

Assessment Cycle 2022-23 (Academic Programs)

Political Science BA

Mission

The mission of the Department of Political Science and Public Administration is to serve the global, national, state and local community through teaching, research, and service.

Academic Year 2022-23

Political Science BA Learning Outcomes

Critical Thinking **MET**

Students will have the ability to think critically and relate theoretical information to practical experiences;

MEASURES	RESULTS	ACTIONS
<p>Course Mapping Survey</p> <p>Students graduating from all PSPA majors complete an exit survey as part of their capstone (POLS 495). Students rate the emphasis of each course they took in the major on the various PSPA learning goals. The rating is from 0 to 5 with 5 indicating strong emphasis and 0 indicating no emphasis.</p> <p>Student responses are averaged by course and then courses are averaged together as an indication of the degree of emphasis students perceive is placed on each learning goal across the curriculum.</p> <p>Indirect - Survey</p> <p>Target</p> <p>Target of 4.0 on scale of 1-5 (particularly in upper-division courses) in course map survey of disaggregated courses</p>	<p>NOT MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>The average for Critical Thinking across the courses formally part of the Political Science major was 3.89. This is just short of the PSPA target of 4.0. Even excluding introductory courses, the goal is not met.</p>	<p>Revise Benchmark / Target</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p> <p>The current benchmark is an average across all required courses. This benchmark does not distinguish between consistently below benchmark course ratings and a situation in which some courses stress a learning goal but others do not. The department committed to conducting a course mapping for each learning goal to evaluate if students report learning goal focus in the areas where we have sought to emphasize it as a learning goal.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023</p> <p>Maintain Assessment Strategy</p> <p>In closing the loop discussions, it was noted that the course mapping results were generally lower than what has been seen in the past. With the exception of verbal communication, students have historically rated PSPA courses relatively high across the various learning goals.</p> <p>It was further noted that this cohort of students would have been significantly affected by the COVID 19 pandemic and had an educational experience different from what we have seen in the past. Given the generally strong results across the other assessment measures, it was determined that the department would hold steady with the Course Mapping assessment but continue to monitor to see if this drop persists.</p>
<p>Exit Survey</p> <p>Students graduating from all PSPA majors complete an exit survey as part of their capstone (POLS 495). As part of this survey, students rate the extent to which their major contributed to improvement in their own self assessment of each learning goal. The rating is from 1 to 5 with 5 indicating significant contribution and 1 indicating no contribution. Student responses are averaged for each PSPA major.</p> <p>Indirect - Survey</p> <p>Target</p> <p>Minimum of 4.0 on scale of 1-5 in value-added survey question for aggregated curriculum</p>	<p>MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>The average for Critical Thinking across the 29 Political Science students was 4.28, meeting the department's target.</p>	<p>Revise Measurement / Assessment</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p> <p>As part of the "closing the loop conversations" PSPA has begun revising the exit survey. This will alter presentation but not the substance of this question.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023</p>

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<p>White Paper</p> <p>The white paper is a significant research project undertaken by students as part of their coursework in POLS 495. Students identify and define a problem, marshal relevant scholarly work on the problem, and put forward a solution. In addition to a written paper students prepare and deliver a professional presentation. The presentation and paper are scored using the PSPA Communication Rubric which includes a separate measure for content, comprehension, reasoning, organization and verbal / written communication.</p> <p>Direct - Assignment</p> <p><i>Senior Colloquium in Political Science and Public Administration: POLS 495</i></p> <p>Target</p> <p>Minimum of 80% of student artifacts achieving average of 2.0 (0-3 scale) on relevant dimensions (reasoning).</p>	<p>MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>A sample of 8 white papers and 8 white paper presentations was drawn from POLS 495 students. The critical thinking score is based on the reasoning category of the PSPA communication rubric. The average score across the artifacts scored was 2.5. This meets the PSPA target of 2.0. Additionally, 93.8% of artifacts met the 2.0 target.</p>	<p>Revise Measurement / Assessment</p> <p>COMPLETE</p> <p>In closing the loop discussions, PSPA faculty expressed dissatisfaction with the ability to use the results of the PSPA communication rubric for program improvement. A subcommittee was established to revise the PSPA communication rubric.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023</p>
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Conclusion

PSPA faculty are broadly satisfied with the direct and indirect measures related to the critical thinking learning goal. PSPA courses emphasize critical thinking, which is supported by the exit survey, course mapping, and the white paper scoring. PSPA faculty felt that no curricular or programmatic changes were needed at this point to support this learning goal.

Cultural Agility **MET**

Students will have cultural agility and an appreciation of cultural differences.

MEASURES	RESULTS	ACTIONS
<p>Course Mapping Survey</p> <p>Students graduating from all PSPA majors complete an exit survey as part of their capstone (POLS 495). Students rate the emphasis of each course they took in the major on the various PSPA learning goals. The rating is from 1 to 5 with 5 indicating strong emphasis and 0 indicating no emphasis.</p> <p>Student responses are averaged by course as an indication of the degree of emphasis students perceive is placed on each learning goal across the curriculum.</p> <p>Indirect - Survey</p> <p>Target</p> <p>Target of 4.0 on scale of 1-5 (particularly in upper-division courses) in course map survey of disaggregated courses</p>	<p>NOT MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>The average for Cultural Agility across the courses formally part of the Political Science major was 3.64. This is short of the PSPA target of 4.0. Even excluding introductory courses, the goal is not met.</p>	<p>Maintain Assessment Strategy</p> <p>In closing the loop discussions, it was noted that the course mapping results were generally lower than what has been seen in the past. With the exception of verbal communication, students have historically rated PSPA courses relatively high across the various learning goals.</p> <p>It was further noted that this cohort of students would have been significantly affected by the COVID 19 pandemic and had an educational experience different from what we have seen in the past. Given the generally strong results across the other assessment measures, it was determined that the department would hold steady with the Course Mapping assessment but continue to monitor to see if this drop persists.</p> <p>Revise Benchmark / Target</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p> <p>The current benchmark is an average across all required courses. This is benchmark does not distinguish between consistently below benchmark course ratings and a situation in which some courses stress a learning goal but others do not. The department committed to conducting a course mapping for each learning goal to evaluate if students report learning goal focus in the areas where we have sought to emphasize it as a learning goal.</p>

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		Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023
<p>Exit Survey</p> <p>Students graduating from all PSPA majors complete an exit survey as part of their capstone (POLS 495). As part of this survey, students the extent to which their major contributed to improvement in their own self assessment of each learning goal. The rating is from 1 to 5 with 5 indicating significant contribution and 1 indicating no contribution. Student responses are averaged for each PSPA major.</p> <p>Indirect - Survey</p> <p>Target</p> <p>Minimum of 4.0 on scale of 1-5 in value-added survey question for aggregated curriculum</p>	<p>MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>The average for Cultural Agility across the 29 Political Science students was 4.21, meeting the department's target.</p>	<p>Revise Measurement / Assessment</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p> <p>As part of the "closing the loop conversations" PSPA has begun revising the exit survey. This will alter presentation but not the substance of this question.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023</p>

General Outcome Actions

ACTIONS
<p>Additional Training</p> <p>Not Started</p> <p>Cultural agility is a relatively new PSPA learning goal. In closing the loop discussions it was noted that it was adopted as part of a larger college conversation about building interpersonal communication skills; however, there was never an internal department conversation about what skills we wanted students to be able to demonstrate or what knowledge we wanted students to have.</p> <p>The department committed to setting aside time for an extended conversation on this topic to be supported by scholarly work on the concept and how it is taught and assessed.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 05/10/2024</p>

Conclusion

PSPA faculty are partially satisfied with the indirect measures related to Cultural Agility. The exit survey provides strong evidence that students believe they have gained significantly in this area because of PSPA courses. However, when asked to identify which courses emphasized these skills they did not rank Cultural Agility as an emphasis across the PSPA curriculum.

Unlike the other PSPA learning goals, there is not a direct assessment of cultural agility to help adjudicate differences between the course mapping and the exit survey results.

Field Content Knowledge **MET**

Students will have an understanding of the core concepts of political science and their application. Content assessment will be conducted on a rotating basis from the following broad categories: political institutions, political behavior, public policy, political theory, international relations, and research methods.

MEASURES	RESULTS	ACTIONS
<p>Course Mapping Survey</p> <p>Students graduating from all PSPA majors complete an exit survey as part of their capstone (POLS 495). Students rate the emphasis of each course they took in the major on the various PSPA learning goals. The rating is from 1 to 5 with 5 indicating strong emphasis and 0 indicating no emphasis.</p> <p>Student responses are averaged by course as an indication of the degree of emphasis students</p>	<p>MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>The average for Field Content Knowledge across the courses formally part of the Political Science major was 3.99. This is on par with the PSPA target of 4.0. Excluding introductory courses, the goal is met.</p>	<p>Maintain Assessment Strategy</p> <p>In closing the loop discussions, it was noted that the course mapping results were generally lower than what has been seen in the past. With the exception of verbal communication, students have historically rated PSPA courses relatively high across the various learning goals.</p> <p>It was further noted that this cohort of students would have been significantly affected by the COVID 19 pandemic and had an educational experience different from what we have seen in the past. Given the generally strong results across the</p>

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<p>perceive is placed on each learning goal across the curriculum.</p> <p>Indirect - Survey</p> <p>Target</p> <p>Target of 4.0 on scale of 1-5 (particularly in upper-division courses) in course map survey of disaggregated courses</p>		<p>other assessment measures, it was determined that the department would hold steady with the Course Mapping assessment but continue to monitor to see if this drop persists.</p> <p>Revise Benchmark / Target</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p> <p>The current benchmark is an average across all required courses. This is benchmark does not distinguish between consistently below benchmark course ratings and a situation in which some courses stress a learning goal but others do not. The department committed to conducting a course mapping for each learning goal to evaluate if students report learning goal focus in the areas where we have sought to emphasize it as a learning goal.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023</p>
<p>Exit Survey</p> <p>Students graduating from all PSPA majors complete an exit survey as part of their capstone (POLS 495). As part of this survey, students the extent to which their major contributed to improvement in their own self assessment of each learning goal. The rating is from 1 to 5 with 5 indicating significant contribution and and 1 indicating no contribution. Student responses are averaged for each PSPA major.</p> <p>Indirect - Survey</p> <p>Target</p> <p>Minimum of 4.0 on scale of 1-5 in value-added survey question for aggregated curriculum</p>	<p>MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>The average for Field Content Knowledge across the 29 Political Science students was 4.28, well ahead of the department's target.</p>	<p>Revise Measurement / Assessment</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p> <p>As part of the "closing the loop conversations" PSPA has begun revising the exit survey. This will alter presentation but not the substance of this question.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023</p>
<p>White Paper</p> <p>The white paper is a significant research project undertaken by students as part of their coursework in POLS 495. Students identify and define a problem, marshal relevant scholarly work on the problem, and put forward a solution. In addition to a written paper students prepare and deliver a professional presentation. The presentation and paper are scored using the PSPA Communication Rubric which includes a separate measure for content, comprehension, reasoning, organization and verbal / written communication.</p> <p>Direct - Assignment</p> <p><i>Senior Colloquium in Political Science and Public Administration: POLS 495</i></p> <p>Target</p> <p>Minimum of 80% of student artifacts achieving average of 2.0 (0-3 scale) on relevant dimensions (content and comprehension).</p>	<p>MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>A sample of 8 white papers and 8 white paper presentations was drawn from POLS 495 students. The Field Content Knowledge score is based on the content and comprehension categories of the PSPA communication rubric. The average score across the artifacts scored was 2.5. This meets the PSPA target of 2.0. Additionally, 90.6% of artifacts met the 2.0 target, surpassing the target of 80%.</p>	<p>Revise Measurement / Assessment</p> <p>COMPLETE</p> <p>In closing the loop discussions, PSPA faculty expressed dissatisfaction with the ability to use the results of the PSPA communication rubric for program improvement. A subcommittee was established to revise the PSPA communication rubric.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023</p>

General Outcome Actions

ACTIONS

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Gather Additional Data

Not Started

During closing the loop discussions it was noted that our current direct assessment of content knowledge assesses depth but not breadth of content knowledge. Three years ago, the department generated an exam aimed at assessing breadth of knowledge. The length of the exam prohibited its adoption. It was resolved to revisit this exam with an eye toward streamlining it.

Recommended Due Date: 05/10/2024

Conclusion

PSPA faculty are broadly satisfied with assessment results around Field Content Knowledge. The direct assessment results indicate that students are able to engage with social science concepts and research at a high level. The indirect assessment results further support this. Students report that they have gained a better understanding of the discipline and are able to point to specific courses that contributed to content knowledge.

Verbal Communication Skills **MET**

Students will have the ability and confidence to communicate orally effectively.

MEASURES	RESULTS	ACTIONS
<p>Course Mapping Survey</p> <p>Students graduating from all PSPA majors complete an exit survey as part of their capstone (POLS 495). Students rate the emphasis of each course they took in the major on the various PSPA learning goals. The rating is from 1 to 5 with 5 indicating strong emphasis and 0 indicating no emphasis.</p> <p>Student responses are averaged by course as an indication of the degree of emphasis students perceive is placed on each learning goal across the curriculum.</p> <p>Indirect - Survey</p> <p>Target</p> <p>Target of 4.0 on scale of 1-5 (particularly in upper-division courses) in course map survey of disaggregated courses</p>	<p>NOT MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>The average for Verbal Communication Skills across the courses formally part of the Political Science major was 3.37. This is well short of the PSPA target of 4.0. Even excluding introductory courses, the goal is not met.</p>	<p>Revise Benchmark / Target</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p> <p>The current benchmark is an average across all required courses. This benchmark does not distinguish between consistently below benchmark course ratings and a situation in which some courses stress a learning goal but others do not. The department committed to conducting a course mapping for each learning goal to evaluate if students report learning goal focus in the areas where we have sought to emphasize it as a learning goal.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023</p> <p>Maintain Assessment Strategy</p> <p>In closing the loop discussions, it was noted that the course mapping results were generally lower than what has been seen in the past. With the exception of verbal communication, students have historically rated PSPA courses relatively high across the various learning goals.</p> <p>It was further noted that this cohort of students would have been significantly affected by the COVID 19 pandemic and had an educational experience different from what we have seen in the past. Given the generally strong results across the other assessment measures, it was determined that the department would hold steady with the Course Mapping assessment but continue to monitor to see if this drop persists.</p>
<p>Exit Survey</p> <p>Students graduating from all PSPA majors complete an exit survey as part of their capstone (POLS 495). As part of this survey, students rate the extent to which their major contributed to improvement in their own self assessment of each learning goal. The rating is from 1 to 5 with 5 indicating significant contribution and 1 indicating no contribution. Student responses are averaged for each PSPA major.</p> <p>Indirect - Survey</p>	<p>MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>The average for Verbal Communication Skills across the 29 Political Science students was 4.07, meeting the department's target.</p>	<p>Revise Measurement / Assessment</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p> <p>As part of the "closing the loop conversations" PSPA has begun revising the exit survey. This will alter presentation but not the substance of this question.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023</p>

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<p>Target</p> <p>Minimum of 4.0 on scale of 1-5 in value-added survey question for aggregated curriculum</p>		
<p>White Paper Presentation</p> <p>The white paper is a significant research project undertaken by students as part of their coursework in POLS 495. Students identify and define a problem, marshal relevant scholarly work on the problem, and put forward a solution. In addition to a written paper students prepare and deliver a professional presentation. The presentation and paper are scored using the PSPA Communication Rubric which includes a separate measure for content, comprehension, reasoning, organization and verbal / written communication.</p> <p>Direct - Assignment</p> <p><i>Senior Colloquium in Political Science and Public Administration: POLS 495</i></p> <p>Target</p> <p>Minimum of 80% of student artifacts achieving average of 2.0 (0-3 scale) on relevant dimensions (organization and verbal conventions).</p>	<p>MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>A sample of 8 white papers and 8 white paper presentations was drawn from POLS 495 students. The Verbal Communication score is based on the organization and verbal conventions categories of the PSPA communication rubric. The average score across the artifacts scored was 2.7. This meets the PSPA target of 2.0. Additionally, 100% of artifacts met the 2.0 target, surpassing the target of 80%.</p>	<p>Revise Measurement / Assessment</p> <p>COMPLETE</p> <p>In closing the loop discussions, PSPA faculty expressed dissatisfaction with the ability to use the results of the PSPA communication rubric for program improvement. A subcommittee was established to revise the PSPA communication rubric.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023</p>

Conclusion

PSPA faculty are partially satisfied with the direct and indirect measures related to the verbal communication learning goal. While the direct measure of verbal communication indicates students are performing well, this has not been the case historically. PSPA has long recognized that our courses are more heavily weighted toward written communication than verbal communication. This is supported by the course mapping results. The department was uncertain what steps to take to further improve the student verbal communication scores. The revision of the PSPA communication rubric is a step toward gaining more useful information for program improvements.

PSPA faculty resolved to continue efforts to emphasize verbal communication in courses, recognizing that this has long been an area that needs attention.

Written Communication Skills **MET**

Students will have high levels of written communications skills.

MEASURES	RESULTS	ACTIONS
<p>Course Mapping Survey</p> <p>Students graduating from all PSPA majors complete an exit survey as part of their capstone (POLS 495). Students rate the emphasis of each course they took in the major on the various PSPA learning goals. The rating is from 1 to 5 with 5 indicating strong emphasis and 0 indicating no emphasis.</p> <p>Student responses are averaged by course as an indication of the degree of emphasis students perceive is placed on each learning goal across the curriculum.</p> <p>Indirect - Survey</p> <p>Target</p> <p>Target of 4.0 on scale of 1-5 (particularly in upper-division courses) in course map survey of</p>	<p>MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>The average for Written Communication Skills across the courses formally part of the Political Science major was 4.0. This meets the PSPA target. Excluding introductory courses further strengthens the Course Mapping results.</p>	<p>Maintain Assessment Strategy</p> <p>In closing the loop discussions, it was noted that the course mapping results were generally lower than what has been seen in the past. With the exception of verbal communication, students have historically rated PSPA courses relatively high across the various learning goals.</p> <p>It was further noted that this cohort of students would have been significantly affected by the COVID 19 pandemic and had an educational experience different from what we have seen in the past. Given the generally strong results across the other assessment measures, it was determined that the department would hold steady with the Course Mapping assessment but continue to monitor to see if this drop persists.</p> <p>Revise Benchmark / Target</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p>

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<p>disaggregated courses</p>		<p>The current benchmark is an average across all required courses. This is benchmark does not distinguish between consistently below benchmark course ratings and a situation in which some courses stress a learning goal but others do not. The department committed to conducting a course mapping for each learning goal to evaluate if students report learning goal focus in the areas where we have sought to emphasize it as a learning goal.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023</p>
<p>Exit Survey</p> <p>Students graduating from all PSPA majors complete an exit survey as part of their capstone (POLS 495). As part of this survey, students the extent to which their major contributed to improvement in their own self assessment of each learning goal. The rating is from 1 to 5 with 5 indicating significant contribution and and 1 indicating no contribution. Student responses are averaged for each PSPA major.</p> <p>Indirect - Survey</p> <p>Target</p> <p>Minimum of 4.0 on scale of 1-5 in value-added survey question for aggregated curriculum</p>	<p>MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>The average for Written Communication Skills across the 29 Political Science students was 4.59, well ahead of the department's target.</p>	<p>Revise Measurement / Assessment</p> <p>IN PROGRESS</p> <p>As part of the "closing the loop conversations" PSPA has begun revising the exit survey. This will alter presentation but not the substance of this question.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023</p>
<p>White Paper</p> <p>The white paper is a significant research project undertaken by students as part of their coursework in POLS 495. Students identify and define a problem, marshal relevant scholarly work on the problem, and put forward a solution. In addition to a written paper students prepare and deliver a professional presentation. The presentation and paper are scored using the PSPA Communication Rubric which includes a separate measure for content, comprehension, reasoning, organization and verbal / written communication.</p> <p>Direct - Assignment</p> <p><i>Senior Colloquium in Political Science and Public Administration: POLS 495</i></p> <p>Target</p> <p>Minimum of 80% of student artifacts achieving average of 2.0 (0-3 scale) on relevant dimensions (organization and written conventions).</p>	<p>MET</p> <p>Analysis</p> <p>A sample of 8 white papers and 8 white paper presentations was drawn from POLS 495 students. The Written Communication Skills score is based on the organization and written conventions categories of the PSPA communication rubric. The average score across the artifacts scored was 2.6. This meets the PSPA target of 2.0. Additionally, 87.5% of artifacts met the 2.0 target, surpassing the goal of 80%.</p>	<p>Revise Measurement / Assessment</p> <p>COMPLETE</p> <p>In closing the loop discussions, PSPA faculty expressed dissatisfaction with the ability to use the results of the PSPA communication rubric for program improvement. A subcommittee was established to revise the PSPA communication rubric.</p> <p>Recommended Due Date: 12/01/2023</p>

Conclusion

PSPA faculty are broadly satisfied with the direct and indirect measures related to the written communication learning goal. PSPA courses emphasize written communication, which is supported both by the exit survey, course mapping, and the white paper scoring. PSPA faculty felt that no curricular or programmatic changes were needed at this point to support this learning goal.