



SAINT LOUIS
UNIVERSITY

Saint Louis University
Program Assessment Plan

Program (Major, Minor, Core): MA in Political Science

Department: Political Science

College/School: College of Arts and Sciences

Person(s) Responsible for Implementing the Plan: Political Science graduate committee, under the direction of the graduate program coordinator. All faculty teaching graduate classes are involved in the process.

Date Submitted: September 1, 2016

Program Learning Outcomes	Curriculum Mapping	Assessment Methods	Use of Assessment Data
<p><i>What do you expect all students who complete the program to know, or be able to do?</i></p>	<p><i>Where is the outcome learned/assessed (courses, internships, student teaching, clinical, etc.)?</i></p>	<p><i>How do students demonstrate their performance of the program learning outcomes? How does the program measure student performance? Distinguish your direct measures from indirect measures.</i></p>	<p><i>How does the program use assessment results to recognize success and "close the loop" to inform additional program improvement? How/when is this data shared, and with whom?</i></p>
<p>1. Students will be able to explain how political systems operate within the context of their chosen MA concentrations</p>	<p>This will be assessed in core courses, which will vary according to the student's chosen concentration, but will include the following courses: POLS 5010: Cultural Methods: Gender, Politics, and Power POLS 5020: Advanced Topics in Research Methods POLS 5100: Seminar in American Politics</p>	<p>Items from exams, papers, class presentations, and public research presentations. Also, all students will take a "field exam" in their chosen concentration, which will capture knowledge of the core courses in their field of study. Individual faculty members select the class assignments on which to</p>	<p>All faculty submit reports on how well students meet learning outcomes in at least one of their graduate classes annually to the department graduate coordinator, Wynne Moskop. The questions that faculty answer are attached. The graduate coordinator summarizes the faculty reports and shares that summary with all faculty members. All faculty discuss the summary</p>

	<p>POLS 5750: American Political Thought POLS 5760: Feminist Theory POLS 5770: Feminist Epistemology POLS 5150: Gender and American Politics POLS 5700: History of Political Thought POLS 5510: Democratization POLS 5530: Authoritarianism POLS 5550: Politics of Economic Development POLS 5690: Theories of World Politics POLS 6310: Policy Process</p> <p>In any given year, only some of these courses are offered, and they will be the ones in which assessment occurs.</p>	<p>base assessments. Individual faculty members may develop rubrics for their own purposes.</p>	<p>assessment report at the department August retreat.</p> <p>In addition, the department's graduate committee meets at least once a semester to review student and department-wide outcomes and consider curriculum and/or advising changes. Areas of concern or significant accomplishment will be brought to the attention of the department faculty for further consideration.</p>
<p>2. Students will be able to critique competing theoretical explanations and produce a comprehensive review of the scholarly literature in their chosen field of study.</p>	<p>This will be assessed in core courses, which will vary according to the student's chosen concentration, but will include the following courses: POLS 5010: Cultural Methods: Gender, Politics, and Power POLS 5020: Advanced Topics in Research Methods POLS 5100: Seminar in American Politics POLS 5750: American Political Thought POLS 5760: Feminist Theory</p>	<p>Research papers and field exams.</p> <p>Individual faculty members select the class assignments on which to base assessments. Individual faculty members may develop a rubric for their own purposes.</p>	<p>All faculty submit reports on how well students meet learning outcomes in at least one of their graduate classes annually to the department graduate coordinator, Wynne Moskop. The questions that faculty answer are attached. The graduate coordinator summarizes the faculty reports and shares that summary with all faculty members. All faculty discuss the summary assessment report at the department August retreat.</p>

	<p>POLS 5770: Feminist Epistemology POLS 5150: Gender and American Politics POLS 5700: History of Political Thought POLS 5510: Democratization POLS 5530: Authoritarianism POLS 5550: Politics of Economic Development POLS 5690: Theories of World Politics POLS 6310: Policy Process</p> <p>In any given year, only some of these courses are offered, and they will be the ones in which assessment occurs. Students who choose to write an MA thesis will also demonstrate these learning outcomes.</p>		<p>In addition, the department's graduate committee meets at least once a semester to review student and department-wide outcomes and consider curriculum and/or advising changes. Areas of concern or significant accomplishment will be brought to the attention of the department faculty for further consideration.</p>
<p>3. Students will be able to design original research and seminar projects that investigate political processes with appropriate methodologies and contribute to ongoing scholarly debates.</p>	<p>This will be assessed in core courses, which will vary according to the student's chosen concentration, but will include the following courses: POLS 5010: Cultural Methods: Gender, Politics, and Power POLS 5020: Advanced Topics in Research Methods POLS 5100: Seminar in American Politics POLS 5750: American Political Thought POLS 5760: Feminist Theory</p>	<p>Research papers and presentations, particularly in our research methodology courses. Students who choose to write an MA thesis will also demonstrate these outcomes.</p>	<p>All faculty submit reports on how well students meet learning outcomes in at least one of their graduate classes annually to the department graduate coordinator, Wynne Moskop. The questions that faculty answer are attached. The graduate coordinator summarizes the faculty reports and shares that summary with all faculty members. All faculty discuss the summary assessment report at the department August retreat.</p>

	<p>POLS 5770: Feminist Epistemology POLS 5150: Gender and American Politics POLS 5700: History of Political Thought POLS 5510: Democratization POLS 5530: Authoritarianism POLS 5550: Politics of Economic Development POLS 5690: Theories of World Politics POLS 6310: Policy Process</p> <p>In any given year, only some of these courses are offered, and they will be the ones in which assessment occurs.</p> <p>This learning outcome will also be assessed amongst our students who choose to write an MA thesis.</p>		<p>In addition, the department's graduate committee meets at least once a semester to review student and department-wide outcomes and consider curriculum and/or advising changes. Areas of concern or significant accomplishment will be brought to the attention of the department faculty for further consideration.</p>
<p>4. Students will be able to explain the results of their research in public forums and justify their methodological choices.</p>	<p>This outcome will be assessed in all courses that require students to present their research in class (which is nearly all of our courses). Also, we will assess our students who choose to write an MA thesis at the oral defense of their thesis.</p>	<p>Class presentations, student research presentations at the department's regular "brown bag" series, oral defense of MA thesis or internship.</p>	<p>All faculty submit reports on how well students meet learning outcomes in at least one of their graduate classes annually to the department graduate coordinator, Wynne Moskop. The questions that faculty answer are attached. The graduate coordinator summarizes the faculty reports and shares that summary with all faculty members. All faculty discuss the summary assessment report at the</p>

			<p>department August retreat.</p> <p>In addition, the department's graduate committee meets at least once a semester to review student and department-wide outcomes and consider curriculum and/or advising changes. Areas of concern or significant accomplishment will be brought to the attention of the department faculty for further consideration.</p>
<p>5. Students will be able to analyze the values that inform political institutions, behavior, and policies.</p>	<p>This outcome will be assessed primarily via students' field exam and by their written work in elective courses.</p>	<p>Items from exams, research papers, and other class assignments.</p>	<p>All faculty submit reports on how well students meet learning outcomes in at least one of their graduate classes annually to the department graduate coordinator, Wynne Moskop. The questions that faculty answer are attached. The graduate coordinator summarizes the faculty reports and shares that summary with all faculty members. All faculty discuss the summary assessment report at the department August retreat.</p> <p>In addition, the department's graduate committee meets at least once a semester to review student and department-wide outcomes and consider curriculum and/or advising changes. Areas of concern or significant accomplishment will be brought to the attention of the</p>

			department faculty for further consideration.
6. Students will be able to demonstrate honest and ethical research practices.	This outcome will be assessed in the methods courses, POLS 5010 Cultural Methods and POLS 5020 Advanced Topics in Research Methods.	Research papers	Instructors of the methods courses submit reports on how well students meet this learning outcome to the department graduate coordinator, Wynne Moskop. The questions that faculty answer are attached. The graduate coordinator summarizes the faculty reports and shares that summary with all faculty members. All faculty discuss the summary assessment report at the department August retreat. In addition, the department's graduate committee meets at least once a semester to review student and department-wide outcomes and consider curriculum and/or advising changes. Areas of concern or significant accomplishment will be brought to the attention of the department faculty for further consideration.

1. It is **not recommended** to try and assess (in depth) all of the program learning outcomes every semester. It is best practice to plan out when each outcome will be assessed and focus on 1 or 2 each semester/academic year. Describe the responsibilities, timeline, and the process for implementing this assessment plan.

The department (led by the graduate committee and director of graduate studies) will act deliberately in assessing our six learning outcomes. During AY 15 – 16, the department assessed the sixth outcome (honest and ethical research practices). For AY 2016-2017 we will assess learning outcome #3, then move sequentially through the rest of the learning outcomes.

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

There is no MA program in Political Science in Madrid, consequently MA assessment efforts presently exist only in St. Louis.

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:

- a. Timeline regarding when or how often this plan will be reviewed and revised. (This could be aligned with program review.)

At the end of each semester, faculty teaching graduate courses (or courses that include graduate students) will submit an assessment report to the department's graduate coordinator. This report will assess progress on the learning outcome being assessed that year. The graduate coordinator will compile these reports and, in consultation with the graduate committee, will report to the full faculty on assessment results and suggestions. Discussion with the full faculty may result in changes to the assessment plan. In addition, the assessment plan will be reviewed as part of the program review process.

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

Several of our MA students were consulted during the original process of drafting learning outcomes for our graduate program. Student input will continue to be solicited in order to enhance and improve the assessment process. In particular, we want to make sure that our students understand our expectations of what they will learn and have an opportunity to express their own expectations. Going forward, we will introduce a discussion of program learning outcomes into the new student orientation meeting.

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

Walwood, Barbara. 2010. *Assessment Clear and Simple: A Practical Guide for Institutions, Departments, and General Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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

The department has been assessing student learning outcomes for over a decade at the undergraduate level and, at the graduate level, for as long as programs have existed. In the past, we tended to combine undergraduate and graduate assessment, so the main additional work in this plan involves greater attention to specifically MA outcomes and greater involvement of the graduate committee in the assessment process. This additional work will enable us to focus more directly on the graduate learning outcomes.

**2015-2016 Assessment
BA and MA classes**

We agreed to assess these student learning outcomes this year:

BA: Graduates will demonstrate a strong work ethic.

MA: Students will demonstrate honest and ethical research practices.

If you teach graduate and undergraduate classes, please assess **one of each** this year. If the graduate class is a 4000/5000 class, please report separately for the 4000 and the 5000 section. (That will count as the “one of each.”)

To assess student learning outcomes, please answer these questions in no more than one page total and send the results to Ken by MAY 19, 2016:

1. How did your course contribute to this goal? What did you do to develop these skills in students?
2. How well prepared were students coming into the class?
3. How well did student accomplish this goal by the end of class? What tactics were effective in building student skills?

	Majors (xx students)	Non-Majors (xx students)
Number who met expectations		
Number who exceeded expectations		
Number who did not meet expectations		

4. How might the department help students better accomplish these goals?

"Mastery" of any of the student outcomes will look different at different levels. We shouldn't expect freshmen to perform as well as seniors or grad students. Although the expectations in your own class may be different, here are some general guidelines:

For 1000 level courses: Students have few absences and come to class prepared. Papers are turned in on time. Work has few typos or other errors. Students with problems communicate with the professor.

For 2000 level courses: Students do the above, plus they demonstrate their preparation through class participation. Students raise good questions based on the readings. Students meet with professors or visit the Writing Center as needed.

For 3000 level courses: The above, plus students can work independently with less direction and contribute informed comments based on the readings. Written work shows evidence of having been edited. Citations are correct and show effort to find appropriate sources. Students meet with professors.

For 4000 level courses: The above, plus students can work independently and meet with professors to discuss research problems. Work shows evidence of serious thought.

For 5000 level courses (honest and ethical research practices): Students present research results accurately and honestly. They interpret published results and identify information that helps with reproducibility. They assess how honest reporting helps build knowledge. They identify issues related to study with human subjects.