**Liberal Arts Essentials Assessment Plan**

**Course:** POLS311: Politics of Western Europe  
**Writing Unit:** No  
**Instructor:** Boomgaard  
**Methods:** Examination and mini simulation papers  

**LAE Category:** Western Heritage (a)  
**Goal 3:** Muskingum students will acquire multiple and integrative approaches to life-long learning.  
**Learning Objective 1:** Students will demonstrate the ability to engage effectively in the lifelong learning skills of acquiring, evaluating, synthesizing, and applying knowledge.

A. **Student work examined**  
List the tasks used to measure the objective (e.g., exams, research project/paper assignments, presentation or class assignment) and attach a copy of each along with the Departmental plan.

1. This course incorporates three mini-simulations, recreating the legislative process in three different countries. As part of the preparation (and grading) for each simulation, students research a politician from the state, and write a paper about that person’s stance on the issue at hand. In addition to regular grading, one of the three mini-simulation papers will be evaluated according to an LAE assessment rubric.

2. In addition, one question on the final exam will ask a specific question which asks students to evaluate a critique of European political systems. In addition to the usual grading, this question will be evaluated according to a separate LAE assessment rubric.

A. **Scoring Criteria**  
Briefly explain the criteria used to evaluate student performance in relation to the learning objective (i.e., what constitutes advanced, proficient, partially proficient, not proficient, etc.)  
Attach copies of measurement instrument or rubric.

Advanced students will be able to find a variety of reliable sources and/or evidence to support their argument, to accurately extrapolate positions on issues based on past events, and apply evidence effectively in different settings.

Proficient students will be able to find multiple reliable sources and/or evidence to support their argument, and apply evidence sufficiently in a variety of settings.

Partially proficient students will be able to find some evidence to support their argument in at least one setting, though it may not be current or reliable.

Students who are not proficient cannot find reliable sources, or are unable to use them effectively in argumentation.
Rubric for mini-simulation papers:

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<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>0</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sources used</td>
<td>More than 3 citations (no sources not cited)</td>
<td>2-3 works cited (or more than 3, but not all cited)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Unknown, source not cited.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of sources used</td>
<td>Over half of the sources are relevant government documents or websites, biographies, party platforms, or other relevant primary sources from the last 5 years</td>
<td>Some of the sources fit into category 3. Others are textbooks, or sources that are more than five years old.</td>
<td>Relies primarily on the textbook.</td>
<td>Relies primarily on Wikipedia or other non-peer reviewed material.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ability to connect arguments to source material</td>
<td>Quotations and other researched material support and strengthen arguments</td>
<td>Quotations, citations, etc. integrate into papers</td>
<td>Quotations and other researched material break the flow of the paper, or is not explained in paper</td>
<td>Research seems to contradict argument.</td>
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Rubric for exam question:

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<tr>
<td>Clarity of argument</td>
<td>Essay clearly stated perspective, and was consistent throughout</td>
<td>Essay clearly stated perspective, argument present throughout</td>
<td>Thesis statement may not be present, or else the argument was not consistent.</td>
<td>Essay argued both sides of the issue.</td>
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<td>Use of evidence</td>
<td>Essay mustered multiple examples from different states to support argument</td>
<td>Essay used at least two examples to support argument</td>
<td>Essay used one correct example</td>
<td>Essay did not correctly use examples from class.</td>
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</table>
A combined total score over 12 points, with at least one three earned on each assessment, will indicate advanced competency.

Scores between 9 and 12 points (or 13, if there are no 3’s earned on one of the two assessments) will indicate proficiency.

Scores between 5 and 8 points will indicate partial proficiency.

Scores of less than 5 will be deemed not proficient.