

**Politics**  
**PROGRAM ASSESSMENT**  
**December 2008**

**I. Program Goals**

- Students should have theoretical and empirical knowledge of politics and government, both domestic and international.
- Students should develop skills in critical thinking, modes of analysis, deliberation, research and communication.
- Students should develop an active public spirit and sense of social justice.
- Students should experience first-hand the relationship between theory and practice in the political process.

**II. Learning Outcomes**

- 1a. Graduates will comprehend and apply key concepts from four of five subfields of politics (American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Politics, Political Theory, and Public Policy/Administration).
- 1b. Graduates will understand the broad range of political systems and cultural perspectives on politics.
- 1c. Graduates will achieve a depth of understanding in a particular subfield of politics.
- 2a. Graduates will demonstrate critical thinking skills and formulate and defend a thesis in written and oral form.
- 2b. Graduates will exhibit skill and competency in applying qualitative and or quantitative methods.
- 2c. Graduates will design, implement and communicate the results of an original research project.
- 2d. Graduates will develop skills in collective deliberation (through collaboration and engaging diverse viewpoints).
- 3a. Graduates will develop a critical and informed perspective on global, national and local political issues.

3b. Graduates will engage political problems and apply analytical tools to propose solutions to them.

3c. Graduates will demonstrate knowledge of, and be informed by, diverse perspectives on global, national, and local political issues.

4a. Graduates will examine the relationship between theories of politics and the practice of it through structured service learning opportunities. Students' knowledge of politics will be expanded by engaging in a governmental or non-governmental internship opportunity.

### **III. Assessment Method(s)**

For Learning Outcomes 1a, 1b, and 1c (as well as 3a, 3b, and 3c):

- Senior theses and other student papers reviewed and evaluated by departmental committee
- Oral presentations evaluated by departmental committee
- Course-embedded assessment (test performance, short answer performance, quizzes, essays)
- Portfolio evaluations by departmental committee

For Learning Outcomes 2a, 2b, 2c, and 2d:

- Senior theses and other student papers reviewed and evaluated by departmental committee
- Oral presentations evaluated by departmental committee
- Course-embedded assessment (test question performance, short answer performance, quizzes, essays)

- Students' perceptions of their development (responses to questions added to Summa Evaluation Forms)
- Portfolio evaluations by departmental committee

For Learning Outcome 3a, 3b, and 3c (indirect measures):

- Focus Groups of Recent Alumni
- Telephone Interviews and Surveys of Recent Alumni
- Reflective essays of graduating students
- Exit interviews of graduating students
- Students' perceptions of their development (responses to questions added to Summa Evaluation Forms)

For Learning Outcome 3b (additional measures)

- Participation Rate in Community and Political Activism
- Alumni Surveys (2-10 years post-graduation)

For Learning Outcome 4:

- Telephone Interviews and Surveys of Internship Supervisors
- Internship course (Politics 396 and 397) papers reviewed and evaluated by departmental committee
- Course evaluations

#### **IV. Time Frame**

1a. Students will prepare portfolios, and complete senior course theses and oral presentations before the end of the senior year.

Evaluation of the portfolios, senior course theses and oral presentations will be scheduled for each semester.

1b. Course-embedded assessment (to evaluate learning outcomes 2a, 2b, and 2c) will be conducted once a year.

1c. Reflective essays and exit surveys of graduating students will be conducted once a year.

1d. Focus group interviews, telephone interviews and surveys of recent alumni will be conducted (we assume) by university personnel who will determine their scheduling.

1e. Telephone interviews and surveys will be conducted by internship course professors each semester.

#### **V. Who Will Do the Assessment?**

- Department Chair and department-elected committees will conduct most of the assessment
- Some measures will be conducted (we assume) by university administration

#### **VI. How data will be used to improve program or revise curricula**

- The department will meet as a whole to discuss findings and will recommend methods of improving department curricula and procedures.