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**Spring 2006 Semester Assessment Report Form
DUE October 31, 2006**

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	Masters of Arts in Political Science
Department	Political Science
College	Liberal Arts
Program Assessment Coordinator	Dr. David F. Damore
Semester Data Collected	Spring 2006
Report Submitted by	Dr. David F. Damore
Phone/email	895-3217, david.damore@unlv.edu
Date Submitted	October 31, 2006

2. According to the Assessment Plan for this program, what were the planned assessments to be conducted during the Spring 2006 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?
6 outcomes out of a total of 12 outcomes evaluated this semester.		
1. Development of critical thinking skills necessary for the evaluation of social science concepts.	Instructor evaluations via narratives of students' performances.	Significant improvement over the term.
3. Knowledge of the research process in the social sciences.	Instructor evaluations via narratives of students' performances	Significant improvement over the term.

4. Development of the skills and knowledge needed for informed information consumption.	Instructor evaluations via narratives of students' performances	Significant improvement over the term.
7. Development of knowledge of the multiple motivations and constraints underlying political behavior.	Instructor evaluations via narratives of students' performances	Significant improvement over the term.
8. Development of an understanding of the multi-causal nature that characterizes the social world.	Instructor evaluations via narratives of students' performances	Significant improvement over the term.
9. Application of the social science research process.	Instructor evaluations via narratives of students' performances	Significant improvement over the term.

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

<p>Results</p> <p>During the spring of 2006, the Department of Political Science offered three graduate seminars: PSC 702 (Advanced Research Design and Methodology); PSC 719 (Advanced Studies in American Politics); and PSC 733 (Public Law and Policy). Assessment of these courses was conducted by the individual instructors. Instructors were requested to submit narrative descriptions of their evaluations of students' ability to fulfill learning outcomes. A narrative was submitted for PSC 702.</p> <p>PSC 702 is a graduate level seminar that examines the application of quantitative methods in applied social science research, with particular attention given to regression analysis. The class draws a mix of political science MA students and PhD. students from the Public Affairs program. The emphasis of the course is on the practical application of these methods. However, because of the nature of course material, a fair amount of attention is devoted to the theory and mechanics that underlie these analytical methods. The course requirements consist of a series of homework assignments and two take home examinations. The nature of these assignments requires students to execute statistical analysis both by hand and via SPSS, a widely used statistical software package, critique published academic work that makes use of the methods taught in the course, and develop their own statistical models. As such, the course and its accompanying assignments tap learning outcomes</p>
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1, 3, 4, 7-9.

The impressions of the course instructor indicate that expectations were met. Specifically, as noted above, the major expectation for the learning outcomes assessed was significant improvement during the term. In large part this occurred because virtually students enrolled in the course had not prior background with course material. Indeed, by the end of the course, students were surprised at how far they had come.

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

Conclusions and Discoveries

As noted above, student expectations for PSC 702 were met. At the same time, however, not all students performed equally well. Thus, perhaps the biggest surprise was the uneven work ethic demonstrated by the students. Case in point, students are allowed to correct and resubmit their homework assignments for half of the deducted points. Surprisingly, not all students took advantage of this opportunity and those that did ended up with the higher grades.

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 changes to the program. The reason for this is that the department has already submitted a proposal to significantly overhaul the graduate program. Specifically, the proposal is for a PhD. in political science that would shift the focus of the graduate program from a general political science degree to a specialized degree in global studies. At the present time, the proposal is waiting approval from higher ups. As a consequence, any attention that the department would devote to the MA program is likely to be short lived because when the PhD. comes on line the emphasis of the graduate program will change dramatically (e.g., more rigorous admission standards; a well defined plan of study; and increased expectations of student performance).

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, as well as the Dean's Office in the College of Liberal Arts. In addition, the report is posted on the Department of Political Science web page.