

Academic Program Assessment Report

Assessment is a term commonly used to encompass the process of gathering and using evidence to guide improvements.

SACSCOC requires that an institution "identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of seeking improvement based on analysis of the results".

Be sure to SAVE your progress as you work!

Academic Program
Political Science, B.S.

Submission Year
2021-2022

Assessment Coordinator Name
Kimberly M. Richburg

Enter Assessment Coordinator Email
krichburg@lander.edu

Program Goal

Goal

Goal 1

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal

Political science majors will demonstrate knowledge in most of the generally-recognized areas of the discipline

Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of seniors demonstrating an understanding of political science as an academic discipline that is distinct from other social sciences by obtaining a subscore above 50 on the "political science as an academic discipline" question subset of the Political Science Program Assessment Exam

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2020-2021

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 70% score above 50 on the "political science as an academic discipline" question subset of the Political Science Program Assessment Exam

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50% and less than 70% score above 50 on the "political science as an academic discipline" question subset of the Political Science Program Assessment Exam

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 50% score above 50 on the "political science as an academic discipline" question subset of the Political Science Program Assessment Exam

Assessment Measure Used

Political Science Program Assessment Exam—
"Political Science as an Academic Discipline" 20
Question Subset

Frequency of Assessment

Yearly in POLS 499 (Capstone Senior Seminar)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

93%

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Out of 13 seniors, 93% (12 seniors) scored above 50 on the "political science as an academic discipline" subscore. These results, along with those from the past several academic years (2017-2018 and 2018-2019) indicate that a majority of seniors are meeting the expected outcome and have been thus performing well in demonstrating an understanding of political science as an academic discipline. The requirement that majors earn C's in the first two introductory courses—POLS 101(American National Government) and POLS 103 (Introduction to World Politics)—of the major and the recommendation that majors take POLS 200 (Introduction to Political Science) in the sophomore year help students develop an early understanding of the nature and components of the political science discipline. That early exposure to the fundamentals of the discipline supports the attainment of more complex, political science concepts later on in upper level courses such as POLS 305(European Politics), POLS 360 (Congress and the Presidency) and POLS 445 (American Foreign Policy).

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Money--\$23,200 to support adjunct faculty members who would teach sections of introductory POLS classes--POLS 101 (American National Government) and POLS 103 (Introduction to World Politics).

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

The money used to hire adjunct faculty will enable the program to offer a sufficient number of POLS 101 (American National Government) and POLS 103 (Introduction to World Politics) sections. Offering enough sections of the introductory classes--POLS 101 and POLS 103--is very important given that these courses both provide many of the foundational concepts for both understanding Political Science as an academic discipline and for learning material in later courses that further promote understanding Political Science as an academic discipline. Given that Political Science majors must make at least a "C" in both POLS 101 and POLS 103, offering a sufficient number of sections allows Political Science

majors to repeat these courses in the following semester if they do not make the required "C" or higher in either POLS 101 or POLS 103.

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of seniors demonstrating a basic knowledge of forms of government by obtaining a subscore above 50 on the "forms of government" question subset of the Political Science Program Assessment Exam

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2020-2021

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 70% score above 50 on the "forms of government" question subset of the Political Science Program Assessment Exam

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50% and less than 70% score above 50 on the "forms of government" question subset of the Political Science Program Assessment Exam

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 50% score above 50 on the "forms of government" question subset of the Political Science Program Assessment Exam

Assessment Measure Used

Political Science Program Assessment Exam—"Forms of Government" 24 Question Subset

Frequency of Assessment

Yearly in POLS 499 (Capstone Senior Seminar)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

100%

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Out of 13 seniors (13 seniors), 100% scored above 50 on the "forms of government" subscore. These results, along with those from the past several academic years (2017-2018 and 2018-2019) have indicated that a majority of seniors are meeting the expected outcome and have been thus performing well in demonstrating knowledge of forms of government. The requirement that majors earn a "C" or above in POLS 101 (American National Government) and POLS 103 (Introduction to World Politics) helps to ensure that students leave those courses with basic knowledge related to forms of government.

Also, the recommendation that majors take POLS 200 (Introduction to Political Science) in the sophomore year helps students develop an early foundation of basic knowledge related to forms of government.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Money--\$23,200 to support adjunct faculty members who would teach sections of introductory Political Science classes--POLS 101 (American National Government) and POLS 103 (Introduction to World Politics).

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

The money used to hire adjunct faculty will enable the program to offer a sufficient number of POLS 101 (American National Government) and POLS 103 (Introduction to World Politics) sections. Offering enough sections of the introductory classes--POLS 101 and POLS 103--is very important given that these courses both provide many of the foundational concepts for learning basic knowledge of forms of government and for learning material in later courses that further promote learning basic knowledge of forms of government. Given that Political Science majors must make at least a "C" in both POLS 101 and POLS 103, offering a sufficient number of sections allows Political Science majors to repeat these courses in the following semester if they do not make the required "C" or higher in either POLS 101 or POLS 103.

Outcome 3

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of seniors demonstrating a basic knowledge of political philosophies by obtaining a subscore above 50 on the "political philosophies" question subset of the Political Science Program Assessment Exam

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2020-2021

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 70% score above 50 on the "political philosophy" question subset of the Political Science Program Assessment Exam

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50% and less than 70% score above 50 on the "political philosophy" question subset of the Political Science Program Assessment Exam

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 50% score above 50 on the “political philosophy” question subset of the Political Science Program Assessment Exam

Assessment Measure Used

Political Science Program Assessment Exam—
“Forms of Government” 6 Question Subset

Frequency of Assessment

Yearly in POLS 499 (Capstone Senior Seminar)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

93%

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Out of 13 seniors, 93% (12 seniors) scored above 50 on the "political philosophy" subscore. These results, along with those over the past several academic years (2017-2018 and 2018-2019), have indicated that a majority of seniors are meeting the expected outcome and have been thus performing well in demonstrating knowledge of political philosophies. In an effort to support students' learning of political philosophy, Political Science majors are strongly encouraged to take POLS 200 (Introduction to Political Science) in the sophomore year so that they can get a foundational exposure to political philosophy before taking POLS 331 (Political Philosophy).

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results**Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used**

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

Students met all three expected learning outcomes for the goal of demonstrating knowledge in most of the generally-recognized areas of the Political Science discipline. Students have met all three expected learning outcomes for the goal of demonstrating knowledge in most of the generally-recognized areas of the Political Science over the past several academic years (2018-2019 and 2017-2018) in which this goal has been assessed.

In response to these multiple past years of positive returns and the desire to periodically examine our student learning outcomes, program faculty reevaluated its the courses that represent the generally--recognized areas of the Political Science discipline that were included in this goal. This was done to help ensure that students are demonstrating knowledge across the generally recognized areas of the Political Science discipline that are most relevant for students' post undergraduate environments. The ultimate goal is for students to demonstrate knowledge across the generally-recognized areas of the Political Science discipline that are relevant and applicable to students' careers and post-undergraduate educational pursuits. Beginning with students on the 2020-2021 major program, a modified set of core classes were required for the major. POLS 386 (State and Local Government) and POLS 318 (Public Budgeting) were added to the required core classes. These classes were added due to the practical relevance they have to the governmental-related job settings in which a significant number of POLS majors are likely to work during their careers. Alternatively, several courses (POLS 331--Political Philosophy, POLS 360--Congress and the Presidency, and POLS 445--American Foreign Policy) were removed from the Political Science major's core (required) courses given that they are not as practically relevant to governmental-related job settings frequently occupied by Political Science majors. Although the modified set of core major courses were in effect by the 2020-2021 academic year, neither the student learning outcomes representing the generally-recognized areas of the discipline nor the questions on the POLS Assessment exam were changed in the 2020-2021 academic year since the 2020-2021 seniors followed the previous POLS major program (and not the modified 2020-2021 major

program). The modified 2020-2021 set of core major courses will be mapped to a modified set of student learning outcomes that represent the generally recognized areas of the Political Science Discipline for the 2021-2022 program assessment report. Also, program faculty plan to modify the POLS Assessment Exam items to reflect the core courses of 2020-2021's modified major program in the in the 2021-2022 academic year.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

To maintain student performance on this goal, several previously made program changes will be retained for the 2021-2022 academic year. First, program faculty will continue the effort to identify tutors (to work in Lander's Academic Success Center) for most of the core classes (which are required) in the Political Science major. Tutoring assistance for students will provide a means by which students could improve their understanding of important material in the core classes, which will assist them in developing knowledge in most of the generally recognized areas of Political Science. Second, program faculty who teach introductory core courses (POLS 101--Introduction to American Politics, POLS 103--Introduction to World Politics, and POLS 200--Introduction to Political Science) will continue to include a link to the Academic Success Center's Tutoring Center within their online Blackboard course pages. This action is being done to further encourage students to seek tutoring assistance, which could help them improve their understanding of material in the introductory core classes. A better understanding of material in the introductory core classes could in turn support students' development of knowledge in most of the generally recognized areas of Political Science.

One new program change for the 2021-2022 academic year is for program faculty who teach upper level classes to include a link to the Academic Success Center's Tutoring Center within their online Blackboard course pages with the goal of supporting upper-class student's learning regarding the generally recognized areas of the discipline.

Finally, we will continue the 2020-2021 previously made program change year of using the modified set of core Political Science courses which are a part of the recently adopted (2020-2021) major program requirements. We have received multiple years of positive returns on the student learning outcomes for the goal of having students demonstrate knowledge in the generally-recognized areas of Political Science. However, the ultimate goal is for students to demonstrate knowledge across the generally-recognized areas of the Political Science discipline that are most relevant and applicable to students' careers and post-undergraduate educational pursuits. POLS 386 (State and Local Government) and POLS 318 (Public Budgeting) have been added to the core courses required by all majors. These classes were added due to the practical relevance of them to jobs in governmental-related settings within which a significant number of POLS majors are likely to hold during their careers. Alternatively, several courses (POLS 331--Political Philosophy, POLS 360--Congress and the Presidency, and POLS 445--American Foreign Policy) were removed from the Political Science major's core (required) courses. Although the modified set of core major courses have been in effect since the 2020-2021 academic year, the student learning outcomes associated with the generally-recognized areas of the discipline goal and the questions on the POLS Assessment exam will be NOT be modified until the 2021-2022 academic year (since the 2020-2021 senior majors have followed the previous POLS major program instead of the modified 2020-2021 POLS major program).

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

Goal 2

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal

Political science majors will demonstrate political analysis skills

Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of students demonstrating the ability to identify and critique the main points of political discourse by achieving a total score of 4 or more points across all three (organization, mechanics, and content) categories of the POLS 101 Critical Thinking Paper Scoring Rubric

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2020-2021

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 70% achieve a total score of 4 or more points across all three categories (organization, mechanics and content) on the POLS 101 Critical Thinking Paper Scoring Rubric

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50% and less than 70% achieve a total score of 4 or more points across all three categories (organization, mechanics and content) on the POLS 101 Critical Thinking Paper Scoring Rubric

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 50% achieve a total score of 4 or more points across all three categories (organization, mechanics and content) on the POLS 101 Critical Thinking Paper Scoring Rubric

Assessment Measure Used

POLS 101 Critical Thinking Paper Rubric

Frequency of Assessment

Fall and Spring Semesters in POLS 101 (American National Government)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

82%

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Out of 11 students, 82% (9 students) achieved a total score of 4 or more points across all three categories (organization, mechanics, and content) of the POLS 101 Critical Thinking Paper Scoring

Rubric, meeting the expected outcome. These results indicate the third year of overall improvement in student learning since the 2017-2018 student performance, in which the standard was partially met with 62% of students scoring 4 or more points across all three categories (organization, mechanics, and content) of the POLS 101 Critical Thinking Paper Scoring Rubric.

Analyses of average subscores indicate that the 2020-2021 student performances on mechanics (Avg mechanics subscore=1.73) and content (Avg content subscore= 1.36) were essentially the same as they had been in 2019-2020. However, the 2020-2021 student performance on organization (Avg subscore= 1.43) decreased from what it had been in both 2019-2020 (Avg subscore=1.73) and 2018-2019 (Avg subscore=1.63). Although there was a significant decrease in student performance in the organization area, overall student performance was still strong in that a strong majority of the students were able to meet the standard.

In 2018-2019, we began the practice of bringing in a representative from the Writing Center to POLS 101 classes so that students could learn about the services offered and be encouraged to seek assistance. However, since Spring of 2020, we have temporarily suspended the practice of bringing Writing Center representatives into POLS 101 classes due to the changes in instruction brought on by the COVID 19 Pandemic. Although students were still encouraged to seek assistance from the writing center, the pandemic may have discouraged some students to visit the writing center. Further, the modified teaching practices (such as more online and online-hybrid classes and the splitting of on ground classes in to several groups) brought on by COVID 19 during the 2020-2021 academic year may have also affected students' performances. In 2020-2021, program faculty will reevaluate whether the previously begun practice of having writing center representatives visit all POLS 101 classes is desirable for future semesters. In the meantime, program faculty will continue to encourage students to seek assistance from the writing center and will send writing assignments to the writing center to better facilitate the writing tutor's ability to assist students.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

\$17,400 to support adjunct faculty members who would teach sections of introductory POLS classes-- POLS 101 (American National Government)

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

The money would be used to support the hiring of adjunct faculty members who are needed in order to provide a sufficient number of POLS 101 sections of reasonable (35 or fewer students) class sizes. If enough sections of POLS 101 are offered so that larger sections are avoided, then faculty will be better able to assist students in developing the ability to identify and critique the main points of political discourse through the usage of written assignments.

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of students demonstrating the ability to identify and critique the main points of political discourse by achieving a total score of 5 or more points across all five (thesis/topic, references, organization, mechanics, and content) categories of the POLS 103 Critical Thinking Scoring Rubric

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2020-2021

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 70% achieve a total score of 5 or more points across all five categories (thesis/topic, references, organization, mechanics and content) on the POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper Scoring Rubric

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50% and less than 70% achieve a total score of 5 or more points across all five categories (thesis/topic, references, organization, mechanics and content) on the POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper Scoring Rubric

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 50% achieve a total score of 5 or more points across all five categories (thesis/topic, references, organization, mechanics and content) on the POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper Scoring Rubric

Assessment Measure Used

POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper Rubric

Frequency of Assessment

Fall and Spring Semesters in POLS 103 (Introduction to World Politics)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

75%

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Out of 8 students, 75% (6 students) achieved a total score of 5 or more across the five categories (organization, mechanics, content, thesis, and references) of the POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper Rubric. The results indicate that students met the standard and are continuing to perform well regarding identifying and critiquing the main points of political discourse through their performances across the five categories of the POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper Rubric.

For the 2020-2021 academic year, student performances in mechanics (2020-2021 subscore Avg=1.5; 2019-2020 subscore Avg=1.18) and organization (2020-2021 subscore Avg=1.13; 2019-2020 subscore Avg=1.09) showed improvement from what they had been in 2019-2020. However, student performances in references (2020-2021 subscore Avg=1.00; 2019-2020 subscore Avg=1.18) and content (2020-2021 subscore Avg=1.25; 2019-2020 subscore Avg=1.77) were lower than they had been in 2019-2020.

Copies of the POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper are sent to the Writing Center so that tutors are better enabled to assist students with the all five categories of the assignment. Also, POLS 103 faculty provide students with a proofreading checklist on Blackboard in an effort to assist student with the references and content of the POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper. Program faculty will continue these practices in order to try to maintain and/or improve upon the student performances received for the last several assessment cycles.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

\$5800 to support adjunct faculty members who would teach sections of introductory Political Science classes--POLS 103 (Introduction to World Politics)

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

The money would be used to support the hiring of adjunct faculty members who are needed in order to provide a sufficient number of POLS 103 sections of relatively small class sizes. If enough sections of POLS 103 are offered so that larger sections are avoided, then faculty will be better able to assist students in developing the ability to identify and critique the main points of political discourse through the usage of written assignments.

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

The standards were met for both of the student learning outcomes used to measure the goal of demonstrating political analysis skills, thus indicating that students are performing well on this goal. Students continue to show improvement by meeting the standard for the second year in a row since the 2018-2019 academic year. During that academic year, students partially met the standard on the student learning outcome of critiquing the main points of political discourse through a POLS 101 critical thinking paper rubrics. In order to improve the measurement of this goal, during the 2021-2022 academic year, program faculty plan to add a third student learning outcome which measures the goal of demonstrating political analysis skills. Both of the student learning outcomes used are measured by assignments--critical thinking papers--given in lower level courses (POLS 101 and POLS 103). In order to assess students' political analysis skills in the context of more advanced student work, program faculty plan to add a student learning outcome which measures political analysis skills that will come from POLS 200 (Introduction to Political Science), which is a sophomore level introductory course.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

Several previously made program changes will be retained for the upcoming 2021-2022 academic year. First, the previously made program change of providing copies of POLS 101 and POLS 103 writing assignments to the writing center will be retained for the 2020-2021 academic year. Second, the previously made program change of providing a link to the writing center within the Blackboard course materials for POLS 101 and POLS 103 in order to further encourage students to utilize the Writing Center will be retained. Third, the 2019-2020 academic year program change of providing a "proofreading checklist" to POLS 101 and POLS 103 students on Blackboard to help sustain and improve students' political analysis skills will be retained for the 2020-2021 academic year. The proofreading checklist includes information and tips related to all of the categories--organization, mechanics, content, thesis/topic, and references--that are included in the grading rubric for the POLS 101 and POLS 103 critical thinking papers.

However, the previous program change of requiring a representative from the writing center to come visit POLS 101 classes to discuss the services of the writing center temporarily suspended during the 2020-2021 academic year due to modifications brought on by COVID 19. In 2021-2022, program faculty will reevaluate whether this previously begun practice of having writing center representatives visit all POLS 101 classes is desirable for future semesters.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

POLS 101 Critical Thinking Paper Rubric.doc

Writing Rubric for POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper.doc

Goal 3

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal

Political science majors will demonstrate skills essential for success in careers related to political science

Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of students demonstrating their political science knowledge in work environments by receiving a "satisfactory" rating on job performance criteria from worksite supervisor

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2020-2021

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 70% receive a "satisfactory" rating on job performance criteria from worksite supervisor

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50% and less than 70% receive a "satisfactory" rating on job performance criteria from worksite supervisor

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 50% receive a "satisfactory" rating on job performance criteria from worksite supervisor

Assessment Measure Used

POLS 490 Internship Evaluation Survey

Frequency of Assessment

Yearly (Fall Semester, Spring Semester and Summer Session) in POLS 490 (POLS Internship)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

100%

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Out of 1 intern, 100% (1 intern) received a "satisfactory" rating on job performance criteria from worksite supervisor on the internship evaluation survey, thus meeting the standard. The successful job performances of the interns suggest that they are demonstrating their political science knowledge in work environments successfully. Further, interns successfully applied for and received experiential learning credit through the "EYE (Experience Your Education)" program. This activity, which encourages students to consider undertaking additional experiential activities in the future, which carry the potential for "EYE" credit. The completion of enough "EYE" credits would qualify students to receive an "EYE" degree at graduation.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Money (\$1000) is needed to facilitate bringing Political Science Alumni to campus to share their experiences and stories of impact while working in political science related fields.

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

The money will be used to pay the expenses of bringing Political Science Alumni to campus to give presentations and interact with current political science majors. Political Science Alumni, who have worked in political science related fields, can share their experiences and stories of impact. Providing current political science majors to interact with alumni would help foster a greater appreciation for how political science knowledge is applied to various work environments.

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of students demonstrating research competency by achieving a total score of 4 or more across the four categories (organization, content, references/citations, and mechanics) on the POLS 445 American Foreign Policy Research Paper Rubric

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2020-2021

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 70% achieve a total score of 4 or more points across four categories (organization, content, references/citations, and mechanics) on the POLS 445 American Foreign Policy Research Paper Rubric

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50% and less than 70% achieve a total score of 4 or more points across four categories

(organization, content, references/citations, and mechanics) on the POLS 445 American Foreign Policy Research Paper Rubric

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 50% achieve a total score of 4 or more points across four categories (organization, content, references/citations, and mechanics) on the POLS 445 American Foreign Policy Research Paper Rubric

Assessment Measure Used

POLS 445 American Foreign Policy Research Paper Rubric

Frequency of Assessment

Yearly in POLS 445 (American Foreign Policy) Course

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

77%

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Out of 13 students, 77% (10 students) scored 4 or more points across all four categories (organization, content, references/citations, and mechanics) on the POLS 445 American Foreign Policy Research Paper Rubric and thus met the standard for demonstrating research competency through writing the research paper. These results mark three consecutive years (2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021) of strong overall student performance in meeting the standard for demonstrating research competency through writing the research paper. An item analysis reveals that the 2020-2021 student performance in the content area (Avg=1.85) was slightly higher than it was in 2019-2020 (Avg=1.77) and significantly higher than it was in 2018-2019 (Avg=1.27)

By advising political science majors to take POLS 445 (American Foreign Policy) during their senior year of study, the majors take the class having already been exposed to foundational knowledge (from lower level courses such as POLS 101 and POLS 103) regarding both content and basic research skills, both of which are important in demonstrating research competency well in the POLS 445 research paper. Also, in 2019-2020, POLS 445 instructors began adding a "web guide" to assist students in improving their research skills for the American Foreign Policy Position Paper. This "web guide" contains links to relevant data bases and other informational sources that students can use to help strengthen the content of their research.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

No resources are being requested to sustain these results given that (as explained below in the goal/summary section) beginning 2021-2022, this student learning outcome will no longer be used to assess the goal of demonstrating skills essential for success in careers related to political science.

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Outcome 3

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention,

employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Student Learning Outcome

Enter Outcome

Percentage of students demonstrating research competency through receiving a "satisfactory" rating on job performance criteria from worksite supervisor

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2020-2021

Performance Target for "Met"

At least 70% receive a "satisfactory" rating on job performance criteria from worksite supervisor

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Between 50% and less than 70% receive a "satisfactory" rating on job performance criteria from worksite supervisor

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Less than 50% receive a "satisfactory" rating on job performance criteria from worksite supervisor

Assessment Measure Used

POLS 490 Internship Evaluation Survey

Frequency of Assessment

Yearly (Fall Semester, Spring Semester and Summer Session) in POLS 490 (POLS Internship)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

100%

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

Out of 1 interns, 100% (1 intern) received a "satisfactory" rating on job performance criteria from worksite supervisor on the internship evaluation survey, thus meeting the standard. The successful job performances of the interns suggest that they are demonstrating their political science knowledge in work environments successfully. Further, interns successfully applied for and received experiential learning credit through the "EYE (Experience Your Education)" program. This activity, which encourages students to consider undertaking additional experiential activities in the future, which carry the potential for "EYE" credit. The completion of enough "EYE" credits would qualify students to receive an "EYE" degree at graduation.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Money (\$1000) is needed to facilitate bringing Political Science Alumni to campus to share their experiences and stories of impact while working in political science related fields.

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

The money will be used to pay the expenses of bringing Political Science Alumni to campus to give presentations and interact with current political science majors. Political Science Alumni, who have worked in political science related fields, can share their experiences and stories of impact. Providing current political science majors to interact with alumni would help foster a greater appreciation for how research competency is useful and necessary various political science work environments.

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

Students performed well in demonstrating skills (knowledge application and research competency demonstration) that are essential for success in careers related to political science in that all three student learning outcomes for this goal were met. Although Political Science internships are not required for all Political Science majors, program faculty have encouraged majors to consider doing an internship so that they can learn how to demonstrate relevant research skills and knowledge in political science work environments. Program faculty will continue to monitor student performance on all student learning outcomes related to this goal.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

We have received multiple years of past positive returns regarding the student learning outcomes of students demonstrating their political science knowledge and research competencies in work environments. However, program faculty seek to further increase the performance levels of students in internship environments. We will continue program change started in the 2020-2021 academic year is that the status of the POLS 490 Internship from a pass/fail course to a letter grade course. Two considerations prompted POLS faculty to make this change. First, as a pre-professional experience, a grade serves as a form of "job performance" evaluation for majors similar to what they will experience in the workplace, thus serving to encourage strengths and point out areas for professional growth. Second, graded internships better capture the variability in the quality of the internship experience and quality of work achieved by majors.

Strong research skills is one of the skills that is important for success in many careers related to political science. However, as of students entering in Fall of 2020, POLS 445 (American Foreign Policy) is no longer included as part of the Political Science core set of required classes. Therefore, beginning 2021-2022, performance on the Foreign Policy Research Paper Rubric will no longer be used as a student learning outcome for the goal of demonstrating skills for success in careers related to Political Science. Instead, a student learning outcome related to an assignment from the core, required POLS 499 (Capstone Senior Seminar) class will be added to measure this goal beginning 2021-2022.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

POLS 445 Writing Rubric for Paper.doc

Goal 4

Program Goals are broad and overarching statements about the skills, knowledge, and dispositions students are expected to gain by the end of their course of study (big picture). They support the Institution's Mission/Goals.

Program Goal

To comply with Program Productivity standards as defined by the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education

Pillar of Success Supported

High-Demand, Market-Driven Programs

Outcomes

Outcome 1

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge, skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome

Major Enrollment

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2020-2021

Performance Target for "Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major (a) for Baccalaureate programs is greater than or equal to 12.5, (b) for Master's/First Professional is greater than or equal to 6.

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

Not Applicable

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of students enrolled in the major (a) for Baccalaureate programs is less than 12.5 (b) for Master's/Professional is less than 6.

Assessment Measure Used

Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner

Frequency of Assessment

Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

51.6

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

The Political Science program met this standard and has maintained a solid enrollment for the past five years, with a rolling average of 51.6 majors, which is the same as the previous year's (2019-2020) rolling average. The number of majors has ranged between 48 majors and 55 majors over the past five academic years (2016-2017) through 2020-2021).

In order to maintain and increase enrollment, the Political Science program has engaged in activities such as sponsoring program advising and informational sessions for majors, participating in Open Houses, increasing the number of minor options in fields related to Political Science (Homeland Security, Criminology, Non-Profit Management), encouraging students to consider pursuing minors related to political science, adding several new course offerings (such as Homeland Security and Emergency Management), and sponsoring informational sessions and student presentations on both the Washington Semester internship program and the WISH internship program.

In 2020-2021, the program continued its commitment begun in 2019-2020 to expanding the number of law-related course offerings to a minimum of two per academic year. Given that many students are interested in law-related courses (based on their interests in law-related careers), offering law courses on a more frequent basis could encourage students to complete the political science degree (within which they could take multiple law-related classes).

To provide venues outside the classroom within which interested students can pursue political science related interests and explore potential careers, the program sponsors several student organizations such as the Political Science Association (PSA) and the International City/County Managers Association (ICMA), which was initiated during the 2019-2020 academic year. The program routinely recognizes students of exemplary performance in the Political Science field through inviting them to join the Political Science Honor Society (Pi Sigma Alpha).

During the 2020-2021 academic year, the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Lander Diversity Council sponsored a Race and Identity Dialogue series which included virtual speaker presentations and panel discussions on various topics related to race and identity. Several program faculty participated in the series and many Political Science majors attended and reacted to various sessions. During the spring of 2021, through a South Carolina Humanities Grant Electoral Initiatives, the program sponsored a series of virtual panel discussions on topics pertaining to elections and democracy. These two series generated much participation and enthusiasm among students who were in the Political Science major program.

In 2020-2021, a modified, more streamlined version of the Political Science major became available to students. Program faculty streamlined the major so that the required, core classes better reflected practical content that would be applicable to work settings in which many Political Science majors are likely to become employed. The new major program also allows for students to take more electives hours, which they can use to add minors which relate to their desired occupations and/or graduate or professional school goals.

Since Spring of 2020, the department has been dealing with the challenges brought on by COVID as they relate to teaching students. As a result, more instruction was offered in either an online or online-hybrid formats than before. All Political Science faculty completed the COIL (Center for Online and Innovative Learning) certification course sponsored Lander University so that they could better adapt their teaching to support Political Science students' instructional across different formats during this time.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Money (\$1000) is needed to facilitate bringing in professionals who work in political science related fields.

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

The money will be used to pay the expenses of bringing in guests who work in political science related fields. These professionals will interact with students and share their real world experiences of working in political science related fields. This will help majors and perspective students to get a better sense of the variety of careers and contexts in which they could apply their Political Science backgrounds.

Outcome 2

Outcomes are specific, **measurable** statements that reflect the broader goals.

Academic Programs are required to develop **Student Learning Outcomes**, which describe knowledge,

skills, and values that students are expected to gain as a result of their educational experiences.

Academic Programs may also develop **Operational Outcomes**, which describe the level of performance of an operational aspect of a program or office (ex. graduation rates, retention, employment data).

Most goals have at least two outcomes measured.

What type of Outcome would you like to add?

Operational Outcome

Enter Outcome

Completions (Degrees Awarded)

Timeframe for this Outcome

Academic Year 2020-2021

Performance Target for "Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded (a) for Baccalaureate programs is greater than or equal to 8, (b) for Master's/First Professional is greater than or equal to 3

Performance Target for "Partially Met"

No Applicable

Performance Target for "Not Met"

Using a five-year rolling average, the number of degrees awarded (a) for Baccalaureate programs is less than 8 (b) for Master's/First Professional is less than 3

Assessment Measure Used

Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner

Frequency of Assessment

Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)

13.6

Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)

3

Comments/Narrative

The Political science program met this standard by producing a solid number of graduates over the past five years, with a rolling average of over 13 degrees conferred per year. The program has engaged in multiple activities in order to maintain and increase degree completion. The program requires that majors earn a "C" or above in two introductory courses (POLS 101--American National Government and POLS 103--Introduction to World Politics) so that students will have solid foundational knowledge of the discipline which will help them be more successful in more advanced upper level courses that are taken later. The program has worked with the Academic Success Center in making tutors available in the introductory courses (POLS 101, POLS 103, and POLS 200) so that students will have access to coursework assistance, which can enhance student performance and progressions through the major. Program faculty keep regular office hours to be available for student assistance. Further, in order to guide students to graduation, program faculty spend a significant amount of time advising students during the course registration period and when needed throughout the semester.

During 2020-2021, the program continued its 2019-2020 commitment to expanding the number of law-related course offerings to a minimum of two per academic year. Given that many students are interested in law-related courses (based on their interests in law-related careers), offering law courses

on a more frequent basis could help encourage students to complete the political science major program, within which they could take multiple law-related classes).

The program also maintains a student organization--the Political Science Association--which provides opportunities for majors to engage in politically-related activities such as voter registration drives, guest speaker events, and political discourse. During the 2019-2020 academic year, the program added the International City/County Managers Association (ICMA), which is a student/professional organization that promotes all forms of city/county level employment, in order to encourage students to explore and prepare for public administration--related careers.

Since Spring of 2020, the department has been dealing with the challenges brought on by COVID as they relate to teaching students. More instruction was offered in either an online or online-hybrid format than before. All Political Science faculty completed the COIL (Center for Online and Innovative Learning) certification course sponsored Lander University so that they could better adapt their teaching to support Political Science students' instructional across different formats during this time.

In 2020-2021, a modified, more streamlined version of the Political Science major became available to students. Program faculty streamlined the major so that the required, core classes better reflected practical content that would be applicable to work settings in which many Political Science majors are likely to become employed. The new major program also allows for students to take more electives hours, which they can use to add minors which relate to their desired occupations and/or graduate or professional school goals.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Money (\$1000) is needed to facilitate bringing in professionals who work in political science related fields.

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

The money will be used to pay the expenses of bringing in guests who work in political science related fields. These professionals will interact with students and share their real world experiences of working in political science related fields. This will help majors students to get a better sense of the variety of careers and contexts in which they could apply their Political Science backgrounds, which will in turn encourage them to complete the degree.

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments

Overall, the Political Science program is doing well in both maintaining a significant number of majors and awarding a significant number of Political Science degrees. Both the number of students enrolled and the number of graduates have remained solid over the past five years. The program aims to get students interested in the major and keep them interested by offering various academic, social, and career related opportunities of which they can take advantage. Despite these positive returns, program faculty aspire to continue to grow the political science program both in terms of major enrollment and graduates in the future.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal

One recent program change (from 2019-2020) that we will continue to make is to expand the number of law-related course offerings to a minimum of two per academic year. Given that many students are interested in law-related courses (based on their interests in law-related careers), offering law courses on a more frequent basis could help attract students to the political science program and encourage them to complete the political science degree (within which they could take multiple law-related classes).

Several other recently made 2020-2021 program changes for the purposes of supporting our major

degree completions will be retained for the 2021-2022 academic year. First, we continue to apply the new, modified version of the Political Science major (first used in 2020-2021) in which the required number of Political Science classes has been reduced so that the degree is more accessible to students. Also, the increased number of elective hours that students will have available in the major program curriculum allows majors more room for majors to add either relevant minors and/or a second major to their curricula.

Finally, the program will continue to host various types of events (such as guest speaker presentations and student-faculty interactive activities) to encourage student interest and engagement in the field which will facilitate both student enrollment in and student completion of the major.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files**Dean's Email Address**

smcmillan@lander.edu

Approved by Dean?

Yes

Signature of Dean

Lucas McMillan

Comments from Dean's Review

This is a good report. The assessment coordinator has clearly led a strong team of faculty who provide meaningful assessment and strive for continuous improvement. This report details how recent curricular changes will mean that student learning outcomes and the assessment instruments used will shift in the future. Thus, future planning efforts are planned.

By separate e-mail, I am sending comments (via Notes in Adobe) that are meant to inspire reflection, new ideas, and commentary on how things might work in the future.

Good job.

Thank you for reviewing and approving this report. The approval and a copy of the report will be emailed to you and the Assessment Coordinator.