



Program Assessment Report (PAR)

Political Science (PLS) Baccalaureate Degree

REPORT PREPARED by: Green, December

ACADEMIC YEAR COVERED BY THIS REPORT: 2020-2021

I. PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

Graduates will be able to... communicate effectively in writing (LO for 2020-21). The following learning outcomes have been or will be assessed other years: Graduates will be able to... analyze and evaluate local, national, or global political, legal, or social issues demonstrate an understanding of the value of diversity and multicultural competence in today's global environment. apply analytical tools to analyze problems relevant to politics, geography, the public sector, or the nonprofit sector.

II. PROCEDURES USED FOR ASSESSMENT

A. Direct Assessment

Outcome Assessed for 2020-21: Graduates will be able communicate effectively in writing. The SPIA Assessment Committee assessed research papers collected at the end of the Fall 2020 semester from all the PLS majors (6) in PLS 4881, an upper-level IW course. The course instructor collected the data and members of the SPIA Assessment Committee conducted the analysis.

B. Scoring of Student Work

To score the students' level of performance of the outcome, we used a rubric drawn from the AAUC's rubric.* 1) "Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas" (AS#1). 2) "Uses language that conveys meaning to readers with clarity" (AS#2). Members of the SPIA Assessment Committee did the scoring. *Rhodes, Terrel. "Assessing Outcomes and Improving Achievement Tips and Tools for Using Rubrics." Washington, DC Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2010.

C. Indirect Assessment

Outcome Assessed for 2020-21 Graduates will be able to communicate effectively in writing. Assessment Strategy #3 The instructor sent a Qualtrics survey to all students in PLS 4881 at the end of the Fall 2020 semester with the following statement, "This course helped me communicate more effectively in writing" (AS#3).

III. ASSESSMENT RESULTS/INFORMATION:

1) "Uses appropriate and relevant content to develop and explore ideas" (AS#1).
2) "Uses language that conveys meaning to readers with clarity" (AS#2). 3) "This course helped me communicate more effectively in writing" (AS#3).

100% of students achieved AS #1. 83% of students achieved AS #2. 100% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with AS #3 (only 2 students completed the survey). The data suggest that we are meeting our learning outcomes regarding written communication. Students are adept at selecting and utilizing content, but some could use help with writing more clearly.

PLS majors are graduating with developed critical thinking skills to analyze and evaluate local, national, or global political, legal, or social issues. PLS majors are able to state an issue, utilize information, and describe it comprehensively, but we need to do more to help students learn how to interpret and evaluate information in order to develop a comprehensive analysis. Of those who responded, PLS majors unanimously reported that they are equipped to think critically to analyze and evaluate information.

IV. ACTIONS TO IMPROVE STUDENT LEARNING

The SPIA Assessment Committee will present the findings of the report, particularly the area that needs improvement, to the PLS faculty at our next department meeting. We will discuss ways in which we can help students convey their meaning more clearly. This was our first year assessing this LO, so it is impossible to compare to previous years.

V. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Additional documentation, when provided, is stored in the internal Academic Program Assessment of Student Learning SharePoint site.