Program Political Science Major; Department: Political Science; College/School: Arts and Sciences  
Person(s) Responsible for Implementing the Plan: Robert Strikwerda, Kenneth Warren, Ellen Carnaghan, Chair  
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<td>What do you expect all students who complete the program to know, or be able to do?</td>
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Graduates will understand how knowledge is created and shared across forms and contexts. Graduates will:
- demonstrate contextual understanding and sufficient factual and historical background to assess political science theories and concepts.
- recognize and apply major concepts and approaches in the study of American politics, comparative politics, international relations, and political thought.
- discuss and defend their ideas orally, with increasing confidence as they proceed through the major.
- present arguments and evidence clearly in written form, with increasing sophistication as they move through the major.
- read carefully and comprehend theoretical texts.

Courses, culminating in our two required 4000 seminars

Students demonstrate through written work (papers and tests), orally through presentations and discussions

All faculty submit reports on student learning in one of their classes annually to the department assessment director, who analyzes, bundles and condenses them. The department meets to discuss his report at August retreat.
Graduates will understand inquiry as sustained engagement with increasingly complex questions.

Graduates will:
- critique and assess scholarly writing.
- construct and write clear, well-reasoned, and persuasive theoretical arguments.
- correctly identify underlying assumptions and conceptual categories.
- critically evaluate and incorporate information and its sources.
- adjudicate between competing theories or arguments, giving credit to perspectives other than their own.
- evaluate evidence to test theories and to make persuasive arguments.
- assess the strengths and weaknesses of various methodological approaches.
- frame meaningful questions and devise strategies to answer them.
- develop, plan, and defend a research project, and write up the results in the appropriate style.

Courses, culminating in our two required 4000 seminars.

Students demonstrate through written work (papers and tests), orally through presentations and discussions

Graduates will understand themselves in solidarity with and for others locally, nationally, and globally

Graduates will:
- demonstrate increased interest in political phenomena, leading to greater engagement with the community and the world.
- discern the ethical consequences of decisions, actions, and inaction.
- demonstrate awareness of the complex identities of themselves and others.

Courses, culminating in our two required 4000 seminars.

Students demonstrate through written work (papers and tests), orally through presentations and discussions

See above
Graduates will demonstrate a strong work ethic. Courses, By due diligence in completing and submitting quality work in a timely fashion. See above

1. Describe the responsibilities, timeline, and the process for implementing this assessment plan.

   All faculty submit reports on one undergraduate course annually, in May, to the department assessment director, who bundles and condenses them. Department meets to discuss at August retreat. Department then choses one or two areas for special emphasis each academic year.

   For 2014-2015 special emphasis was “Graduates will be able to adjudicate between competing theories or arguments, giving credit to perspectives other than their own.”

   For 2015-2016 it is “Graduates will demonstrate a strong work ethic.”

2. Please explain how these assessment efforts are coordinated with Madrid (courses and/or program)?

   The department sends one St. Louis faculty member to Madrid every year to teach a course in American politics. In the past, this faculty member has also worked with the Madrid faculty to help them develop a plan to assess their own courses. Up to now, however, we have not assessed the St. Louis and Madrid programs together.

   The Madrid faculty have shared their learning outcomes, and they are similar to our own. We have contacted the Madrid faculty to begin a process of working out a common program to bring together results from both campuses, but that process is still ongoing. By May 2016, we will have a common process to assess student learning outcomes in the BA across both campuses.

3. The program assessment plan should be developed and approved by all faculty in the department. In addition, the program assessment plan should be developed to include student input and external sources (e.g., national standards, advisory boards, employers, alumni, etc.). Describe the process through which your academic unit created this assessment plan. Include the following:

   Process was developed through faculty discussion over a number of years. The most recent round of discussion began in May, 2008. Modifications were made as needed. Dr Warren, whose academic research includes assessment has helped shape the process.
a. Timeline regarding when or how often this plan will be reviewed and revised. (This could be aligned with program review.)

Both assessment results and the assessment plan are reviewed each year, and the plan is adapted as necessary at the August retreat and sometimes at other parts of the year.

b. How students were included in the process and/or how student input was gathered and incorporated into the assessment plan.

We intend to figure out ways to discuss the program learning plan and outcomes with students.

c. What external sources were consulted in the development of this assessment plan?


The assessment plans of other colleges and universities, posted online, were consulted (Syracuse, Calvin, Wittenberg, etc.).

d. Assessment of the manageability of the plan in relation to departmental resources and personnel:

We have been conducting assessment according to this plan for a number of years, with variations to increase feasibility and effectiveness. Faculty participation has been good.