

Date Received _____

**Semester Assessment Report Form: Spring 2007 Data
DUE October 31, 2007**

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. Kenneth E. Fernandez
Semester Data Collected	Spring 2007
Report Submitted by	Dr. Kenneth E. Fernandez
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Date Submitted	October 31, 2007

2. According to the Assessment Plan for this program, what were the planned assessments to be conducted during the Spring 2007 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 out of 12 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. Positive evaluation of thesis or exam committee. Interviews with graduate students.</p>	<p>Passing grades in core research methods and related courses. Positive evaluations of courses by students. Positive student evaluations of program in interviews.</p>

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

Results

I. Grades

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Grade A	24	49.0	49.0	77.6
A-	14	28.6	28.6	28.6
B+	3	6.1	6.1	85.7
B-	1	2.0	2.0	79.6
F	1	2.0	2.0	87.8
I	2	4.1	4.1	91.8
WD	3	6.1	6.1	98.0
WH	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
Total	49	100.0	100.0	

II. Course Evaluations

The overall course evaluations for the classes were high: 3.43; 3.78; 3.8; 3.89

III. Related comments of students in teaching evaluations

- More focus on policy
- Link material to the study of and application of “ethics
- Outside speakers
- Include of format for students’ presentations & a rubric for evaluation
- More mechanics of SPSS
- Better overview of goals in class
- Visual aids
- Less discussion and Less student presentations
- Tie discussion of current affairs
- Relate theories to modern issues

IV. Related comments of students in interviews

- Students believed that the courses and course assignments were preparing them for their thesis research.
- A course like PSC729 (developed by Dr. Zundel) which is a writing intensive course with assignments directly related to their thesis was said to be very helpful.
- Some students suggested that more research opportunities as a Research Assistant (RA) would be helpful for their career goals and completion of their thesis.
- Students also said that more assistance/advice on participating in academic conferences
- Allowing student to take an independent study where they revise a project into a professional paper was also suggested.
- Almost every student wanted more graduate courses to be offered and when that is not possible to make sure they are not at overlapping times.

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

Conclusions and Discoveries

Overall students are satisfied with courses and the program as a whole. The most common comment by graduate students is that they want more course offerings. Some suggestions from students focused on linking the theoretical and academic exposure and exercises to practical or concrete examples and practices. Some suggested an increase in exposure and instruction in the statistical software SPSS. This suggestion should be adopted in the core research methods courses (PSC 701 & 702).

Overall students expressed an understanding and appreciation of the purpose of the course requirements and their connection to the M.A. thesis and/or exam requirements.

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 reason for this is that the department has 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 the administration. 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).

Student suggestions for 1) increasing a policy focus; 2) increased discussion of ethics; 3) increased application of theory to practical/current issues; 4) increases exposure and instruction of SPSS statistical software in specific courses will be recommended to the department.

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.