

**Institutional Effectiveness  
2022-2023**

**Program:** Political Science BS

**College and Department:** College of Arts & Sciences

**Contact:** Lori 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.

**Attach Curriculum Map (Educational Programs Only): \*See Appendix 1.**

**PO 1: RECRUIT SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF STUDENTS**

**Define Outcome:**

The Program of Political Science will recruit a sufficient number of students to sustain a strong educational program and promote lifelong learning in support of the strategic plan.

**Assessment Methods:**

The Program will monitor enrollment and graduation rates.

**Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):**

1. The enrollment threshold for Political Science is 70 students; if our number of majors falls below that threshold, we will monitor our recruitment initiatives.

**Results and Analysis:**

Year	Number of POLS General Track	Number of POLS Legal Studies	Number of Total POLS Majors
2022	23	53	76
2021	39	43	82

2020	42	44	86
2019	52	34	86
2018	48	36	84

### **Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:**

While Political Science met the enrollment threshold, the Program will continue to seek improvement by participating in University recruitment initiatives, VIP days, and SOAR sessions.

## **PO 2: OFFER SUFFICIENT CURRICULAR & CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

### **Define Outcome:**

Students will judge that a sufficient number of curricular and co-curricular activities were offered by the program.

### **Assessment Methods:**

1. Departmentally-designed Qualtrics student satisfaction survey. A departmentally-designed Qualtrics student satisfaction survey is now annually circulated among Political Science Majors. Students are surveyed regarding the sufficiency of their curricular options.
2. Student Assessment of Curricular Effectiveness: Completed by student majors.
3. Co-Curricular Options

### **Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):**

1. The threshold of acceptability for the Qualtrics student satisfaction survey is that the majority of students are on the positive side of the Likert responses (Somewhat agree, Agree, or Strongly Agree)
2. The threshold of acceptability for the student-evaluated curriculum map is that the students determine a majority of the courses prepare them for written and oral communication as well as prepare them for proficiency in their concentration. Absent this, a re-evaluation of the curriculum would be undertaken.
3. The threshold of acceptability is to offer co-curricular options in political science as indicated above.

### **Results and Analysis:**

Departmentally-designed Qualtrics student satisfaction survey.

- *Thinking about the entire political science curriculum, please tell us your level of agreement with the following statements (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree) Spring 2023*
  - *The political science curriculum exposes me to a broad range of content in the field of political science. 95.24% of responding students agree or strongly agree*
  - *The courses have been intellectually stimulating. 95.24% of responding students agree or strongly agree*

- *The courses have been academically rigorous. 80.95% of responding students agree or strongly agree*
- *The courses have utilized a variety of teaching methods to enhance my learning. 80.96% of responding students agree or strongly agree*

#### Co-Curricular Options

- Internships: Federal; State; Local
- Internships: Legal Studies
- Pi Sigma Alpha (Political Science Honor Society)
- Constitution Day: POLS Student Majors serve on the Committee
- YAL: Young Americans for Liberty Libertarian Student Group
- Guest Speakers: Elected Officials; Law Student Alumni
- Student Teaching Assistantships/Research Assistantships
- Pre-Law Club

#### **Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:**

While the majority of responding students are satisfied with the curricular offerings, Political Science will continue to seek improvement by administering the student survey annually to gauge student satisfaction.

### **SLO 1: ACQUIRE CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS**

#### **Define Outcome:**

Students will acquire the critical thinking skills to be prepared for employment and graduate/law school.

#### **Assessment Methods:**

1. The California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) is a senior exit exam taken by all graduate seniors at Tennessee Tech University. Political Science majors will average 90% of the TTU average on the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST).
2. 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.
3. Departmentally-designed Qualtrics student satisfaction survey. A departmentally-designed Qualtrics student satisfaction survey is now annually circulated among Political Science Majors. Students are surveyed regarding the sufficiency of their curricular options.

**Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):**

1. Faculty seek to emphasize student critical thinking gains through use of the California Critical Thinking Test as a component of SLO 1. Specifically, students must score 90% of TTU's mean score on the CCTST.
2. Performance at a level within 10% of a mean of 50 on the ETS Major Field Examination Analytical and Critical Thinking Score is expected. If this mean drops, faculty will re-evaluate.
3. The threshold of acceptability for the Qualtrics Student Survey is that the majority of students self-select on the positive side of the Likert responses (indicated in purple). In the event this does not happen, faculty will assess possible solutions.

**Results and Analysis:**

1. California Critical Thinking Skills Test

2022-23 CCTST Scores	Mean	N
POLS	77.0	15
TTU	74.3	1652
TTU CAS	76.2	242
CCTST National	73.3	n/a

2. ETS - Major Field

ETS POLS Major Field Assessment Indicator			
Spring 2023	N	TTU Mean	National Mean
Analytical and Critical Thinking	9	58	59.6

3. Departmentally-designed Qualtrics student satisfaction survey.
  - *Thinking about the entire political science curriculum, please tell us your level of agreement with the following statements (Strongly Disagree – Strongly Agree)*
  - *The political science curriculum has improved my ability to think critically. 90.47% of responding students agree or strongly agree.*

**Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:**

No actions are needed as POLS scored higher than TTU, CAS and the CCTST

**SLO 2: DEMONSTRATE KNOWLEDGE OF DISCIPLINE****Define Outcome:**

Students will demonstrate appropriate knowledge of their discipline.

**Assessment Methods:**

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.

**Criteria for Success (Thresholds for Assessment Methods):**

1. Acceptable performance on the ETS Major Field Examination Sub Score content areas is expected. If scores are below the previous mean, faculty will re-evaluate.

**Results and Analysis:**

ETS Major Field Test

ETS Major Field Assessment Indicator			
Spring 2023	N	TTU Mean	Frequency distribution
US Government & Politics	9	53	9
Comparative Government	9	52	9
International Relations	9	49	9

**Use of Results to Improve Outcomes:**

The ETS scores were higher in spring 2023 than in fall 2022, thus they were not below the previous mean. National averages were not provided. To seek improvement, Political Science has decided to incentivize the top performers by offering a prize for the highest ETS score annually.

**Summative Evaluation:**

**SLO2:** To seek improvement on the ETS Major Field Test, Political Science has decided to incentivize the top performers by offering a prize for the highest ETS score annually.

**Assessment Plan Changes:**

None

Appendix 1:

Curriculum Map, Political Science BS: Student Assessment of Curricular Effectiveness

<b>COURSES: Required; POLS-LS; POLS-IRCG (withdrawn and teach-out plan just completed)</b>		Capable of effective oral and written communication.	Demonstrate proficiencies in the program concentration(s).
POLS 1030	American Government	Yes	Yes
POLS 1100	Intro to Political Science	Yes	Yes
POLS 2250	Mock Trial	Yes	Yes
POLS 3000	Data Analysis	Yes	Yes
POLS 3100	Model United Nations I	Yes	Yes
POLS 3101	Model United Nations II	Yes	Yes
POLS 3110	Intro to Legal Reasoning and Analysis	Yes	Yes
POLS 3120	Legal Research and Writing	Yes	Yes
POLS 3130	Moot Court	Yes	Yes
POLS 3200	American Political Thought	Yes	Yes
POLS 3300	Intro to Latin American Politics	Yes	No
POLS 3310	Politics of Developing Nations	Yes	Yes
POLS 3320	U.S. Policy Toward Latin America	Yes	No
POLS 3330	State and Local Government	Yes	Yes
POLS 3400	Gender and Politics	Yes	Yes
POLS 3500	Political Conspiracy Theories	Yes	Yes
POLS 3610	International Politics	Yes	Yes
POLS 3650	International Organizations	Yes	Yes
POLS 3670	Foreign Policy	Yes	Yes

POLS 3700	The Legislative Process	Yes	Yes
POLS 3710	The American Executive	Yes	Yes
POLS 3810	Judicial Process	Yes	Yes
POLS 4100	International Law	Yes	Yes
POLS 4210	American Political Parties	Yes	Yes
POLS 4220	Campaigns and Elections	Yes	Yes
POLS 4230	Scandal and Corruption in US Politics	Yes	Yes
POLS 4250	Political Communications	Yes	Yes
POLS 4310	CON LAW I: Struggle for Federal Powers and Accountability	Yes	Yes
POLS 4320	CON LAW II: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	Yes	Yes
POLS 4400	Political Satire	Yes	Yes
POLS 4410	Political Theory: Ancient and Medieval	Yes	Yes
POLS 4420	Political Theory: Early Modern	Yes	Yes
POLS 4430	Power and Privilege on the Screen	Yes	Yes
POLS 4510	Comparative Government: Europe	Yes	Yes
POLS 4520	Comparative Political Behavior	Yes	Yes
POLS 4610	Public Administration & Public Policies	Yes	Yes
POLS 4700	Tennessee Trial Practices	Yes	Yes
POLS 4730	First Amendment Law and Analysis	Yes	Yes
POLS 4910	Seminar in Public Law	Yes	Yes
POLS 4911	Special Projects	Yes	Yes
POLS 4920	Seminar in Comparative Politics	Yes	Yes
POLS 4950	Political Participation Internship	Yes	Yes