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 "<u>identifies</u> expected outcomes, <u>assesses</u> the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and <u>provides evidence of seeking improvement</u> based on analysis of the results".

Be sure to SAVE your progress as you work!

Academic Program
Political Science, B.S.

Submission Year
2022-2023

Assessment Coordinator Name
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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 2021-2022

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	**Frequency of Assessment**
Political Science Program Assessment Exam— "Political Science as an Academic Discipline" 20 Question Subset	Yearly in POLS 499 (Capstone Senior Seminar)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
100%	3

Comments/Narrative
Out of 5 seniors, 100% (5 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, 2018-2019, and 2020-2021) 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--$27,000 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 2021-2022

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	**Frequency of Assessment**
Political Science Program Assessment Exam— "Forms of Government" 24 Question Subset	Yearly in POLS 499 (Capstone Senior Seminar)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
100%	3

Comments/Narrative
Out of 5 seniors (5 seniors), 100% scored above 50 on the "forms of government" subscore. These results, along with those from the past several academic years (2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2020-2021) 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--$27,000 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 2021-2022

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)
80%

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

Comments/Narrative
Out of 5 seniors, 80% (4 seniors) scored above 50 on the "political philosophy" subscore. These results, along with those over the past several academic years (2017-2018, 2018-2019, and 2020-2021), 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 few academic years (2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2021-2022) 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 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 2021-2022 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 2021-2022 academic year since most of the 2021-2022 seniors followed the previous POLS major program (and not the modified 2020-2021

major program). The modified 2020-2021 major program's 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 2022-2023 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 2022-2023 academic year.

Note: Initially, program faculty planned to modify both the student learning outcomes and items on the assessment exam in the 2021-2022 academic year to reflect the modified set of core major courses of the 2020-2021 POLS major program. However, given that a majority (60%) of the graduating seniors of 2021-2022 did not graduate under the new program, program faculty decided to delay the transition to the new student learning outcomes and new assessment exam until the 2022-2023 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 2022-2023 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.

We will continue the previously made program change from the 2021-2022 academic year which requires 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 2022-2023 academic year (since most of the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 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 2021-2022

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	**Frequency of Assessment**
POLS 101 Critical Thinking Paper Rubric	Fall and Spring Semesters in POLS 101 (American National Government)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)   **Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
67%   2

Comments/Narrative
Out of 12 students, 67% (8 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, partially meeting the expected outcome. These results come after three consecutive years of meeting the expected outcome.

Analyses of average scores indicate that the 2021-2022 student performances on content (Avg=1.4) and organization (Avg=1.5) were about the same (content=1.36 and organization=1.43) as they were in the previous year--2020-2021. However, the 2021-2022 student performance on mechanics (Avg=1.5) was somewhat lower than the 2020-2021 student performance on mechanics (Avg=1.73). Although there was a decrease in student performance in the mechanics, student performance levels in content and organization from the previous academic year (2020-2021) were maintained.

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. In 2022-2023, 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.

Program faculty reevaluated the quantity of writing assignments in the on-ground an online hybrid sections given to students and decided that the quantity of written assignments needed to be reduced during the 2022-2023 academic year. The plan is for the reduction to afford students more time and attention to focus on the critical thinking paper assignment, which will hopefully help improve student performance on it. (Note: POLS majors are usually not enrolled in online sections of POLS 101 and the nature of the online class probably necessitates more assignments than the on-ground classes given that they do not meet in person. Given these factors, program faculty focused the reduction of the number of written assignments in the on ground and online-hybrid sections of the course.)

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results
$21,600 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 2021-2022

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	**Frequency of Assessment**
POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper Rubric	Fall and Spring Semesters in POLS 103 (Introduction to World Politics)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
89%	3

Comments/Narrative
Out of 18 students, 89% (16 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. Further, students' average scores across each of the five rubric categories are very similar, indicating that students are also performing pretty well across all five areas (Organization=1.5, Mechanics =1.4, Content=1.6, Thesis=1.6, and References =1.4) of the rubric. This marks the second year in a row in which the standard was met. 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 past few academic years, copies of the POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper have been 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.

In 2021-2022, program faculty piloted the practice of requiring students to submit a writing assignment-- a reflection paper--before they do the critical thinking paper. This allows students to get practice in writing and receive instructor on their writing before doing the critical thinking paper. By already having received feedback from the reflection paper writing assignment, students can learn from the feedback and perform better on the critical thinking paper assignment. Program faculty plan to continue and standardize this practice across all POLS 103 sections in 2022-2023.

Program faculty will continue the aforementioned 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
$8100 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.

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 the ability to analyze the institutional and behavioral political content of a movie by achieving a score of 2 points on Political Analysis section of the POLS 200 Movie Paper Rubric

Timeframe for this Outcome
Academic Year 2021-2022

Performance Target for "Met"
At least 75% achieve a total score of 2 points on the Political Analysis section on the POLS 200 Movie

Paper Scoring Rubric

Performance Target for "Partially Met"
Between 50% and less than 75% achieve a total score of 2 points on the Political Analysis section on the POLS 200 Movie Paper Scoring

Performance Target for "Not Met"
Less than 50% achieve a total score of 2 or more points on the Political Analysis section on the POLS 200 Movie Paper Scoring

Assessment Measure Used	**Frequency of Assessment**
POLS 200 Political Analysis Movie Paper	Every Fall Semester (when POLS 200 is taught)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
66%	2

Comments/Narrative
Out of 18 students, 66% (12 students) achieved a score of 2 on the Political Analysis section of the POLS 200 Movie Paper Rubric. The results indicate that students partially met the standard.

One practice which will be continued for 2022-2023 is providing a brief outline (on the assignment itself) of the questions that must be addressed in the political analysis portion of the paper. The purpose of this outline is to guide students in writing a thorough analysis in their papers.

This is the first year for implementation of the instrument to measure this outcome. As such, we have no previous data for comparison. For the coming year, the assignment will be used again for the outcome. This is will give us a second year of data as a point of comparison. As we continue to utilize this assignment in the future, we will be able to observe trends in the data to ensure students are meeting the outcome of successful political analysis.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results

Explanation of How Resources Will Be Used

Goal Summary

Goal Summary/Comments
Student performance on the goal of demonstrating political analysis skills was mixed. The standard was met for one of the student learning outcomes and partially met for the other two student learning outcomes used to measure the goal of demonstrating political analysis skills. These results suggest that while some students are performing well regarding demonstrating political analysis skills, there still needs to be improvement on the goal in the future.

The partially met standard for the Student Learning Outcome #1—identifying and critiquing the main points of political discourse through the POLS 101 Critical Thinking Paper—was both close to being met and comes after multiple years of having met the standard. Second, the met standard for Student Learning Outcome #2—identifying and critiquing the main points of political discourse through the POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper—for the second year in a row and marks continued improvement on student performance. Finally, the partially met standard for the Student Learning Outcome #3 occurs as this was the first year in which this student learning outcome was used. In order to improve measurement of the goal of demonstrating political analysis skills in the context of more advanced student work, program

faculty in 2021-2022 piloted the addition of a third student learning outcome. Student performance on the political analysis section of the POLS 200 Movie Paper Rubric from the POLS 200 (Introduction to Political Science) class which is a sophomore level introductory course, was added to assess students' political analysis skills.

Changes Made/Proposed Related to Goal
Several new program changes related to the goal of demonstrating political analysis skills will be made during the 2022-2023 academic year. First, regarding the POLS 101 Critical Thinking Paper, the quantity of written assignments in the on ground and online-hybrid sections of POLS 101 has been reduced in order to afford students more time and attention to focus on the critical thinking paper assignment, which will hopefully help improve student performance on it. Second, in order to maintain and improve performance on the POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper, instructors will assign and provide feedback on a reflection paper before the critical thinking paper is done by students. This practice will be standardized across all sections of POLS 103 in 2022-2023.

Several previously made program changes will be retained for the upcoming 2022-2023 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 has been temporarily suspended since the 2020-2021 academic year due to modifications brought on by COVID 19. In 2022-2023, program faculty will reevaluate whether the previously begun practice of having writing center representatives visit all POLS 101 classes is desirable for future semesters.

Changes in Assessment:
Finally, the newly piloted third student learning outcome (students demonstrating the ability to analyze the institutional and behavioral political content of a movie) will be included in the 2022-2023 assessment of this goal (demonstrating political analysis skills). As we continue to measure this student learning outcome through the POLS 200 Movie Paper Rubric, we plan to learn more about students' attainment of political analysis skills.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files
Writing Rubric for POLS 101 Critical Thinking Paper.doc

Writing Rubric for POLS 103 Critical Thinking Paper(2).doc

POLS 200 Political Analysis Movie Paper Rubric.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 2021-2022

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	**Frequency of Assessment**
POLS 490 Internship Evaluation Survey	Yearly (Fall Semester, Spring Semester and Summer Session) in POLS 490 (POLS Internship)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
100%	3

Comments/Narrative
Out of 2 interns, 100% (2 interns) 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 2021-2022

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 (organizaion, content, references/citations, and mechanics) on the POLS 445 Americal 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)
100%

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

Comments/Narrative
Out of 3 students, 100% (3 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 four consecutive years (2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021, and 2021-2022) of strong overall student performance in meeting the standard for demonstrating research competency through writing the research paper. An item analysis reveals that the 2021-2022 student performance in the content area (Avg=2.00) was somewhat higher than it was in both 2020-2021 (Avg=1.85) and in 2019-2020 (Avg=1.77). Despite these signs of improvement, we recognize that the results should be taken with caution given that the data came from the rubric scores of only thee students, a very small number of students.

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 2022-2023, 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 2021-2022

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	**Frequency of Assessment**
POLS 490 Internship Evaluation Survey	Yearly (Fall Semester, Spring Semester and Summer Session) in POLS 490 (POLS Internship)

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
100%	3

Comments/Narrative
Out of 2 interns, 100% (2 interns) 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 a program change started in the 2020-2021 academic year. The change was that the POLS 490 Internship is being offered as a letter grade course instead of a pass/fail 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 2022-2023, 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 2022-2023.

Note: We had initially planned on making this change (replacing the POLS 445 Foreign Policy Research Paper rubric with a research paper assignment from POLS 499 in order to measure the attainment of research skills related to careers in Political Science in the 2021-2022 academic year. However, some Political Science seniors were still on older (pre 2020-2021) major programs, which did require taking POLS 445 (American Foreign Policy). Therefore, we decided to use the POLS 445 Foreign Policy Research Paper Rubric to measure the student learning outcome of attaining research skills related to careers in Political Science for one last year.

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 2021-2022

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	**Frequency of Assessment**
Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner	Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	**Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)**
49.4	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 49.4 majors, which is slightly lower, but very close to the previous year's (2020-2021) five-year rolling average of 51.5. The number of majors has ranged between 44 majors and 52 majors over the past five academic years (2017-2018 through 2021-2022).

In order to maintain and increase enrollment, the Political Science program has engaged in multiple activities over the past few years. These activities have included participating in all Open Houses, increasing the number of minor options in fields related to Political Science (Homeland Security, Criminology, Non-Profit Management), encouraging students to consider pursing 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.

To provide venues outside the classroom within which interested students can pursue political science related interests and explore potential careers, the program sponsors a student organization, the Political Science Association (PSA). Also, 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). Further, the program annually recognizes students who have attained various academic achievements are recognized during the spring semester in an honors and awards 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 (such as State and Local Government and Public Budgeting) 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.

In 2021-2022, the program continued its commitment (begun in 2019-2020) to increasing the number of law-related course offerings. In 2021-2022, the program committed to offering a minimum of three law-related courses per academic year (which is up from the previous minimum offering of two law courses per academic year). Given that many students are interested in law-related courses, offering law courses on a more frequent basis could encourage students to pursue a political science degree.

In September of 2021, the program facilitated several Constitution Day events, which covered constitutional-related topics that are of interest to many Political Science majors. The first event (which was in person) was a conversation with a local newspaper editor on freedom of the press. The second event was participation in a virtual National Constitution Day Conversation, which was sponsored by the American Democracy Project. The program plans to continue facilitating Constitution Day events in the future in order to stimulate the minds students interested in Political Science.

In 2021-2022, the program sponsored a student showcase in which current and former majors shared their experiences related to internships and other special out of the classroom experiences with students. In this event, program faculty provided a forum within which students interested in Political Science could learn about the opportunities that can be experienced in the major from other students. The program plans to continue with the student showcase in the following (2022-2023) academic year.

In spring of 2022, program faculty sponsored a presentation on the "The War in Ukraine: Understanding this Crisis from Lander Faculty Members" shortly after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In this event, interested students could learn about the background to the current event of Russia's War with Ukraine.

Finally, in 2021-2022, the program sponsored several social events for students and faculty in order to encourage student interaction with faculty. In the "Get to Know Your Professor," event, students were invited to take part in a game in which students tried to match pieces of information to the correct professor. The event facilitated positive interactions between the faculty and students in an informal, entertaining setting. We plan to continue with the "Get to Know Your Professor" event in the upcoming academic year (2022-2023). Another social event was the "Pre Finals Social" for for students and faculty, which allowed them to casually interact and eat snacks before the final exam period began.

Resources Needed to Meet/Sustain Results
Money ($1000) is needed to facilitate bringing in professionals who work in political science related fields.

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 2021-2022

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	Frequency of Assessment
Enrollment and Graduation data extracted from Banner	Annually

Data Collected for this Timeframe (Results)	Score (Met=3, Partially Met=2, Not Met=1)
12.2	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 12.2 degrees conferred per year, which is only slightly below the previous year's (2020-2021) rolling average (13.6) degrees.

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.

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.

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.

In 2021-2022, the program continued its commitment (begun in 2019-2020) to increasing the number of law-related course offerings. In 2021-2022, the program committed to offering a minimum of three law-related courses per academic year (which is up from the previous minimum offering of two law courses per academic year). Given that many students are interested in law-related courses, offering law courses on a more frequent basis could encourage students to complete the political science major program, within which they can take multiple law--related courses.

In Fall 2021, the program facilitated several Constitution Day events, which covered constitutional-related topics that are of interest to many Political Science majors. The first event (which was in person) was a conversation with a local newspaper editor on freedom of the press. The second event was participation in a virtual National Constitution Day Conversation, which was sponsored by the American Democracy Project. The program plans to continue facilitating Constitution Day events in the future in order to stimulate the minds the Political Science majors.

In 2021-2022, the program sponsored a student showcase in which current and former majors shared their experiences related to internships and other special out of the classroom experiences with students. In this event, program faculty provided a forum through which Political Science majors could learn about the opportunities that can be experienced in the major from other students. The program plans to continue with the student showcase in the following (2022-2023) academic year.

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. 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 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 2021-2022) that we will continue in 2022-2023 is to expand the number of law-related course offerings to a minimum of three per academic year. 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 program changes for the purposes of supporting our major degree completions will be retained for the 2022-2023 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. In 2021-2022, the program sponsored a student showcase in which current and former majors (alumni) shared their experiences related to internships and other special out of the classroom experiences with students. The program plans to continue with the student showcase in the following (2022-2023) academic year. Also, the program plans to continue facilitating Constitution Day events, which pertain to constitutional-related topics that are of interest to many Political Science majors.

Upload Rubrics/Other Files

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Dean's Email Address
smcmillan@lander.edu

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.