Institutional Effectiveness Report
Academic Year 2011-2012
Political Science

Dr. Eileen Kirley-Tallon
Coordinator of IE & JMJ Holliday Professor of Political Science

Dr. David R. White
Chair, Department of Political Science and Geography

May 31, 2012

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 2011-2012.

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 and administered in Spring 2010, 2011, and 2012. In Spring 2012 a study guide to help students prepare for the internal exam was provided to the students one week before the administration of the exam. Results are reported for Spring 2002 through Spring 2012.

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 2009 through Fall 2011.

3) The administration of an exit survey for political science majors. This survey was developed in Fall 2009/ Spring 2010 and administered for the third time in Spring 2012. 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 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
Spring 2012	15	96.67

STUDENT EVALUATION OF QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION

Faculty

TERM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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	--
Spring 2011	1.06	1.26	1.50	1.59	1.60	1.75	2.11
Fall 2011	1.19	1.42	1.46	1.54	1.56	1.58	2.21

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…"**

<div align="center">RESPONSES</div>

	Well Prepared	Somewhat Prepared	Uncertain/Neutral	Somewhat Unprepared	Unprepared
Understand Political Science as a science of political behavior	66.67%	33.33%	0	0	0
Understand and appreciate how the scientific method can be utilized to study politics	60%	40%	0	0	0
Understand the major theories and issues of Political Science	53%	40%	6.67%	0	0
Understand the political institutions and processes of the American Political System	73.33%	20%	6.67%	0	0
Appreciate your role as a citizen in the American political system	86.67%	13.33%	0	0	0
Understand the political processes of other countries, regions, and the international system	20%	53.33%	26.67%	0	0
Engage in critical thinking about political issues	80%	20%	0	0	0
Become aware of career options for political science majors	40%	26.67%	20%	6.67%	6.67%

2. Perceptions of program quality in specific areas:

RESPONSES

	Good	Somewhat Good	Uncertain/Neutral	Somewhat Poor	Poor
Availability of course offerings	60%	26.67%	6.67%	6.67%	0
Extent to which class objectives were specified on the syllabus in your courses	73.33%	26.67%	0	0	0
Extent to which class objectives were met in your courses	60%	40%	0	0	0
Overall quality of the instructional methods used in the classroom including lectures, demonstrations, etc.	73.33%	26.67%	0	0	0
Overall quality of the use of instructional technology in the classroom	66.67%	33.33%	0	0	0
Overall fairness of grading in your political science courses	73.33%	26.67%	0	0	0
Overall quality of your political science courses	80%	20%	0	0	0

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

RESPONSES

	Good	Somewhat Good	Uncertain/Neutral	Somewhat Poor	Poor
Overall knowledge of subject matter of faculty	100%	0	0	0	0
Overall conduct of courses by faculty	93.33%	6.67%	0	0	0
Treatment of students in the classroom by faculty	73.33%	26.67%	0	0	0
Approachability and availability of faculty	80%	20%	0	0	0
Advising by faculty	86.67%	6.67%	6.67%	0	0

Issues of Concern 2009-2013	Actions Taken
Maintain qualified faculty in Political Science	• The program has been authorized to hire two new faculty members. One position will be filled by a faculty member to teach Criminal Justice courses. The other position will be filled by a faculty member to teach Comparative Politics and Political Theory. Students indicated in the exit surveys that the lack of availability of course offerings is a weakness of the program. The faculty hope that with the addition of these new faculty members we will be able to offer a broader array of courses to deal with this weakness. • One program faculty member was awarded a sabbatical for Spring 2012 to further her research agenda. • The program sent faculty members to multiple academic conferences including the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association and the International Studies Association.
Increase the opportunity for Political Science majors to gain information about career options	• The program has consistently maintained bulletin boards to post information about career, internship, and graduate school opportunities. • A program faculty member presented a law school preparation session in March of 2012. • The program faculty integrate discussion of career opportunities and training throughout the curriculum. • A faculty member is taking five students to New York for a seminar on the Gilded Age in which will be integrated discussions of the politics of Tammany Hall. • By participating in the National Model U.N.in New York City, and visiting the United Nations, students learned about diplomatic career opportunities. • Florence City Councilwoman Octavia Williams-Blake spoke at the Pi Sigma Alpha banquet about careers in public service. • Three political science students took advantage of internship opportunities with state and local governments. • A faculty member took three students to Washington, D.C. to attend a national security seminar, where they also learned about many national security-related career opportunities.

Maintain an up-to-date curriculum relevant to the study of Political Science in the 21st century	• In Fall 2011 the program faculty participated in a two day retreat, at which extensive discussion of the curriculum took place. • The program faculty have reassessed the curriculum, and are in the process of proposing new courses, revising existing courses, and eliminating other courses. • POL 331, Administration of Justice, was taught for the first time in three years.
Maintenance and improvement of performance on internal exam	• Faculty continue to revise the internal exam to reflect more accurately student learning.
Upgrade as needed office and instructional computers.	• Two faculty members were provided with new computers.