Program Assessment

Degree or Program Name: Political Science (BA)
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Deliverable #1: Matrix of Program Outcomes and Courses

Program's Goals and Objectives
Prepare the students to be competitive for one of the following after graduation: graduate school, law school, secondary education, and government jobs.

Courses' Outcomes

1. Know the basic knowledge of all major sub-fields of political science, including American government, international relations, comparative politics, political theory, and public law and public administration.

2. Know key literatures and scholarly contributions in each sub-field of political science.

3. Know key theories and development of each sub-field of political science.

4. Have a good grasp of research methodologies, skills, and documentation requirements to write research papers.

5. Demonstrate good communication skills by making presentation of research papers and by participating in debate on political science issues in class and conference.

6. Have the skills of critical thinking by employing learned theories and knowledge to analyze domestic and international political issues. Develop the skill of how to write a high quality research papers.

Courses for Majors	Required	Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5	Outcome 6
POLS 101 - Introduction to American Politics	**R**	**I**	**I**	**I**	**I**	**I**	**I**
POLS 220 - Introduction to Legal Systems	**R**	**I**	**D**	**I**	**D**	**D**	**D**
POLS 242 - Introduction to World Politics	**R**	**D**	**D**	**I**	**D**	**I**	**D**
POLS 251 - Introduction to Comparative Government	**R**	**D**	**D**	**D**	**D**	**D**	**D**
POLS 280 – Methods of Research	**R**	**D**	**D**	**M**	**M**	**D**	**M**
POLS 301 - Modern Political Ideologies	**R**	**D**	**D**	**D**	**I**	**I**	**D**
POLS 470S – Seminar in Political Science	**R**	**M**	**M**	**M**	**M**	**M**	**M**

I = Introduced, D = Developed & Practiced with Feedback, M = Demonstrated at the Mastery

Deliverable #2: Assessment Plan for Program Outcomes

Program Outcome (same outcomes as Deliverable #1)	Assessment Plan	Status / Progress / Results
1. Know the basic knowledge of all major sub-fields of political science, including American government, international relations, comparative politics, political theory, and Public law and public administration.	Identify the content of each of the five sub-fields of political science and demonstrate a good grasp of the basic knowledge of each of the five sub-fields through two comprehensive examinations: the ETS POLS Major Field Test (MFT) in the time of graduation and the Political Science Department's self-designed test.	We have administered the MFT once and the self-designed test twice.
2. Know key literatures and scholarly contributions in each sub-field of political science.	Identify 2 thinkers/scholars or 2 books that have greatly contributed to each of the five sub-fields; Identify 5 influential American scholars in the field of political science as well as their major works.	Listed in course syllabi; but students have not been tested.
3. Know key theories and development of each sub-field of political science.	Identify key theories of each of the five sub-fields; Explain why they are important for that sub-field.	Tested in required courses and in comprehensive tests
4. Have a good grasp of research methodologies, skills, and documentation requirements to write research papers.	Identify the basic empirical and statistical research methods; Demonstrate the ability to explain and employ the Social Scientific Method, including research designs, data connection, measurement, and hypothesis testing; Present the ability to interpret and perform data analysis; Know how to document research papers with the Chicago style or other styles; Present the ability to use computers for word processing and data analysis and access to remote data sites.	Student learned these skills in Pols 280 and other lower and upper division courses

5. Demonstrate communication skills by making presentation of research papers and by participating in debate on political science issues in class and conference.	Present research papers in class and in conference; Participate in class discussions and debate; Serve as seminar leaders in class; Participate the Political Science Club meetings to discuss and debate domestic and international issues.	Presentations in class are required, tested, and grated. Students participated in academic conferences and Model UN conference.
6. Have the skills of critical thinking by employing learned theories and knowledge to analyze domestic and international political issues. Develop the skill of how to write a high quality research papers.	Explain the domestic and international issues through research papers, debates presentations, senior thesis, the 470s research paper, and other researches.	All courses, except pols 101, required writing a research paper. The Pols 470s students are required to finish a high-quality paper; Some students coauthored research papers or conducted research with professors.

Further Explanation of Political Science Learning Assessment at UH Hilo

Currently, political science learning assessment has been carried out by the following arrangements.

(1) Students' learning from each political science course, including the 7 required courses, is assessed through classroom tests, presentations in class and in formal conference such as Model UN conference, research papers, and outside classroom activities such as federal state and local internships.

(2) The ETS Political Science Major Field Test (MFT). Political Science majors' learning is assessed through two comprehensive learning assessment tests (See the attached "Assessment Report" by our department)--one is the MFT and the other is our department's self-designed test. All POLS majors are required to take the MFT by registering our capstone 470s in the last semester of their graduation. We compared our students' test scores with those of 20 peer institutions to assess our program's strength and weakness. So far we have administered the MFT once.

(3) The Political Science Department's self-designed comprehensive major test. The questions of this comprehensive test are from each of the five sub-fields of political science. POLS majors are asked to take two tests: a pre-test and a post-test. The pre-test is given when they register POLS 101—American Politics (lowest-level POLS class for freshmen) to know how much they have learned about Political Science prior to take POLS courses. The post-test is given when they finish their four-year study at college and take our capstone Pols 470s in the time of graduation. Students' learning in POLS during the four years can be assessed through comparing the "pre-test" scores and the "post-test" scores. So far we have administered two pairs of pre- and post- tests.

(4) Research papers. The ability to write research papers are an important part of students' learning in the field of political science. POLS majors are required to finish a research paper for each POLS course (except POLS 101) and a high-quality research paper for completion of our capstone POLS 470s. The POLS 470s paper will be evaluated by both the Instructor of the 470s and a faculty specialized in student's research area.

Our Plan for further Improvement in Students' Learning

Based on our assessment data, our program decided to further improve students' learning through the following arrangements:

(1) Curriculum Construction. Learning goals will be further clearly defined in the syllabus of each of our required curses and elective courses.

(2) Improve the weak areas. For instance, POLS 251--Comparative Politics needs to redesign the syllabus and to change some subjects of this course.

(3) We will study peer institutions to see how they design, assess and improve their students learning.

Deliverable #3: WASC Rubrics (Self-Assessment Checklist)

Check the status of your program's learning outcomes for each WASC criteria below.

Criterion	Initial	Emerging	Developed	Highly Developed
Comprehensive List		√		
Assessable Outcomes		√		
Alignment			√	
Assessment Planning				√
The Student Experience		√		

<u>Retention and Graduation</u>

Declared Political Science majors
Fall 2003: 84
Fall 2007: 84

The number of Graduates with BA in Political Science per academic year
03/04 -- 14
04/05 – 16
05/06 – 20
06/07 -- 27
07/08 – 06 (fall 2007 graduates only)

Compared the number of declared political science majors in the 03/04 academic year and in the 06/07 academic year and the number of the students graduated from UH Hilo with BA in political Science between these years, we can find that that more and more students chose to stay in UH Hilo to finish their political science degrees.