Texas A&M International University
Annual Institutional Effectiveness Review (AIER)

Date Submitted   30 January 2008

Assessment Period Covered (2007)

Academic Program/AES Unit Bachelor of Arts in Political Science

Person(s) Preparing Review   Dr James A. Norris

Provide summary of the last cycle's use of results and changes implemented
Twelve seniors took the capstone Senior Seminar locally-generated exam. Three scored 4 (excellent), three scored 3 (good), five scored 2 (pass) and one scored 1 (fail). These twelve seniors also took the ACAT and four of their scores were above the standardized average. As a whole, students performed at the 52nd percentile, exceeding our goal. Scores varied from a high of 740 (240 points above average) to a low of 419 (81 points below average). The mean score in American Government was 494 (6 points below average- 48th percentile). The mean score in International Relations/Comparative Government was 529 (29 points above average-61st percentile). The mean score in Public Administration was 485 (15 points below average-44th percentile). Lastly, the mean score in Political Theory/ Research Methods was 513 (13 points above average-55th percentile).   No changes were made based upon these results, since, on the whole, the students met our standards.

Our survey of graduating seniors found that 27 percent of students take longer than four (4) years to graduate, 45 percent of the seniors said they had been unable to choose all the upper division PSCI courses they wanted to take in order to graduate "on-time," 18 percent strongly agreed with the previous statement, 45 percent said they had to use a course substation to graduate "on time," 18 percent said they had used two course substitutions, and 18 percent said they had asked for an independent study class in order to graduate "on-time."   Based upon these results in order to put a stop to the use of course substitution the political science faculty recommend that we offer two to three more additional upper division courses per semester and repeat the more popular courses more often than biannually. This will require one more faculty line. Hence, this is a suggestion that we were not able to implement this year, but will have to wait at least another year. Our short-term solution is to hire adjuncts to teach more lower-division courses and one upper division course, but this is less than ideal. One problem is that this solution continues to overburden the faculty; a second problem is that this solution deprives lower-division students exposure to seasoned faculty and the highest quality instruction. Last cycle year we did have one professor emeritus teaching one upper division course each semester, which has helped out a great deal, but we cannot absolutely count on his availability for the future.

Section I: Planning and Implementation

Institutional Mission

Texas A&M International University, a Member of The Texas A&M University System, prepares students for leadership roles in their chosen profession in an increasingly complex, culturally diverse state, national, and global society … Through instruction, faculty and student research, and public service, Texas A&M International University embodies a strategic point of delivery for well-defined programs and services that improve the quality of life for citizens of the border region, the State of Texas, and national and international communities.

Academic Program or Administrative/Educational Support Unit Mission

The Department of Social Sciences enjoys a broad mission in teaching, research, creative activities, and service to our international community.

The Bachelor of Arts in Political Science is a traditional liberal arts degree designed to provide a sound undergraduate education that helps prepare graduates to think critically and constructively about the world, to be active and concerned citizens, and for a wide range of careers relating to teaching, management, government, politics, and the law. Many of our students intend to continue their education to earn either a Master's degree or a law degree. Accordingly, the degree plan seeks to provide students with a broad, integrated knowledge of all the major subfields of the discipline: political philosophy, American government and politics, comparative politics, and international relations. In addition, the degree plan emphasizes analytic and writing skills as these are critical to success in education beyond the bachelor's degree. Some students earning this degree will likely become teachers, but this degree itself is not intended to stand alone as a teacher preparation degree, since the state of Texas' most closely related teaching specialization, Social Studies, is far broader than just Political Science.

Identify outcomes and the relationship to Strategic Plan

Outcome 1   ☐ **Is this outcome related to writing (QEP)?**
Students completing the Political Science program will understand political behavior, political institutions, public policies, and the role of government in society. Senior Political Science students will be required to take a capstone course that reviews political behavior, political institutions, public policies, and the role of government in society. The final examination, a locally generated exam, focusing on these components, will be given to students at the end of their final semester.

Identify Strategic Plan Goal related to Outcome 1
Goal 1 Academics

Identify Strategic Plan Objective related to Outcome 1
1.2   Support a student-centered learning environment supported by excellent teaching
1.4   Prepare students for success in their chosen careers

Identify methods of assessment to be used
Senior Political Science students will be required to take a capstone course that reviews political behavior, political institutions, public policies, and the role of government in society. The final examination, a locally generated exam, focusing on these components, will be given to students at the end of the semester. It will be team graded by political science faculty using a rubric ranging from 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent).

Indicate when assessment will take place
Spring

Criteria/Benchmark
The average score on the examination will be at least 3 (good).

Outcome 2   ☐ **Is this outcome related to writing (QEP)?**
Students completing the baccalaureate program will compare favorably in their knowledge of political science with students at other universities completing similar programs.

Identify Strategic Plan Goal related to Outcome 2
Goal 1 Academics

Identify Strategic Plan Objective related to Outcome 2
1.2   Support a student-centered learning environment supported by excellent teaching
1.4   Prepare students for success in their chosen careers

Identify methods of assessment to be used
Graduating seniors will take the Political Science ACAT examination in political science.

Indicate when assessment will take place
Spring

Criteria/Benchmark
The average score of TAMIU graduates will not fall below the average scores of other students completing similar programs nation. Subscales on the ACAT will be analyzed to identify specific areas of the program that need attention. On no subscale will the average score fall below the average of other students completing similar programs nationwide.

Outcome 3   ☐ **Is this outcome related to writing (QEP)?**
Students majoring in Political Science will, within reason, express satisfaction with the variety and frequency (or scheduling) of the Department's upper division course offerings.

Identify Strategic Plan Goal related to Outcome 3
Goal 1 Academics

Identify Strategic Plan Objective related to Outcome 3
1.3   Increase student retention and graduation rates

1.5   Expand academic programs to meet the needs of the region and include internationalization perspectives in the curriculum, where appropriate

Identify methods of assessment to be used
We will develop a short on-line survey for seniors and recent graduates.

Indicate when assessment will take place
Spring

Criteria/Benchmark
Students will agree that course variety and frequency rates at least satisfactory.

When (term/date) was assessment conducted?
Outcome 1
Spring 2007

Outcome 2
Spring 2007, scores received in August 2007.

Outcome 3
Spring 2007

What were the results attained (raw data)?
Outcome 1
Eighteen students took the locally-generated exam. Eight scored 4 (excellent), six scored 3 (good), and four scored 2 (pass).

Outcome 2
Ten students took the Political Science ACAT exam, and four of their scores were above the standardized average. As a whole, students performed at the 38th percentile, failing to meet our goal. Scores varied from a high of 622 (122 points above average) to a low of 376 (124 points below average). The mean score in American Government was 505 (5 points above average- 52nd percentile). The mean score in International Relations/Comparative Government was 473 (27 points below average- 39th percentile). The mean score in Public Administration was 427 (73 points below average- 23rd percentile). Lastly, the mean score in Political Theory/ Research Methods was 504 (4 points above average- 52nd percentile).

Outcome 3
Our survey of graduating seniors found that 64 percent of students take longer than four (4) years to graduate, 35 percent of the seniors said they had been unable to choose all the upper division PSCI courses they wanted to take in order to graduate "on-time," 7 percent strongly agreed with the previous statement, 35 percent said they had to use a course substation to graduate "on time," 21 percent said they had used two or more course substitutions, and 21 percent said they had asked for an independent study class in order to graduate "on-time."
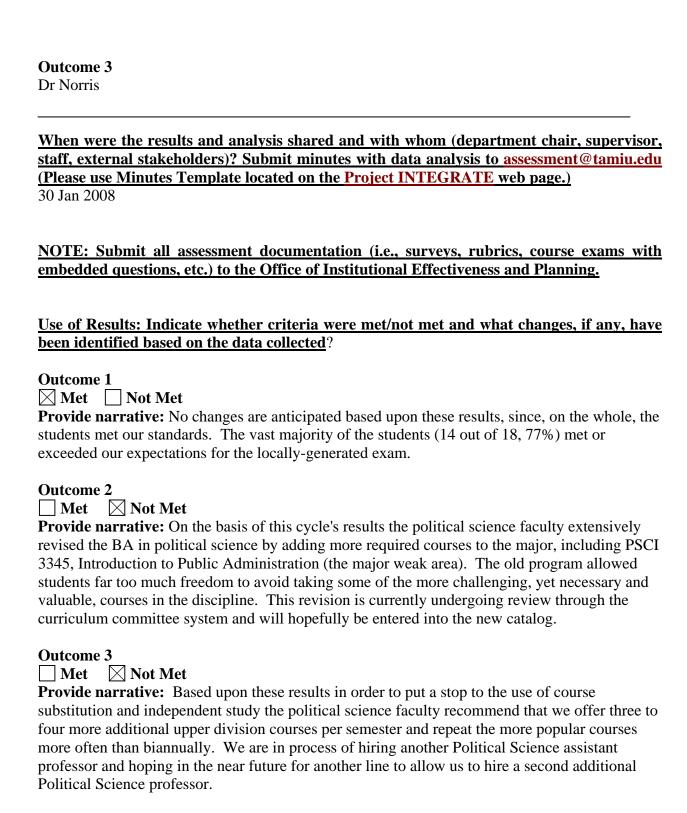

Who (specify names) conducted analysis of data?
Outcome 1
Dr. Norris

Outcome 2
Dr Norris

Outcome 3
Dr Norris

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30 Jan 2008

NOTE: Submit all assessment documentation (i.e., surveys, rubrics, course exams with embedded questions, etc.) to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning.

Use of Results: Indicate whether criteria were met/not met and what changes, if any, have been identified based on the data collected?

Outcome 1
☒ **Met** ☐ **Not Met**
Provide narrative: No changes are anticipated based upon these results, since, on the whole, the students met our standards. The vast majority of the students (14 out of 18, 77%) met or exceeded our expectations for the locally-generated exam.

Outcome 2
☐ **Met** ☒ **Not Met**
Provide narrative: On the basis of this cycle's results the political science faculty extensively revised the BA in political science by adding more required courses to the major, including PSCI 3345, Introduction to Public Administration (the major weak area). The old program allowed students far too much freedom to avoid taking some of the more challenging, yet necessary and valuable, courses in the discipline. This revision is currently undergoing review through the curriculum committee system and will hopefully be entered into the new catalog.

Outcome 3
☐ **Met** ☒ **Not Met**
Provide narrative: Based upon these results in order to put a stop to the use of course substitution and independent study the political science faculty recommend that we offer three to four more additional upper division courses per semester and repeat the more popular courses more often than biannually. We are in process of hiring another Political Science assistant professor and hoping in the near future for another line to allow us to hire a second additional Political Science professor.

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How have these data-based changes improved your program/unit?

The answer to this question is still uncertain but we predict that by 2010-2011 academic year students will demonstrate more positive results on the ACAT from the more i

Section III: Programmatic Review

Are resources affected by the changes identified in Section II? ☒ Yes   ☐ No

If so, specify the effect(s) using the chart below:

Funding	Physical	Other
☒ New resources required	☐ New or reallocated space	☐ Primarily faculty/staff time
☐ Reallocation of current funds		☐ University rule/procedure change only
		☐ Other: Enter text here

Provide a narrative description and justification for requested resources (include linkage to Strategic Plan)

An additional faculty line to allow us to offer a greater variety of upper division courses to our majors in support of our goals (1.3) to increase student retention and graduation rates and (1.5) to expand academic programs to meet the needs of the region and include internationalization perspectives in the curriculum.

Identify proposed outcomes for the next assessment cycle:
Continuation of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for continuation): These are perennial areas for concern. In addition, we have not yet hired any new faculty. Indeed, last year we conduced a search and after interviews had only one viable candidate who refused our job offer.
New Outcome(s) – (List outcomes below): Enter text here
Modification of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for modification): Enter text here

**** This section to be completed by dean/director/vice-president ****

Are resources requested a priority for the academic program/AES unit?
☐ **Yes**   ☐ **No**
Comments:
Enter text here

If funding, physical or other resources were requested, what is the impact of the budget decisions on the academic program/AES unit?
Enter text here

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As of Last Complete Printing
    Number of Pages: 8
    Number of Words: 2,279 (approx.)
    Number of Characters: 12,445 (approx.)