

Insert Academic Degree Name Here

Annual Program Report Template

Year:	2022-2023
Program:	Political Science
Contact Person (include email & phone#)	Dr. Thomas E. Sowers, Thomas.sowers@lamar.edu , 409-8808539

Summary of Continuous Improvement Efforts since Last Report

Provide a brief description of how assessment results have been used for program improvement. Point to a specific example of how an assessment provided the program with data it could use for improvement and what that improvement was, if possible, also show evidence of the improvement. You may look at data from the two previous academic years to support this case.

Respond here: In the past both the areas of policy/public administration and comparative politics have been under performing according to the use of our exit exam compared to our entrance exam. We have made a hire in the comparative section that has seen two consecutive years of improvement in this subfield. Although the comparative subfield still is lower than desired, it is improving. We have made some curriculum changes in the subfield and will be adding a new course in Spring 24 that between reflects faculty expertise and the current state of the discipline. The subfield score average on the exit exam improved from a 7 to 7.5 average, in the years before the new hire we were below a 5. The policy area, which was a weakness, has improved dramatically. This year it had the highest subfield average of 11.22. We are still in the process of revising the curriculum in the policy subfield, but the early changes have shown positive results. The courses need to be senior level so that students are through their methods sequence so that students can complete the requirements of the course. This was a combination of course numbering and advising.

Program Highlights Since Last Report

Identify and briefly discuss any programmatic curriculum changes made since the last report (e.g. new courses, course changes, SLO changes, course deletions).

Respond here: Based on the data we plan to remove POLS 3332: Politics of Western Democracies, and POLS 3341: Intro to Public Administration and replacing them with POLS 3XXX: Comparative Civilian-Military Relations and a new theory-based policy course at the 4000 level. These changes will better match faculty skills with students needs and should improve overall performance in the program.

Table 1. Assessment Results and Analyses for Current Cycle.

STAGE 1: PLAN				STAGE 2: DO		STAGE 3: STUDY
Departmental Student Learning Goal	Program Student Learning Outcome	Assessment	Assessment Method/Location	Benchmark Expectations	Data Results	Actions/Goals Based on Data Results* What do the data tell you? How will you use this data? How were data from the last cycle used to make changes during this cycle, and What were the results of those changes?
The goal is to provide a strong foundation in the substantive knowledge in the five subfields of Political Science – American, Comparative, International Relations, Policy and Public Administration, and Statistics and Research Methods.	Graduating seniors majoring in Political Science will have acquired basic knowledge and understanding of the substantive fields of the discipline (American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Public Administration, and Research Methodology). Gaining basic knowledge and understanding of the substantive fields of the discipline equips students to pursue a variety of career paths and prepares them for post-graduation studies in law, political science, and other social sciences.	Exit Exam	Graduating seniors will be required prior to graduation to take a standardized test constructed by Ph.D. holding faculty in the Department of Political Science. The examination will be administered via Blackboard during the Spring semester. The examination contains questions categorized in the five subject areas and provides a standardized	The goal is for all graduating seniors to have a score of 60% or higher on the standardized exam as based on a 100-point scale.	The score of 69.95 surpassed our benchmark expectation.	The data shows that performance in the area of IR and Comparative is lagging even though our overall goal was met.

			score that will allow the department to compare student perform based on changes and past scores.			
To develop the ability for students to conduct original research in the field.	<p>Graduating seniors majoring in Political Science will demonstrate proficiency in the quantitative and qualitative research skills necessary to conduct and critically evaluate social science research. Proficiency in conducting primary and secondary research enhances students' post graduation success by expanding the research tools available to them in careers and post-graduate studies.</p>	Rubric Scored Essay	<p>The entrance examination will be given in the fall semester to all students enrolled in POLS 1301 (Introduction to Political Science). The same examination will be given to all graduating seniors with a major in Political Science as an exit examination required in the student's last semester of course work. The exam has five subfield indexes. By comparing the entrance and exit exam scores in each</p>	<p>The goal is for 70% of the term papers assessed to achieve an overall score of twelve points or higher as based on the Term Paper Scoring Rubric</p>	<p>92.8% of papers submitted achieved this goal.</p>	<p>Although the benchmark was achieved a high number of students did not complete the assignment resulting in a bit of an upward bias in the data. The performance of students submitting their assignment improved but the number not submitting also increased. Providing a template, examples, and supplementary videos seemed to improve student performance.</p>

			<p>of the subfields, the department will be able to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum in terms of "knowledge gained." The overall improvement of students should correspond with the weight the department assigns to each of the subfields in our curriculum. In addition, assessment will also be conducted by comparing the overall examination performance of incoming freshmen with that of graduating seniors. The entrance/exit exams is under project attachments.</p>			
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

<p>To show improvement in knowledge in American, Comparative, International Relations, Policy and Public Administration, and Statistics and Research Methods based on the weight given to the subfields in our degree plan.</p>	<p>Graduating seniors majoring in Political Science will demonstrate significant improvement in knowledge in the five subject areas noted in the above outcome as a result of their Political Science education. Improvement in knowledge gained in the subfields demonstrates student advancement through the discipline from the freshman to the senior level and provides valuable learning outcome assessment data over time.</p>	<p>Pre-test/Post Test</p>	<p>The entrance examination will be given in the fall semester to all students enrolled in POLS 1301 (Introduction to Political Science). The same examination will be given to all graduating seniors with a major in Political Science as an exit examination required in the student's last semester of course work. The exam has five subfield indexes. By comparing the entrance and exit exam scores in each of the subfields, the department will be able to determine the effectiveness of the curriculum in terms of</p>	<p>Weighted percentage increase in knowledge based on distribution of subfields in the degree plan.</p> <p>American – 60%</p> <p>Comparative - 15%</p> <p>International Relations – 15%</p> <p>Policy and Public Administration – 15%</p> <p>Statistics and Research Methods – 15%</p>	<p>American – 69.55%</p> <p>Comparative - 43.13%</p> <p>International Relations – 43.6%</p> <p>Policy and Public Administration – 150.69%</p> <p>Statistics and Research Methods – 139.39%</p>	<p>All subfields met their targets with four greatly exceeding expectation. This is largely driven by the very low knowledge based in these four fields when entering the program.</p>
---	---	---------------------------	---	--	--	--

			"knowledge gained." The overall improvement of students should correspond with the weight the department assigns to each of the subfields in our curriculum. In addition, assessment will also be conducted by comparing the overall examination performance of incoming freshmen with that of graduating seniors. The entrance/exit exams is under project attachments.			

Table 2. Continuous Improvement Results Since Last Report

Stage 4: ACT		
Actions/Goals Based on Data Results <i>*Copy last cycle's actions/goals and report on progress toward continuous improvement on those here.</i>	Status <i>C=Complete P=Progressing N=No Action Taken</i>	Discussion of Status <i>If C, describe efforts that led to accomplishment of actions/goals. If P, provide update on progress made toward accomplishing actions/goals and what tasks remain If N, discuss why action toward accomplishing actions/goals has been delayed and what work will be initiated toward accomplishment.</i>
We will continue to make and monitor curriculum changes in an attempt to improve the two weaker performing subfields.	P	One additional course needs to be created and one course needs to be removed from the rotation.
We will be attempting to increase student completion of the research product in the course.	C	A variety of different tools were provided to students to complete their research project. These included instructional videos that greatly improved performance in the area of statistical analysis and hypothesis testing.
Targets will be increased.	C	We made changes to the curriculum in the area of comparative politics and policy that resolved the students deficiencies in these areas.