



Fullerton College

Self-study for Political Science Program

2025

Section 1: Introduction

1. Briefly describe your program, make sure to include how your program helps the College achieve its mission.

The Political Science program at Fullerton College introduces students to the study of government, politics, and civic engagement at the local, state, national, and international levels. Through rigorous coursework, students strengthen their reading, writing, and analytical skills and gain an understanding of political systems, public policy, and citizen participation.

The program supports the College's mission by preparing students for transfer and helping them become informed, responsible participants in their communities. Political Science courses cultivate civic literacy and critical thinking, both central to Fullerton College's vision of fostering student learning and achievement. Our curriculum reflects Fullerton College's core values of diversity, equity, and inclusivity by encouraging students to explore multiple perspectives and engage with social and political issues that shape their daily lives.

Section 2: Students

2.1 Student Demographics and Enrollment Trends

1. Using the data provided by the OIE, describe the student population your department serves. Which demographic groups have the most enrollments in your program? Which student groups are underrepresented in your program? Has the demographic profile of your program changed over the last four years?

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Based on OIE data from 2020–2021 through 2024–2025, the Political Science department reflects many of the same demographic patterns as the college as a whole, but with some key differences.

Gender:

At the college level, females have consistently been the majority but their share declined slightly, from **52% in 2020–2021 to 48% in 2024–2025**. Males increased modestly from **43% to 44%**, while students reporting “unknown” gender grew from **5% to 7%**.

In Political Science, the gender balance closely mirrors the college, with females holding **52% in 2020–2021 and 51% in 2024–2025**. Males increased slightly from **43% to 44%**, while “unknown” responses also rose from **5% to 6%**. Overall, Political Science enrollments are slightly more balanced than the college as a whole, with female students not as dominant as in other programs.

Ethnicity:

The ethnic profile shows stronger contrasts. **Across the college**, Latina/o/x/e students are the largest group, making up **59% of enrollments in 2020–2021** and rising to **61% by 2024–2025**. White students declined from **16% to 14%**, and Asian students fell from **13% to 11%**. Black or African American students remained steady at **3%**, while “two or more races” increased slightly from **7% to 9%**.

In Political Science, Latina/o/x/e students are even more dominant, representing **62% of enrollments in 2020–2021 and 63% in 2024–2025**—a slightly higher share than the college average. White students declined modestly from **15% to 14%**, while Asian students decreased from **11% to 10%**, both in line with the broader college trend. Black or African American students remained very small in number (3% to 2–3%), showing continued

underrepresentation compared to their share of the general population. Students identifying as “two or more races” increased from **6% to 10%**, a slightly sharper rise than at the college level.

Summary:

The Political Science department serves a predominantly Latina/o/x/e and female student population, much like the college overall. However, compared to the college, Political Science has:

- A **slightly higher share of Latina/o/x/e students** (63% vs. 61% in 2024–2025).
- A **more balanced gender distribution**, with females just over half of enrollments rather than approaching a stronger majority.
- A **lower representation of Asian and African American students**, who remain underrepresented in Political Science relative to the college at large.
- A **notable increase in students reporting two or more races**, which rose faster in Political Science than across the college.

Over the four-year span, the demographic profile of Political Science has not dramatically shifted but shows gradual changes parallel to the college: increasing Latina/o/x/e enrollment, declining White and Asian enrollment, and a steadier male presence compared to the college overall.

2. Briefly describe course-level enrollment trends in your program over the past five years. Have the enrollment trends in your program changed over the last five years? To what do you attribute any changes or lack of changes?

Over the past five years, the demographic composition of students taking **POLS 1000 American Government** for general education credit has closely mirrored that of students majoring in Political Science. By gender, both groups remain consistently balanced, with enrollments averaging **51–52% female, 43–44% male**, and **5–6% listed as unknown**. This indicates that the GE course draws a student population that is nearly identical in gender distribution to the department’s majors, maintaining a slight female majority across all years.

The same pattern holds true by race and ethnicity. In both POSC 100 and the overall Political Science program, **Latina/o/x/e students represent approximately 61–63% of enrollments**, forming a clear majority. **White students account for about 14–16%**, **Asian students for 10–12%**, and **Black or African American students for 2–3%**, while **students of two or more races comprise 6–10%**. Other groups, including Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander and American Indian students, make up less than 1% due to small sample sizes.

Overall, the data show that students who take Political Science for general education purposes

reflect the same broad demographic makeup as students majoring in the discipline.

Term: All Reset Filters Return

Enrollments by Ethnicity

Academic Year	2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2024-2025	
	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	0%	2	0%	3	0%	4	0%	3	0%
Asian	442	11%	364	12%	307	10%	305	10%	291	10%
Black or African American	111	3%	95	3%	66	2%	80	3%	71	2%
Latina/o/x/e	2,380	62%	1,926	62%	1,812	61%	1,874	62%	1,893	63%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	5	0%	4	0%	8	0%	11	0%	8	0%
Two or more races	231	6%	224	7%	234	8%	272	9%	297	10%
Unknown	102	3%	48	2%	50	2%	52	2%	41	1%
White	585	15%	425	14%	481	16%	444	15%	420	14%
Total	3,858	100%	3,088	100%	2,961	100%	3,042	100%	3,024	100%

Term: All Reset Filters Return

Enrollments by Ethnicity

Academic Year	2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2024-2025	
	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	0%	2	0%	2	0%	4	0%	2	0%
Asian	370	11%	294	11%	273	10%	272	10%	252	10%
Black or African American	96	3%	89	3%	63	2%	70	3%	59	2%
Latina/o/x/e	2,087	62%	1,646	62%	1,609	61%	1,659	61%	1,666	63%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	4	0%	3	0%	6	0%	11	0%	8	0%
Two or more races	202	6%	194	7%	206	8%	255	9%	256	10%
Unknown	84	3%	47	2%	46	2%	52	2%	37	1%
White	503	15%	359	14%	415	16%	393	14%	347	13%
Total	3,348	100%	2,634	100%	2,620	100%	2,716	100%	2,627	100%

Term: All Reset Filters Return

Enrollments by Gender

Academic Year	2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2024-2025	
	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent
Female	2,021	52%	1,611	52%	1,501	51%	1,543	51%	1,537	51%
Male	1,641	43%	1,327	43%	1,302	44%	1,324	44%	1,318	44%
Unknown	196	5%	150	5%	158	5%	175	6%	169	6%
Total	3,858	100%	3,088	100%	2,961	100%	3,042	100%	3,024	100%

Term: All Reset Filters Return

Enrollments by Gender

Academic Year	2020-2021		2021-2022		2022-2023		2023-2024		2024-2025	
	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent	Enrollments	Percent
Female	1,762	53%	1,364	52%	1,322	50%	1,369	50%	1,348	51%
Male	1,414	42%	1,145	43%	1,168	45%	1,196	44%	1,127	43%
Unknown	172	5%	125	5%	130	5%	151	6%	152	6%
Total	3,348	100%	2,634	100%	2,620	100%	2,716	100%	2,627	100%

3. How do you monitor and modify course offerings, including time and modality, to ensure that students' needs are being met?

The Political Science Department regularly evaluates students' needs through monitoring

enrollment, waitlists, and overall trends at the College. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for classes shifted largely to asynchronous courses — particularly for POSC 100/POLS C1000. The Department obliged and shifted more offerings to the asynchronous model. Through internal discussions over the past year, the Department has concluded that while the COVID-19 pandemic forced this necessary shift, the California Community Colleges are not currently supporting students’ actual needs, as online instruction in the world of artificial intelligence is hampered by rampant shirking of responsibility. The Department would support a statewide mandate through the California Community Colleges’ Chancellor’s Office (CCCCO) that would require students to take more classes through in-person modalities. At the very least, the Department requests that the CCCCCO institutes a policy of mandatory in-person testing with a human proctor to eliminate the incentive to cheat in online courses (in particular). While the Department recognizes the “AI optimism” and “AI literacy” arguments, our goal is to effectively teach our students — and we cannot accomplish that task without strict controls mandated statewide (to prevent enrollment decline locally). With respect to in-person courses that the Department currently offers, the Department offers courses throughout the day — but lacks concrete data on foot traffic on the campus

2.2 Student Achievement

1. Using data provided by the OIE, describe overall student achievement counts, rates, and trends in your program over the past five years, these include: course success rates, degrees/certificates completion counts, transfer counts, licensing, job placement, wage improvements (not all of these measures apply to every program).

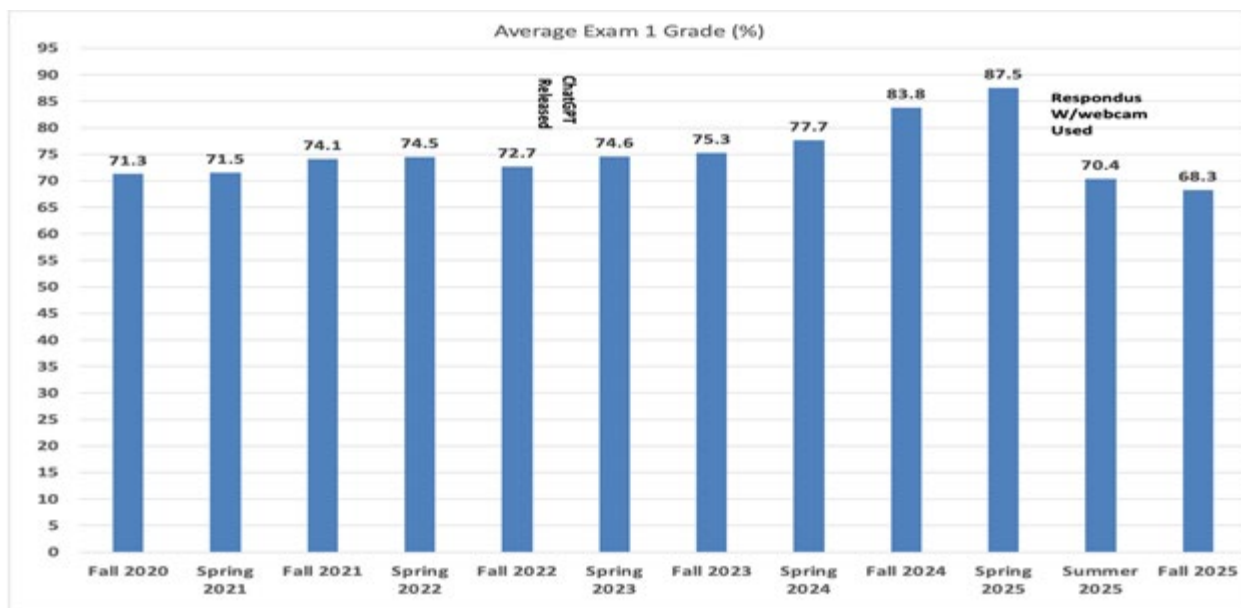
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Course Success Rates:

Over the past five years, Political Science course success rates have fluctuated but generally remained strong. Program-wide success rates ranged from a low of **68% in 2021–2022** to a high of **77% in 2024–2025**, averaging **72%** for the period. These consistently exceeded the institutional set standard of **62%**, and recent years have approached the **stretch goal of 80%**.

The largest course in the program, **POSC 100 F (American Government)**, closely mirrors this trend: success rates were **73% in 2020–2021**, dipped to **66% in 2021–2022**, and then rebounded to **77% by 2024–2025**.

However, it is important to note that 2023–2024 success rates were inflated by **widespread use of ChatGPT and other AI tools for cheating**. This is evident in professor Dahi’s **Exam 1 grade averages**, which spiked to **87.5% in Spring of 2025**. Professor Dahi teaches/taught 250-300 students in his online American Government classes (POSC 100 F) so his data is reflective of the pattern in online American Government classes. Professor Jodi Balma and Archie Delshad experienced a similar pattern in their American Government online classes.



Once the department implemented **Respondus with webcam monitoring** in Summer/Spring 2025, scores dropped back to the historical baseline (around **70%**), confirming that earlier increases did not reflect true learning outcomes. The department has implemented a policy that requires any professor to use Respondus with webcam monitoring if they want to teach an online political science class.

Degrees and Certificates:

Completion trends show that the department has **moved away from traditional Associate Degrees** in favor of **AA-T/AS-T (Associate Degrees for Transfer)**, which guarantee students admission to the CSU system.

- In **2020–2021**, there were **45 completions** (43 transfer degrees, 2 associate degrees).
- Completions declined to **20 in 2023–2024**, reflecting broader enrollment drops, before rebounding to **31 in 2024–2025**.
- Across all years, the overwhelming majority of completions have been **AA-T/AS-T transfer degrees** (typically 95–100% of awards).

This shift aligns the department with statewide policy changes that prioritize transfer pathways over terminal associate degrees.

Transfers:

Transfer outcomes also reflect this emphasis on AA-T/AS-T pathways.

- In **2020–2021**, of the 43 students completing a degree, **70% transferred** to a four-year university.
- In **2021–2022**, the transfer rate climbed to **86%**.
- In **2022–2023**, the rate was **74%**, and in **2023–2024**, it settled at **65%**.

While the absolute number of transfers has fallen in line with declining completions (from 30 transfers in 2020–2021 to 13 in 2023–2024), the **majority of completers still successfully transfer**, which demonstrates that the program’s core mission—supporting CSU transfer readiness—is being met.

Summary:

- **Course success rates:** Strong overall (72% average), but temporarily inflated by AI cheating until proctoring was introduced in 2025.
- **Degrees/Certificates:** Clear transition from local Associate Degrees to AA-T/AS-T, aligning with CSU transfer guarantees. Completions dipped during enrollment declines but are recovering.
- **Transfers:** Consistently high proportions of degree completers transfer to CSU/UC, with rates ranging **65–86%** over the last four years.

Overall, the Political Science program continues to serve its transfer-focused mission effectively, despite enrollment volatility and the temporary distortions caused by AI misuse in 2023–2024.

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2. Are there student groups whose success rates are below the institution-set standard or whose success rates are below other student groups? What factors can explain this?

Equity Gaps in Success Rates (2020–2025)

Political Science Department:

- **Lowest-performing groups:**
 - **Black/African American students:** consistently lowest (42–62%), well below the institutional set standard (62%).
 - **Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students:** highly volatile due to small

enrollments but very low in several years (25–50%).

- **Latina/o/x/e students:** majority group, success rates in the **66–74%** range. While above the standard, they fall below Asian and White students, showing a persistent equity gap for the largest demographic.
- **Highest-performing groups:**
 - **Asian and White students:** consistently strongest outcomes, **79–88%**, often exceeding the stretch goal (80%).

Social Science Division:

- **Black/African American (57–59%), Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (52–59%), and American Indian/Alaska Native (56–62%)** students fall below the set standard of 62%.
- **Latina/o/x/e students** (66–72%) perform above the institutional standard but still lower than Asian (82–85%) and White (73–76%) students.
- **Two or more races** and **Unknown** groups fall in the middle (70–77%).

Fullerton College (All Programs):

- College-wide patterns mirror those seen in Political Science and Social Sciences:
 - **Black/African American students (57%)** and **Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students (61%)** are consistently below the standard.
 - **American Indian/Alaska Native students** fluctuate around the standard (64%), showing mixed outcomes.
 - **Latina/o/x/e students** (67%) exceed the threshold but trail behind higher-achieving peers.
 - **Asian students** lead with the strongest outcomes (**80%**), followed by White students (**74%**), both outperforming other groups.
- Overall college average: **72%**, very close to the division and Political Science program averages.

Factors Explaining These Gaps:

1. **Systemic educational inequities:** Many Black, Latino, and Native students arrive less prepared due to gaps in K–12 opportunities and resources.
2. **Socioeconomic pressures:** Students from underrepresented groups are more likely to juggle work, family, and school, impacting persistence.
3. **Representation and inclusivity:** Limited faculty diversity and curricula that do not fully reflect the lived experiences of minoritized groups can affect engagement and outcomes.
4. **Enrollment size effects:** Very small groups (e.g., Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, American Indian) show volatility, but consistent underperformance indicates structural

barriers.

5. **External disruptions:** Pandemic-related stressors, access to technology, and uneven recovery also hit these groups harder.

Summary:

Across the **Political Science department**, the **Social Science division**, and **Fullerton College as a whole**, the equity picture is consistent:

- **Black/African American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students** are the most underperforming groups, regularly falling below the institutional set standard of 62%.
- **American Indian/Alaska Native students** hover near the standard but struggle relative to peers.
- **Latina/o/x/e students**, while the majority population, remain behind Asian and White peers, representing the largest equity gap due to their size.
- **Asian and White students** consistently achieve the highest success rates, often meeting or exceeding the stretch goal.

The persistence of these gaps across program, division, and college levels indicates that the challenges are systemic, not isolated to Political Science alone.

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3. In terms of your degree and certificate completers, are there any groups who are underrepresented in your completion data compared to the overall enrollment in your program?

Enrollment Context (2020–2025):

- **Latina/o/x/e students** are by far the largest group in the program, consistently making up about **61–63% of enrollments**.
- **White students** are the second largest group, around **14–16%**.
- **Asian students** account for **10–12%**.
- **Black/African American students** make up **2–3%**.
- **Two or more races: 6–10%**.
- Other groups (American Indian/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, Unknown) are very small (1–3%).

Completions (2020–2025):

Latina/o/x/e students: Very strong representation in completions, ranging from **55–74%**, often higher than their share of enrollment. For example, in 2022–2023, they were **61% of enrollment but 74% of awards**.

- **White students:** Also well represented, making up **14–16% of enrollment but 11–25% of completions** depending on the year.
- **Asian students:** Underrepresented compared to their enrollment share. They are **10–12% of enrollment but only 6–16% of awards**, consistently earning fewer awards than expected.
- **Black/African American students:** Significantly underrepresented. Despite being **2–3% of enrollment**, they account for only **3–5% of completions**, and in some years as low as a single student.
- **Two or more races:** Modestly underrepresented. They are **6–10% of enrollment but only 3–9% of awards**.
- **American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students:** Virtually absent from completions, which mirrors their very low enrollment numbers.

Summary:

- **Underrepresented groups in completions:** **Asian students, Black/African American students, and students of two or more races** earn fewer degrees relative to their enrollment share.
- **Well represented or slightly overrepresented groups:** **Latina/o/x/e and White students** complete at or above their enrollment proportions.
- **Persistently missing groups:** **American Indian/Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students** remain almost invisible in the award data, reflecting both small enrollment and systemic barriers.

4. Are your students completing your degree and certificate program requirements in the expected time frame? Are there certain groups whose rates are below other student groups? Discuss any efforts to improve time to completion.

Overall Completion Rates:

Across the Fall 2018–Fall 2022 cohorts, Political Science students are completing their **AA/AS degrees**, but many are taking longer than the traditional two-year timeline.

- **Two-year completion rates** range from **18% to 27%**, averaging around one in five

students completing on time.

- **Three-year completion rates** improve outcomes (13–23%), showing that some students persist but finish later than expected.
- A notable share—especially the Fall 2018 cohort (28%)—required **more than three years** to complete, reflecting extended pathways to graduation.

This indicates that while students do complete, **timely completion within two years remains a challenge**, with most students needing 3+ years or longer.

By Ethnicity:

- **Asian students** complete at much higher rates, with **41% finishing within two years**, well above the program average.
- **White students** also do better than average at **23% two-year completion**, and many complete by the three-year mark (**20%**).
- **Latino students** (the majority enrollment group) show **significantly lower completion rates**—only **17% within two years**, with many taking longer. This represents the most persistent equity gap.
- **Students of two or more races** show the strongest outcomes, with a **53% two-year completion rate**, although this may be influenced by smaller sample sizes.
- **Race/ethnicity unknown** students often take much longer, with **33% completing beyond three years**, suggesting either barriers to earlier completion or misclassification.

By Gender:

- **Female students** complete faster, with **26% finishing in two years**, compared to **20% for males**.
- **Male students** are more likely to extend to three years (18%) or longer (10%).
- **Unknown gender category** has the lowest and most consistent rates, with only **13% at each time frame**, suggesting barriers in persistence.

Summary of Gaps:

- **Latino students** (largest group) are underperforming in timely completion compared to Asian, White, and multi-race students.
- **Male students** complete at lower rates and take longer than female students.
- **Asian and multi-race students** are completing at significantly higher rates, especially within two years.

Efforts to Improve Time to Completion:

The department and college have taken steps to address these gaps:

1. **Shift to AA-T/AS-T Transfer Degrees:** By emphasizing transfer degrees aligned with CSU, pathways are now more structured and transparent, reducing excess units and helping students complete faster.
 2. **Guided Pathways and Course Sequencing:** Clearer semester-by-semester maps have been developed to help students stay on track within the two-year timeframe.
 3. **Support for Latino and first-generation students:** Targeted programs (Puente, Transfer Advantage, learning communities) aim to provide mentoring, advising, and culturally relevant support to close gaps.
 4. **Increased advising and counseling:** Efforts to prevent students from “stopping out” and encourage continuous enrollment through summer and intersession courses.
 5. **Monitoring AI/academic integrity:** Reducing reliance on inflated success from AI tools ensures real preparation for transfer, which should improve long-term completion.
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2.3 Student Learning Outcomes

1. Describe your program’s processes and practices for defining, assessing, and analyzing student learning outcomes at the course (CSLO) and program (PSLO) level. Include a discussion of how your program uses the results of CSLO/PSLO data to inform course and program improvement efforts.

The Department of Political Science regularly reassesses our CSLOs and PSLOs on a continuous basis. Our current CSLOs and PSLOs measure student success through quantitative and qualitative assessment. The Department plans to continue assessing, analyzing, and redefining (if necessary) CSLOs and PSLOs if our current practices do not align with our goals of educating our students according to their actual needs. Since the data is not currently available, we cannot address that component of this self-study

2. (OPTIONAL/NOT REQUIRED) Using the data provided by OIE, describe the most salient results of CSLO or PSLO mastery rates. Did you find significant differences by race, ethnicity, gender, and other categories?
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Section 3: Other Areas of Program Effectiveness

1. Document any substantial changes to your program curriculum since the last review and discuss what prompted these changes. Looking forward, what changes to the curriculum do you plan based on the emerging needs of your discipline, industry, student population, etc.

Since the last program review, the department has strengthened its alignment with statewide initiatives such as Guided Pathways and CALGETC. Course outlines have been updated to emphasize skill development in research, critical thinking, and civic engagement. The department continues to offer and revise POSC 198 (Campaign Internship) and POSC 199 (Public Policy Internship) to reflect new opportunities in local and state government. Faculty are currently discussing updates to POSC 100 (American Government) to integrate civic engagement projects and to ensure continued alignment with the state's U.S. and California Government requirement for transfer students.

New program development:

The department recently introduced the **Practical Politics Certificate**, a program that gives students an applied understanding of political campaigns, communications, and civic leadership. The certificate bridges academic theory and professional practice, offering students direct experience in political strategy, data analysis, and public engagement. A central course in the certificate is **POSC 135: Campaigns and Elections**, which examines how campaigns are organized, funded, and managed. Students learn how to design messaging, analyze polling data, use geographic and demographic tools, and plan local or regional campaigns. This course and certificate provide students with tangible, career-ready skills that complement the department's traditional transfer pathway and prepare them for roles in government, advocacy, and community organizations.

Looking forward, the department plans to explore curriculum additions that reflect emerging areas in the discipline, such as race, class, and gender, and political economy. As student demographics evolve, the program aims to create learning experiences that meet the needs of diverse and working students by offering more late-start and online sections.

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2. Please briefly describe opportunities your students have to apply and deepen knowledge and skills through projects, apprenticeship, internships, co-ops, clinical placements, group projects outside of class, service learning, study abroad, and other experiential learning activities that you intentionally embed in coursework or elsewhere in your program.

The Political Science program provides several opportunities for students to deepen their learning beyond the classroom.

- **Internships:** Students gain hands-on experience through POSC 198 and POSC 199, working with nonprofit organizations, district offices, local campaigns, and government agencies. These internships often lead to professional connections and employment in the public sector.
- **Field Learning:** POSC 180 (Sacramento Seminar) allows students to meet with legislators, policymakers, and advocates at the State Capitol, linking theory with real-

world governance.

- **Research and Honors Projects:** The department supports the Honors Program and offers four honors courses annually, including POSC 100HF and POSC 110HF. Students conduct independent research and present at the Honors Transfer Council of California Research Conference.
- **Campus and Community Engagement:** Faculty encourage students to participate in voter registration drives, student government, the Speech and Debate Team, and community discussions on current issues.

These experiences prepare students for transfer and careers in law, public administration, teaching, and community leadership while promoting civic responsibility.

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3. Describe any laws, regulations, trends, policies, procedures, or other influences that have an impact on your program. These can include things like Vision 2030, CALGETC, Common Course Numbering, etc.

The Political Science program is shaped by state and systemwide policies, transfer initiatives, and broader educational trends.

- **Vision 2030:** The department's emphasis on civic engagement, equity, and student-centered learning supports the state's long-term goals for access, completion, and workforce readiness.
- **CALGETC and Common Course Numbering:** These statewide reforms are streamlining general education and transfer requirements. The department has reviewed and updated course outlines to ensure alignment with CALGETC areas and to prepare for numbering consistency across California community colleges.
- **Equity and Student Success Initiatives:** Institutional efforts to address opportunity gaps continue to guide departmental priorities, including improved outreach to first-generation and underrepresented students through targeted mentorship and embedded support.

The Department of Political Science believes that education is currently at a crossroads — and we require bold leadership at the state and federal levels to determine our path forward. While the Department agrees with the Chancellor's stated goals outlined in Vision 2030 (namely, its "call to action for our 116 colleges to lead with equity and excellence, act with urgency, and serve as a force for economic mobility, environmental stewardship, and community resilience"), the Department believes it is of paramount importance for the CCCCO to self-assess whether or not Vision 2030 is in line with itself when it comes to environmental stewardship. Due to the economic model in the United States, it appears that

the major stakeholders in AI (Sam Altman’s OpenAI, Mark Zuckerberg’s Meta, etc.) will be able to open data centers larger than entire cities, which will consume more resources than many countries. Moreover, these American companies will receive substantial subsidies and pass those environmental costs onto the public. While billionaires will be shielded from the effects of environmental decay, everyone else will suffer. The environmental impact of artificial intelligence cannot be overstated. At the very basic level, compared to a non-generative search, AI requires much more computational power in order to answer a query. This issue is a bit more complex than just AI vs standard queries, since generative AI is not created equally. US American companies in the AI field use less efficient components and practices than their Chinese competitors (i.e., DeepSeek) due to complex reasons that go beyond this discussion. While simple queries using DeepSeek may cost 1-3 watt-hours of electricity, a student prompting DeepSeek to generate a 10 page essay would cost 150-300 watt-hours. Using OpenAI, the same simple query would cost 2-10 watt-hours, and the essay would run 300-1,000 watt-hours. For context, a typical refrigerator uses 1,000-2,000 watt-hours of electricity per day (so just one Open-AI query can use as much energy as your refrigerator). Now multiply that by a billion users. Combining the intertwining of business interests with government policy in the USA, there is no future where American generative AI and environmental protection exist. Finally, since AI is also contributing to “cognitive debt,” or in other words, since AI is literally making us dumber (<https://arxiv.org/pdf/2506.08872v1>), it does not serve our students’ (or society’s!) best interests to replace traditional learning with genAI. For this reason, at the risk of sounding like luddites, the Department advocates that the CCCCO implements policies that reduce the necessity for AI in the classroom, rather than encourage it.

Section 4: Faculty and Staff

4.1 Population and Demographics

1. Using the data provided by OIE, describe your program’s staff (full-time/part-time faculty, nonfaculty, classified). How reflective of your program’s student population is your staff?

Over the past five years, the Political Science program has employed **8–13 faculty members annually**, with the most recent year (2024–25) showing **10 total faculty**. The program has consistently leaned toward full-time faculty, with **70–78% full-time** in most years, compared to **22–30% part-time**. This proportion is higher than many other programs on campus and provides stability and consistency in course offerings.

Course Sections and Workload:

Instructional coverage mirrors faculty composition. In 2020–21, full-time faculty taught

64% of sections (36 of 56 CRNs), while part-time faculty covered **36%**. Full-time coverage peaked in 2021–22 at **77%**, but has since declined to **62% in 2024–25**, with adjunct faculty now teaching **38% of sections**. Measured in Full-Time Equivalent Faculty (FTEF), full-time instructors accounted for **74–84% of workload** across most years, though this dipped to **67% in 2024–25**. This shift reflects a gradual increase in adjunct reliance, tied to enrollment fluctuations and resource constraints.

Faculty Demographics:

- **Gender:** The majority of faculty are male (**60–67%**), while women represent **33–40%**. Although female representation rose slightly to **40% in 2024–25**, women remain underrepresented compared to the student body, where enrollment averages **51% female, 44% male, and 5–6% unknown**.
- **Ethnicity:** Faculty diversity has improved modestly but remains uneven compared to students.
 - **Hispanic/Latino faculty:** **33–43%**, well below their share of student enrollment (**61–63%**).
 - **White faculty:** **36–43%**, more than double their student representation (**14–16%**).
 - **Asian faculty:** **14–20%**, roughly aligned with Asian student enrollment (**10–12%**).
 - **Black/African American faculty:** Present in some years (~11%) but absent in others, compared to **2–3% of students**.
 - **Two or more races:** **9–11% of faculty**, slightly above their student representation (**6–10%**).

Trends and Implications:

The Political Science program continues to be anchored by a strong base of full-time faculty, ensuring **curriculum stability, student advising, and program leadership**. However, the growing share of part-time coverage—rising from **23% of sections in 2021–22 to 38% in 2024–25**—signals increasing reliance on adjunct faculty. While this provides flexibility, it may impact **continuity in student support, mentorship, and governance roles**.

At the same time, faculty demographics do not fully reflect the student body. **Latino students are the majority (61–63%) but Latino faculty make up only 33–43%**. Women also remain underrepresented relative to their enrollment share. Conversely, **White faculty are overrepresented**, while Asian faculty representation is proportional, and Black faculty are underrepresented or absent.

Summary:

The program is staffed predominantly by full-time faculty, which strengthens academic quality and consistency. However, disparities exist between the demographics of students

and faculty, particularly regarding Latino and female representation. Addressing these gaps through **targeted recruitment, mentorship pipelines, and diversity-focused hiring** would help ensure the faculty more closely mirrors the students they serve, while also reducing the risks associated with increasing adjunct reliance.

2. Describe your program's staffing changes since fall 2021. How have these changes impacted your program's ability to achieve its strategic action plans?

Since fall 2021, the department has experienced one retirement (Joe Reilly) and an increase in adjunct faculty to maintain course offerings. While this expansion of part-time instructors has allowed the department to meet student demand, it has also increased coordination needs and reduced the stability that comes with additional full-time faculty.

Despite these challenges, faculty have continued to collaborate effectively on curriculum and assessment. The department remains committed to hiring a new full-time faculty member to maintain quality instruction, support assessment and mentorship programs, and prevent potential bottlenecks in POLS 1000 American Government, a required course for transfer.

The department's long-term success in achieving its strategic action plans: improving retention, expanding applied learning, and strengthening equity depends on restoring full-time faculty positions and continuing to adapt curriculum and pedagogy to serve the changing student population.

4.2 Staff Support and Professional Development

1. Describe the regular discussions your program faculty are having about equitable grading, attendance, late work, extra credit policies, and other strategies to support equitable student success.

The Department of Political Science is composed of professionals who regularly self-study individually but also collaborate to discuss all matters that relate to student success. These discussions are also not limited to just the Department — we regularly collaborate with folks across the campus. Since these matters are a component of academic freedom, the individuals in the Department have different perspectives on what constitutes “equitable” when it comes to student success. Nonetheless, the discussions happen through official Department meetings and informal conversations regularly.

2. How have these conversations shaped practices or policies in your program? What action has arisen from these discussions? If no action has been taken, why not?

The Department of Political Science has recently discussed piloting a new grading scale to account for the systemic failures of the educational system. While this is currently limited to one professor, the results of the pilot will be discussed internally at the conclusion of the semester.

The Department of Political Science advocates that the College's professional development respect the validity of differing viewpoints on equitable outcomes and student success. While administrators may have legitimate business-related (i.e., SCFF) interests in advocating loosening restrictions, the world that students will inherit comes with systemic challenges that require excellence. Our tasks as educators should not be to simply meet students where they are — we should be lifting students to where they need to be to face these challenges. In keeping with this logic, the Department requests more professional development opportunities that come from the world of education — not private enterprise.

3. What additional areas of professional development could help your faculty and staff engage in this work?

Broad discussions division and campuswide about changes in the classroom, teaching methods, and innovations are helpful.

Section 5: Program Planning

5.1 Progress on Previous Strategic Action Plans

1. Please discuss the goals (Strategic Action Plans, SAPs) from your last self-study. Assess and explain your progress on each of the SAP.

SAP #1: Hire new faculty.

We were not granted a faculty line so we weren't able to hire.

SAP #2: Improve Student Retention and Success

We continue to offer our students academic resources and connect them with help in and out of the classroom.

2. If additional funds were NOT allocated to you in the last review cycle, how did the LACK of funds have an impact on your program?

Not being able to hire new faculty means our department relies more and more on adjunct instructors to teach our major prep classes for transfer.

SAPs

Ensure Academic Integrity

Short Description:

Our department adopted a policy for all our online courses to use the LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor to protect the integrity of our online classes. We've seen an increase in cheating with AI in writing assignments and online exams with the average scores on exams increasing over the past few years.

Measurable Outcomes:

We may see an initial drop in success rates and retention as students adjust to these measures. We hope it's a temporary dip and we can help students connect with academic resources to learn the material and succeed in our classes.

College Goals:

2.4 Increase access to academic support in course with DI

SAP Phase:

New

Improve Student Retention and Success

Short Description:

The Political Science faculty will focus on American Government, a required course that students often struggle with in terms of student retention and success. Using campus resources like Supplemental Instruction, the Tutoring Center, the Writing Center, and the Health Center, many of our students can work to improve their academic outcomes without additional funds. However, it is important to understand our students often face personal and work obstacles that interfere with their own success.

Measurable Outcomes:

We hope to see the retention and success rates improve for groups with low rates.

College Goals:

3.3 Reduce equity gaps in transfer attainment

SAP Phase:

New

Hiring Faculty

Short Description:

The Political Science Department has had three retirements, leaving our department with only 3 full-time faculty members. We would like to strengthen instruction in Comparative Politics and Public Law. These courses are central to the Political Science transfer degree and are essential for meeting student demand.

Measurable Outcomes:

New faculty bring new teaching methods to the class and are of a generation that can better relate to younger students. The new faculty member will also contribute to SLO assessment, mentorship, and equity initiatives.

College Goals:**SAP Phase:**

New

Resource Requests

AI Detection Tools

Enhancement:

The Political Science Department is asking the college to help fund a reliable AI detection tool incorporated into Canvas for student writing. Faculty have seen a sharp rise in essays and assignments that appear to be written by AI. This has made it harder to tell whether students are actually doing the work or submitting computer-generated responses. Right now, instructors are left to handle this on their own. Some use free tools, some do not use anything, and others spend extra hours trying to verify whether a submission is authentic. This creates inconsistency across classes. It also increases the risk of either missing cases of cheating or falsely accusing students without solid evidence. Writing in the social sciences is supposed to show a student's own reasoning, their understanding of the material, and their ability to communicate ideas. If AI tools can replace that work without any guardrails, grades stop reflecting learning, and our student learning outcomes lose their meaning. A campus-supported detection service would create a fair, consistent system. It would give faculty a reliable way to confirm authorship and intervene early

with students who may need tutoring, writing support, or help understanding expectations. It also keeps the process transparent and equitable, rather than dependent on which instructor happens to have access to better tools. We are asking for funding so we can maintain academic integrity, give faculty the support they need, and make sure student grades continue to reflect real skills and progress. We don't know the cost of providing these tools since it would hopefully be collegewide.

Personnel-Related:

No

Resource Category:

Computer Software

Quantity:

0

Unit Cost:

\$0.00

TotalCost:

\$0.00