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**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](mailto:bea.babbitt@unlv.edu).

**\*\*\*Please submit the report electronically to [bea.babbitt@unlv.edu](mailto:bea.babbitt@unlv.edu)**

1. Program Information:

Program	Bachelor 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?
8 outcomes out of a total of 8 outcomes evaluated this semester.		
1. Development of critical thinking skills necessary for the evaluation of social scientific concepts.	Pre/Post Tests and Program Exit Surveys	20% to 30% improvement between the Pre and Post Tests and agreement from a majority of students who completed the program that their critical thinking skills improved
2. Development of persuasive writing skills.	Program Exit Surveys	Agreement from a majority of students who completed the program that their persuasive writing skills improved

3. Knowledge of the research process in the social sciences	Pre/Post Tests and Program Exit Surveys	Agreement from a majority of students who completed the program that their understanding of the research process improved
4. Development of the skills for sophisticated information consumption	Pre/Post Tests and Program Exit Surveys	20% to 30% improvement between the Pre and Post Tests and agreement from a majority of students who completed the program that their information processing skills improved
5. Comprehension of the obligations and expectations of citizenship.	Program Exit Surveys	Agreement from a majority of students who completed the program that their understanding of the expectations of citizenship improved
6. Knowledge of the interplay between preferences and institutions for shaping political outcomes.	Pre/Post Tests and Program Exit Surveys	20% to 30% improvement between the Pre and Post Tests and agreement from a majority of students who completed the program that their understanding of the factors shaping political outcomes improved
7. Comprehension of the multiple motivations and constraints underlying political behavior.	Pre/Post Tests and Program Exit Surveys	20% to 30% improvement between the Pre and Post Tests and agreement from a majority of students who completed the program that their understanding of the factors underlying political behavior improved
8. Identification of the multi-causal nature that characterizes the social world.	Pre/Post Tests and Program Exit Surveys	20% to 30% improvement between the Pre and Post Tests and agreement from a majority of students who completed the program that their understanding of the multi-causal nature that characterizes the social world improved

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

Results

During the spring of 2007, the Department of Political Science used two instruments to assess student learning. For lower division course offerings required for the undergraduate major (PSC 100, 101, 200, 211, and 231,) a ten question multiple choice test, unique to each course, was administered at the start (n = 1420) and end of the semester (n = 1338). The purpose of this assessment instrument was to measure student learning over the course of the term by examining differences between the pre and post-tests. The second assessment instrument consisted of an exit survey administered to all students graduating in the spring and summer of 2007 with either a major or minor in Political Science (n= 64).

Turning first to the assessment of the program's lower division offerings, which are presented in Table 1 below, the results are largely mixed as 24 of the 37 courses (65%) assessed met or exceeded expectations (with an average improvement of 36.5%). Specifically, the table summarizes the overall course means (out of a possible 10) for both the pre and post tests and the differences between the two tests and the percent improvement. With the exception of one section of PSC 211, all classes assessed demonstrated improvement from the start to the end of the term (summarized in the Difference and % Improve columns). However, the improvement across courses and across sections for the same courses was uneven. For instance, some sections of PSC 100 (The Nevada Constitution) showed significant improvement (well over thirty percent), while others did not. The variation is greatest among different sections of PSC 101 (Introduction to American Politics). At the same time, it is difficult to read too much into the results because there is also a great deal of variation in the pre test scores. This is most notable for the various sections of PSC 200 (Survey of Political Theory) where the pre-test course means are quite high, leaving little room for improvement (this was also the case with the fall 2006 data). The results also indicate no systematic differences between courses taught by full time faculty as compared to courses taught by lectures or part time instructors when controlling for type of course (Two-Way ANOVA).

Table 4 provides a summary of the assessment of program learning requirements for students graduating with either a major or minor in Political Science in the spring and summer of 2007. Specifically, the table displays the frequencies gleaned from a series of questions taken from the program exit survey asking students to rate how well the program fulfilled their expectations, as well as how the program helped them master the learning outcomes summarized above. In almost every case, the 64 students who completed the exit survey indicated satisfaction with the program and more importantly, that completion of the program instilled the skills encompassed in the learning. Specifically, the results in indicate the following:

- Over 95% either agreed or strongly agreed that the program improved their critical reasoning skills.
- Nearly 94% either agreed or strongly agreed that the program strengthened their persuasive writing skills.
- Over 90% agreed or strongly agreed that the program helped developed their writing skills.
- Over 84% agreed or strongly agreed that the program helped them to better understand the social scientific research process.
- Over 93% either agreed or strongly agreed that the program improved their ability to understand sophisticated political information.
- Over 78% either agreed or strongly agreed that the program helped them to better understand the obligations and expectations of citizenship.
- All students either agreed or strongly agreed that the program improved their understanding of how preferences and institutions affect political outcomes.
- All but one student either agreed or strongly agreed that the program improved their understanding of the factors that underlie political behavior.
- Over 93% either agreed or strongly agreed that the program helped them to better understand the multi-causal nature that characterizes the social world.
- Over 89% either agreed or strongly agreed that completion of the program helped them better understand how multi-culturalism shapes political outcomes in the international arena.

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

#### Conclusions and Discoveries

Overall, the assessment data shows that the core courses in the program are meeting their objectives. All but one course assessed show improvement in the pre and post-test and 65% of the courses showed improvement of 20% or more. The exit survey data showed that over 90 % of graduating students felt the program met or exceeded their expectations. The most common comment on how to improve the undergraduate program was to offer more types of courses each semester. These results are consistent with data from prior semester. One concern is that the PSC 211, Comparative Government and Politics has shown the lowest amount of improvement between pre and post-tests over the last two semesters.

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

Exit surveys asked students for suggestions to improve the program. Many students suggested making it easier to enroll in PSC 302 Research Methods for Political Science or having students take it earlier in their academic career. The department has recently changed its policy and will begin to require students to take PSC 302 prior to their senior year.

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

The information is distributed to all instructors teaching undergraduate courses in the Department of Political Science and have been posted on the Department of Political Science web page.

**Table 1: Results of Pre and Post Test**

Title	Course	Pre Mean	N	Post Mean	N	Difference	% Improve
NV Constitution	100-OM1	4.70	42.00	8.40	46.00	3.70	78.72
NV Constitution	100-OM2	4.30	46.00	6.70	46.00	2.40	55.81
NV Constitution	100-OM3	4.30	25.00	5.70	27.00	1.40	32.56
NV Constitution	100-OM4	4.70	22.00	6.70	22.00	2.00	42.55
NV Constitution	100-OM5	4.60	50.00	9.00	41.00	4.40	95.65
NV Constitution	100-OM6	5.00	12.00	7.70	12.00	2.70	54.00
NV Constitution	100-OM7	4.60	20.00	7.20	20.00	2.60	56.52
NV Constitution	100-OM8	4.30	14.00	7.60	14.00	3.30	76.74
NV Constitution	100-OM9	4.60	22.00	6.50	22.00	1.90	41.30
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-001	4.30	38.00	7.00	49.00	2.70	62.79
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-002	5.00	175.00	5.70	149.00	0.70	14.00
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-003	4.90	44.00	8.10	47.00	3.20	65.31
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-004	4.60	49.00	6.20	47.00	1.60	34.78
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-005	4.70	53.00	5.50	48.00	0.80	17.02
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-006	4.50	24.00	6.40	22.00	1.90	42.22
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-007	3.70	48.00	4.50	53.00	0.80	21.62
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-008	4.20	170.00	4.80	175.00	0.60	14.29
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-009	5.10	54.00	8.10	48.00	3.00	58.82
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-010	5.00	49.00	8.20	49.00	3.20	64.00
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-011	4.90	33.00	5.30	36.00	0.40	8.16
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-012	4.80	25.00	7.00	17.00	2.20	45.83
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-013	4.50	27.00	4.80	27.00	0.30	6.67

Intro Amer. Gov't	101-014	4.20	20.00	5.40	17.00	1.20	28.57
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-015	5.00	15.00	5.80	15.00	0.80	16.00
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-016	4.20	10.00	4.60	9.00	0.40	9.52
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-018	6.00	15.00	6.20	14.00	0.20	3.33
Intro Amer. Gov't	101-020	5.40	12.00	6.10	14.00	0.70	12.96
Survey Pol. Theory	200-001	6.30	33.00	7.80	27.00	1.50	23.81
Survey Pol. Theory	200-002	7.20	34.00	8.60	27.00	1.40	19.44
Survey Pol. Theory	200-003	6.80	20.00	7.80	13.00	1.00	14.71
Comparative Gov/Politics	211-001	5.90	39.00	5.60	35.00	-0.30	-5.08
Comparative Gov/Politics	211-002	5.40	33.00	6.10	31.00	0.70	12.96
World Politics	231-001	5.60	45.00	6.90	35.00	1.30	23.21
World Politics	231-002	4.60	43.00	5.80	37.00	1.20	26.09
World Politics	231-003	5.00	22.00	7.00	20.00	2.00	40.00
Research Meths Pol Sci	302-001	4.60	22.00	6.50	18.00	1.90	41.30
Research Meths Pol Sci	302-002	4.20	15.00	6.70	9.00	2.50	59.52

**Table 2: Overall Average and Range of Differences**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Difference	37	-0.30	4.40	1.6838	1.10718
Valid N (listwise)	37				

**Table 3: Average Differences by course groupings**

Spring 2007 Differences

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
100.00	9	2.7111	.94663	1.40	4.40
101.00	18	1.3722	1.05819	.20	3.20
200.00	3	1.3000	.26458	1.00	1.50
211.00	2	.2000	.70711	-.30	.70
231.00	3	1.5000	.43589	1.20	2.00
302.00	2	2.2000	.42426	1.90	2.50
Total	37	1.6838	1.10718	-.30	4.40

**Table 4: Exit Survey Data**

**Did the program fulfill your expectations?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0 No	4	6.3	6.3	6.3
1 Yes	58	90.6	92.1	98.4
2 Yes & No	1	1.6	1.6	100.0
Total	63	98.4	100.0	
Missing System	1	1.6		
Total	64	100.0		

**Pursuing a degree in political science at UNLV strengthened my critical reasoning skills (e.g., the ability to use logic and reasoning in solving problems).**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 2 Disagree	1	1.6	1.6	1.6
3 Neither agree or disagree	3	4.7	4.7	6.3
4 Agree	31	48.4	48.4	54.7
5 Strongly agree	29	45.3	45.3	100.0
Total	64	100.0	100.0	

**Pursuing a degree in political science at UNLV helped me to understand the research process in the social sciences**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 2 Disagree	3	4.7	4.7	4.7
3 Neither agree or disagree	7	10.9	10.9	15.6
4 Agree	33	51.6	51.6	67.2
5 Strongly agree	21	32.8	32.8	100.0
Total	64	100.0	100.0	

**Pursuing a degree in political science at UNLV strengthened my persuasive writing skills (e.g. the ability to articulate, support, and defend an argument).**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 2 Disagree	2	3.1	3.1	3.1
3 Neither agree or disagree	4	6.3	6.3	9.4
4 Agree	29	45.3	45.3	54.7

5 Strongly agree	29	45.3	45.3	100.0
Total	64	100.0	100.0	

**Pursuing a degree in political science at UNLV improved my ability to understand sophisticated political information communicated through the media and scholarly writing.**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 2 Disagree	1	1.6	1.6	1.6
3 Neither agree or disagree	3	4.7	4.7	6.3
4 Agree	25	39.1	39.1	45.3
5 Strongly agree	35	54.7	54.7	100.0
Total	64	100.0	100.0	

**Pursuing a degree in political science at UNLV helped me to better understand the obligations and expectations of citizenship.**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 Strongly disagree	1	1.6	1.6	1.6
2 Disagree	4	6.3	6.3	7.8
3 Neither agree or disagree	9	14.1	14.1	21.9
4 Agree	17	26.6	26.6	48.4
5 Strongly agree	33	51.6	51.6	100.0
Total	64	100.0	100.0	

**Pursuing a degree in political science at UNLV improved my understanding of the role of preferences and institutions for shaping political outcomes.**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 4 Agree	27	42.2	42.2	42.2
5 Strongly agree	37	57.8	57.8	100.0
Total	64	100.0	100.0	

**Pursuing a degree in political science at UNLV allowed me to comprehend the factors that motivate and constrain political behavior.**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 2 Disagree	1	1.6	1.6	1.6
4 Agree	27	42.2	42.2	43.8
5 Strongly agree	36	56.3	56.3	100.0
Total	64	100.0	100.0	

**Pursuing a degree in political science at UNLV helped me to recognize the multi-causal nature that characterizes the social world.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 Disagree	1	1.6	1.6	1.6
	3 Neither agree or disagree	3	4.7	4.7	6.3
	4 Agree	31	48.4	48.4	54.7
	5 Strongly agree	29	45.3	45.3	100.0
	Total	64	100.0	100.0	

**Pursuing a degree in political science at UNLV helped me to better understand the role of multiculturalism in shaping international political exchanges and outcomes.**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 Strongly disagree	1	1.6	1.6	1.6
	2 Disagree	2	3.1	3.1	4.7
	3 Neither agree or disagree	4	6.3	6.3	10.9
	4 Agree	30	46.9	46.9	57.8
	5 Strongly agree	27	42.2	42.2	100.0
	Total	64	100.0	100.0	

**How do you think your degree in political science will assist you in meeting these goals?**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0	4	6.3	6.3	6.3
	1 Applying for law school	5	7.8	7.9	14.3
	2 Critical thinking/research/writing skills	15	23.4	23.8	38.1
	3 Better understanding of legal/political processes	22	34.4	34.9	73.0
	4 Other	17	26.6	27.0	100.0
	Total	63	98.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.6		
Total		64	100.0		