

Program Name Political Science

Program Mission

Referring to your annual assessment reports, please reflect on and report any changes or improvements you have made to your program as a result of evidence you have gathered

Comparative Civil Wars is an upper division political science course. Fourteen students were originally enrolled in the course, including eleven political science majors. Len Champney, Mary Goldschmidt, and Mike Allison scored rubrics for each individual presentation (except the low stakes one) and group presentation during the semester. Mike spoke with Len and Mary after each set of presentations and reviewed the rubrics. In terms of presenting with PowerPoint, students clearly improved as the semester went along. Most students scored proficient or above in all areas of the rubric during their final individual presentation. We were quite pleased with the progress demonstrated by students during the fall 2015 semester. While Len, Mary and Mike were pleased with the progress demonstrated by the class during the course of the semester, they agreed that students should have come into the class better prepared to give individual and group presentations than they were. This was a 300-level class taken mostly by juniors and seniors. For the last few years, graduates have completed a senior exit survey that asked how well their political science courses addressed oral communication skills. Surprisingly, students regularly gave us relatively poor marks in this area. On a scale of one to five (with five being the highest), the average score for how well we have addressed oral communication has been 4.14 (2012), 3.1 (2014), 3.73 (2015), and 3.6 (2016). In order to help students gain presentation skills prior to this 300-level class and to improve our ability to address oral communication skills for our department, the Department of Political Science agreed to create an introductory-level FYOC and FYDT course that would be geared towards first year political science and social science majors. Scranton and the World (PS 110) with FYOC and FYDT designations is now a recommended course for political science majors. The course is designed to be taken during the second semester of a student's first year at the University. Mike Allison and Teresa Grettano (Director of First Year Writing and assistant professor of rhetoric in the Department of English and Theater) co-taught a pilot course in spring 2016. Given the late adoption of FYDT and FYOC designations, only one first year student was enrolled in the course. Mike again offered the course in fall 2016 and spring 2017. He will again offer the course in spring 2018. The department is satisfied with offering our own FYOC and FYDT course that will introduce students to the major and lay the foundations for competency in public speaking and digital technology. With the University moving forward with EPIL, the department will sought to identify those upper-division political science courses where we could best integrate EPO and EPD into the curriculum. PS 331 European Union was an obvious fit for EPO. Gretchen Van Dyke and Teresa Grettano co-taught the course in fall 2017 with the intention that this would be a regular EPO offering for PS students (and International Studies students). We also planned to convert Political Science Research (PS 210) into an upper-division EPD course. Mike taught the course in fall 2017 as if it were going to be adopted as an EPD-designated course. We will continue to focus on EPO in PS 331 and EPD in PS 210 even if the University does not go forward with the implementation of EPIL.

Curriculum

The curriculum provides more than one opportunity for students to meet the Program Learning Objectives

Which key courses and assignments does the program use to ensure that students are meeting these program learning outcomes?

The Department plans to continue to use artifacts from Political Science Research and the European Union to ensure that students are meeting program learning outcomes related to communication. We will continue to use the ETS for Political Science to ensure that students are meeting content needs. Finally, we will continue to use course embedded assignments to ensure that students are meeting the social justice-related program learning outcome.

We will complement these direct measures of student learning with indirect measures as acquired from our senior exit survey.

Program Learning Outcomes to be Assessed

Program Political Science

Program Learning Outcome

1).To demonstrate proficiency in one or more of the core bodies of knowledge contained in the basic subfields of the discipline.

How will you collect and analyze the evidence that students are meeting the PLO (e.g. Review aggregate scores on embedded questions; review scores on standardized tests; use a rubric to score samples of student writing).

Graduating seniors will complete the ETS Exam for Political Science majors. We will also utilize questions from our senior exit survey.

Where in the program does the evidence reside? Evidence can reside in a particular course, sections of a particular course, or outside of courses (e.g. survey of graduates)

The evidence exists outside of courses (ETS and senior exit survey)

Is the evidence direct or indirect Direct evidence is actual student outputs, which can be analyzed or aggregated using quantitative or qualitative methods. Indirect is secondary information, such as perceptions, attitudes, or self-ratings.

The ETS Exam is a direct measure and the Senior Exit Survey is an indirect measure.

What tools are necessary to collect evidence? (Rubrics, Portfolio, Embedded Exam Questions etc.)

To pay for the ETS exam and to have students complete the online senior exit survey.

Are there benchmarks that you will use to interpret your results? Benchmarks are associated with quantitative evidence and can be determined based on disciplinary norms or previous results on the same assignment, survey, etc.

We have two years worth of our own majors' ETS scores and the scores provided by ETS that will help us to interpret this cohort's results. We have several years of senior exit survey results to which we can compare this year's results.

Program Political Science

Program Learning Outcome

2).To identify issues related to the creation of injustices and the pursuit of social justice in one or more of the basic subfields of the discipline.

How will you collect and analyze the evidence that students are meeting the PLO (e.g. Review aggregate scores on embedded questions; review scores on standardized tests; use a rubric to score samples of student writing).

Similar to last time we assessed this program learning outcome, we intend to embed questions in one or more courses during the academic year. We will also have our graduating students complete the senior exit survey which includes questions related to social justice.

Where in the program does the evidence reside? Evidence can reside in a particular course, sections of a particular course, or outside of courses (e.g. survey of graduates)

Evidence will reside in one or more upper division courses and in the senior exit survey. The course, or courses, will be identified prior to the start of the academic year in which we will be assessing this program learning outcome.

Is the evidence direct or indirect Direct evidence is actual student outputs, which can be analyzed or aggregated using quantitative or qualitative methods. Indirect is secondary information, such as perceptions, attitudes, or self-ratings.

The course-embedded artifact will be direct evidence and the senior exit survey will be indirect.

What tools are necessary to collect evidence? (Rubrics, Portfolio, Embedded Exam Questions etc.)

We will use embedded questions in one or more classes (exam questions or another assignment) and an electronic survey of graduating seniors.

Are there benchmarks that you will use to interpret your results? Benchmarks are associated with quantitative evidence and can be determined based on disciplinary norms or previous results on the same assignment, survey, etc.

We can use the results of previous senior exit surveys to interpret this year's results. Comparing the results of the course embedded questions will be more difficult. We will try to use the same courses and questions as the last time we assessed this pro

Program Political Science

Program Learning Outcome

3).To communicate clearly, accurately, and persuasively about political issues and ideas.

How will you collect and analyze the evidence that students are meeting the PLO (e.g. Review aggregate scores on embedded questions; review scores on standardized tests; use a rubric to score samples of student writing).

We will review an embedded assignment from this semester's European Union course and our Senior Exit Survey.

Where in the program does the evidence reside? Evidence can reside in a particular course, sections of a particular course, or outside of courses (e.g. survey of graduates)

The European Union is typically populated with junior and senior political science majors. All graduating seniors take the Senior Exit Survey.

Is the evidence direct or indirect Direct evidence is actual student outputs, which can be analyzed or aggregated using quantitative or qualitative methods. Indirect is secondary information, such as perceptions, attitudes, or self-ratings.

European Union (Direct) and Senior Exit Survey (indirect)

What tools are necessary to collect evidence? (Rubrics, Portfolio, Embedded Exam Questions etc.)

European Union (Rubric) and Senior Exit Survey (survey questions)

Are there benchmarks that you will use to interpret your results? Benchmarks are associated with quantitative evidence and can be determined based on disciplinary norms or previous results on the same assignment, survey, etc.

We have four or five years worth of survey results from the exit survey. While the total number of students completing the surveys is low because of few majors, we should still be able to learn something from these. This will be our first time assessing o