

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

Date Submitted September 6, 2005

Assessment Period Covered (FY 2005)

Budget Period Covered (FY 2005)

Academic Program/AES Unit Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Political Science

Person Preparing Review Dr. James A Norris

Provide summary of the last cycle's use of results and changes implemented.

During the last cycle our results showed that the students scores on the ACAT were slightly above the national mean (within one standard deviation) in all areas except in the sub-area of Political Theory/Research Methods. However, we had not yet implemented the Senior Capstone Course, nor the locally generated exam. In addition, because we had only seven (7) cases (students). Hence, we decided not to make any changes.

Provide summary of budget decisions and their impact on your program/division.

The Department did ask for an additional faculty line in the last year and funds to allow one or two members of the faculty a year to teaching conferences. Due to a lack of funds we will not be able to hire any additional faculty this year. This affects our program by limiting our upper division course offerings, which hurts our student's by making it more difficult to take the courses required to graduate. One unintended consequence may be fewer majors. Also, this has meant that faculty were forced to teach several students the courses they needed to graduate through independent study and that current faculty were also forced to teach overloads. Dr. Norris taught an overload and Drs. Norris, Parish, and Riggs taught independent studies.

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/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 relationship to Strategic Plan

Outcome 1

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 the semester.

Identify Strategic Plan Goal related to Outcome 1

Goal 2 Academic

Identify Strategic Plan Objective and Strategy related to Outcome 1 (Appendix A – Strategic Goals)

Objective2, Strategy 12: Provide quality instruction to better prepare graduates for leadership roles in their chosen profession.

Methods of assessment

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). The average score on the examination will be at least 3

Frequency of administration

The BA in Political Science locally-generated comprehensive examination will be administered once each Spring Semesters in the capstone course.

Criteria/Benchmark

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

Outcome 2

Students completing the baccalaureate program will compare favorably in their knowledge of political science with students at other universities completing similar programs. Graduating seniors will take the ACAT examination in political science.

Identify Strategic Plan Goal related to Outcome 2

Goal 2 Academic

Identify Strategic Plan Objective and Strategy related to Outcome 2 (Appendix A – Strategic Goals)

Objective 2, Strategy 1. Implement an Institutional Effectiveness plan to evaluate academic and educational/administrative support units and track the use of results used to improve programs.

Methods of assessment

Graduating seniors will take the Political Science ACAT examination in political science.

Frequency of administration

The Political Science ACAT examination will be administered once each Spring Semester in the capstone course.

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

N/A

Identify Strategic Plan Goal related to Outcome 3

To Select Goal [Click Here](#)

Identify Strategic Plan Objective and Strategy related to Outcome 3 (Appendix A – Strategic Goals)

N/A

Methods of assessment

N/A

Frequency of administration

N/A

Criteria/Benchmark

N/A

Section II: Analysis of Results

When (term/date) was assessment conducted?

Outcome 1

The assessment was conducted in Spring 2005.

Outcome 2

The assessment was conducted in Spring 2005.

Outcome 3

N/A

What were the results attained (raw data)?

Outcome 1

Eight students took the exam. Four scored 4 (excellent), three scored 3 (good), and one scored 1 (fail).

Outcome 2

Nine seniors took the ACAT and five of their scores were above the standardized average. As a whole students performed at the 54th percentile, exceeding our goal. Scores varied from a high of 692 (192 points above average) to a low of 365 (135 points below average). The mean score in American Government was 521 (21 points above average). The mean score in International Relations/Comparative Government was 497 (3 points below average). The mean score in Public Administration was 508 (8 points above average). Lastly, the mean score in Political Theory/ Research Methods was 507 (7 points above average).

Outcome 3

N/A

Who (specify names) conducted analysis of data?

Outcome 1

The Political Science faculty (Drs. Ben-Ruwin, Norris, and Parish).

Outcome 2

The Political Science faculty (Drs. Ben-Ruwin, Norris, and Parish).

Outcome 3

N/A

When were the results and analysis shared? With whom (department chair, supervisor, staff, external stakeholders)? Minutes with data analysis submitted to

assessment@tamiu.edu? (Please use Minutes Template located on the Project INTEGRATE web page.)

The results were embodied in assessment reports and regularly submitted electronically to the University Assessment Committee and the Office of Institutional Effectiveness with copies to the Department Chair and the Political Science faculty. The results are also discussed in Department meetings. On some occasions, hard copies were also provided.

Has the assessment documentation (i.e., surveys, rubrics, course exams with embedded questions, etc.) been submitted to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning?

The comprehensive examinations, rubric, ACAT exam results, and minutes have been maintained in electronic and hard copy files by the Political Science Program Coordinator. These records are available for inspection whenever the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning needs them.

Use of Results: Indicate what changes, if any, based on the data have been recommended?

Outcome 1

No changes were made based upon these results since all but one student met or exceeded our standards, however the Political Science faculty noted that one student did not pass. Hence the faculty will continue to monitor the program and always seeks better ways to maximize student success and learning.

Outcome 2

No changes were made based upon these results since, on the whole, the students met our standards. Only the mean score in the sub-area of International Relations/Comparative Government is below standards. Even so, it is less than one percent below the national average which means it is not significant. Nevertheless, the Political Science faculty are mildly concerned and will continue to monitor the program and always seeks better ways to maximize student success and learning.

Outcome 3

N/A

Section III: Programmatic Review

What are the implications of the recommended changes?

None.

Will resources be affected by the recommended changes? Yes No

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

| Funding | Physical | Other |
|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New resources required | <input type="checkbox"/> New or reallocated space | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Primarily faculty/staff time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Reallocation of current funds | | <input type="checkbox"/> University rule/procedure change only |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |

Narrative description and justification for request including related strategy (Attach Budget Request 'Form B' and/or 'Form C')

Assessment is very time consuming and our faculty are already tasked to the limit. In order to conduct these assessments one faculty member was required to work for a number of weeks during the Summer with out pay. If we had additional resources this would not have been necessary.

If funding, physical or other resources were requested, what is the impact of the budget decisions on program/division?

Additional funding, to include funding for an additional faculty line, will increase the number of upper division course offerings, making it easier for students take the correct courses required to graduate. Faculty will no longer be required to teach so many independent study sections. A greater number of upper division course offerings should also, indirectly, increase the number of students in the major. In addition , the faculty involved in assesment will no longer have to accomplish quite so much off the books. However, without this additional funding these benefits will be lost and faculty research and scholarship will likely suffer. Students will also suffer harm because the department's decrease in course offerings may delay graduation.

In the box below, provide information on the outcomes for the next assessment cycle:

| |
|---|
| Outcomes for Next Assessment Cycle |
| Continuation of present outcome(s) - (Indicate reason for continuation): The present outcomes appear to be resonable measures of program success. |
| New Outcome(s) – (List outcomes below): Students majoring in Political Science will, within reason, express satisfaction with the variety and frequency (or scheduling) of the Department's upper division course offerinings. |
| Modification of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for modification): N/A |