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| **POLS 487 Capstone Rubric to Assess Student Mastery of Program Learning Objectives (PLO)** |
| **Criteria**  | **Exemplary (A)** | **Good (B)** | **Marginal (C-D)** | **Unacceptable (F)** |
| **PLO 1****Substantive Political Science Knowledge** | Paper shows a thorough mastery of substantive knowledge about the political institutions, political actors, policy issues or relevant processes in state, national, or international political systems. | Paper shows good mastery of substantive knowledge about the political institutions, political actors, policy issues or relevant processes in state, national, or international political systems, albeit with some minor omissions or confusion. | Paper shows reasonable mastery of substantive knowledge about the political institutions, political actors, policy issues or relevant processes in state, national, or international political systems, albeit with some significant omissions or confusion. | Paper shows little or no mastery of substantive knowledge about the political institutions, political actors, policy issues or relevant processes in state, national, or international political systems. |
| **POL 2****Critical Thinking** | Paper shows a thorough mastery of the ability to think critically about political or policy phenomena by applying alternative explanatory perspectives from the political science literature to the research topic. | Paper shows a good mastery of the ability to think critically about political or policy phenomena by applying alternative explanatory perspectives from the political science literature to the research topic, albeit with some minor omissions from the relevant literature. | Paper shows a reasonable mastery of the ability to think critically about political or policy phenomena by applying alternative explanatory perspectives from the political science literature to the research topic, albeit with some significant omissions from the relevant literature. | Paper shows little or no mastery of the ability to think critically about political or policy phenomena by applying alternative explanatory perspectives from the political science literature to the research topic.  |
| **POL 3A****Theoretical Question** | The paper includes a comprehensive and clear theoretical statement.  | The paper includes a good theoretical statement that is generally comprehensive and clear, although sometimes the student digresses from it.  | The paper includes a basic theoretical statement that is somewhat comprehensive and clear, although sometimes the student digresses from it.  | The paper does not include a comprehensive and clear theoretical statement.  |
| **POL 3B****Research Design** | The paper includes a clear and coherent description of the project’s research design.  | The paper includes a good and generally coherent description of the project’s research design. | The paper includes a satisfactory and relatively coherent description of the project’s research design. | The paper does not include a clear and coherent description of the project’s research design. |
| **POL 3C****Data Analysis**  | The paper shows that the student used correct data analysis to reach their conclusions. | The paper shows that the student generally used correct data analysis to reach their conclusions. | The paper shows that the student partially or inconsistently used correct data analysis, which casted some doubt on their conclusions. | The paper shows that the student did not use correct data analysis to reach their conclusions. |

*PLO1. A command of substantive knowledge about the political institutions, political actors, policy issues or relevant processes in state, national, or international political systems.*

*PLO2. An ability to think critically about political or policy phenomena in a way that applies alternative explanatory perspectives across the political science literature.*

*PLO3. A demonstrated capability to carry out systematic empirical research in political science or policy, i.e., articulate a theoretical question, construct a rigorous research design, and analyze data or cases using appropriate methodological approaches.*

*PLO3A Articulate a theoretical question.*

*POL3B Construct a rigorous research design.*

*POL3C Analyze data or cases using appropriate methodological approaches.*