

Date Received _____

**Semester Assessment Report Form: Fall 2008 Data
DUE March 31, 2009**

Directions: Please complete a form for each of the programs within your department. This form was designed to provide a format for assessment reporting and should not be used to limit the amount of information provided. Each box that is attached to each of the sections is designed to adjust to varying lengths. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Bea Babbitt at x51506 or via email at: bea.babbitt@unlv.edu.

*****Please submit the report electronically to bea.babbitt@unlv.edu**

1. Program Information:

Program	Graduate Programs PhD, M.A., EPS
Department	Political Science
College	Liberal Arts
Program Assessment Coordinator	Dr. Kenneth E. Fernandez
Semester Data Collected	Fall 2009
Report Submitted by	Dr. Kenneth E. Fernandez
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Date Submitted	March 31, 2009

2. According to the Assessment Plan for this program, what were the planned assessments to be conducted during the Fall 2008 semester? You may want to copy and paste from this program's assessment plan.

Which outcomes for this program were measured?	How did you measure the outcomes?	What results did you expect? If the students performed well what would their performance look like, i.e. percentages, means, or comparisons to a national standard?
7 outcomes were evaluated this semester.		
1. Development of critical thinking skills necessary for the evaluation of social science concepts.	Instructor course grades of student performances. Student comments and evaluation of course in teaching evaluations. Interviews with graduate students.	Passing grades in core research methods and related courses. Positive evaluations of course by students.

<p>2. Knowledge of the research process in the social sciences.</p>	<p>Instructor course grades of student performances. Student comments and evaluation of course in teaching evaluations. Interviews with graduate students.</p>	<p>Passing Grades in core research methods and related courses. Positive evaluations of course by students.</p>
<p>3. Development of the skills and knowledge needed for informed information consumption.</p>	<p>Instructor course grades of student performances. Student comments and evaluation of course in teaching evaluations. Interviews with graduate students.</p>	<p>Passing grades in core research methods and related courses. Positive evaluations of course by students.</p>
<p>4. Development of knowledge of the multiple motivations and constraints underlying political behavior.</p>	<p>Instructor course grades of student performances. Student comments and evaluation of course in teaching evaluations. Interviews with graduate students.</p>	<p>Passing Grades in core research methods and related courses. Positive evaluations of course by students.</p>
<p>5. Development of an understanding of the multi-causal nature that characterizes the social world.</p>	<p>Instructor course grades of student performances. Student comments and evaluation of course in teaching evaluations. Interviews with graduate students.</p>	<p>Passing grades in core research methods and related courses. Positive evaluations of course by students.</p>
<p>6. Application of the social science research process.</p>	<p>Instructor course grades of student performances. Student comments and evaluation of course in teaching evaluations. Interview with graduate students.</p>	<p>Passing Grades in core research methods and related courses. Positive evaluations of course by students. Students expressing a positive understanding of the application of course objectives and assignments to the research process (i.e. M.A. thesis)</p>
<p>7. Upon completion of the program students will have knowledge of the theoretical and methodological development and controversies within the discipline.</p>	<p>Completion of thesis or written and oral exam.</p>	<p>Positive (Passing) evaluation of thesis or exam committee.</p>

3. Results. What are the results of the planned assessments listed above? Describe below or attach to the form.

Results

I. Student Grades

The courses that were offered in the Fall of 2008 were:
PSC701; PSC723; PSC760; EPS712

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
A	21	42.0	42.0	42.0
A-	11	22.0	22.0	64.0
B+	12	24.0	24.0	96.0
B	4	8.0	8.0	72.0
WD	1	2.0	2.0	98.0
WH	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

II. Student Course Evaluations

The overall course evaluation averages for the graduate classes were above average to high: 3.81, 3.80, 3.52, 3.42

III. Comments of students in teaching evaluations.

Generally, the student comments on the graduate courses were very strong. This report will focus on the critical comments for future improvement of the curriculum. One of the most common comments was that the amount of assigned reading was too much.

- Tie readings and course to current events
- Encourage more discussion
- Provide more/better feedback on assignment so student have better idea of their performance
- Smaller classes

IV. Comments of Students in Interviews

Generally, the comments received in the focus groups and individual interviews were not about any courses or course material, but rather about the graduate program itself.

- Students felt that course assignments and assessments were appropriate and provided the needed structure, incentives and opportunity to consume and analyze the course material, but they would appreciate more detailed feedback on these assignments and assessments when handed back to students.
- Most critical comments were not about curriculum content but rather on recent changes to degree requirements
- Similarly, students wished there was better communications regarding the thesis and examination process
- Students wanted more courses offered and at better and more various times
- Students suggested smaller courses; 16 students in a course is too large
- Students suggested access to a graduate student computer lab with SPSS and STATA so that students can work together on projects.
- Student felt the courses in the political science courses were similar in structure and rigor to graduate courses taken in other departments.
- Students appreciated being required to discuss or present their own research projects or papers in class. Such a requirement allowed them to get immediate feedback and get ideas from other student's comments and presentations.
- Students suggested that students be reminded about the requirement that students form their advisory committee before completing sixteen credits of work.

4. Conclusions and Discoveries. What conclusions or discoveries were made from these results? Describe below or attach to the form.

Conclusions and Discoveries

The main goal of the assessment of the graduate program is to assess whether our graduate students are making adequate progress through the program and that the

program and its curriculum are preparing students to begin work on their thesis. Overall students expressed through their evaluations and comments that they were satisfied with the program and felt that the courses were challenging. Students felt the courses and course material met their expectations and provided them with a better understanding of the particular field.

5. Use of Results. What program changes are indicated? How will they be implemented? If none, describe why changes were not needed.

At the present time, the Department of Political Science does not plan to make any major changes to the program. The assessment did not show that any curriculum or programmatic changes were needed. Instead, the dissemination of this report will allow individual faculty to consider the information and determine how to best address any identified issues. For example, not all courses had comments recommending more class discussion or the need to better feedback on assignments, so a program change is not necessary. Instead, faculty can incorporate relevant information into their course changes or revisions.

6. Dissemination of Results, Conclusions, and Discoveries. How and with whom were the results shared?

The information was distributed to all full time faculty members in the Department of Political Science. In addition, the report is posted on the Department of Political Science web page.