

*Institutional Effectiveness Report  
Academic Year 2010-2011  
Political Science*

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**Mission and Goals**

**Mission Statement:**

The political science program provides instruction to enable all students to complete as part of their general education requirement an introductory-level course in political science that includes material dealing with the United States Constitution and Federalist Papers. Students may earn a major, minor, or collateral in political science. The program offers its majors a broad understanding of political phenomena, including political institutions, political processes, political behavior, political thought patterns, and contemporary political issues. The course of study for the major prescribes a set of core courses in the discipline's traditional sub-fields of American government, comparative politics, international relations, political philosophy, and political methodology. Students elect the remainder of their primary work from a range of course offerings pertaining to foreign and /or domestic American government and politics. The flexibility of the curriculum permits students to pursue a program of courses tailored to their individual interests and career goals. Graduates with a major in political science receive the broad training and develop the general competence in the discipline required to equip them for successful careers in journalism, politics, the military, public service and quasi-public agencies, commerce and industry, teaching, and other occupations for which preparation in the field is desirable, or to undertake postgraduate professional study in political science, public administration, or related areas, such as law.

**Goals:**

Political Science majors will demonstrate knowledge of government and politics and of the terms, concepts, methods, theories, and principles of political science.

Political Science graduates will be prepared to successfully pursue graduate degrees, or enter employment in positions in business, government, or public service.

Political Science faculty will provide quality instruction in every class.

The Political Science faculty will strive to offer a full array of courses in the discipline to ensure a sufficient list of course offerings each semester.

## Assessment Activities

The political science program utilized three assessment tools in 2010-2011.

These are:

- 1) The administration of an internal exam created by program faculty. This exam has been used as an assessment tool for many years. The exam was substantially revised in Fall 2009 so that it more accurately measures the knowledge we expect majors to gain in the program. The revised exam was first administered in Spring 2010. Results are reported for Spring 2001 through Spring 2011.
  
- 2) The gathering of student evaluation data concerning the quality of instruction by faculty. This is based on question # 7 (“overall, the quality of instruction in the course was...” with a response of excellent being one (1)) on the University’s student course and instruction evaluation form. Results are reported for Spring 2008 through Fall 2010.
  
- 3) The administration of an exit survey for political science majors. This survey was developed in Fall 2009/ Spring 2010 and administered for the second time in Spring 2011. Based on student responses to both close-ended and open-ended questions, the program faculty identified some issues of concern to students which the faculty believe need to be addressed.

### AVERAGE SCORES ON POLITICAL SCIENCE INTERNAL EXAM

TERM	N	AVERAGE SCORE
Spring 2001	11	72.7
Spring 2002	4	64.8
Spring 2003	20	58.3
Spring 2004	20	58.9
Spring 2005	14	57.6
Spring 2006	20	72.6
Spring 2007	19	66.4
Spring 2008	22	69.8
Spring 2009	19	62.7
Spring 2010	22	75.36
Spring 2011	22	65.82

### STUDENT EVALUATION OF QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION

#### Faculty

TERM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Spring 2008	1.32	1.63	1.34	1.13	1.18	1.63	1.75
Fall 2008	1.60	1.17	2.32	1.49	1.37	1.64	1.75
Spring 2009	1.67	1.42	1.46	1.63	1.23	--	--
Fall 2009	1.24	1.70	1.68	1.80	1.50	1.38	--
Spring 2010	1.64	1.34	1.43	1.19	1.74	1.58	--
Fall 2010	1.19	1.73	1.61	1.90	1.72	1.64	--

**Numbering of each faculty member is completely random for each period of reporting.**

**Results from exit survey of Political Science Majors**  
 The percent of students who gave each response is reported.

**1. Perceptions of program quality (all questions begin with “to what extent has the political science program prepared you to...”**

**RESPONSES**

	<b>Well Prepared</b>	<b>Somewhat Prepared</b>	<b>Uncertain/Neutral</b>	<b>Somewhat Unprepared</b>	<b>Unprepared</b>
Understand Political Science as a science of political behavior	81.8%	13.6%	0	4.5%	0
Understand and appreciate how the scientific method can be utilized to study politics	40.9%	40.9%	9.09%	9.09%	0
Understand the major theories and issues of Political Science	68.18%	22.72%	4.5%	0	4.5%
Understand the political institutions and processes of the American Political System	72.72%	18.18%	4.5%	0	4.5%
Appreciate your role as a citizen in the American political system	63.63%	31.8%	0	0	4.5%
Understand the political processes of other countries, regions, and the international system	36.36%	45.45%	13.63%	4.5%	0
Engage in critical thinking about political issues	63.63%	22.72%	9.09%	0	4.5%
Become aware of career options for political science majors	27.27%	22.72%	22.72%	22.72%	4.5%

## 2. Perceptions of program quality in specific areas:

### RESPONSES

	<b>Good</b>	<b>Somewhat Good</b>	<b>Uncertain/Neutral</b>	<b>Somewhat Poor</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Availability of course offerings	50%	36.36%	13.63%	0	0
Extent to which class objectives were specified on the syllabus in your courses	72.72%	22.72%	0	4.5%	0
Extent to which class objectives were met in your courses	61.9%	33.3%	0	4.7%	0
Overall quality of the instructional methods used in the classroom including lectures, demonstrations, etc.	50%	36.36%	9.09%	0	4.5%
Overall quality of the use of instructional technology in the classroom	30%	50%	15%	0	5%
Overall fairness of grading in your political science courses	54.54%	31.8%	9.09%	0	4.5%
Overall quality of your political science courses	68.18%	27.27%	0	4.5%	0

## 3. Perceptions of political science faculty's performance in specific areas:

### RESPONSES

	<b>Good</b>	<b>Somewhat Good</b>	<b>Uncertain/Neutral</b>	<b>Somewhat Poor</b>	<b>Poor</b>
Overall knowledge of subject matter of faculty	86.36%	9.09%	0	0	4.5%
Overall conduct of courses by faculty	81.8%	13.63%	0	0	4.5%
Treatment of students in the classroom by faculty	59.09%	27.27%	9.09%	0	4.5%
Approachability and availability of faculty	72.72%	22.72%	0	0	4.5%
Advising by faculty	63.63%	13.63%	9.09%	9.09%	4.5%

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Issues of Concern 2008-2012</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Actions Taken</b></p>
<p>Maintain qualified faculty in Political Science</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The program has hired a new tenure-track faculty member to teach International Relations and Comparative Politics courses starting in Fall 2011.</li> <li>• The program has been authorized to hire a new faculty member to teach Criminal Justice courses. This position will be filled beginning in Spring 2012. It is the faculty's hope that the addition of this new faculty member (to replace a retired faculty member who left the University in Spring 2008) will help to deal with one of the issues identified by students in the first two administrations of the exit survey. Students indicated in both the 2010 and 2011 exit surveys that the lack of availability of course offerings is a weakness of the program. The faculty hope that with the addition of this new faculty member we will be able to offer a broader array of courses to deal with this weakness.</li> </ul>
<p>Increase the opportunity for Political Science majors to gain information about career options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The program has acquired bulletin boards to post information about career, internship, and graduate school opportunities.</li> <li>• Students from the Introduction to Law course and the Civil Rights and Civil Liberties course learned about careers in the federal court system. They heard presentations from a federal District Court judge, and representatives of the U.S. Probation and Parole Office, the U.S. Attorney's office, and the U.S. Marshals Service through a trip to the Federal District Court.</li> <li>• Criminal Justice students learned about careers in the federal prison system by means of a field trip to a federal correctional institution.</li> <li>• Model U.N. students learned about diplomatic careers through delegate seminars at the U.N. in New York.</li> </ul>
<p>Modernize the use of technology in Political Science courses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GIS technology will be installed in the political science computer lab for use in both political geography and criminal justice courses.</li> </ul>

<p>Maintain an up-to-date curriculum relevant to the study of Political Science in the 21<sup>st</sup> century</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new course, POL 338: Politics and Film, was added and has been taught five times since Fall 2007.</li> <li>• A new course, POL 320: Constitutional Law, was added and has been taught three times since Summer 2008.</li> <li>• POL 215: Public Administration, was taught in Spring 2011 for the first time in six years.</li> <li>• POL 324: Asian Politics, will be taught for the first time in four years in Fall 2011.</li> <li>• Students learned about grand jury proceedings through a field trip to observe such proceedings in a state circuit court.</li> <li>• A retreat has been planned for Fall 2011 at which a discussion of the curriculum and possible improvements will be held.</li> </ul>
<p>Maintenance and improvement of performance on internal exam</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The faculty has decided to consider a proposal for re-vamping the internal exam in a way that would allow students to prepare for the exam.</li> </ul>
<p>Upgrade as needed office and instructional computers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most of the political science lab computers have been replaced.</li> <li>• All lab computers have been updated.</li> </ul>