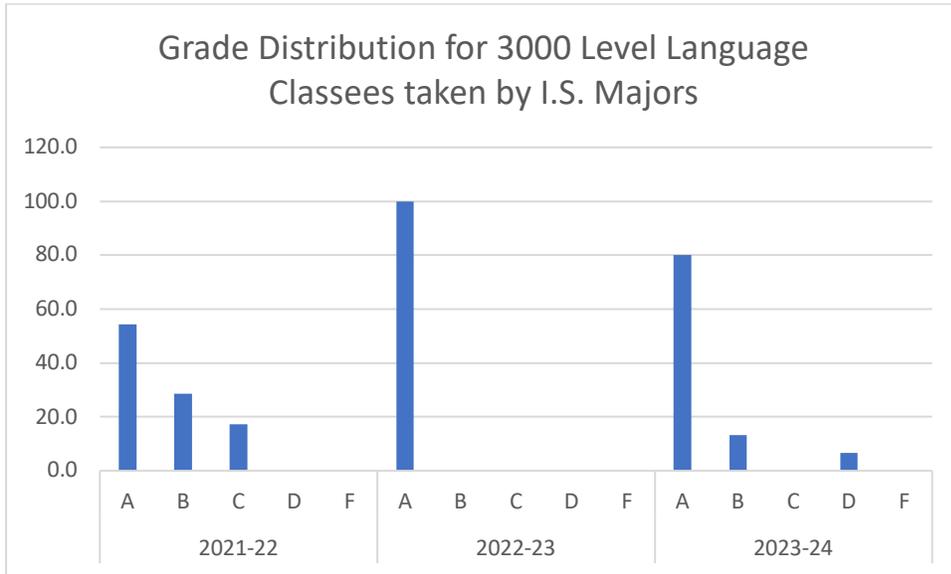
Learning Objective 2: To have an international experience for students.

Measure 1: Passage rate for POLS 5960, the International Experience Class.



Learning Objective 3: To demonstrate a basic level of fluency in a foreign language

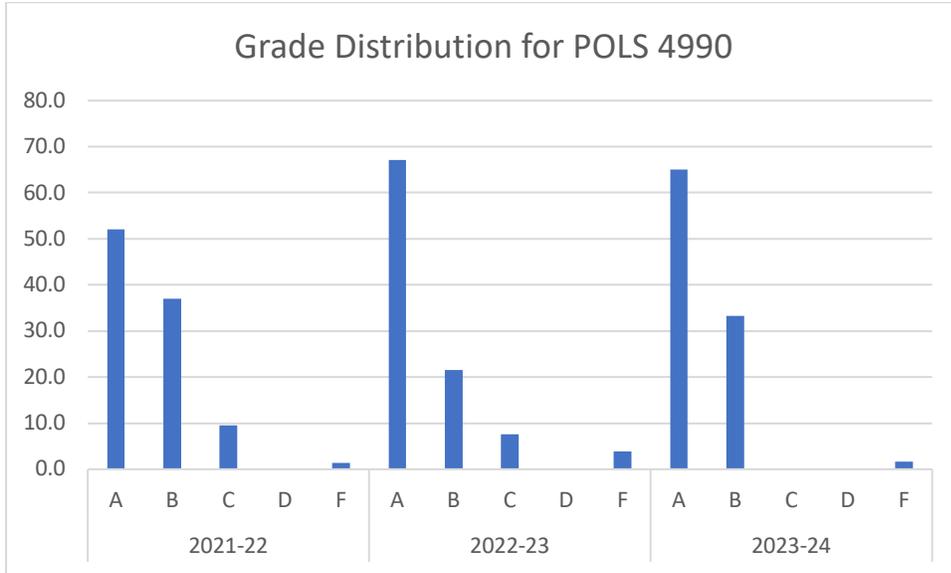
Measure 1: Grade Distributions for 3000-level Foreign Language Courses among International Studies majors²



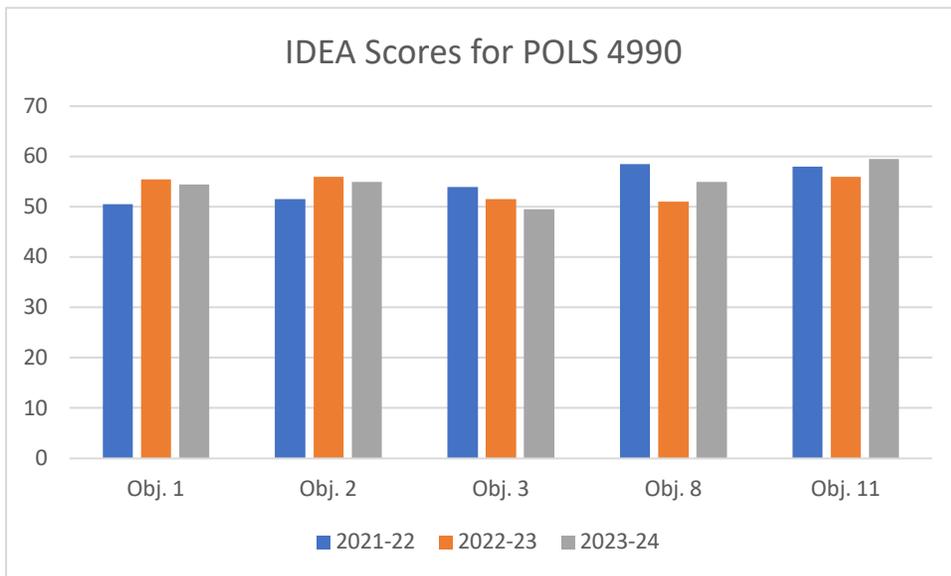
² These figures are based on a random sample of 5 graduating International Studies major seniors in each of the given years. Each year contains the grades earned in all of the 3000 or higher level language classes each student took, so they are based on more than 5 grades in each year because many of these students took more than 1 language. We do not assess students who took only 2000 level language courses but did so in multiple languages.

Learning Objective 4: To demonstrate orally and in writing the ability to analyze and critically evaluate ideas and arguments related to international politics.

Measure 1: Grade Distributions for POLS 4990, which covers this material



Measure 2: IDEA student evaluation scores for POLS 4990³



³ Note: We selected IDEA learning objectives relevant to assessing factual knowledge on the subject. Specifically, Objective 1 is Gaining a basic understanding of the subject, Objective 2 is Developing knowledge and understanding of diverse perspectives, global awareness, or other cultures, Objective 3 is Learning to apply course material, Objective 8 is Developing skill in expressing myself orally or in writing, and Objective 11 is Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.

Data-driven Decision-making

In light of data received on grades and IDEA evaluations, we have made a number of adjustments and improvements. Our faculty in this program have made a concerted effort to cultivate community in their classes, striving to learn student names and engage them more carefully in discussions to build community and academic belonging. This also helps to cultivate the ability to communicate effectively. Political Science faculty teaching in this program have also reached out to strengthen relationships with faculty outside the department who teach language and culture classes to provide better mentoring and advising for students who need such classes to make progress in their degree. This has led to development of clubs that serve International Studies students in ways that transcend traditional disciplinary boundaries. We will continue to monitor the effects of these changes on progress students make on relevant goals.