University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Detailed Assessment Report
2015-2016 Political Science BA
As of: 11/16/2016 02:13 PM CENTRAL
(Includes those Action Plans with Budget Amounts marked *One-Time, Recurring, No Request*.)

Mission / Purpose

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. A notable highpoint of the Department's service to the community was sponsoring an on-campus debate between the three major candidates for the 7th congressional district seat, an event that was covered live by KATC-TV3 and that featured UL Lafayette students themselves asking the questions. 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*.

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

SLO 1: Engagement with Political System
Students will increase their level of engagement with the political system.

> **Strategic Plan Associations**
>
> > **University of Louisiana at Lafayette**
> > 2.1.4 Students KPI 4: Improve student success through engagement in high impact practices.
>
> **Related Measures**

M 1: Passport of Political Participation

Number of students assessed = 178 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 was accomplished by the creation of a "passport" which records each student's involvement. 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 participatory activities of each student during regular advising sessions in the fall. (A copy of the passport with model script at the top is listed as attached). The 2014/15 passport used to collect data was nearly identical to that created during the 2008-09 assessment cycle and utilized during the 2010/11 and 2012/13 assessment cycles. It included a carefully crafted model script to assist advisors in the process of gathering student information. The script has both instrumental and pedagogical purposes. Instrumentally, the script aids data collection by informing the student of the reasons for the collection. Pedagogically, the script seeks to promote political engagement by emphasizing the benefits of such engagement to the student as a citizen and also in strengthening resumes for application to graduate school and jobs. The passport was most recently reworked in 2008 through an expansion of the categories of engagement, allowing for greater specificity in reporting. Thus, in the iteration in use today, a distinction can be made between simply joining an organization and becoming part of its leadership team. Currently, data on student participation is collected only once a year, during the formal advising session in the fall semester. The rationale for this schedule is to enhance the comparability of results across future years. Finally, the information gathered on the passport was collected according to credit hours, which is easily quantified and produce results groups by class rank (fresh; soph). All of these characteristics were in place for the 2014/15 assessment process.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

Target:
Success in the area of civic engagement has been set at an (average) minimum of four student activities, 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 a increase in the percentages of students who are involved in some kind of civic participation and social involvement as they progress from less than 30 hours, to 31-60 hours, to 61-90 hours, and conclude at over 90 hours.

Connected Document
        [Student Passport](#)

Finding (2015-2016) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
We did not assess this Outcome/Objective (Success in the area of civic engagement has been set at an (average) minimum of four student activities, 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 a increase in the percentages of students who are involved in some kind of civic participation and social involvement as they progress from less than 30 hours, to 31-60 hours, to 61-90 hours, and conclude at over 90 hours.) during the 2015-16 cycle

It will be assessed with the Text Critique in the 2106-17 cycle.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

Faculty Role Expansion
There have been a number of recent initiatives aimed at increasing the activity of the political clubs sponsored by the Political Science Department. Currently, four professors (of the six in the department) lead a political club while the fifth and sixth run the internship programs. While the Political Science Department is weighing other possibilities for expanding citizenship education in our curriculum, our options are limited to some extent by the small size of the department and pre-existing curricular requirements.

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
        Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System

Internship Program at State Legislature
The program allows UL undergraduates to intern with state senators and representatives while they earn POLS credits. The course the students enroll in is scheduled for completion during legislative sessions, which provides students with hands-on experiences with their state government. This course promotes student knowledge and participation.

Update By Dr Ryan Lee Teten 4/30/15: This program is in its sixth iteration. Therefore, although it is still an ongoing program, the action plan for its inception is Finished.

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010
Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
        Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System

Implementation Description: The program ran for the first time in 2010 and has run each year since that date.
Projected Completion Date: 05/2010
Responsible Person/Group: Dr. Ryan Teten is supervising this internship.
Additional Resources: There are a number of resources needed for this program, including a stipend and transporation to and from Baton Rouge. Currently, students enjoy a tuition waiver for participation in acknowledgment of the costs entailed.

New Internship
Both advising and curricular changes will be proposed to further enhance student engagement. Based on the results of this passport, faculty will be encouraged to expand course-related civic engagement activities in their classes where they do exist and to create them where they do not. One new initiative in this regard, has resulted in the creation of two new internship programs in 2009, one at the national level in Washington D.C., with the office of Dr. Charles Boustany and the other at the state level with the Louisiana State Senate and House. These two internship programs provide a minimum of 20 students each year the opportunity to work on the staff of a state or national politician, gaining in the process, an intense and qualitative civic participation experience.

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010
Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
        Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System

Assessment Survey of the POLS 101 Class
The establishment of a 1 hour course, required of all majors in the first year, has allowed the department to seek to educate its cohort, at a much earlier date, on the specifics of the major and the field of political science. The class not only provides information regarding potential classes and fields of study in political science here at the University of Louisiana, it also addresses main student needs as well. The students create c.v's, they learn about the differences between Law schools and graduate study and the tests required for each, as well as how to attain positions outside of academia in both governmental and non-governmental employ. Our hope is that this course will lead to increased and earlier civic participation and social involvement that will be clearly visible in the passport results. In addition, we plan to institute an assessment tool for this specific course that will examine the retention not only of the fundamentals of our discipline and college, but also the real-world opportunities to which the students will be exposed during the course of the class.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: In-Progress

Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
     Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System

Implementation Description: We will begin to administer an assessment tool in POLS 101. This tool will be administered twice, once at the beginning of the semester and again at the end. 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
Projected Completion Date: 08/2014
Responsible Person/Group: Department Head

Establishment of the POLS 101 Course

The establishment of a 1 hour course, required of all majors in the first year, has allowed the department to seek to educate its cohort, at a much earlier date, on the specifics of the major and the field of political science. The class not only provides information regarding potential classes and fields of study in political science here at the University of Louisiana, it also addresses main student needs as well. The students create c.v's, they learn about the differences between Law schools and graduate study and the tests required for each, as well as how to attain positions outside of academia in both governmental and non-governmental employ. Our hope is that this course will lead to increased and earlier civic participation and social involvement that will be clearly visible in the passport results.

Update By Dr Ryan Lee Teten 4/30/15: The POLS 101 course has been created and is also now required of all majors. Although we are now examining additional assessment possibilities for the course, its original inception and requirement has been completed.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
     Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System

Political Science Peer Mentoring Program

Beginning in 2012-2013, the department of political science implemented a new departmental peer mentoring program. Similar in construction to the UNIV peer mentors, outstanding juniors and seniors from within our majors are placed in our Introductory political science classes for the duration of the semester. These upperclassmen attend every class, run review sessions, meet with students, answer questions that students might not feel comfortable bring to the professor, and share their educational and life experiences with the new, incoming political science majors. The hope is this will result in increased civic and institutional engagement earlier in our political science majors' matriculation, it will aid in retention within the major, and it will lead to increased job placement and networking abilities of our majors.

Update By Dr Ryan Lee Teten 4/30/15: As of the 2014-15 cycle, the Peer Mentor program is in its third year. This makes this action plan inception finished as opposed to in progress, even though the Peer Mentor program continues indefinitely.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
     Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System
     Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
     Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
     Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Competitive Pre-law Moot Court Collegiate Opportunities

For students seeking to graduate with a degree in Political Science or Pre-Law who may wish to continue to law school, activities that foster and nurture the debate and Socratic skills necessary for sucess are invaluable. Law firms and law schools alike have confirmed that the type of skills garnered through Moot Court classes and competitions are not only important for a student's development, but also to foster the critical thinking and interaction ability that is central for law school. With this in mind, the department of political science will attempt to create a Moot Court class as well as an intercollegiate and competitive Moot Court team. The primary challenges that have prevented this innovation in the past (and also, carrying over to the present) will be faculty to lead the course and the competition as well as seeking funding for travel and competitions. The result of the establishment of the program should align with all of the goals of the department: Engagement with the Political System, Positive Attitudes, Critical Thinking and Writing and Learning About the Discipline. Measureable participation in the program will be visible on the Passport measurement as well as in the concrete realization of the course and competition participation.

Established in Cycle: 2014-2015
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
     Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System
     Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
     Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
     Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Implementation Description: Faculty will be sought to lead the Moot Court class and Moot court competitive team. Funds will be sought and petitioned for from the University as well as the local law community.
Projected Completion Date: 12/2017
Responsible Person/Group: Department Head
Additional Resources: Student Travel funding if possible

Election year Campaign Internships and Volunteerism

One of the core missions of the department of political science is to encourage experiential learning about the discipline by participating in timely and important political events locally. One of the best way that students can be exposed to the tenets of government that are discussed in class is through volunteering for or interning with local, state, and federal election activities. In addition, students who meet the requirements established by the political science department of working in an internship that will involve 15 or more hours per week, maintaining a 3.0 cumulative GPA or higher, providing a letter of recommendation from a political science professor, providing a writing sample from a political science course, and providing the contact information for the internship supervisor are also eligible to receive political science class credit for their campaign work. The result of the establishment of the program should align with all of the goals of the department: Engagement with the Political System, Positive Attitudes, Critical Thinking and Writing and Learning About the Discipline. Measurable participation in the program will be visible on the Passport measurement as well as noting the increases in the numbers of student internships (POLS 397/398 and 497/498) during campaign cycles.

Established in Cycle: 2014-2015
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: Medium

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
     Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System
     Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship

Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing
Responsible Person/Group: Internship Director

M 5: POLS 101 Pre/Post test

The establishment of a 1 hour course, required of all majors in the first year, has allowed the department to seek to educate its cohort, at a much earlier date, on the specifics of the major and the field of political science. The class not only provides information regarding potential classes and fields of study in political science here at the University of Louisiana, it also addresses main student needs as well. The students create c.v's, they learn about the differences between Law schools and graduate study and the tests required for each, as well as how to attain positions outside of academia in both governmental and non-governmental employ. Our hope is that this course will lead to increased and earlier civic participation and social involvement that will be clearly visible in the passport results. In addition, we plan to institute an assessment tool for this specific course that will examine the retention not only of the fundamentals of our discipline and college, but also the real-world opportunities to which the students will be exposed during the course of the class.

We will begin to administer an assessment tool in POLS 101. This tool will be administered twice, once at the beginning of the semester and again at the end. 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. This Measure will correlate with the departmental goal of Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship by providing exposure to opportunities within the community related to political science. It will correlate with the departmental goal of Positive attitudes and Learning About the Discipline by measuring the increase in general knowledge regarding fields of study, opportunities for employment, and other facets of political science.

Source of Evidence: Faculty pre-test / post-test of knowledge mastery

Connected Document
POLS 101 pre and post test

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. The survey questions were as follows:I know the academic requirements for majors in the Department of Political Science at UL; I know what specific classes I will need to take in order to graduate with a degree in Political science, pre-law or international relations;I know the required elements of a professionally constructed résumé; I know 10 specific jobs that are available upon graduation to me as a political science, pre-law, or international relations major; I know what I would like to do after I graduate with a political science degree from UL; I know what fields each of the faculty of the Department of Political Science specialize in at UL; I know what preparation I need for law school or graduate school admission and application; I know what internship opportunities are available to me in the department of political science; I know how I will be advised each semester by the faculty from the department of political science; I know what clubs, scholarships, and extracurricular activities are available in the department of political science.

Connected Document
POLS 101 pre and post test

Finding (2015-2016) - Target: Met

As this was the first year of the implementation of this assessment tool, we were very interested to see the impact of the newly instituted POLS 101 class on the student body for Engagement with the Political System, Student Mastery of Effective Citizenship, Positive Attitudes, and Learning about the Discipline. Based on this standard, the POLS Department achieved its goals in each of these areas in the POLS 101 class during the 2015/16 cycle. On the pre-test, we received 47 responses and on the post-test we received 37 responses. Each of the questions that was asked (the pre/post test is attached) gave the opportunity for the student to respond with a Strongly agree, Agree, No Opinion, Disagree, and Strongly disagree response. The full responses to the survey are included below. One of the major goals of the assessment was to attempt to move the responses from the Disagree/Strongly Disagree responses to the Agree and and Strongly Agree responses across the board. This was overwhelmingly the case. In the pre test, 244 responses of Disagree or Strongly Disagree to the questions were given. In the post test, these two categories received only 4 responses combined, and the Strongly Disagree category received 0 responses (out of 370). This was a an unbelievable drop to less than 2% of the total responses by the students who marked as Disagree or Strongly Disagree. In fact, these 4 "disagreements" were only given in two categories (Ten Specific Jobs (3 responses)/ and Internships (1 response)). In stark contrast, almost every one of the categories saw an exponential increase in the number of students who marked agree or strongly agree between the pre and post test. The total number of responses for all of the questions in these two categories saw a 220% increase. In specific categories, the increase is even more significant. The number of those who agreed or strongly agreed that they knew the "Academic Requirements for Majors" increased from 9 responses to 37 (a 400% increase). the number of those who agreed or strongly agreed that they knew "What fields the Faculty Specialized in" increased from 4 to 36 in the agree or strongly agree categories (a 900% increase). In addition to the dramatic shift in the student knowledge from the pre to the post test, the number of responses of "no opinion" dropped by nearly 80% to only 12 total responses out of the 370 given (from 65 on the pre test). The attempt of this new measure of assessment was to make students aware of opportunities for Engagement with the Political System, provide examples of and opportunities for Student Mastery of Effective Citizenship, increase their Positive Attitudes about their major and provide depth of Learning about the Discipline that they had chosen. Both the structure of the POLS 101 class and the pre and post test suggest that this was an overwhelming success. As this is a 1 hour class and provided specifically to incoming freshmen, the trends here suggest that we may also be able to positively impact retention and career direction by the implementation of the POLS 101 class.

PRE TEST 101 Fall 2015

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	TOTAL	
Academic Requirements for Majors	2	7	5	23	10		47
Specific Classes to Graduate	6	12	8	14	7		47
Required Elements of a Resume	1	14	4	16	12		47
Ten Specific Jobs	0	11	3	22	11		47
What I'd Like To Do After Graduation	14	23	4	5	1		47
What Fields The Faculty Specialize In	1	3	8	25	9		46
Grad/Law Prep	1	8	11	16	11		47
Internship Opportunities	2	13	7	19	6		47
Advising	10	12	9	11	5		47
Clubs/Scholarships/Extracurriculars	2	18	6	16	5		47
TOTAL	39	121	65	167	77		469

POST TEST 101 Fall 2015

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	TOTAL	
Academic Requirements for Majors	28	9	0	0	0		37
Specific Classes to Graduate	32	5	0	0	0		37
Required Elements of a Resume	27	8	2	0	0		37

Ten Specific Jobs	19	15	0	3	0	37
What I'd Like To Do After Graduation	20	10	6	1	0	37
What Fields The Faculty Specialize In	24	12	1	0	0	37
Grad/Law Prep	24	11	2	0	0	37
Internship Opportunities	20	16	1	0	0	37
Advising	29	8	0	0	0	37
Clubs/Scholarships/Extracurriculars	26	11	0	0	0	37
TOTAL	249	105	12	4	0	370

SLO 2: Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
Students will master the knowledge necessary for effective citizenship.

Relevant Associations:

General Education/Core Curriculum Associations

    3.1 Collect, consume, and critique basic and complex concepts in history and social sciences.
    3.2 Understand the diverse and complex nature of humanity
    3.3 Create engaged citizens.

Strategic Plan Associations

    University of Louisiana at Lafayette
        2.1.4 Students KPI 4: Improve student success through engagement in high impact practices.

Related Measures

M 2: POLS 110 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). (Test attached as Appendix B; subject headings added). 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.

Source of Evidence: Faculty pre-test / post-test of knowledge mastery

Target:
Success in the area of knowledge of the American political system was measured by scores on the pre-and post-test.

Connected Document
    Pre-Post American Government Test

Finding (2015-2016) - Target: Met
Scores on the post-test showed marked improvement over the pre-test scores. The data for the pre-tests and post-tests are displayed in the Table below. The average score for the pre-test was 15.6 correct answers, equivalent to a 62.5% score, compared to the average post-test score of 17.6, equivalent to a 70.2% score. This constitutes a 7.7% relative improvement from the pre-test and post test, and an equivalent increase to just over a one-full-academic-letter-grade improvement on average. Improvement is especially noticeable when looking at the higher percentages of students earning the equivalent of "B" grades on the post test, and the significantly lower number of "D" and "F" grades on the post-test. The number of "B" grades rose from 6.3% to 32.5% from the pre to the post test; this is an increase of 26.2% of the students (over a four-fold increase). The number of "C" grades remained nearly constant at the 27.7% on the pre test and 27.5% on the post test. There was a huge decrease in the percentages of "D" and "F" grades between the pre and post test. The percentage of "D" scores dropped from 32% to 17.5% and the percentage of "F" scores dropped from 34.1% to 20%; these are decreases of 14.5% and 14.1% respectively. Moreover, given that the post-test was administered during the last two weeks of class, these positive results were achieved even though most students probably had not yet fully prepared for the final exam. Had the test been administered during or shortly after the final exam period, at which point most students would have reviewed the course material to a greater degree, the results of the post-test most likely would have shown even greater improvement. This provides excellent testament to the POLS 110 class and the information on the American Political System that is being successfully conveyed over the course of a semester.

Results of Fall
2015 POLS 110
Pre- and
Post-Tests

Pre Test Fall 2015
(n=47)

Score (percent)	#Students	%Students (rounded to nearest tenth)
90-100 (A)	0	0
80-89 (B)	3	6.3
70-79 (C)	13	27.7
60-69 (D)	15	32
0-59 (F)	16	34.1
		Avg Score: 62

Post Test Fall
2015 (n=40)

Score (percent)	#Students	%Students (rounded to nearest tenth)
90-100 (A)	1	2.5
80-89 (B)	13	32.5
70-79 (C)	11	27.5
60-69 (D)	7	17.5
0-59 (F)	8	20
		Avg Score: 70

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

Gathering of Demographic Information
The 2009 assessment revealed a few administrative problems. Several of the students taking the tests apparently did not understand the coding instructions resulting in a number of student pre-tests and post-tests that could not be analyzed because the coded answers sheets could not be read by the electronic reader. Thus, one planned improvement is to distribute clear instructions—including an actual example of how to code the

sheets—to students at both the pre-test and post-test. Another change under consideration for future assessments is to include the gathering and analysis of demographic information such as age, gender, ethnicity, and class level. This information might allow the Department to further refine and develop the instrument to better measure the needs, skills and abilities of the student population.

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
   Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship

Preliminary Surveys

The data for 2009 affirmed the effectiveness of the teaching and curriculum of the POLS Department. As such, the Department was generally pleased with the noticeable levels of improvement between the pre- and the post-test. As future weaknesses in student performance are identified, the teaching faculty will take steps to increase the level and depth of coverage in those specific areas. The goal is to ensure that POLS 110-American Government adequately introduces and addresses key information, providing students with the tools they need to understand and engage their political system. Addressing the question of how much POLS majors are learning in core courses raises the question of what do students who are not POLS majors know about their government? The answer, based on preliminary and anecdotal evidence, indicates that most non-POLS students know very little about the functioning of their governmental institutions and history and are therefore ill-prepared to participate as citizens in the American democracy. With that in mind, the POLS department is--through the committee on general education at ULL--exploring ways to assess and expand the civic knowledge possessed by students of all majors. Preliminary surveys and focus groups are providing a rough idea of the opportunities for expanding this learning. While a number of suggestions have been made, it is, at the moment unclear exactly what general education requirements might be made for increasing student knowledge and engagement with their political system.

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
   Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship

Simplified Instructional and Administration Process of POLS 110 Pre and Post Test

The Spring 2011 assessment of the Fall 2010 pre- and post-tests continued to reveal a recurring administrative problem. Despite an extra emphasis during this iteration of the pre- and post-tests on clearly informing students of the coding instructions, several of the students taking the tests apparently did not understand the coding instructions. Thus, a number of student pre-tests and post-tests could not be analyzed because the coded answers sheets could not be read by the electronic reader available. The probable cause of this is that the statistical analysis used here required a different scantron reader than is normally used by our department. The reader used for the analysis here requires students to code their student ID numbers on the test sheet. Several students either miscoded or failed to code their ID numbers, and the electronic reader rejected those sheets. Thus, in the future, even more clear instructions, perhaps with an actual example of how to code the sheets, could be distributed to students at both the pre-test and post-test. Also, given that the student ID number is not relevant to the test results since the test is anonymous, another possible solution to this problem might be to fill in the student ID section of the scantron with random ID information as needed to correct student miscoding in this section. In addition, future assessments could perhaps include gathering demographic information such as age, gender, ethnicity, major and class level to further refine and develop the instrument to fit it to the needs and aptitudes of the developing student population. This also might allow instructors to perhaps tailor course materials or pedagogical methods to better reach various student demographic groups.

Update By Dr Ryan Lee Teten 4/30/15: The pre and post test instructions have now been standardized and the necessity for student id's has been eliminated to make responses as well as coding a consistent process. Collection of demographic information is still under review

Established in Cycle: 2010-2011
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
   Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship

Implementation Description: This measure will be implemented the next time this objective is assessed. Most likely this will happen in fall 2011.
Projected Completion Date: 08/2011
Responsible Person/Group: POLS Department; Assessment Director
Additional Resources: None
Budget Amount Requested: $0.00 (no request)

Course Specific Assessments

As the result of specific learning outcomes on each class syllabi, and as the further result of a clear curriculum map that these slo's will enable, we hope to institute assessments for each individual course, when offered. These assessments will be able to test not only for the differences in the student citizenry as they matriculate through the program. They will also allow the department to evaluate each class according to its stated slo's and its place on the curriculum map. This latter step will allow the department to maintain alignment with its mission, the goals of the college and the university, and with the needs of the students.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
   Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
   Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
   Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Majority Participation in Learning Outcome Syllabus Inclusion

Within the next two years, we hope to have at least 50% of all of the political science classes that are offered have clearly detailed student learning outcomes included in their syllabi. This will detail student expectations of achievement, as well as will provide depth of understanding in terms of creation and correct placement of these courses on a departmental curriculum map.

Update By Dr Ryan Lee Teten 4/30/15: As of the 2014-15 cycle, a majority of the faculty include student learning outcomes in their syllabi. Therefore, this action plan is finished and the plan to seek unanimous inclusion moves from planned to in-progress.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
   Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
   Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
   Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Implementation Description: The implementation of this action plan will require faculty to ascribe to the understanding of the importance of the curriculum map to discover strengths and weaknesses in the department and to best serve student needs and provide them with rigorous and complementary coursework over the course of their careers.

Political Science Peer Mentoring Program

Beginning in 2012-2013, the department of political science implemented a new departmental peer mentoring program. Similar in construction to the UNIV peer mentors, outstanding juniors and seniors from within our majors are placed in our Introductory political science classes for the duration of the semester. These upperclassmen attend every class, run review sessions, meet with students, answer questions that students might not feel comfortable bring to the professor, and share their educational and life experiences with the new, incoming political science majors. The hope is this will result in increased civic and institutional engagement earlier in our political science majors' matriculation, it will aid in retention within the major, and it will lead to increased job placement and networking abilities of our majors.

Update By Dr Ryan Lee Teten 4/30/15: As of the 2014-15 cycle, the Peer Mentor program is in its third year. This makes this action plan inception finished as opposed to in progress, even though the Peer Mentor program continues indefinitely.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
    Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System
    Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
    Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
    Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Unanimous Participation in Learning Outcome Syllabus Inclusion

Within the next five years, we hope to have 100% of all of the political science classes that are offered have clearly detailed student learning outcomes included in their syllabi. This will detail student expectations of achievement, as well as will provide depth of understanding in terms of creation and correct placement of these courses on a departmental curriculum map.

Update: As of the 2014-15 cycle, a majority of the syllabi from the department included student leaning outcomes. Therefore this planned action now becomes an in-progress plan to seek unanimous inclusion in the syllabi.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
    Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
    Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
    Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Competitive Pre-law Moot Court Collegiate Opportunities

For students seeking to graduate with a degree in Political Science or Pre-Law who may wish to continue to law school, activities that foster and nurture the debate and Socratic skills necessary for sucess are invaluable. Law firms and law schools alike have confirmed that the type of skills garnered through Moot Court classes and competitions are not only important for a student's development, but also to foster the critical thinking and interaction ability that is central for law school. With this in mind, the department of political science will attempt to create a Moot Court class as well as an intercollegiate and competitive Moot Court team. The primary challenges that have prevented this innovation in the past (and also, carrying over to the present) will be faculty to lead the course and the competition as well as seeking funding for travel and competitions. The result of the establishment of the program should align with all of the goals of the department: Engagement with the Political System, Positive Attitudes, Critical Thinking and Writing and Learning About the Discipline. Measureable participation in the program will be visible on the Passport measurement as well as in the concrete realization of the course and competition participation.

Established in Cycle: 2014-2015
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
    Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System
    Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
    Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
    Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Implementation Description: Faculty will be sought to lead the Moot Court class and Moot court competitive team. Funds will be sought and petitioned for from the University as well as the local law community.
Projected Completion Date: 12/2017
Responsible Person/Group: Department Head
Additional Resources: Student Travel funding if possible

Election year Campaign Internships and Volunteerism

One of the core missions of the department of political science is to encourage experiential learning about the discipline by participating in timely and important political events locally. One of the best way that students can be exposed to the tenets of government that are discussed in class is through volunteering for or interning with local, state, and federal election activities. In addition, students who meet the requirements established by the political science department of working in an internship that will involve 15 or more hours per week, maintaining a 3.0 cumulative GPA or higher, providing a letter of recommendation from a political science professor, providing a writing sample from a political science course, and providing the contact information for the internship supervisor are also eligible to receive political science class credit for their campaign work. The result of the establishment of the program should align with all of the goals of the department: Engagement with the Political System, Positive Attitudes, Critical Thinking and Writing and Learning About the Discipline. Measurable participation in the program will be visible on the Passport measurement as well as noting the increases in the numbers of student internships (POLS 397/398 and 497/498) during campaign cycles.

Established in Cycle: 2014-2015
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: Medium

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
    Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System
    Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
    Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
    Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Responsible Person/Group: Internship Director

M 5: POLS 101 Pre/Post test
The establishment of a 1 hour course, required of all majors in the first year, has allowed the department to seek to educate its cohort, at a much earlier date,

on the specifics of the major and the field of political science. The class not only provides information regarding potential classes and fields of study in political science here at the University of Louisiana, it also addresses main student needs as well. The students create c.v's, they learn about the differences between Law schools and graduate study and the tests required for each, as well as how to attain positions outside of academia in both governmental and non-governmental employ. Our hope is that this course will lead to increased and earlier civic participation and social involvement that will be clearly visible in the passport results. In addition, we plan to institute an assessment tool for this specific course that will examine the retention not only of the fundamentals of our discipline and college, but also the real-world opportunities to which the students will be exposed during the course of the class.

We will begin to administer an assessment tool in POLS 101. This tool will be administered twice, once at the beginning of the semester and again at the end. 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. This Measure will correlate with the departmental goal of Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship by providing exposure to opportunities within the community related to political science. It will correlate with the departmental goal of Positive attitudes and Learning About the Discipline by measuring the increase in general knowledge regarding fields of study, opportunities for employment, and other facets of political science.

Source of Evidence: Faculty pre-test / post-test of knowledge mastery

Connected Document
 POLS 101 pre and post test

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. The survey questions were as follows:I know the academic requirements for majors in the Department of Political Science at UL; I know what specific classes I will need to take in order to graduate with a degree in Political science, pre-law or international relations;I know the required elements of a professionally constructed résumé; I know 10 specific jobs that are available upon graduation to me as a political science, pre-law, or international relations major; I know what I would like to do after I graduate with a political science degree from UL; I know what fields each of the faculty of the Department of Political Science specialize in at UL; I know what preparation I need for law school or graduate school admission and application; I know what internship opportunities are available to me in the department of political science; I know how I will be advised each semester by the faculty from the department of political science; I know what clubs, scholarships, and extracurricular activities are available in the department of political science.

Connected Document
 POLS 101 pre and post test

Finding (2015-2016) - Target: Met

As this was the first year of the implementation of this assessment tool, we were very interested to see the impact of the newly instituted POLS 101 class on the student body for Engagement with the Political System, Student Mastery of Effective Citizenship, Positive Attitudes, and Learning about the Discipline. Based on this standard, the POLS Department achieved its goals in each of these areas in the POLS 101 class during the 2015/16 cycle. On the pre-test, we received 47 responses and on the post-test we received 37 responses. Each of the questions that was asked (the pre/post test is attached) gave the opportunity for the student to respond with a Strongly agree, Agree, No Opinion, Disagree, and Strongly disagree response. The full responses to the survey are included below. One of the major goals of the assessment was to attempt to move the responses from the Disagree/Strongly Disagree responses to the Agree and and Strongly Agree responses across the board. This was overwhelmingly the case. In the pre test, 244 responses of Disagree or Strongly Disagree to the questions were given. In the post test, these two categories received only 4 responses combined, and the Strongly Disagree category received 0 responses (out of 370). This was a an unbelievable drop to less than 2% of the total responses by the students who marked as Disagree or Strongly Disagree. In fact, these 4 "disagreements" were only given in two categories (Ten Specific Jobs (3 responses)/ and Internships (1 response)). In stark contrast, almost every one of the categories saw an exponential increase in the number of students who marked agree or strongly agree between the pre and post test. The total number of responses for all of the questions in these two categories saw a 220% increase. In specific categories, the increase is even more significant. The number of those who agreed or strongly agreed that they knew the "Academic Requirements for Majors" increased from 9 responses to 37 (a 400% increase). the number of those who agreed or strongly agreed that they knew "What fields the Faculty Specialized in" increased from 4 to 36 in the agree or strongly agree categories (a 900% increase). In addition to the dramatic shift in the student knowledge from the pre to the post test, the number of responses of "no opinion" dropped by nearly 80% to only 12 total responses out of the 370 given (from 65 on the pre test). The attempt of this new measure of assessment was to make students aware of opportunities for Engagement with the Political System, provide examples of and opportunities for Student Mastery of Effective Citizenship, increase their Positive Attitudes about their major and provide depth of Learning about the Discipline that they had chosen. Both the structure of the POLS 101 class and the pre and post test suggest that this was an overwhelming success. As this is a 1 hour class and provided specifically to incoming freshmen, the trends here suggest that we may also be able to positively impact retention and career direction by the implementation of the POLS 101 class.

PRE TEST 101 Fall 2015

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	TOTAL	
Academic Requirements for Majors	2	7	5	23	10		47
Specific Classes to Graduate	6	12	8	14	7		47
Required Elements of a Resume	1	14	4	16	12		47
Ten Specific Jobs	0	11	3	22	11		47
What I'd Like To Do After Graduation	14	23	4	5	1		47
What Fields The Faculty Specialize In	1	3	8	25	9		46
Grad/Law Prep	1	8	11	16	11		47
Internship Opportunities	2	13	7	19	6		47
Advising	10	12	9	11	5		47
Clubs/Scholarships/Extracurriculars	2	18	6	16	5		47
TOTAL	39	121	65	167	77		469

POST TEST 101 Fall 2015

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	TOTAL	
Academic Requirements for Majors	28	9	0	0	0		37
Specific Classes to Graduate	32	5	0	0	0		37
Required Elements of a Resume	27	8	2	0	0		37
Ten Specific Jobs	19	15	0	3	0		37
What I'd Like To Do After Graduation	20	10	6	1	0		37
What Fields The Faculty Specialize In	24	12	1	0	0		37
Grad/Law Prep	24	11	2	0	0		37
Internship Opportunities	20	16	1	0	0		37

Advising	29	8	0	0	0	37
Clubs/Scholarships/Extracurriculars	26	11	0	0	0	37
TOTAL	249	105	12	4	0	370

SLO 3: Positive Attitudes
Students will develop positive attitudes towards political participation.

Relevant Associations:

General Education/Core Curriculum Associations

3.3 Create engaged citizens.

Strategic Plan Associations

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

2.1.4 Students KPI 4: Improve student success through engagement in high impact practices.

Related Measures

M 3: Reaction Paper
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 217/317-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" that seeks 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. The Reaction Paper that is a small part of the Field Trip Assignment seeks information about changes in students' attitudes after attending the meeting.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Target:
Success in the area of "positive affect and "improved likelihood of participation" has been set at 50%. That is, if one-half of the students attending the meeting report an improved attitude towards government and an increased likelihood of attending some future governmental meeting then the assignment may be viewed as a success.

Connected Document
Reaction Paper Guidelines

Finding (2015-2016) - Target: Met
Field Trip Paper Feedback Assignment, 2015-16 POLS 317 is a course required of most pols majors, including those with concentrations in pre-law or political science. The field trip requires students to attend a local governmental meeting. Typically this requirement is completed by attendance at a city council or a school board meeting. In an effort to measure the attitudinal effects of this requirement the department asks students to complete a "Field Trip Paper Feedback Assignment" after attending a meeting (assignment below). Thirty-four students completed the questionnaire in Spring 2016. The results were collated in Spring 2016 by a two-person team. Inter-coder reliability was assumed to be high, based on the similarity of the results from each coder. The students were asked three questions and were given a chance to respond yes, no, or unsure/ n/a; less, more or unsure/ n/a; and likely, less likely, and unsure/ n/a (respectively) The results were as follows: Question 1: Did attendance at this meeting change the way that you view your government? Yes: 22 No: 4 Unsure or n/a: 8. Question 2: Did your attendance at this meeting make you more or less likely to attend a government meeting in the future? More Likely: 20 Less Likely: 4 Unsure/ N/a: 10. Question 3: Did attendance at this meeting make it more likely that you will exercise your participation rights as a citizen at some point in the future? More likely: 20 Less Likely: 3 Unsure/ n/a: 11.

Discussion: As may be seen from the results, students exposed to a governmental meeting, overwhelmingly find that their experience was transformative and are much more likely to attend future meetings and participate in politics in the future. Indeed, among those students who responded, nearly 64% answered positively to question one and 58% gave an answer of "Yes" regarding questions two and three respectively. These data correspond well with the department goal of increasing student and citizen participation in and with government. In addition, they exceed the target of 50% improved likelihood of participation to view the target as met. Although, overall, Also, they show the same positive responses to the same questions that were received during the 2013-14 assessment cycle and the 2015-16 cycle (although this is slightly less than both cycles). Although the responses do correlate with the outcomes that were desired by the department, the decrease in overall positivity is something that suggests further examination. Studies suggest that the electorate positivity often mimics that of the general election cycle tenor. This would align with our findings during a presidential election primary cycle that has been incredibly negative and presents the view of uncertainty over the ability to make a difference through participation or civic engagement.

Changes: Consistent with the conclusions of the report in 2013-14 and 14-15, it is felt that the results of this assessment, while positive, could be improved by changing the assessment measure to better determine student attitudes. Because of transitions of the department head and weave designees, this change will look to be implemented, if need be, for the 16-17 cycle of assessment. The improved measure would potentially be revised as follows in order to further codify the process and potentially gain more depth. For example, a student may report that his or her view is changed by their trip to see a local government in operation, yet we cannot tell with the current measure whether that change was positive or negative, because both responses are coded the same. Hence, we plan to look at changing the assessment instrument to one using the Likert scale, which will allow for great sensitivity. A draft of a proposed assessment tool is included below, although this draft will be subject to revision as comments are gained. The following are suggestions for measures to assess: 1. Awareness of local government; 2. Trust in local government; 3. (belief in the) Efficacy of local government; 4. (Belief in the) Efficacy of personal participation; 5. Tolerance of political views; 6. Interest in local government. Local Government Attitudinal Survey Instructions: This is an anonymous survey. Do NOT place your name on this answer sheet. For each of the statements below, circle the answer that best indicates how much you agree or disagree with each statement. 1. "I am informed about how local government meetings work." 1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = slightly disagree 4 = unsure/don't know 5 = slightly agree 6 = agree 7 = strongly agree 2. "I am interested in how local government works." 1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = slightly disagree 4 = unsure/don't know 5 = slightly agree 6 = agree 7 = strongly agree 3. "I want to attend a local government meeting." 1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = slightly disagree 4 = unsure/don't know 5 = slightly agree 6 = agree 7 = strongly agree 4. "I trust that local government works well." 1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = slightly disagree 4 = unsure/don't know 5 = slightly agree 6 = agree 7=strongly agree 5. "I believe people can make a difference if they get involved in local government." 1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=slightly disagree 4=unsure/don't know 5=slightly agree 6=agree 7=strongly agree 6. "I want to get involved in local politics." 1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=slightly disagree 4=unsure/don't know 5=slightly agree 6=agree 7=strongly agree

Current Field Trip Paper Feedback Assignment The Department of Political Science is interested in determining the benefits of requiring State and Local Government students to attend a local government meeting. With that purpose in mind, your assignment is to describe what effect your visit to local government has had on you, in terms of your experience and your attitude. You are also encouraged to speculate about its likely effect (if any) on your future actions. More specifically you are asked to comment on the following: *Did attendance at this meeting change the way that you view your government? Explain how? *Did your attendance at this meeting make you more or less likely to attend a government meeting in the future? *Did attendance at this meeting make it more likely that you will exercise your participation rights as a citizen at some point in the future? What activities might you be more likely to undertake? Directions Your answers should be type-written and double-spaced. You should have a cover page with your name on it but your name should appear nowhere else on the paper. Your answer should be written in prose and complete sentences, about one page long, but no more than two pages. No citations are necessary; this paper is a reflection of how you feel and think about governmental meetings and your government. Turning the Assignment In This assignment may be turned in any time after you have attended a meeting, up through the final exam. It is not necessary that you turn it in with your field trip paper, although students frequently do.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

Civic Engagement Activities (317)

Given the success of the Field Trip assignment, faculty will be encouraged to expand course-related civic engagement activities where they do exist and to create them where they do not. The 2009 assessment had a few problems: not all students who took POLS 317 and completed the Field Trip assignment completed the Reaction Paper. Secondly, not all students in the Department take POLS 317. Under new POLS curriculum guidelines, all pre-law and POLS majors will be required to take POLS 317, thereby exposing them to the field trip requirement. This should create a broader group of students to study. The Reaction Paper is now also regularized in the POLS 317 curriculum so that all students completing the course complete it. However, and in addition, the instrument itself needs to be examined critically. It may be that the "Reaction Paper" is "helping" the students report good attitudes rather than merely recording the attitudes that exist. Future iterations should take measures to address some of these lingering questions. There may be a way to arrive at this same data more obliquely, or in a way that does not chance poisoning the sample as it was speculated that reports of bad local governmental leaders did for the positive perception of government noted above.

Update By Dr Ryan Lee Teten 4/30/15:   POLS 317 is now required of all POLS and Pre-Law majors. In addition, the reaction paper is now a required aspect of that course. Therefore, although the reaction paper structure and possible feedback revision is in progress, this Action Plan (increased requirement of the 317 course) has been completed.

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010
Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
    Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes

Course Specific Assessments

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Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

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Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

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Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
    Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System
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Update: As of the 2014-15 cycle, a majority of the syllabi from the department included student leaning outcomes. Therefore this planned action now becomes an in-progress plan to seek unanimous inclusion in the syllabi.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
    Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
    Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes

Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Competitive Pre-law Moot Court Collegiate Opportunities

For students seeking to graduate with a degree in Political Science or Pre-Law who may wish to continue to law school, activities that foster and nurture the debate and Socratic skills necessary for sucess are invaluable. Law firms and law schools alike have confirmed that the type of skills garnered through Moot Court classes and competitions are not only important for a student's development, but also to foster the critical thinking and interaction ability that is central for law school. With this in mind, the department of political science will attempt to create a Moot Court class as well as an intercollegiate and competitive Moot Court team. The primary challenges that have prevented this innovation in the past (and also, carrying over to the present) will be faculty to lead the course and the competition as well as seeking funding for travel and competitions. The result of the establishment of the program should align with all of the goals of the department: Engagement with the Political System, Positive Attitudes, Critical Thinking and Writing and Learning About the Discipline. Measureable participation in the program will be visible on the Passport measurement as well as in the concrete realization of the course and competition participation.

Established in Cycle: 2014-2015
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System
Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Implementation Description: Faculty will be sought to lead the Moot Court class and Moot court competitive team. Funds will be sought and petitioned for from the University as well as the local law community.
Projected Completion Date: 12/2017
Responsible Person/Group: Department Head
Additional Resources: Student Travel funding if possible

Election year Campaign Internships and Volunteerism

One of the core missions of the department of political science is to encourage experiential learning about the discipline by participating in timely and important political events locally. One of the best way that students can be exposed to the tenets of government that are discussed in class is through volunteering for or interning with local, state, and federal activities. In addition, students who meet the requirements established by the political science department of working in an internship that will involve 15 or more hours per week, maintaining a 3.0 cumulative GPA or higher, providing a letter of recommendation from a political science professor, providing a writing sample from a political science course, and providing the contact information for the internship supervisor are also eligible to receive political science class credit for their campaign work. The result of the establishment of the program should align with all of the goals of the department: Engagement with the Political System, Positive Attitudes, Critical Thinking and Writing and Learning About the Discipline. Measurable participation in the program will be visible on the Passport measurement as well as noting the increases in the numbers of student internships (POLS 397/398 and 497/498) during campaign cycles.

Established in Cycle: 2014-2015
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: Medium

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System
Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Responsible Person/Group: Internship Director

M 5: POLS 101 Pre/Post test

The establishment of a 1 hour course, required of all majors in the first year, has allowed the department to seek to educate its cohort, at a much earlier date, on the specifics of the major and the field of political science. The class not only provides information regarding potential classes and fields of study in political science here at the University of Louisiana, it also addresses main student needs as well. The students create c.v's, they learn about the differences between Law schools and graduate study and the tests required for each, as well as how to attain positions outside of academia in both governmental and non-governmental employ. Our hope is that this course will lead to increased and earlier civic participation and social involvement that will be clearly visible in the passport results. In addition, we plan to institute an assessment tool for this specific course that will examine the retention not only of the fundamentals of our discipline and college, but also the real-world opportunities to which the students will be exposed during the course of the class.

We will begin to administer an assessment tool in POLS 101. This tool will be administered twice, once at the beginning of the semester and again at the end. 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. This Measure will correlate with the departmental goal of Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship by providing exposure to opportunities within the community related to political science. It will correlate with the departmental goal of Positive attitudes and Learning About the Discipline by measuring the increase in general knowledge regarding fields of study, opportunities for employment, and other facets of political science.

Source of Evidence: Faculty pre-test / post-test of knowledge mastery

Connected Document
POLS 101 pre and post test

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. The survey questions were as follows:I know the academic requirements for majors in the Department of Political Science at UL; I know what specific classes I will need to take in order to graduate with a degree in Political science, pre-law or international relations;I know the required elements of a professionally constructed résumé; I know 10 specific jobs that are available upon graduation to me as a political science, pre-law, or international relations major; I know what I would like to do after I graduate with a political science degree from UL; I know what fields each of the faculty of the Department of Political Science specialize in at UL; I know what preparation I need for law school or graduate school admission and application; I know what internship opportunities are available to me in the department of political science; I know how I will be advised each semester by the faculty from the department of political science; I know what clubs, scholarships, and extracurricular activities are available in the department of political science.

Connected Document
POLS 101 pre and post test

Finding (2015-2016) - Target: Met

As this was the first year of the implementation of this assessment tool, we were very interested to see the impact of the newly instituted POLS 101 class on the student body for Engagement with the Political System, Student Mastery of Effective Citizenship, Positive Attitudes, and Learning about the Discipline. Based on this standard, the POLS Department achieved its goals in each of these areas in the POLS 101 class during the 2015/16 cycle. On the pre-test, we received 47 responses and on the post-test we received 37 responses. Each of the questions that was asked (the pre/post test is attached) gave the opportunity for the student to respond with a Strongly agree, Agree, No Opinion, Disagree, and Strongly disagree response. The full responses to the survey are included below. One of the major goals of the assessment was to attempt to move the responses from the Disagree/Strongly Disagree responses to the Agree and and Strongly Agree responses across the board. This was overwhelmingly the case. In the

pre test, 244 responses of Disagree or Strongly Disagree to the questions were given. In the post test, these two categories received only 4 responses combined, and the Strongly Disagree category received 0 responses (out of 370). This was a an unbelievable drop to less than 2% of the total responses by the students who marked as Disagree or Strongly Disagree. In fact, these 4 "disagreements" were only given in two categories (Ten Specific Jobs (3 responses)/ and Internships (1 response)). In stark contrast, almost every one of the categories saw an exponential increase in the number of students who marked agree or strongly agree between the pre and post test. The total number of responses for all of the questions in these two categories saw a 220% increase. In specific categories, the increase is even more significant. The number of those who agreed or strongly agreed that they knew the "Academic Requirements for Majors" increased from 9 responses to 37 (a 400% increase). the number of those who agreed or strongly agreed that they knew "What fields the Faculty Specialized in" increased from 4 to 36 in the agree or strongly agree categories (a 900% increase). In addition to the dramatic shift in the student knowledge from the pre to the post test, the number of responses of "no opinion" dropped by nearly 80% to only 12 total responses out of the 370 given (from 65 on the pre test). The attempt of this new measure of assessment was to make students aware of opportunities for Engagement with the Political System, provide examples of and opportunities for Student Mastery of Effective Citizenship, increase their Positive Attitudes about their major and provide depth of Learning about the Discipline that they had chosen. Both the structure of the POLS 101 class and the pre and post test suggest that this was an overwhelming success. As this is a 1 hour class and provided specifically to incoming freshmen, the trends here suggest that we may also be able to positively impact retention and career direction by the implementation of the POLS 101 class.

PRE TEST 101 Fall 2015

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	TOTAL
Academic Requirements for Majors	2	7	5	23	10	47
Specific Classes to Graduate	6	12	8	14	7	47
Required Elements of a Resume	1	14	4	16	12	47
Ten Specific Jobs	0	11	3	22	11	47
What I'd Like To Do After Graduation	14	23	4	5	1	47
What Fields The Faculty Specialize In	1	3	8	25	9	46
Grad/Law Prep	1	8	11	16	11	47
Internship Opportunities	2	13	7	19	6	47
Advising	10	12	9	11	5	47
Clubs/Scholarships /Extracurriculars	2	18	6	16	5	47
TOTAL	39	121	65	167	77	469

POST TEST 101 Fall 2015

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	TOTAL
Academic Requirements for Majors	28	9	0	0	0	37
Specific Classes to Graduate	32	5	0	0	0	37
Required Elements of a Resume	27	8	2	0	0	37
Ten Specific Jobs	19	15	0	3	0	37
What I'd Like To Do After Graduation	20	10	6	1	0	37
What Fields The Faculty Specialize In	24	12	1	0	0	37
Grad/Law Prep	24	11	2	0	0	37
Internship Opportunities	20	16	1	0	0	37
Advising	29	8	0	0	0	37
Clubs/Scholarships /Extracurriculars	26	11	0	0	0	37
TOTAL	249	105	12	4	0	370

SLO 4: Critical Thinking and Writing
Students will master the skills necessary to read, think, and write critically across the discipline of political science.

Relevant Associations:

General Education/Core Curriculum Associations

1.1 Think critically and read with comprehension.
1.2 Write essays that make arguments appropriately supported by evidence, while synthesizing and documenting sources.
1.3 Speak cogently in presenting information.
3.1 Collect, consume, and critique basic and complex concepts in history and social sciences.

Strategic Plan Associations

University of Louisiana at Lafayette
2.1.4 Students KPI 4: Improve student success through engagement in high impact practices.

Related Measures

M 4: Text Critique

Number of students assessed = 30. The fourth goal articulated in the Assessment Plan for the Department of Political Science is that students completing the political science degree will be able to read complex primary and secondary texts, critique those texts, and write critically about them. In order to measure the Department's success in preparing students for these complex tasks, the Department typically selects 15 papers from majors with less than 60 credit hours and 15 papers from majors with more than 90 credit hours. The basic assumption behind this strategy is that students with more hours in the Political Science program should be able to read, think and write more effectively than should students with fewer hours. The papers collected are then graded by three members of the Political Science faculty according to a 6-point rubric developed by the entire Department (The POLS Grading Rubric is Appendix D). Each item on the Departmental Rubric is scored from 0-4 points, with 4 being the highest. Each professor scores the six items for each essay. The raw scores for each of the six items on the rubric are added and then divided by three to generate an average of all the evaluations.

This assessment was not performed in 2010-11. It is planned for the 2011-12 assessment cycle.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

Target:

Success in the area of mastering the skills necessary to read, think and write critically across the discipline of political science has been set as an average increase of at least .5 (on a 4.0 scale; a 12.5% improvement) between the under 60 papers and the over 90 papers.

Finding (2015-2016) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle

We did not assess this Outcome/Objective (Success in the area of mastering the skills necessary to read, think and write critically across the discipline of political science has been set as an average increase of at least .5 (on a 4.0 scale; a 12.5% improvement) between the under 60 papers and the over 90 papers.) during the 2015-16 cycle.

It will be assessed with the Passport of Political Participation in the 2106-17 cycle.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

Curriculum Map

A third change is the planned institution of a "curriculum map" specifying where learning is taking place in what courses along the student's path to graduation. It is thought that an explicit focus on the process of learning will increase the likelihood that students will learn. We will utilize the stated learning outcomes from every syllabus and class to map out what each will contribute to a student's overall education. This will also enable us to better diagnose where inefficiencies may be present or where there may be specific needs to reconfigure classes or class content.

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
        Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

First Year Seminar

The second change (currently under discussion) is to institute a first year seminar that puts POLS students firmly on the path to the goals listed above by informing them of expectations and directing them along the path to reach them. Partly as a result of this exercise, the Department has become aware that majors in the early years take too few classes in Political Science and are not required to begin writing serious papers early enough in their college career. It is hoped that a curriculum review and the institution of a first year seminar will address this problem in the near future. Possible solutions might include designating some 300-level classes that would more routinely expose sophomores (students with less than 60 credit hours) to writing assignments of 10 to 15 pages. These papers could then be used to gauge the effectiveness of our program in promoting our goal of reading, thinking and writing critically across the discipline of Political Science.

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010
Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
        Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Rigorous Reading and Writing Plan

The POLS Department is strongly committed to the success of our students and believes that nothing is a more important indicator of pedagogical success than the ability of our students to read, think and write critically across the discipline of political science. With that in mind, we have adopted some Department wide curriculum changes and are pursuing other initiatives to improve the chances of student success. The first of these changes involved tightening a number of the electives in our three degree plans to reflect a more rigorous reading and writing plan of study for all of our concentrations (pre-Law, Political Science, International Relations).

Update By Dr Ryan Lee Teten 4/30/15: As of the new Fall 2015-16 curriculum, Students in POLS are now required to take a 3/4xx level sociology class, 33 POLS major hours of 3/4xx level classes (as opposed to the 24 hours required in the 2009-11 catalog) and a Philosophy class. Students in Pre-law are now required to take a 3/4xx level sociology class, 33 POLS major hours of 3/4xx level classes (as opposed to the 24 hours required in the 2009-11 catalog) and a 3xx/4xx level Philosophy class. Students in International relations are now required to take an 3/4xx level geography class, 33 POLS major hours of 3/4xx level classes (as opposed to the 24 hours required in the 2009-11 catalog) and a Philosophy class. Although we are still looking at ways to increase the reading and writing requirements for the majors, these changes move the action plan from planned to in-progress.

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
        Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Under-60 and Over-90 Professor

Previously it had been proposed that the POLS rubric be adopted for general use in POLS. Yet, a discussion and comparison among the faculty made it plain that the wide variety of papers and assignments in use in the various POLS courses precludes any such general usage. While several professors are voluntarily distributing the Rubric with their term paper assignments and making the Rubric part of their course materials (making it more likely that students will incorporate the principal elements), others do not use the rubric in their courses. This will make it difficult to continue to measure papers produced at different levels against each other, as they are apples and oranges to some degree. One possible solution would be to take papers from the classes of a single professor who taught both an under-60 and an over-90 course, especially if that professor used the rubric as a standard of measurement. This option will be pursued in future assessments.

Established in Cycle: 2009-2010
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
        Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Course Specific Assessments

As the result of specific learning outcomes on each class syllabi, and as the further result of a clear curriculum map that these slo's will enable, we hope to institute assessments for each individual course, when offered. These assessments will be able to test not only for the differences in

the student citizenry as they matriculate through the program. They will also allow the department to evaluate each class according to its stated slo's and its place on the curriculum map. This latter step will allow the department to maintain alignment with its mission, the goals of the college and the university, and with the needs of the students.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
　　　　Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
　　　　Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
　　　　Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Majority Participation in Learning Outcome Syllabus Inclusion

Within the next two years, we hope to have at least 50% of all of the political science classes that are offered have clearly detailed student learning outcomes included in their syllabi. This will detail student expectations of achievement, as well as will provide depth of understanding in terms of creation and correct placement of these courses on a departmental curriculum map.

Update By Dr Ryan Lee Teten 4/30/15: As of the 2014-15 cycle, a majority of the faculty include student learning outcomes in their syllabi. Therefore, this action plan is finished and the plan to seek unanimous inclusion moves from planned to in-progress.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
　　　　Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
　　　　Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
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Implementation Description: The implementation of this action plan will require faculty to ascribe to the understanding of the importance of the curriculum map to discover strengths and weaknesses in the department and to best serve student needs and provide them with rigorous and complementary coursework over the course of their careers.

Political Science Peer Mentoring Program

Beginning in 2012-2013, the department of political science implemented a new departmental peer mentoring program. Similar in construction to the UNIV peer mentors, outstanding juniors and seniors from within our majors are placed in our Introductory political science classes for the duration of the semester. These upperclassmen attend every class, run review sessions, meet with students, answer questions that students might not feel comfortable bring to the professor, and share their educational and life experiences with the new, incoming political science majors. The hope is this will result in increased civic and institutional engagement earlier in our political science majors' matriculation, it will aid in retention within the major, and it will lead to increased job placement and networking abilities of our majors.

Update By Dr Ryan Lee Teten 4/30/15: As of the 2014-15 cycle, the Peer Mentor program is in its third year. This makes this action plan inception finished as opposed to in progress, even though the Peer Mentor program continues indefinitely.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: Finished
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
　　　　Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System
　　　　Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
　　　　Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
　　　　Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Unanimous Participation in Learning Outcome Syllabus Inclusion

Within the next five years, we hope to have 100% of all of the political science classes that are offered have clearly detailed student learning outcomes included in their syllabi. This will detail student expectations of achievement, as well as will provide depth of understanding in terms of creation and correct placement of these courses on a departmental curriculum map.

Update: As of the 2014-15 cycle, a majority of the syllabi from the department included student leaning outcomes. Therefore this planned action now becomes an in-progress plan to seek unanimous inclusion in the syllabi.

Established in Cycle: 2012-2013
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
　　　　Measure: POLS 110 Pre/Post Test | **Outcome/Objective:** Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship
　　　　Measure: Reaction Paper | **Outcome/Objective:** Positive Attitudes
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Established in Cycle: 2014-2015
Implementation Status: In-Progress
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
　　　　Measure: Passport of Political Participation | **Outcome/Objective:** Engagement with Political System
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Implementation Description: Faculty will be sought to lead the Moot Court class and Moot court competitive team. Funds will be sought and petitioned for from the University as well as the local law community.
Projected Completion Date: 12/2017

Responsible Person/Group: Department Head
Additional Resources: Student Travel funding if possible

Election year Campaign Internships and Volunteerism

One of the core missions of the department of political science is to encourage experiential learning about the discipline by participating in timely and important political events locally. One of the best way that students can be exposed to the tenets of government that are discussed in class is through volunteering for or interning with local, state, and federal election activities. In addition, students who meet the requirements established by the political science department of working in an internship that will involve 15 or more hours per week, maintaining a 3.0 cumulative GPA or higher, providing a letter of recommendation from a political science professor, providing a writing sample from a political science course, and providing the contact information for the internship supervisor are also eligible to receive political science class credit for their campaign work. The result of the establishment of the program should align with all of the goals of the department: Engagement with the Political System, Positive Attitudes, Critical Thinking and Writing and Learning About the Discipline. Measurable participation in the program will be visible on the Passport measurement as well as noting the increases in the numbers of student internships (POLS 397/398 and 497/498) during campaign cycles.

Established in Cycle: 2014-2015
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: Medium

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
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Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Responsible Person/Group: Internship Director

Measure student legal writing and analysis skills

We will review our 2016-17 "text critique" measurement and expand it to include measurement of student legal writing and analysis. The current measure of text critique does not capture the different type of analytic writing and reasoning used in legal writing by pre-law students in pre-law courses.

Established in Cycle: 2015-2016
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Text Critique | **Outcome/Objective:** Critical Thinking and Writing

Responsible Person/Group: Rick Swanson and Kinzie Hall (the two PLAW faculty for this academic year) will devise a way to compare student legal writing and analysis between students taking a beginning PLAW course versus students taking an advanced PLAW course

SLO 5: Learn about Discipline

It is believed that students majoring in political science should possess sufficient knowledge of the program at UL Lafayette, and the career opportunities open to them with a political science degree that they are making an informed choice about their program of study and preparing for life beyond the B.A.

Relevant Associations:

Standard Associations

SACS (sections): 2010
2.7.2 Program Content
3.5.3 Undergraduate program requirements

General Education/Core Curriculum Associations

3.3 Create engaged citizens.

Related Measures

M 5: POLS 101 Pre/Post test

The establishment of a 1 hour course, required of all majors in the first year, has allowed the department to seek to educate its cohort, at a much earlier date, on the specifics of the major and the field of political science. The class not only provides information regarding potential classes and fields of study in political science here at the University of Louisiana, it also addresses main student needs as well. The students create c.v's, they learn about the differences between Law schools and graduate study and the tests required for each, as well as how to attain positions outside of academia in both governmental and non-governmental employ. Our hope is that this course will lead to increased and earlier civic participation and social involvement that will be clearly visible in the passport results. In addition, we plan to institute an assessment tool for this specific course that will examine the retention not only of the fundamentals of our discipline and college, but also the real-world opportunities to which the students will be exposed during the course of the class.

We will begin to administer an assessment tool in POLS 101. This tool will be administered twice, once at the beginning of the semester and again at the end. 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. This Measure will correlate with the departmental goal of Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship by providing exposure to opportunities within the community related to political science. It will correlate with the departmental goal of Positive attitudes and Learning About the Discipline by measuring the increase in general knowledge regarding fields of study, opportunities for employment, and other facets of political science.

Source of Evidence: Faculty pre-test / post-test of knowledge mastery

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Target:
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POLS 101 pre and post test

Finding (2015-2016) - Target: Met

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Required Elements of a Resume	1	14	4	16	12	47
Ten Specific Jobs	0	11	3	22	11	47
What I'd Like To Do After Graduation	14	23	4	5	1	47
What Fields The Faculty Specialize In	1	3	8	25	9	46
Grad/Law Prep	1	8	11	16	11	47
Internship Opportunities	2	13	7	19	6	47
Advising	10	12	9	11	5	47
Clubs/Scholarships/Extracurriculars	2	18	6	16	5	47
TOTAL	39	121	65	167	77	469

POST TEST 101 Fall 2015

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	TOTAL
Academic Requirements for Majors	28	9	0	0	0	37
Specific Classes to Graduate	32	5	0	0	0	37
Required Elements of a Resume	27	8	2	0	0	37
Ten Specific Jobs	19	15	0	3	0	37
What I'd Like To Do After Graduation	20	10	6	1	0	37
What Fields The Faculty Specialize In	24	12	1	0	0	37
Grad/Law Prep	24	11	2	0	0	37
Internship Opportunities	20	16	1	0	0	37
Advising	29	8	0	0	0	37
Clubs/Scholarships/Extracurriculars	26	11	0	0	0	37
TOTAL	249	105	12	4	0	370

Analysis Questions and Analysis Answers

How were assessment results shared and evaluated within the unit?
These assessment results were shared with the Political Science Department in face to face conversation as well as e-mail updates.

Identify which action plans [created in prior cycle(s)] were implemented in this current cycle. For each of these implemented plans, were there any measurable or perceivable effects? How, if at all, did the findings appear to be affected by the implemented action plan?

Competitive Pre-law Moot Court Collegiate Opportunities
With the leadership of an adjunct faculty, a competitive moot court competition began in the 2015-16 cycle. The group attended several competitions and placed in many of them. In addition, the group hosted it's first ever moot court invitational. This has succeeded in implementing the goals set forth for this action plan : "For students seeking to graduate with a degree in Political Science or Pre-Law who may wish to continue to law school, activities that foster and nurture the debate and Socratic skills necessary for sucess are invaluable. Law firms and law schools alike have confirmed that the type of skills garnered through Moot Court classes and competitions are not only important for a student's development, but also to foster the critical thinking and interaction ability that is central for law school. With this in mind, the department of political science will attempt to create a Moot Court class as well as an intercollegiate and competitive Moot Court team. The primary challenges that have prevented this innovation in the past (and also, carrying over to the present) will be faculty to lead the course and the competition as well as seeking funding for travel and competitions. The result of the establishment of the program should align with all of the goals of the department: Engagement with the Political System, Positive Attitudes, Critical Thinking and Writing and Learning About the Discipline. Measureable participation in the program will be visible on the Passport measurement as well as in the concrete realization of the course and competition participation." We will seek the continence of the program and reliable funding and faculty for the future.

POLS 101 pre and post test
The establishment of a 1 hour course, required of all majors in the first year, has allowed the department to seek to educate its cohort, at a much earlier date, on the specifics of the major and the field of political science. The class not only provides information regarding potential classes and fields of study in political science here at the University of Louisiana, it also addresses main student needs as well. The students create c.v's, they learn about the differences between Law schools and graduate study and the tests required for each, as well as how to attain positions outside of academia in both governmental and non-governmental employ. Our hope is that this course will lead to increased and earlier civic participation and social involvement that will be clearly visible in the passport results. In addition, we plan to institute an assessment tool for this specific course that will examine the retention not only of the fundamentals of our discipline and college, but also the real-world opportunities to which the students will be exposed during the course of the class. We will begin to administer an assessment tool in POLS 101. This tool

will be administered twice, once at the beginning of the semester and again at the end. 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. This Measure will correlate with the departmental goal of Student Mastery in Effective Citizenship by providing exposure to opportunities within the community related to political science. It will correlate with the departmental goal of Positive attitudes and Learning About the Discipline by measuring the increase in general knowledge regarding fields of study, opportunities for employment, and other facets of political science.

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. The survey questions were as follows:I know the academic requirements for majors in the Department of Political Science at UL; I know what specific classes I will need to take in order to graduate with a degree in Political science, pre-law or international relations;I know the required elements of a professionally constructed résumé; I know 10 specific jobs that are available upon graduation to me as a political science, pre-law, or international relations major; I know what I would like to do after I graduate with a political science degree from UL; I know what fields each of the faculty of the Department of Political Science specialize in at UL; I know what preparation I need for law school or graduate school admission and application; I know what internship opportunities are available to me in the department of political science; I know how I will be advised each semester by the faculty from the department of political science; I know what clubs, scholarships, and extracurricular activities are available in the department of political science.

As this was the first year of the implementation of this assessment tool, we were very interested to see the impact of the newly instituted POLS 101 class on the student body for Engagement with the Political System, Student Mastery of Effective Citizenship, Positive Attitudes, and Learning about the Discipline. Based on this standard, the POLS Department achieved its goals in each of these areas in the POLS 101 class during the 2015/16 cycle. On the pre-test, we received 47 responses and on the post-test we received 37 responses. Each of the questions that was asked (the pre/post test is attached) gave the opportunity for the student to respond with a Strongly agree, Agree, No Opinion, Disagree, and Strongly disagree response. The full responses to the survey are included below. One of the major goals of the assessment was to attempt to move the responses from the Disagree/Strongly Disagree responses to the Agree and and Strongly Agree responses across the board. This was overwhelmingly the case. In the pre test, 244 responses of Disagree or Strongly Disagree to the questions were given. In the post test, these two categories received only 4 responses combined, and the Strongly Disagree category received 0 responses (out of 370). This was a an unbelievable drop to less than 2% of the total responses by the students who marked as Disagree or Strongly Disagree. In fact, these 4 "disagreements" were only given in two categories (Ten Specific Jobs (3 responses)/ and Internships (1 response)). In stark contrast, almost every one of the categories saw an exponential increase in the number of students who marked agree or strongly agree between the pre and post test. The total number of responses for all of the questions in these two categories saw a 220% increase. In specific categories, the increase is even more significant. The number of those who agreed or strongly agreed that they knew the "Academic Requirements for Majors" increased from 9 responses to 37 (a 400% increase). the number of those who agreed or strongly agreed that they knew "What fields the Faculty Specialized in" increased from 4 to 36 in the agree or strongly agree categories (a 900% increase). In addition to the dramatic shift in the student knowledge from the pre to the post test, the number of responses of "no opinion" dropped by nearly 80% to only 12 total responses out of the 370 given (from 65 on the pre test). The attempt of this new measure of assessment was to make students aware of opportunities for Engagement with the Political System, provide examples of and opportunities for Student Mastery of Effective Citizenship, increase their Positive Attitudes about their major and provide depth of Learning about the Discipline that they had chosen. Both the structure of the POLS 101 class and the pre and post test suggest that this was an overwhelming success. As this is a 1 hour class and provided specifically to incoming freshmen, the trends here suggest that we may also be able to positively impact retention and career direction by the implementation of the POLS 101 class.

PRE TEST 101 Fall 2015

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		TOTAL
Academic Requirements for Majors	2	7	5	23	10		47
Specific Classes to Graduate	6	12	8	14	7		47
Required Elements of a Resume	1	14	4	16	12		47
Ten Specific Jobs	0	11	3	22	11		47
What I'd Like To Do After Graduation	14	23	4	5	1		47
What Fields The Faculty Specialize In	1	3	8	25	9		46
Grad/Law Prep	1	8	11	16	11		47
Internship Opportunities	2	13	7	19	6		47
Advising	10	12	9	11	5		47
Clubs/Scholarships/Extracurriculars	2	18	6	16	5		47
TOTAL	39	121	65	167	77		469

POST TEST 101 Fall 2015

	Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		TOTAL
Academic Requirements for Majors	28	9	0	0	0		37
Specific Classes to Graduate	32	5	0	0	0		37
Required Elements of a Resume	27	8	2	0	0		37
Ten Specific Jobs	19	15	0	3	0		37
What I'd Like To Do After Graduation	20	10	6	1	0		37
What Fields The Faculty Specialize In	24	12	1	0	0		37
Grad/Law Prep	24	11	2	0	0		37
Internship Opportunities	20	16	1	0	0		37
Advising	29	8	0	0	0		37
Clubs/Scholarships/Extracurriculars	26	11	0	0	0		37
TOTAL	249	105	12	4	0		370

What has the unit learned from the current assessment cycle? What is working well, and what is working less well in achieving desired outcomes?

Consistent with the conclusions of the report in 2013-14 and 2015-16 cycles, it is felt that the results of the POLS 317 assessment, while positive, could be improved by changing the assessment measure to better determine student attitudes. Because of transitions of the department head and weave designees, this change is still under discussion and will look to be implemented, if need be, for the 16-17 cycle of assessment. The improved measure would potentially be revised as follows in order to further codify the process and potentially gain more depth. For example, a student may report that his or her view is changed by their trip to see a local government in operation, yet we cannot tell with the current measure whether that change was positive or negative, because both responses are coded the same. Hence, we plan to look at changing the assessment instrument to one using the Likert scale, which will allow for great sensitivity. A draft of a proposed assessment tool is included below, although this draft will be subject to revision as comments are gained. The following are suggestions for

measures to assess: 1. Awareness of local government; 2. Trust in local government; 3. (belief in the) Efficacy of local government; 4. (Belief in the) Efficacy of personal participation; 5. Tolerance of political views; 6. Interest in local government. Local Government Attitudinal Survey Instructions: This is an anonymous survey. Do NOT place your name on this answer sheet. For each of the statements below, circle the answer that best indicates how much you agree or disagree with each statement. 1. "I am informed about how local government meetings work." 1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = slightly disagree 4 = unsure/don't know 5 = slightly agree 6 = agree 7 = strongly agree 2. "I am interested in how local government works." 1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = slightly disagree 4 = unsure/don't know 5 = slightly agree 6 = agree 7 = strongly agree 3. "I want to attend a local government meeting." 1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = slightly disagree 4 = unsure/don't know 5 = slightly agree 6 = agree 7 = strongly agree 4. "I trust that local government works well." 1 = strongly disagree 2 = disagree 3 = slightly disagree 4 = unsure/don't know 5 = slightly agree 6 = agree 7=strongly agree 5. "I believe people can make a difference if they get involved in local government." 1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=slightly disagree 4=unsure/don't know 5=slightly agree 6=agree 7=strongly agree 6. "I want to get involved in local politics." 1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=slightly disagree 4=unsure/don't know 5=slightly agree 6=agree 7=strongly agree

Current Field Trip Paper Feedback Assignment The Department of Political Science is interested in determining the benefits of requiring State and Local Government students to attend a local government meeting. With that purpose in mind, your assignment is to describe what effect your visit to local government has had on you, in terms of your experience and your attitude. You are also encouraged to speculate about its likely effect (if any) on your future actions. More specifically you are asked to comment on the following: *Did attendance at this meeting change the way that you view your government? Explain how? *Did your attendance at this meeting make you more or less likely to attend a government meeting in the future? *Did attendance at this meeting make it more likely that you will exercise your participation rights as a citizen at some point in the future? What activities might you be more likely to undertake? Directions Your answers should be type-written and double-spaced. You should have a cover page with your name on it but your name should appear nowhere else on the paper. Your answer should be written in prose and complete sentences, about one page long, but no more than two pages. No citations are necessary; this paper is a reflection of how you feel and think about governmental meetings and your government. Turning the Assignment In This assignment may be turned in any time after you have attended a meeting, up through the final exam. It is not necessary that you turn it in with your field trip paper, although students frequently do.

For the Passport findings, we are examining whether or not the questionnaire needs to be re-examined to better reach more nuanced responses of students.

Overall, this assessment cycle demonstrated that the department in making important headway into reaching its goals. Both the POLS 101 pre and post test, the POLS 110 pre and post test, the POLS 317 field trip and the Moot Court team demonstrated significant improvements into student engagement with the political system, mastery in effective citizenship and positive attitudes about politics, the political system and political efficacy. The reaction paper will most probably see an overhaul to better measure student feelings of efficacy and positivity. Overall, the findings illustrate the faculty mentoring of clubs, faculty participation in the pols 101 class, close faculty monitoring of student progression in advising, and faculty incorporation of experiential learning in the classrooms has benefited the student cohort to a significant and measurable degree.