

**Unit Effectiveness Plan for 2001-2002**  
**Department(Unit): Political Science**  
**College (Division): Dean - College of Liberal Arts**

**Unit Mission or Purpose:**

The Department of Political Science serves the widest possible range of students at the University, including all lower-level undergraduates in the University, upper-level undergraduates with major or minor areas of concentration in Political Science, and graduate students enrolled in the M.A. in Political Science, the M.P.A., or a few related Ph.D. programs. At each level, the Department's mission is to challenge the student in the context of a student-centered environment that maintains the broad educational goals of a liberal arts education while preparing the student for a life-long process of education in a professional career. The Political Science faculty, through its research, professional activities, and community service is constantly striving to contribute to the body of knowledge in our discipline and to disseminate that knowledge to our students and to the larger community.

**Articulation of how unit mission/purpose relates to University mission:**

As one of various academic units in the University serving a wide range of students, the Department of Political Science furthers the University mission by offering a sound and rigorous curriculum at the undergraduate and graduate levels and by emphasizing the University's values of diversity, responsibility, inquisitiveness, and quality through its teaching, research, and service.

<b>Intended outcome</b>	<b>Related Institutional Goal/Objective/Strategy</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Method of Assessment (Who, What, When)</b>	<b>Results of Assessment</b>	<b>Proposed Changes and Recommendations for Improvement</b>	<b>Resources Needed for Proposed Changes</b>
1. Undergraduate students will demonstrate competencies related to the following: The capability to assess critically arguments, theories, ideas, concepts, and models; to organize and present materials effectively; and to communicate in a clear and cogent fashion through oral and written means.	Objective 1.1: To promote and sustain the excellence of undergraduate programs that prepare students for careers and graduate studies.	Professors in POLS 2311 will develop a list of common competencies specific to that course.	A random sample of some 50 students enrolled in POLS 2311 will be taken. A portfolio of those students' materials will be examined by a faculty committee to determine the degree to which competencies have been met.	Of the student portfolios examined, 90% of all students were judged to have achieved adequate competency in all areas. 80% were judged to have achieved above adequate competency in critical thinking,	Results were evaluated by the Chair with input from the appropriate faculty. 1. Increased utilization of Departmental and University-level supplemental instruction. 2. More utilization of media and computer-based	1. No new resources needed. 2. Technology grants from the Office of the Provost have been helpful, but the Department is also proposing a course fee 3. Additional tenure-track hires are needed to improve

				<p>etc. 75% were judged to have achieved above adequate competency in organizing and presenting materials. And 75% were judged to have achieved above adequate competency in communicating. The Department feels these data reflect an acceptable achievement of the outcomes. However, we are not entirely satisfied and have several suggestions for improving.</p>	<p>resources. 3. Smaller classes and a better student-faculty ratio.</p>	<p>classroom student-faculty ratio.</p>
<p>2. Undergraduate students will demonstrate the capability to make cross-cultural comparisons.</p>	<p>Objective 1.1: To promote and sustain the excellence of undergraduate programs that prepare students for careers and graduate studies.</p>	<p>Instructor in advanced undergraduate classes will emphasize cross-cultural comparisons - whether intranational or cross-national.</p>	<p>A random sample of 50 students in advanced undergraduate classes will be evaluated by their professors on a ten-point scale designed to evaluate the ability to think and analyze across cultures.</p>	<p>95% of the total sample were rated at a score of 7 or higher. 50% were 9 or 10, 25% were 8, and 20% were 7. The Department feels these data reflect an acceptable achievement of the outcomes.</p>	<p>Results were evaluated by the Chair with input from the appropriate faculty. Faculty are being asked to increase the exposure to cross-cultural comparisons in their classes.</p>	<p>No new resources needed.</p>

				However, we are not entirely satisfied and have several suggestions for improving.		
3. Graduate students will produce a substantive, individual, original research project.	Objective 4.1: To increase the University's commitment to research and creative activity.	Require all political science graduate students to complete three hours of coursework in research methodology (that provides pedagogical objectives related to research analysis) and to write one major paper involving original research.	The graduate advisor will insure that the appropriate coursework is completed satisfactorily and that the research paper meets the Departmental standards in terms of: (1) literature review; (2) hypothesis testing; (3) data analysis; and (4) generalizing.	All graduate students either have completed the methods coursework and one original paper--or they know they will need to do so. Of those completing the course and the paper, all are judged to have met the Department's standards in terms of literature review, hypothesis testing, data analysis, and generalizations.	Results were evaluated by the Chair with input from the appropriate faculty. No new recommendations were needed.	None needed.
4. Graduate students will demonstrate the capability to synthesize a body of literature in their chosen sub-field of the discipline.	Objective 4.1: To increase the University's commitment to research and creative activity.	Written/Oral exams will emphasize this synthesis objective.	Every M.A. Committee will grade each graduate student at the end of their Written/Oral exams on a ten-point scale measuring their ability to synthesize.	All graduate students completing their M.A. exam have been judged at a level of 8 or higher (10 point scale) on their ability to	Results were evaluated by the Chair with input from the appropriate faculty. No new recommendations were needed.	None needed.

				synthesize their appropriate body of literature.		
5. Departmental faculty will produce significant original research that leads to publication and contributions to the scholarly literature in their fields of expertise.	Goal 4: To support an environment conducive to basic and applied research and creative activity, and the acquisition, preservation, and dissemination of knowledge.	The Department will provide resources (travel, computer, staff, and the like) for the faculty's research activities. The Department will create an environment that emphasizes original research as a major faculty objective. The Department will have each faculty member annually submit a list of their research activities in the previous year.	"Research scores" will be assigned to each faculty member with a score of "1" for each convention paper and article submitted; "2" for each article published; "3" for each book manuscript submitted; and "8" for each book published. The Departmental goal will be to have a Departmental average "Research score" of at least "1."	The Departmental average "Research score" has been at least "1." Obviously, several faculty scored much higher. All faculty are involved in some level of original research.	Results were evaluated by the Chair with input from the appropriate faculty. No new recommendations were needed.	None needed.
6. Departmental faculty will enhance the University's profile in the general community through service to the University, the community, and the profession.	Goal 6: In partnership with the broader community, to contribute to dynamic and continuing economic, social, and cultural development.  Goal 1.2: To promote the continued development of a distinguished faculty that excels in teaching, service, and scholarship.	The Department will encourage (through providing infrastructural assistance) faculty service	Each faculty member will be asked to list annually their service activities for the previous year. The Department's Executive Committee will evaluate these activities on a 1-to-10 scale (with 1 being clearly unacceptable and 10 being superior). The goal of the Department is to have a Departmental average of "5."	The Departmental average was over 6--exceeding the expectation.	Results were evaluated by the Chair with input from the appropriate faculty. No new recommendations were needed.	None needed.
7. All Political Science majors will receive accurate and timely information about degree requirements, academic standards, and University	Objective 1.3: To promote and support a student-centered academic community that enables students to achieve their educational goals.	The Department will create an advising structure headed by the Departmental Advisor and Chairperson, along with Undergraduate and Graduate Associate and	All students advised by the faculty will be asked to complete a 4-6 point satisfaction survey. The Departmental goal will be to achieve a 80%	The Departmental satisfaction level was above 90%, exceeding the expectation.	Results were evaluated by the Chair with input from the appropriate faculty. No new	None needed.

academic policies.		Assistant Advisors. Office hours will be publicized for all of these individuals, and information will be disseminated through classes and in the Political Science office.	satisfaction level.		recommendations were needed.	
8. Students completing POLS 3310 will demonstrate computer proficiency in terms of word processing, spread sheets, email, internet, and statistical data analysis.	Objective 1.1: To promote and sustain the excellence of undergraduate programs that prepare students for careers and graduate studies.	Professors in POLS 3310 will insure that the pedagogical objectives in each section of this course are designed to achieve the outcomes stated here--with even more specific attention given to social science research skills: hypothesis testing, literature reviews, data analysis, and report writing.	Each student in POLS 3310 will achieve an acceptable ("has achieved") rating on the data analysis (computer processing) section of the 3310 assessment form.	All students have been judged by the Methods Competency Committee to have achieved the acceptable rating in terms of data analysis competencies.	Results were evaluated by the Chair with input from the appropriate faculty. No new recommendations were needed.	None needed.
9. Students completing a 3000- or 4000- level Political Science course will demonstrate sufficient oral competency as required for graduation by the University.	Goal 1: The University of Texas at Arlington will provide an environment that fosters broad-based education as well as professional studies designed to facilitate successful careers, personal development, and community service.	Faculty teaching any of the relevant courses will require students to use appropriate organization and presentation skills in a formal oral report.	The Departmental goal will be an average score of 80% on a 4-6 point scale evaluating each student's oral presentation.	The Departmental average score was 85%, exceeding the expectation. However, we are not entirely satisfied and have several suggestions for improving.	Results were evaluated by the Chair with input from the appropriate faculty. We are asking all faculty to increase their expectations from students in the area of oral competencies.	None needed.

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