

## 2017-2018 Assessment Cycle COLA\_Political Science BA

### Mission (due 12/4/17)

#### University Mission

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette offers an exceptional education informed by diverse worldviews grounded in tradition, heritage, and culture. We develop leaders and innovators who advance knowledge, cultivate aesthetic sensibility, and improve the human condition.

#### University Values

We strive to create a community of leaders and innovators in an environment that fosters a desire to advance and disseminate knowledge. We support the mission of the university by actualizing our core values of equity, integrity, intellectual curiosity, creativity, tradition, transparency, respect, collaboration, pluralism, and sustainability.

#### University Vision

We strive to be included in the top 25% of our peer institutions by 2020, improving our national and international status and recognition.

#### College / VP and Program / Department Mission

##### Mission of College or VP-area

*Provide the mission for the College or VP-area in the space provided. If none is available, write "None Available in 2017-2018."*

The College of Liberal Arts is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge through teaching, research, and service. The College teaches students to think critically, applying scientific principles and intellectual schema to understand human behavior and society in a diverse world, to express ideas and ideals in a variety of forms, and to understand themselves and others as members of regional and global communities. The intellectual and creative foundations of this enterprise are written and oral communication, analytical and reasoning skills, and the ability to solve problems creatively. Each departmental curriculum presents perspectives from the past, provides an understanding of the present and directs attention to the challenges of the future. As active researchers, faculty in the College work to advance the frontiers of knowledge and our understanding of humanity and the world we live in, and to use that knowledge and understanding to improve the human condition.

##### Mission of Program / Department

*Provide the program / department mission in the space provided. The mission statement should concisely define the purpose, functions, and key constituents. If none is available, write "None Available in 2017-2018."*

MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE: First and foremost, the mission of the Department of Political Science at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette is to make students wonder—to wonder at the character or nature of the American regime; to wonder at the rich and manifold tapestry of regimes other than our own; and to wonder at the multitudinous ways, both obvious and unseen, that politics shapes our own self-understanding of who we are as individuals and as citizens. Only a student capable of wonder—of asking why someone or something is the way that it is—will be genuinely capable of reflection and openness, and therefore of learning. Thereafter, we attempt to provide students with the full range of intellectual tools to critically evaluate and judge. For example, what are the strengths and weaknesses of American government, in particular, and democracy, in general? What qualities constitute a thoroughly robust and vigorous citizen and what specific right and/or duties (if any at all) should that citizen expect from and/or owe to their regime? Or again, what are the arguments of those who advocate or advance an entirely different political architecture and way of life as superior to our own? The awakening of a student's curiosity must be coupled with an ability to think critically both about one's own way of life (and the political forces that shape that life) and the most serious alternatives proffered by others: without the ability to make reasoned and discerning judgments (and the ability to revisit and revise those judgments in the light of new evidence or ideas), a student

risks wandering aimlessly in their education, or even degenerating into a myopic dogmatism. Finally, we wish to help students make an informed decision about the future course of their lives, a decision that reflects their strengths and interests as individuals as well as their progress and achievements in the Department, University, and community as a whole. Not only do we endeavor to canvass the full range of career possibilities—from graduate education to law school to immediate employment—but we also encourage students to keep in contact with us as they advance in their future endeavors. Wonder, judgment, decision: these are the hallmarks of an undergraduate degree in the Department of Political Science. We seek to provide students with a genuinely liberal arts education—an education that prepares each student to become a free and enlightened individual and citizen. To borrow the language of Aristotle, we hope to awaken the student to the possibility of genuine human excellence or eudaimonia; and that possibility can only be realized if one first confronts the architectonic science of politics. Of course, every Department’s mission must be tailored to its resources, and we are an admittedly smaller Department with fewer resources, both within the University and by national standards of comparison for a university of our size: consequently, we cannot offer the full range of courses necessary to cover every subfield in political science. Thus, the Department has successfully focused on depth rather than breadth in our curriculum, targeting and tapping the diverse intellectual strengths of the faculty as it currently exists. Indeed, despite our Department’s small size, we have managed to excel at each of the three principal areas by which a department is judged: teaching, research and service. In respect to teaching, we offer a general degree program in political science as well as two area concentrations in pre-law and international relations: the former concentration is one of the most popular, and the Department has had great success in sending students to some of the most prestigious law schools in the state and across the nation, including Duke, William & Mary, Vanderbilt, Baylor, Tulane, LSU, Southern Methodist and others. The international relations concentration was only recently instituted, but it is rapidly proving to be extremely popular with students in this new era of globalization. In addition to teaching the Department’s traditional course requirements and offerings, the faculty regularly offers new and innovative courses. Some recent courses include Dystopia and Human Nature in Film, Feminism, The Politics of Shakespeare, Presidential Elections, International Security and Conflict, and Sports and Politics. As evidenced by student evaluations of teaching, faculty in political science have some of the highest ratings of any department in the University. In respect to research, the Department is committed to the continued professional development of our faculty, through pursuing every opportunity to provide the requisite time, resources and facilities necessary for the advancement of knowledge. The political science faculty has published articles in a great many peer-reviewed academic journals, including Presidential Studies Quarterly, Journal of Environmental Law and Litigation, Review of Metaphysics, Policy Research Quarterly, The University of Memphis Law Review, Journal of Comparative European Politics, Peace Review, and Review of International Studies. In addition to other scholarly venues—including encyclopedia entries, internet-based offerings, book reviews or review essays, and attending national and regional academic conferences—the faculty have also published books, edited volumes, and translations with such publishers as Rowman and Littlefield, Lynne Rienner, and Transaction. In respect to service to our students, university, and community, the Department has an extraordinary record which promises to become even brighter in the near future. For example, the Department offers a very vibrant and rewarding internship program, where students can work with United States Senators and members of Congress, as well as work in Lafayette city-parish government. We offer over a dozen different fellowships and/or awards to political science students throughout their career, one of the most recent being the Tom and Lena Ritchie Endowed Memorial Scholarships, which provide up to 10 student with \$1,500 awards for law school. We also host or are involved in a number of university and community events throughout the year, including the UL Lafayette Law Club, forums debating the Iraq war, debates in the Philosophy Club, a political science film series, and most recently creating the International Studies Society, which sponsors an array of events and guest speakers. Our service to students is exemplary in other ways as well. For example, students have easy access to their professors: the entire faculty has at least 10 hours of office hours a week, and we all have a “drop on by” attitude when it comes to addressing students’ questions or concerns. Several of our faculty have won awards for advising. The Department’s service to the community is demonstrated in regular faculty commentary given to the media and departmental sponsorship of public awareness events, such as forums and debates between candidates for elected office. Additionally, several members of the Political Science faculty are asked to provide election night coverage on local television stations and are sought out by state and national media to provide analysis and commentary on important political events throughout the year. Finally, the Department works to make the University community a better place through service on important committees including general education and the American Democracy Project, participation in the Faculty Senate, and answering the call on special projects. Working together, the Political Science Department at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette serves students through teaching and advising, the university community and southwest Louisiana through service, and the intellectual community through cutting-edge research.

**Attachment (optional)**

*Upload any documents which support the program / department assessment process.*

## Assessment Plan (due 12/4/17)

### Assessment Plan (Goals / Objectives, Assessment Measures and Criteria for Success)

#### Assessment List

|                     |  |   |                    |
|---------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| Goal/Objective      | Students will increase their level of active engagement with the political system.(Imported) |   |                    |
| Legends             | SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);                                   |   |                    |
| Standards/Outcomes  |  |   |                    |
|                     | <b>Identifier</b>  | <b>Description</b>  |                    |
|                     | <b>Student SI. Student SI<br/>1.KPI 1</b>  | Implement and sustain student support to retain and graduate students.  |                    |
| Assessment Measures |  |   |                    |
|                     | <b>Assessment Measure</b>  | <b>Criterion</b>  | <b>Attachments</b> |
|                     | Indirect -<br>Survey -<br>students   | Increasing students' level of engagement with the American political system supports one of the Political Science Department's and the University's core missions, which is to "create engaged citizens." Measurement of our efforts in this area is accomplished by the creation of a "passport" which records each student's involvement by academic progress (credit hours earned). The passport itself was the result of a collaborative effort among political science faculty. It is an instrument which allows advisors to monitor and record the self-reported participatory activities of each student during regular advising sessions once per academic year (either fall or spring). The criterion for success in the area of civic engagement has been set at a minimum of four student activities on average, with the expectation that activity would rise by an average of 1 full point as students progress from freshman to senior level (five activities). In addition, we seek to see an increase in the # of activities are involved in as they progress from less than 30 hours, to 31-60 hours, to 61-90 hours, and conclude at over 90 hours. |                    |

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Goal/Objective     | Students will demonstrate knowledge necessary for effective citizenship.(Imported) |
| Legends            | SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);                         |
| Standards/Outcomes |  |

|                     |                           |  |                    |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Assessment Measures |                           |  |                    |
|                     | <b>Assessment Measure</b> | <b>Criterion</b>   | <b>Attachments</b> |
|                     | Direct - Pre/Post Test    | The POLS Department believes that the possession of a reasonable amount of information about the American political system is required for efficacious citizen participation. To measure the Department's success in providing students with this important information, an identical pre- and post-test was given in sections of POLS 110 - American Government (a required class for all majors). The identical test was given on the first day of class and again sometime during the last two weeks of class at the discretion of the instructor. Students were given verbal instructions on proper coding methods, and were also informed of the importance of these measures to the value of the students' education and preparation for life after leaving the University. The 25 question test includes the major topics covered in a standard introductory American Government course. Thus, the test included questions on various topics such as the Constitution, each of the three branches of government, political behavior by individuals, etc. Target: We seek to increase by 10% the percentage of students passing the test with a 70% (C=satisfactory) or better grade between the pre- and post-test. |                    |

|                     |   |  |                    |
|---------------------|---|--|--------------------|
| Goal/Objective      | Students will demonstrate increased positive attitudes towards political participation.(Imported) |  |                    |
| Legends             | SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);  |  |                    |
| Standards/Outcomes  |   |  |                    |
|                     | <b>Identifier</b>   | <b>Description</b>   |                    |
|                     | <b>Student SI. Student SI 1.KPI 4</b>   | Improve student success through engagement in high impact practices.   |                    |
| Assessment Measures |   |  |                    |
|                     | <b>Assessment Measure</b>   | <b>Criterion</b>   | <b>Attachments</b> |
|                     | Indirect - Survey - students  | The POLS Department seeks to develop positive attitudes towards participating in civic activities, believing that an engaged citizenry is necessary for self-government. One way that the Department seeks to accomplish this objective is by requiring those students taking POLS 317-State and Local Government to attend (at least) one public governmental meeting. Students attending the public meeting are then required as part of their assignment to |                    |

|  |  |   |  |
|--|--|---|--|
|  |  | <p>complete a "Reaction Paper." Students also complete a survey designed to determine their attitudes (positive or negative) towards government and gauge the likely effects of this required participation on future (voluntary) civic participation. The "Field Trip" assignment in general reflects the assumption that attendance at a governmental meeting will increase the likelihood that students will continue to develop positive attitudes towards their government, will increase their likelihood of attending another governmental meeting and, as a concomitant, will increase the probability of participating in political activities of all types. Criterion for Success: Success is determined by having 60% or more responses that indicate "positive affect" and "improved likelihood of participation," measured as responses of "strongly agree" or "agree" to the 6 questions on the assessment questionnaire.</p> |  |
|--|--|---|--|

| Goal/Objective         | Students will demonstrate basic knowledge about International Relations.   |             |  |                    |           |             |                        |   |  |
|------------------------|--|-------------|--|--------------------|-----------|-------------|------------------------|---|--|
| Legends                | SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);   |             |  |                    |           |             |                        |   |  |
| Standards/Outcomes     |  |             |  |                    |           |             |                        |   |  |
| Assessment Measures    | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="375 1163 597 1234">Assessment Measure</th> <th data-bbox="597 1163 1321 1234">Criterion</th> <th data-bbox="1321 1163 1531 1234">Attachments</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="375 1234 597 1824">Direct - Pre/Post Test</td> <td data-bbox="597 1234 1321 1824"> <p>The POLS Department believes that the possession of a reasonable amount of information about International Relations is necessary to be politically informed. To measure the Department's success in providing students with this important information, an identical pre- and post-test was given in POLS 360 – International Relations (a required class for all students in the International Relations concentration, and frequently taken by students who are in the POLS-General and POLS-Pre-Law concentrations. ). The identical test was given at the beginning of the semester and also during the final exam period. The 10 question test includes the major topics covered in a standard international relations course. Thus, the test included questions on knowledge of basic institutions and relationships in global politics and knowledge of basic theories of international relations. Spring 2018 will be the first time this assessment will be administered. Target: We seek to increase by 2 full points the average score between the pre-test and the post-test.</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1321 1234 1531 1824"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> |             |  | Assessment Measure | Criterion | Attachments | Direct - Pre/Post Test | <p>The POLS Department believes that the possession of a reasonable amount of information about International Relations is necessary to be politically informed. To measure the Department's success in providing students with this important information, an identical pre- and post-test was given in POLS 360 – International Relations (a required class for all students in the International Relations concentration, and frequently taken by students who are in the POLS-General and POLS-Pre-Law concentrations. ). The identical test was given at the beginning of the semester and also during the final exam period. The 10 question test includes the major topics covered in a standard international relations course. Thus, the test included questions on knowledge of basic institutions and relationships in global politics and knowledge of basic theories of international relations. Spring 2018 will be the first time this assessment will be administered. Target: We seek to increase by 2 full points the average score between the pre-test and the post-test.</p> |  |
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| Goal/Objective                       | Students will demonstrate improved knowledge about the academic discipline of Political Science and careers in the field.(Imported)  |             |  |                    |             |                                |   |   |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------|--|--------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|---|---|--|
| Legends                              | SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);   |             |  |                    |             |                                |   |   |  |
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| Identifier                           | Description  |             |  |                    |             |                                |   |   |  |
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| <b>Student SI.Student SI 1.KPI 1</b> | Implement and sustain student support to retain and graduate students.   |             |  |                    |             |                                |   |   |  |
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| Goal/Objective                       | The Department of Political Science will retain first-year majors to their second year in the major.(Imported)   |  |  |            |             |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Legends                              | PO - Program Objective (academic units);   |  |  |            |             |                                      |  |
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| Assessment Measures                  |  |  |  |            |             |                                      |  |

|  | Assessment Measure                                       | Criterion  | Attachments |
|--|--|--|-------------|
|  | Direct - UL Enrollment Data on Student Retention (Other) | Target: We seek that first-year retention rate of students in the major will be higher than UL's average first-year retention rate across all disciplines. |             |

### Program / Department Assessment Narrative

The primary purpose of assessment is to use data to inform decisions and improve programs (student learning) and departments (operations); this is an on-going process of defining goals and expectations, collecting results, analyzing data, comparing current and past results and initiatives, and making decisions based on these reflections. In the space below, describe the program's or department's overall plan for improving student learning and/or operations (the "assessment plan"). Consider the following:

- 1) What strategies exist to assess the outcomes?
- 2) What does the program/department expect to achieve with the goals and objectives identified above?
- 3) How might prior or current initiatives (improvements) influence the anticipated outcomes this year?
- 4) What is the plan for using data to improve student learning and/or operations?
- 5) How will data be shared within the Program/Department (and, where appropriate, the College/VP-area)?

### Assessment Process

The assessment program for the Department of Political Science focuses heavily on assessing student learning, engagement (departmental, university, and community), political knowledge, and sense of political interest and efficacy. Two of the six assessments directly measure student learning and take place within the classroom, administered by course instructors. Results are assessed by the faculty and analyzed by the assessment coordinator. These results can help us better understand areas of specific weaknesses in terms of teaching political knowledge and writing skills. Three of the six assessments measure student interest and engagement, one through a classroom assignment and another two others through surveys. These can help us understand whether or not we are achieving our departmental mission of creating engaged citizens and encouraging their participation in their communities. Lastly, a final program assessment looks at student retention within the major to better understand how we can retain more students and better advise students about courses, job opportunities, and co-curricular activities. After the results are analyzed, the department will review the assessment report and determine if any curricular changes need to be made or if specific classroom assignments need to be revised to better achieve learning goals. The data will be shared with the department periodically as results are analyzed (typically near the beginning of the following semester) and also a copy of the final assessment report will be given to each department member.

## Results & Improvements (due 9/15/18)

### Results and Improvement Narratives

#### Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Students will increase their level of active engagement with the political system.(Imported)

|                    |  |             |
|--------------------|--|-------------|
| Goal/Objective     | Students will increase their level of active engagement with the political system.(Imported) |             |
| Legends            | SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);                                   |             |
| Standards/Outcomes |  |             |
|                    | Identifier   | Description |

|                              | <b>Student SI. Student SI 1. KPI 1</b>  |   | Implement and sustain student support to retain and graduate students. |   |  |                    |           |         |                                |                        |                              |   |   |  |   |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|---|--|--------------------|-----------|---------|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|---|---|--|---|
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| Assessment Findings          | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="337 1167 488 1272">Assessment Measure</th> <th data-bbox="496 1167 647 1272">Criterion</th> <th data-bbox="656 1167 792 1272">Summary</th> <th data-bbox="800 1167 1349 1272">Attachments of the Assessments</th> <th data-bbox="1357 1167 1511 1272">Improvement Narratives</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="337 1272 488 1976">                     Indirect - Survey - students                 </td> <td data-bbox="496 1272 647 1976">                     Has the criterion Increasing students' level of engagement with the American political system supports one of the Political Science Department's and the University's core missions, which is to "create engaged                 </td> <td data-bbox="656 1272 792 1976">                     The criterion for success was achieved. Our expectation was that of the 15 possible activities, freshman would be involved in at least four activities, with an increase, on average,                 </td> <td data-bbox="800 1272 1349 1976">                     SP_18__POLS__Civic_Participation_Assessment.xlsx                 </td> <td data-bbox="1357 1272 1511 1976">                     - Assessment Process: Targets / Criteria for Success changed: We will continue to implement this assessment in the Fall 2018 semester to analyze for consistency of results across time. The targets,                 </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>   |   |  |   |  | Assessment Measure | Criterion | Summary | Attachments of the Assessments | Improvement Narratives | Indirect - Survey - students | Has the criterion Increasing students' level of engagement with the American political system supports one of the Political Science Department's and the University's core missions, which is to "create engaged  | The criterion for success was achieved. Our expectation was that of the 15 possible activities, freshman would be involved in at least four activities, with an increase, on average, | SP_18__POLS__Civic_Participation_Assessment.xlsx | - Assessment Process: Targets / Criteria for Success changed: We will continue to implement this assessment in the Fall 2018 semester to analyze for consistency of results across time. The targets, |
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|  |  | <p>citizens." Measurement of our efforts in this area is accomplished by the creation of a "passport" which records each student's involvement by academic progress (credit hours earned). The passport itself was the result of a collaborative effort among political science faculty. It is an instrument which allows advisors to monitor and record the self-reported participatory activities of each student during regular advising sessions once per academic year (either fall or spring). The</p> | <p>of at least one activity by their senior year (5 activities). The starting point for students was higher than expected. On average, freshman students were involved in 5.5 activities. Sophomore students were involved in 7.2 activities; juniors were involved in 6.8 activities; and seniors were the most involved with 7.8 activities. The only point at which engagement decreased was from the transition from the sophomore to the junior year.</p> | <p>however, will be adjusted by a full point higher by the senior year, so that our expectation is that freshman students be engaged in, on average, at least 4 activities and that seniors will be engaged in at least 6 activities on average.</p> |
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|  |  | <p>criterion for success in the area of civic engagement has been set at a minimum of four student activities on average, with the expectation that activity would rise by an average of 1 full point as students progress from freshman to senior level (five activities). In addition, we seek to see an increase in the # of activities are involved in as they progress from less than 30 hours, to 31-60 hours, to 61-90 hours, and conclude at over 90 hours. been met yet? Met</p> | <p>However, the decrease is quite small, 7.2 to 6.8. Moreover, the increase in the senior year is a full point higher, at 7.8 activities. This slight decrease going into the junior year also correlates with students beginning their upper division coursework. At such time, it may be appropriate for students to scale back activities somewhat to focus on their classes. On the whole, the measure of engagement speaks highly to the level of civic engagement</p> |  |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  | ent among these students and the fact that their engagement increases as they progress through the major. |  |
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**Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Students will demonstrate knowledge necessary for effective citizenship.(Imported)**

| Goal/Objective         | Students will demonstrate knowledge necessary for effective citizenship.(Imported)   |                    |           |                        |  |  |
|------------------------|--|--------------------|-----------|------------------------|--|--|
| Legends                | SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);   |                    |           |                        |  |  |
| Standards/Outcomes     |  |                    |           |                        |  |  |
| Assessment Measures    | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Assessment Measure</th> <th>Criterion</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Direct - Pre/Post Test</td> <td>The POLS Department believes that the possession of a reasonable amount of information about the American political system is required for efficacious citizen participation. To measure the Department's success in providing students with this important information, an identical pre- and post-test was given in sections of POLS 110 - American Government (a required class for all majors). The identical test was given on the first day of class and again sometime during the last two weeks of class at the discretion of the instructor. Students were given verbal instructions on proper coding methods, and were also informed of the importance of these measures to the value of the students' education and preparation for life after leaving the University. The 25 question test includes the major topics covered in a standard introductory American Government course. Thus, the test included questions on various topics such as the Constitution, each of the three branches of government, political behavior by individuals, etc. Target: We seek to increase by 10% the percentage of students passing the test with a 70% (C=satisfactory) or better grade between the pre- and post-test.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Assessment Measure | Criterion | Direct - Pre/Post Test | The POLS Department believes that the possession of a reasonable amount of information about the American political system is required for efficacious citizen participation. To measure the Department's success in providing students with this important information, an identical pre- and post-test was given in sections of POLS 110 - American Government (a required class for all majors). The identical test was given on the first day of class and again sometime during the last two weeks of class at the discretion of the instructor. Students were given verbal instructions on proper coding methods, and were also informed of the importance of these measures to the value of the students' education and preparation for life after leaving the University. The 25 question test includes the major topics covered in a standard introductory American Government course. Thus, the test included questions on various topics such as the Constitution, each of the three branches of government, political behavior by individuals, etc. Target: We seek to increase by 10% the percentage of students passing the test with a 70% (C=satisfactory) or better grade between the pre- and post-test. |  |
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| Assessment Findings    |  |                    |           |                        |  |  |

| Assessment Measure     | Criterion   | Summary  | Attachments of the Assessments | Improvement Narratives   |
|------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------|--|
| Direct - Pre/Post Test | <p>Has the criterion</p> <p>The POLS Department believes that the possession of a reasonable amount of information about the American political system is required for efficacious citizen participation. To measure the Department's success in providing students with this important information, an identical pre- and post-test was given in sections of POLS 110 - American Government (a required class for all majors). The identical test was given on the first day of class and again sometime during the last two weeks of class at the discretion of the instructor. Students were given verbal instructions on proper coding methods, and were also informed of the importance of these measures to the value of the students' education and preparation for life after leaving the University. The 25 question</p> | <p>We met the criterion for success for this objective. Our goal was to increase by 10% the percentage of students passing the test with a 70% (C=satisfactory) or better grade between the pre- and post-test. This assessment was administered to all three sections of POLS 110 in Fall 2017. We had 137 students complete the pre-test and 112 students complete the post-test. On the pre-test, we had 66 students (48.2% of students) who earned a grade below 70%, and we had 71 students (51.8% of students) who scored a 70% or better. On the post-test, we had 21 students (18.8% of students) who scored below a 70%, and 91 students (81.3%) scored a 70% or better. Hence, we had a 29.4% increase in students who earned a 70% or better between the pre- and post-test. This far</p> |                                | <p>- Assessment Process: Data Collection changed:</p> <p>IMPROVEMENT NARRATIVE: For the 2018-2019 assessment cycle, we will revamp the assessment instrument. This will allow us to make sure all questions are up to date with current political trends and information. Moreover, we will integrate the Social and Behavior General Education assessment questions into the POLS 110 assessment in order for students to take a single assessment and reduce testing fatigue. The assessment will also be made available to instructors via Moodle for those who want to distribute it electronically.</p> |

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**Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Students will demonstrate increased positive attitudes towards political participation.(Imported)**

|                    |   |  |
|--------------------|---|--|
| Goal/Objective     | Students will demonstrate increased positive attitudes towards political participation.(Imported) |  |
| Legends            | SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);  |  |
| Standards/Outcomes |   |  |
|                    | <b>Identifier</b>   | <b>Description</b>   |
|                    | <b>Student SI.Student SI 1.KPI 4</b>  | Improve student success through engagement in high impact practices. |

| <p>Assessment Measures</p>   | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="373 409 600 483">Assessment Measure</th> <th data-bbox="600 409 1529 483">Criterion</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="373 483 600 1071">Indirect - Survey - students</td> <td data-bbox="600 483 1529 1071">The POLS Department seeks to develop positive attitudes towards participating in civic activities, believing that an engaged citizenry is necessary for self-government. One way that the Department seeks to accomplish this objective is by requiring those students taking POLS 317-State and Local Government to attend (at least) one public governmental meeting. Students attending the public meeting are then required as part of their assignment to complete a "Reaction Paper." Students also complete a survey designed to determine their attitudes (positive or negative) towards government and gauge the likely effects of this required participation on future (voluntary) civic participation. The "Field Trip" assignment in general reflects the assumption that attendance at a governmental meeting will increase the likelihood that students will continue to develop positive attitudes towards their government, will increase their likelihood of attending another governmental meeting and, as a concomitant, will increase the probability of participating in political activities of all types. Criterion for Success: Success is determined by having 60% or more responses that indicate "positive affect" and "improved likelihood of participation," measured as responses of "strongly agree" or "agree" to the 6 questions on the assessment questionnaire.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> |   |                                |  |  | Assessment Measure | Criterion | Indirect - Survey - students | The POLS Department seeks to develop positive attitudes towards participating in civic activities, believing that an engaged citizenry is necessary for self-government. One way that the Department seeks to accomplish this objective is by requiring those students taking POLS 317-State and Local Government to attend (at least) one public governmental meeting. Students attending the public meeting are then required as part of their assignment to complete a "Reaction Paper." Students also complete a survey designed to determine their attitudes (positive or negative) towards government and gauge the likely effects of this required participation on future (voluntary) civic participation. The "Field Trip" assignment in general reflects the assumption that attendance at a governmental meeting will increase the likelihood that students will continue to develop positive attitudes towards their government, will increase their likelihood of attending another governmental meeting and, as a concomitant, will increase the probability of participating in political activities of all types. Criterion for Success: Success is determined by having 60% or more responses that indicate "positive affect" and "improved likelihood of participation," measured as responses of "strongly agree" or "agree" to the 6 questions on the assessment questionnaire. |                        |                              |   |   |  |  |
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| Assessment Measure           | Criterion   |   |                                |  |  |                    |           |                              |   |                        |                              |   |   |  |  |
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|  |  | <p>that indicate “positive affect” and “improved likelihood of participation,” measured as responses of “strongly agree” or “agree” to the 6 questions on the assessment questionnaire. been met yet?<br/>Met</p> | <p>future. Results: Strongly Agree: 16; Agree: 27; No Change: 11; Disagree: 9; Strongly Disagree: 5 (68 total) Question 5: Attendance at this meeting made it more likely that I would become more involved in local government in the future. Results: Strongly Agree: 15; Agree: 28; No Change: 5; Disagree: 2; Strongly Disagree: 4 (68 total) Question 6: Attendance at this meeting made it more likely that I will exercise my participation rights in other ways as a citizen at some point in the future. Results: Strongly Agree: 29; Agree: 28; No Change: 5; Disagree: 2; Strongly Disagree: 4 (68 total) Total Responses: Strongly Agree: 120 (29%); Agree: 158 (39%); No Change: 74 (18%); Disagree: 33 (8%); Strongly Disagree: 23 (6%); 408 total responses The responses did vary somewhat by question. 82% of students agreed that attendance made them better informed of how government meetings are</p> |  |  |
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|  |  |  | <p>conducted (Question 1). 65% agreed that the meeting helped them see that people can make a difference and have a voice in local government (Question 2). 63% agreed both that attendance at the meeting made them more likely to attend a government meeting in the future( Question 4) and also that attendance made it more likely that they would become more involved in local government in the future (Question 5). Lastly, 84% agreed that attendance made it more likely that they would participate in other ways as a citizen in the future (Question 6). The lowest scoring of these questions was Question 3, to which 51% agreed that the meeting positively changed the way they viewed their government. These results may be a reaction to a particularly vitriolic city council meeting attended by several students enrolled in Section 002. While attendance at the meeting did not necessarily</p> |  |  |
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|  |  |  | <p>decrease their likelihood of future participation, it did leave students with a negative view of that specific governing body, and the lower score on that question appears related to circumstances rather than an overall affect. On the whole, these results indicate that students who attended a government meeting have increased positive affect and improved likelihood of participation. The goal was for at least 60% of all student responses to indicate a positive affect towards government and civic participation. In sum, 68% of all responses to the questions were "Strongly Agree" (29%) or "Agree" (39%). Consequently, the criterion for success was exceeded, and hence, the target was met.</p> |  |  |
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**Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Students will demonstrate basic knowledge about International Relations.**

|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| Goal/Objective | Students will demonstrate basic knowledge about International Relations. |
| Legends        | SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);               |

| Standards/Outcomes     |   |   |                                |   |  |                    |           |                        |  |                        |                        |  |   |                           |   |
|------------------------|---|---|--------------------------------|---|--|--------------------|-----------|------------------------|--|------------------------|------------------------|--|---|---------------------------|---|
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| Assessment Findings    | <table border="1" data-bbox="370 1094 1511 1995"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="370 1094 553 1199">Assessment Measure</th> <th data-bbox="553 1094 748 1199">Criterion</th> <th data-bbox="748 1094 932 1199">Summary</th> <th data-bbox="932 1094 1325 1199">Attachments of the Assessments</th> <th data-bbox="1325 1094 1511 1199">Improvement Narratives</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="370 1199 553 1995">Direct - Pre/Post Test</td> <td data-bbox="553 1199 748 1995">Has the criterion The POLS Department believes that the possession of a reasonable amount of information about International Relations is necessary to be politically informed. To measure the Department's success in providing students with this important information, an identical pre- and post-test was given</td> <td data-bbox="748 1199 932 1995">The criterion for success for the goal was achieved. 34 students took both the pre-test and the post-test. The average score for the pre-test was 4.0. The average score for the post-test was 9.2. This is an increase of 5.2 points between the pre- and post-test, outperforming the goal of raising the</td> <td data-bbox="932 1199 1325 1995">SP18__360__Assessment.pdf</td> <td data-bbox="1325 1199 1511 1995">- Assessment Process: Continuous monitoring: Because this was the first time this assessment was implemented , the same assessment will be given again in 2018-2019 to ensure the consistency of results.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> |   |                                |   |  | Assessment Measure | Criterion | Summary                | Attachments of the Assessments   | Improvement Narratives | Direct - Pre/Post Test | Has the criterion The POLS Department believes that the possession of a reasonable amount of information about International Relations is necessary to be politically informed. To measure the Department's success in providing students with this important information, an identical pre- and post-test was given | The criterion for success for the goal was achieved. 34 students took both the pre-test and the post-test. The average score for the pre-test was 4.0. The average score for the post-test was 9.2. This is an increase of 5.2 points between the pre- and post-test, outperforming the goal of raising the | SP18__360__Assessment.pdf | - Assessment Process: Continuous monitoring: Because this was the first time this assessment was implemented , the same assessment will be given again in 2018-2019 to ensure the consistency of results. |
| Assessment Measure     | Criterion   | Summary   | Attachments of the Assessments | Improvement Narratives  |  |                    |           |                        |  |                        |                        |  |   |                           |   |
| Direct - Pre/Post Test | Has the criterion The POLS Department believes that the possession of a reasonable amount of information about International Relations is necessary to be politically informed. To measure the Department's success in providing students with this important information, an identical pre- and post-test was given  | The criterion for success for the goal was achieved. 34 students took both the pre-test and the post-test. The average score for the pre-test was 4.0. The average score for the post-test was 9.2. This is an increase of 5.2 points between the pre- and post-test, outperforming the goal of raising the | SP18__360__Assessment.pdf      | - Assessment Process: Continuous monitoring: Because this was the first time this assessment was implemented , the same assessment will be given again in 2018-2019 to ensure the consistency of results. |  |                    |           |                        |  |                        |                        |  |   |                           |   |

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|  | <p>in POLS 360 – International Relations (a required class for all students in the International Relations concentration, and frequently taken by students who are in the POLS-General and POLS-Pre-Law concentrations. ). The identical test was given at the beginning of the semester and also during the final exam period. The 10 question test includes the major topics covered in a standard international relations course. Thus, the test included questions on knowledge of basic institutions and relationships in global politics and knowledge of basic theories of international relations. Spring 2018 will be the first time this assessment</p> | <p>score by 2 total points. These results show significant improvement in core knowledge that is gained by students who complete POLS 360, thus meeting our goal that students will demonstrate basic knowledge about International Relations.</p> |  |  |
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|  |  | will be administered.<br>Target: We seek to increase by 2 full points the average score between the pre-test and the post-test.<br>been met yet?<br>Met |  |  |  |
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**Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for Students will demonstrate improved knowledge about the academic discipline of Political Science and careers in the field.(Imported)**

| Goal/Objective                       | Students will demonstrate improved knowledge about the academic discipline of Political Science and careers in the field.(Imported)   |  |                    |             |                                |   |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|--------------------|-------------|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| Legends                              | SLO - Student Learning Outcome/Objective (academic units);  |  |                    |             |                                |   |                                      |  |
| Standards/Outcomes                   | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="386 1003 651 1045">Identifier</th> <th data-bbox="651 1003 1511 1045">Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="386 1045 651 1119"><b>Student SI.Student SI 1</b></td> <td data-bbox="651 1045 1511 1119">Recruit, retain, and graduate outstanding students (undergraduate and graduate; traditional and nontraditional; transfer and returning adults).</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="386 1119 651 1213"><b>Student SI.Student SI 1.KPI 1</b></td> <td data-bbox="651 1119 1511 1213">Implement and sustain student support to retain and graduate students.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>   |  | Identifier         | Description | <b>Student SI.Student SI 1</b> | Recruit, retain, and graduate outstanding students (undergraduate and graduate; traditional and nontraditional; transfer and returning adults).   | <b>Student SI.Student SI 1.KPI 1</b> | Implement and sustain student support to retain and graduate students. |
| Identifier                           | Description   |  |                    |             |                                |   |                                      |  |
| <b>Student SI.Student SI 1</b>       | Recruit, retain, and graduate outstanding students (undergraduate and graduate; traditional and nontraditional; transfer and returning adults).   |  |                    |             |                                |   |                                      |  |
| <b>Student SI.Student SI 1.KPI 1</b> | Implement and sustain student support to retain and graduate students.  |  |                    |             |                                |   |                                      |  |
| Assessment Measures                  | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="386 1360 594 1434">Assessment Measure</th> <th data-bbox="594 1360 1511 1434">Criterion</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="386 1434 594 1812">Direct - Pre/Post Test</td> <td data-bbox="594 1434 1511 1812">An assessment will be administered twice in POLS 101 Introduction to Political Science. A pre-test once at the beginning of the semester and the same measure will be given again as a post-test at the end of the semester. We will measure knowledge of the major; writing in the discipline; knowledge of club and volunteer opportunities in political science; knowledge of career opportunities; how research is conducted in political science; careers in the various sub-fields of political science; awareness of honors program, study abroad program and scholarship. Target: The target is to see a measurable and significant increase of at least 10% in the number of students who mark "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" in response to the questions that were asked on the Pre/Post Test as opposed to providing a "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" response.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> |  | Assessment Measure | Criterion   | Direct - Pre/Post Test         | An assessment will be administered twice in POLS 101 Introduction to Political Science. A pre-test once at the beginning of the semester and the same measure will be given again as a post-test at the end of the semester. We will measure knowledge of the major; writing in the discipline; knowledge of club and volunteer opportunities in political science; knowledge of career opportunities; how research is conducted in political science; careers in the various sub-fields of political science; awareness of honors program, study abroad program and scholarship. Target: The target is to see a measurable and significant increase of at least 10% in the number of students who mark "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" in response to the questions that were asked on the Pre/Post Test as opposed to providing a "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" response. |                                      |  |
| Assessment Measure                   | Criterion   |  |                    |             |                                |   |                                      |  |
| Direct - Pre/Post Test               | An assessment will be administered twice in POLS 101 Introduction to Political Science. A pre-test once at the beginning of the semester and the same measure will be given again as a post-test at the end of the semester. We will measure knowledge of the major; writing in the discipline; knowledge of club and volunteer opportunities in political science; knowledge of career opportunities; how research is conducted in political science; careers in the various sub-fields of political science; awareness of honors program, study abroad program and scholarship. Target: The target is to see a measurable and significant increase of at least 10% in the number of students who mark "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" in response to the questions that were asked on the Pre/Post Test as opposed to providing a "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" response.   |  |                    |             |                                |   |                                      |  |
| Assessment Findings                  |   |  |                    |             |                                |   |                                      |  |

| Assessment Measure     | Criterion   | Summary  | Attachments of the Assessments | Improvement Narratives  |
|------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------|---|
| Direct - Pre/Post Test | <p>Has the criterion</p> <p>An assessment will be administered twice in POLS 101 Introduction to Political Science. A pre-test once at the beginning of the semester and the same measure will be given again as a post-test at the end of the semester. We will measure knowledge of the major; writing in the discipline; knowledge of club and volunteer opportunities in political science; knowledge of career opportunities; how research is conducted in political science; careers in the various sub-fields of political science; awareness of honors program, study abroad program and scholarship.</p> <p>Target: The target is to see a measurable and significant increase of at least 10% in the number of students who mark "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" in response to the questions</p> | <p>We met the criterion for success for this objective. Our goal was to have an increase of at least 10% in the number of students who marked "Agree" or "Strongly Agree" in response to questions. In the pre-test, we had 37 students who responded to the assessment, and we had 27 students who responded in the post-test. The assessment asks 10 questions related to students' knowledge related to the major, including information about major course requirements, familiarity with advising, understanding of discipline subfields, knowledge of professors' areas of expertise, opportunities for involvement in clubs, and knowledge of internships, job opportunities, and requirements of graduate and law school. On the pre-test, 53.5% of responses were in the categories of "Agree" or</p> |                                | <p>- Student/Faculty Support (for Educational Programs): Though not especially low scoring, the two questions with the lowest scores on the student assessment were related to their knowledge about internship opportunities and making career plans. In order to see if there are ways students can be better served in this regard, the department will reach out to the Office of Career Services for ideas about better advertising opportunities to our majors.</p> |

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|  |  | <p>that were asked on the Pre/Post Test as opposed to providing a "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" response. been met yet?<br/>Met</p> | <p>"Strongly Agree." In the post-test, 97% of all responses were in the categories of "Agree" or "Strongly Agree." This is an increase of 43.5%, far exceeding the goal of a 10% increase. This is the third year the POLS 101 course has been offered. This assessment demonstrates the continued success of the course in educating students about major requirements and career planning. When breaking down the results by question, every question averaged at a minimum a 4.4/5.0. The two questions that averaged the lowest scores, 4.4%, related to students having settled on a career plan after graduation (Question 5) and knowledge of internship opportunities (Question 8). Although both of these scores are already quite high, our department will continue to make these areas of focus going forward into future semesters.</p> |  |  |
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**Assessment List Findings for the Assessment Measure level for The Department of Political Science will retain first-year majors to their second year in the major.(Imported)**

|                     |  |   |  |  |   |
|---------------------|--|---|--|--|---|
| Goal/Objective      | The Department of Political Science will retain first-year majors to their second year in the major.(Imported) |   |  |  |   |
| Legends             | PO - Program Objective (academic units);   |   |  |  |   |
| Standards/Outcomes  | <b>Identifier</b>  |   | <b>Description</b>   |  |   |
|                     | Student SI.Student SI 1.KPI 1  |   | Implement and sustain student support to retain and graduate students.   |  |   |
| Assessment Measures | <b>Assessment Measure</b>  |   | <b>Criterion</b>   |  |   |
|                     | Direct - UL Enrollment Data on Student Retention (Other)   |   | Target: We seek that first-year retention rate of students in the major will be higher than UL's average first-year retention rate across all disciplines.   |  |   |
| Assessment Findings | <b>Assessment Measure</b>  | <b>Criterion</b>  | <b>Summary</b>   | <b>Attachments of the Assessments</b>        | <b>Improvement Narratives</b>   |
|                     | Direct - UL Enrollment Data on Student Retention (Other)   | Has the criterion Target: We seek that first-year retention rate of students in the major will be higher than UL's average first-year retention rate across all disciplines. es. been | We met our criterion for success of having retained a higher percentage of our majors than the university average. Retention rates were calculated using a majors' report generated by institutional research. In Fall 2017, | POLS__majors_retention_report_FA17_SP18.xlsx | - Assessment Process: Continuous monitoring: The department has requested the official university-wide Fall to Spring retention rate from Institutional Research. Once this is known, we will be able to better establish |

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|  |  | <p>met yet?<br/>Met</p> | <p>we had 241 POLS majors. Among those 10 graduated in Fall 2017 and an additional 30 graduated in Spring 2018. In Spring 2018, 24 POLS majors withdrew from the university. Among these students, the average GPA was a 2.24, with GPAs ranging from 0 to 3.8. Student ranged evenly across classification, though seven were seniors. Among those seniors, all seven had a GPA above a 2.0, indicating they were on track to graduate. In addition, 16 students changed to a different major. Those 16 students</p> |  | <p>our criterion for success in the next assessment cycle. After the 14th class day passes in the Fall 2017 semester, which unfortunately will fall after the current assessment cycle ends, we will be able to directly compare our department's one-year retention rate to that of the university. We will also continue to monitor for any trends in retention to see if there are particular populations of students who are leaving the major or leaving the university.</p> |
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|  |  |  | <p>changed to a wide variety of different majors, indicating no particular pattern of exit from political science. The average GPA of students who changed major was a 2.85, with GPAs ranging from 2.37 to 3.77. All students who changed majors were either freshman or sophomores. This is encouraging as it indicates that students who have been in the major for over two years decide to continue in the program. The percent of majors retained within the university was 80.1%. This is calculated</p> |  |
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|  |  |  | <p>by taking the number of majors in the fall (241), subtracting students who graduated in either the fall or spring (40), giving a total of 161 students. This was divided by the number of Spring POLS majors (161). The percentage of freshman majors retained was 76.19% (63 freshman POLS majors in FA17 and 48 returning in SP18). Though doing a direct comparison to university averages is difficult, we can make reasonable estimates from UL's first-year students' retention rate. For students who entered in Fall 2016, 74.97%</p> |  |
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|  |  | <p>were retained in Fall 2017. The POLS majors' retention rate, from Fall 2017 to Spring 2018 was higher than this (76.19%). Though some of those students may not return in Fall 2018, this still appears to be a reasonably high retention rate for first-year students based on the university average. Consequently, we are marking that we have met the criterion for success of having a retention rate higher than the university average.</p> |  |  |
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## Reflection (Due 9/15/18)

### Reflection

The primary purpose of assessment is to use data to inform decisions and improve programs and operations; this is an on-going process of defining goals and expectations, collecting results, analyzing data, comparing current and past results and initiatives, and making decisions based on these reflections. Recalling this purpose, respond to the questions below.

#### 1) How were assessment results shared in the program / department?

*Please select all that apply. If "other", please use the text box to elaborate.*

Distributed via email (selected)

Presented formally at staff / department / committee meetings

Discussed informally

Other (explain in text box below)

The assessment results were shared with all faculty in the department via email, including the assessment plan, summaries, and related documents.

#### 2) How frequently were assessment results shared?

Frequently (>4 times per cycle)

Periodically (2-4 times per cycle)

Once per cycle (selected)

Results were not shared this cycle

#### 3) With whom were assessment results shared?

*Please select all that apply.*

Department Head (selected)

Dean / Asst. or Assoc. Dean

Departmental assessment committee

Other faculty / staff (selected)

#### 4) Consider the impact of prior applied changes. Specifically, compare current results to previous results to evaluate the impact of a previously reported change. Demonstrate how the use of results improved student learning and/or operations.

In keeping with the improvement narrative from the 2016-2017 assessment cycle, we completed assessments related to analyzing students' levels of engagement with the political system, the knowledge necessary for effective citizenship; and improved knowledge about the academic discipline of Political Science and careers in the field. We also expanded and improved our assessments. For instance, related to the goal that "Students will demonstrate increased positive attitudes towards political participation," we assessed students across two sections instead of one and found similar results. This was an important test of our assessment instrument. We also improved the assessment of retention of majors. Previously, this was an extremely labor intensive endeavor that involved looking up information on individual students. By contrast, we were able to secure a majors retention report from Institutional Research to help drastically speed the process. This will also enable us to continue assessing students across semesters. In sum, the department followed up on and implemented suggestions from the improvement narrative last year and were able to streamline assessment processes and confirm the effectiveness of our assessment plan.

#### 5) Over the past three assessment cycles, what has been the overall impact of "closing the loop"? Provide examples of improvements in student learning, program quality, or department operations that are directly linked to assessment data and follow-up analysis.

The assessment cycle has demonstrated the many strengths of the department. We have implemented many changes during these cycles. One such improvement was the creation of a new one-credit hour course for majors and assessment

of their knowledge of the discipline. This process has shown that students who complete this required course do improve their knowledge of the major, familiarity with post-graduate education opportunities, and familiarity with faculty members' areas of research and teaching expertise. In addition, we've conducted an assessment of student political engagement and have found that students' exceeded our expectations regarding how involved they are in political and leadership activities. Moreover, we have added program-level assessment of our retention of majors and have found that as a department we are outperforming the university as a whole in retention of our majors. We are continuing to analyze this data for trends regarding students who leave the university. Lastly, we also created a new assessment of students' knowledge of international relations, one of our three areas of concentration in the major. Taken together, the breadth of areas that the department assesses has grown and we continue to improve our understanding of student learning and needs.

**Attachments (optional)**

*Upload any documents which support the program / department assessment process.*