Institutional Effectiveness
2019-2020

Program: Political Science BS

College and Department: College of Arts & Sciences – Department of Political Science

Contact: Loretta Maxwell

Mission: Within the context of the University's mission, the mission of the Department is to provide students with a quality liberal arts education that prepares them for a rapidly changing world and a variety of work environments and post-graduate educational possibilities.

The Department of Sociology and Political Science has the primary mission of offering strong academic programs in sociology, criminology and criminal justice, social work and political science. It provides students with a quality liberal arts education that prepares them for a rapidly changing world and a variety of work environments and postgraduate educational possibilities. Students are educated to not only master a diverse body of knowledge but also to think critically, analyze data, and clearly communicate what they know and discover. Recognizing that we live in an increasingly technological and diverse world, we seek to incorporate technological expertise and appreciation of human diversity into our courses. The Department also strives to serve the wider university, the Upper Cumberland region, and the nation through research and public service.

Program Goals:

PG 1: The Program of Political Science will have a sufficient number of students, at least 70 majors, to sustain a strong educational program.

The Program will be involved in recruitment initiatives such as participation in TTU Recruitment events.

PG 2: Students will judge that a sufficient number of curricular and co-curricular activities were offered by the program as reported by our students.

Student Learning Outcomes:

SLO 1: Political Science majors will develop knowledge of their discipline.

Political Science majors will demonstrate knowledge of their discipline at a level comparable to the national mean on the ETS major field exam.

SLO 2: Majors in Political Science will demonstrate critical thinking skills at a level comparable to the national mean.

Majors in Political Science will demonstrate critical thinking skills at a level comparable to the national mean.

SLO 3: Majors in Political Science will be capable of effective oral and written communication.

Students will report confidence in their abilities to write and speak clearly and effectively as measured by the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

SLO 4: Majors in Political Science in the Legal Studies Concentration be prepared for legal study.

Majors in Political Science in the Legal Studies Concentration will indicate preparedness for legal study.

A departmentally developed curriculum map can be found in Appendix 1 that shows the connections between courses and student learning outcomes.

Assessment Methods:

PG 1: Sufficient number of students

1. Tracking sheet of the number of Political Science majors
2. Tracking the number of recruitment activities

PG 2: Sufficient number of curricular and co-curricular activities

1. Annual survey of majors delivered through Qualtrics and assesses student satisfaction with curricular and co-curricular offerings in Political Science.

SLO 1: Develop knowledge of the discipline

1. Educational Testing Services (ETS) major field examination is administered each fall and spring semester to all enrolled majors with senior classification. The ETS exam outlines content questions related to Comparative Government and Politics, International Relations, and United States Government and Politics.

   Performance at a level above or comparable to the national mean on the ETS Major Field Examination is defined as Tech students having a mean score no lower than 1.644 standard errors below the national mean, the level at which a difference would become statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

SLO 2: Demonstrate critical thinking skills

1. Educational Testing Services (ETS) major field examination is administered each fall and spring semester to all enrolled majors with senior classification. The ETS exam measures Analytical and Critical Thinking, Methodology, and Political Thought.

   Performance at a level above or comparable to the national mean on the ETS Major Field Examination is defined as Tech students having a mean score no lower than 1.644 standard errors below the national mean, the level at which a difference would become statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

SLO 3: Effective oral and written communication

1. Political Science analyzes the results from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) in order to assess student confidence in their abilities to write and speak clearly and effectively. The results of the National Survey of Student Engagement allow us to assess how well our students perform on learning Outcome 3 by determining their

capabilities in effectively using written and oral skills. These results are compared to other TTU students and to our Carnegie peer institutions.

2. The threshold of acceptability is improvement from the freshman year to the senior year in critical thinking skills on the NSSE data, and this threshold was met.

SLO 4: Prepared for legal study

1. Annual survey of majors assesses students in the Legal Studies Concentration preparation for legal study.

Results:

PG 1: *The threshold of 70 majors was met and all TTU recruitment events were attended.*

Year	Total Political Science (Includes Concentrations)	Political Science with Legal Studies Concentration	Political Studies with International Relations & Comparative Government Concentration (*No Longer Available)
2014	79	23	6
2015	79	31	6
2016	79	32	8
2017	94	36	11
2018	84	34	9
2019	86	44	4

PG 2: Sufficient number of curricular and co-curricular activities

The annual Qualtrics survey of majors (that consistently demonstrates student satisfaction with curricular and co-curricular offerings) was not administered in spring 2020 due to the adverse impact on our students of an F4 tornado followed by the global COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Department continues to offer numerous curricular and co-curricular opportunities, as demonstrated below:

Political Science Curricular Options

- Competition Course: Model United Nations
- Competition Course: Moot Court
- Credit-Based Internship Placements with Local Agencies
- Presenting Research with Faculty at Conferences
- Conducting Research with Faculty
- Serving as a Teaching Assistant
- QEP (grant based) Service Learning in the Community
- Internships in Washington D.C. and the Tennessee General Assembly
- Internships with Local Law Offices

Political Science Co-Curricular Options

- Sociology/Criminal Justice Club
- Pre-Law Club
- Pi Sigma Alpha – Political Science Honor Society
- Alpha Kappa Delta (AKD) – Sociology Honor Society
- One World
- Departmental Work Study
- YAL: Young Americans for Liberty
- Model United Nations of TTU
- Non-Traditional Student Organization (NTSO)
- Habitat for Humanity Build

SLO 1: Develop knowledge of the discipline

ETS Scores:

	TTU Data			National Data		
	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean	S.D.	N
Spring 2020	149.6	14.8	14	152.3	13.9	4190
Fall 2019	140.4	17.2	8	130.9	152.2	3536
Spring 2019	149.6	14.3	14	152.2	13.9	3536
Fall 2018	139	1	2	152.4	14	2268
Spring 2018	155	7	9	152.4	13.7	226.8
Fall 2017	153.2	14	7	142	8	1065
Spring 2017	147	13	19	152	13.8	6691
Fall 2016	142	9	29	148.3	12.4	4998

ETS Sub-Scores:

	FY2020			
	N	TTU Mean	S.D.	National Mean
US Government and Politics	22	47.6	15.94	52.3
Comparative Government and Politics	22	45.7	14.52	52.5
International Relations	22	45.8	16.87	53

Gen Ed Pre/Post results from POLS:

Fall 2019	Pre-test Average	n	Post-test Average	n	Increase
POLS 1030-001	58.83	75	77.66	70	18.83
POLS 1030-002	51.2	21	69.38	19	18.18

SLO 2: Demonstrate critical thinking skills

Student Learning Outcome 2 Major Field Exam: Critical Exam Data		
Fall 2019	TTU Data	National Data
Mean	*No Data Received	
S.D.		
Fall 2019	TTU Data	National Data
Mean	*No Data Received	
S.D.		
Spring 2019	TTU Data	National Data
Mean	*No Data Received	
S.D.		
Fall 2018	TTU Data	National Data
Mean	* Two student tests	
S.D.		
Spring 2018	TTU Data	National Data
Mean	61	60.4
S.D	9	8
Fall 2017	TTU Data	National Data
Mean	53	45
S.D	13.7	19
Spring 2017	TTU Data	National Data
Mean	58	60.4
S.D	11	8
Fall 2016	TTU Data	National Data
Mean	43	47.8
S.D.	9	12
Spring 2016	TTU Data	National Data
Mean	44	48.4
S.D	13	12.6
Fall 2015	TTU Data	National Data
Mean	39	48.4
S.D.	10	12.6
Spring 2015	TTU Data	National Data
Mean	43	48.3
S.D	11	11.9
Fall 2014	TTU Data	National Data
Mean	41	48.3
S.D.	7	11.9

*Subscores not reported when less than 5 students tested

SLO 3: Effective oral and written communication

		Oral		*Written*	
		Freshmen	Seniors	Freshmen	Seniors
2016	TTU Political Science	-	3.2	-	3.6
	TTU Total	2.5	2.9	2.6	2.8
	Carnegie	2.8	2.9	2.9	3.1
2019	TTU Political Science	2.8	4.0	2.8	4.0
	TTU Total	2.6	2.8	2.6	2.8
	Carnegie	2.6	2.9	2.7	2.9
2020	TTU Political Science	-	3.0	-	3.4
	TTU Total	2.7	2.9	2.6	2.9
	Carnegie	2.7	3.0	2.8	3.0

SLO 4: Prepared for legal study

In previous years, students were administered a Qualtrics survey. That was not given in 2019-2020 due to the combined student challenges with a regional F4 tornado and a mid-semester conversion to on-line courses due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. However, individual Exit Interviews were given to four students who took courses in the Legal Studies concentration and 100% of them indicated they felt prepared for legal study. Of these students, all four had also competed in the POLS Moot Court competition course that was a QEP-grant recipient course in 2019. One of these majors is currently admitted to Vanderbilt Law School and one is currently applying to various law schools; two of the above students are saving up money for future law school admission.

Modifications for Improvement:

SLO 3: Effective oral and written communication

Based on program review results and faculty observation of students writing, a rubric for assessment will be added for the Political Science 3000: Data Analysis course. This course is required of all Political Science majors and the rubric will measure oral and written components.

SLO 4: Prepared for Legal Studies

The faculty will be adding a set of questions with the Major Field as currently done in Sociology. A multiple-choice exam covering topics in Political Science-Legal Studies developed by faculty in the department with an expected passage rate of 50% will be administered.

Appendices

1. Curriculum Map

Appendix 1: Curriculum Map

REQUIRED COURSES AND EXPERIENCES	LEARNING OUTCOMES - Political Science Majors			
	1-Demonstrate knowledge of their discipline at a level comparable to the national mean.	2-Demonstrate critical thinking skills at a level comparable to the national mean.	3-Be capable of effective oral and written communication.	4-Demonstrate proficiencies in the program concentration(s).
POLS 1030	X			
POLS 1100	X			
POLS 2250		X	X	
POLS 3000		X	X	
POLS 3102		X	X	
POLS 3110		X	X	
POLS 3120		X	X	
POLS 3130		X	X	
POLS 3200		X	X	
POLS 3300		X	X	
POLS 3310		X	X	
POLS 3320		X	X	
POLS 3330		X	X	
POLS 3400		X	X	
POLS 3500		X	X	
POLS 3610		X	X	
POLS 3650		X	X	
POLS 3670		X	X	
POLS 3700		X	X	
POLS 3710		X	X	
POLS 3810		X	X	X
POLS 4100		X	X	X
POLS 4210		X	X	

POLS 4220		X	X	
POLS 4230		X	X	
POLS 4250		X	X	
POLS 4310		X	X	X
POLS 4320		X	X	X
POLS 4400		X	X	
POLS 4410		X	X	
POLS 4420		X	X	
POLS 4430		X	X	
POLS 4510		X	X	
POLS 4520		X	X	
POLS 4610		X	X	
POLS 4700		X	X	
POLS 4730		X	X	
POLS 4900				
POLS 4910		X	X	X
POLS 4911		X	X	X
POLS 4920		X	X	
POLS 4950		X	X	X
POLS 4960		X	X	
POLS 4990		X	X	