

Assessment Plan
Department of Political Science
Rutgers-Camden College of Arts and Sciences

Learning Goals and Objectives*

Goal 1: Knowledge Acquisition

Objective 1: Students should be able to demonstrate they have acquired a body of knowledge specific to the courses they have taken.

Goal 2: Critical Thinking

Objective 2: Students should be able to assess the quality of information available, understand the importance of appropriate knowledge sources, understand the importance and relevance of topics under discussion, be able to critically evaluate conflicting information, and be able to draw logical conclusions from information and discussions.

Goal 3: Quality of Expression

Objective 3: Students should be able to communicate both orally and in writing, produce original and creative analyses, understand proper citation, and recognize and avoid plagiarism.

Goal: Applied Knowledge

Objective: Students should be able to apply theoretical and conceptual knowledge to real world situations using qualitative or quantitative evidence.

Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures

Student learning outcomes will be evaluated according to the four goals above: knowledge acquisition, critical thinking, quality of expression, and applied knowledge. Each course syllabus will specifically link applicable departmental goals and objectives to the course learning goals.

- The Assessment Committee of the Political Science Department will consist of at least two faculty members plus the Department Chair and will collect the syllabi for Political Science courses taught during the academic year and verify that all courses have addressed the goals and objectives in the syllabi.
- The Assessment Committee of the Political Science Department will collect documentation of student performance by gathering the written assignments and final exams from Political Science courses for two randomly selected students in each course. The documents will be compiled into Student Learning Outcome Portfolios and kept in a Department file for three years. Three written assignments and/or exams will constitute the minimum portfolio. Names of faculty instructors and students as well as grades will be removed, though instructor comments shall remain in place.
- The Assessment Committee will review and assess the quality of the Student Learning Outcome Portfolios on a scale "Excellent", "Good", "Fair", to "Poor" and "Not Applicable" in each of the four sets of goals and objectives established in the Assessment Plan. The Committee will write a brief statement to the Department Chair and faculty members to report the extent to which the student learning outcomes have been demonstrated.
- The Department will consider and discuss the Assessment Committee report of the preceding academic year at the first scheduled Department Meeting following submission of the report.

Assessment Schedule

In order to regularize assessment reporting, the Political Science Department will adopt the schedule outlined below:

- Every semester on the first Monday following Drop/Add period, faculty members will randomly select two students in each class whose assignments will be

- collected for the assessment portfolio that semester.
- Every semester, no later than one week after the last day for turning in final course grades, each faculty member will submit to the Department Secretary the collected assignments for designated students. Faculty members will also submit original assignments for all collected material as well as syllabi with course learning goals clearly linked to Departmental learning goals.
 - The Assessment Committee will convene each September and February to review collected materials and prepare an assessment of each course for the preceding semester. The assessments will follow a standard assessment form (see Attachment 1)
 - Based on the completed forms for each course, the Department Chair will prepare an annual Assessment Report for Political Science to be circulated with the Assessment Committee for comment/approval and submitted to the Dean's Office as required.

Results

The assessment of Students Learning Outcome Portfolios will allow the department to document 1) the correlation between course learning goals and departmental learning goals/objectives; 2) the alignment of student assignments with departmental learning goals 3) the correlation between student performance and each of the departmental learning goals. This will allow the department to demonstrate that individual students are acquiring and demonstrating the knowledge and skills consistent with our learning goals. as they advance through the program.

Application of Results

The Assessment Committee will review and recommend changes in the goals and objectives of courses to improve

coordination with the stated Program Goals and Objectives for the Political Science Department. The Committee will also facilitate the diffusion of information between faculty members to provide resources and ideas about how to improve each specific course. The recommendations and documentation of the corresponding changes will be recorded in Annual Assessment Reports.

* Note: These goals and objectives have been adapted from those developed by other universities.

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