Student Outcomes Assessment and Success Report AY2017-18   *Completed reports due from the dean to the Assessment Office via Blackboard by October 15. Deans, assessment coordinators, and/or department chairs set their own internal deadlines for material review and request for refinement if not suitably addressing questions.*

Unit/Program Name: _Political Science/ Political Science major_   **Contact Name(s) and Email(s)** __Mike Chambers (mike.chambers@indstate.edu)
Samory Rashid (samory.rashid@indstate.edu)
Stan Buchanan (stan.buchanan@indstate.edu)

Before you complete the form below, review your outcomes library and curriculum map to ensure that they are accurate and up to date. If not, you may submit a new version along with this summary. Templates are available on the assessment website.

Part 1a: Summary of Assessment Activities

a. What learning outcomes did you assess this past year? If this is a graduate program, identify the **Graduate Student Learning Outcome** each outcome aligns with.	b. (1) What assignments or activities did you use to determine how well your students attained the outcome? (2) In what course or other required experience did the assessment occur?	c. What were your expectations for student performance?	d. What were the actual data/results?	e. What changes or improvements were made or will be made in response to these assessment results or feedback from previous year's report?
1. Oral Communication: Civil discourse	Class discussions in PSCI 499 (Spring 2018)	All students expected to participate in civil discussion in the class.	9 of 11 students engaged in civil discourse with each other. Two students never spoke in class.	None: students conducted themselves in a civil manner over sometimes contentious issues.
2. Written Communication: a) Write a persuasive argument supported by evidence; b) write a paper/essay with minimal grammatical or spelling errors; c) use appropriate citation method; d) demonstrate the ability to write different styles of papers.	In PSCI 499, students wrote three "thought papers" and one research paper	Students should average 12 points out of 20 for each paper using the UDIE/AAC&U Written Communication rubric	Of the 11 students, three students failed to write more than one "thought paper." Of the remaining 8 students, only 5 scored 12 points or higher on the rubric.	Department has yet to discuss the results of this assessment.
3. Critical Thinking and Analysis: a) compare/contrast different perspectives; b) identify strengths & weaknesses of policies or behaviors; c) draw	In PSCI 499, students completed the ETS Major Field Test (MFT) in Political Science during this course. In addition, the four papers students submitted were	On the MFT, departmental mean for the Analysis and Critical Thinking section should have 50% of scores below our departmental mean.	MFT: The departmental mean for this section was 61, which had only 43% of other departmental scores below ours.	Department has yet to discuss the results of this assessment.

connections between scholarly works; d) apply theory to current events/policies; e) identify appropriate method to analyze issue or event.	used to assess their critical thinking skills.	Using the professor-developed rubric that combines AAC&U Critical Thinking rubric and the department's student learning outcomes, students should average 24 out of 40 points (for the thought papers) or 24 out of 44 points on the research paper.	On the thought papers, only two of 8 students who completed most/all of the papers scored above 24 points on the rubric. On the research papers, 6 of the 8 students who submitted these papers scored 25 points or higher.	
4. Qualitative and Quantitative Research Skills: a) use theory to guide research, develop well thought-out explanations; b) students apply appropriate methodology for research (case study, quantitative, qualitative); c) students demonstrate knowledge of and application of basic terms of empirical research; d) students demonstrate understanding of the importance of prior research on their topic; e) effective organization and presentation of their findings.	In PSCI 499 students complete the MFT, including the Methodology section. Students submit research paper as final paper in PSCI 499. Student grades in PSCI 340.	On the MFT, the departmental mean for the Methodology section should have 50% of scores below our score. Using the professor-developed rubric (developed from the Department's student learning outcomes), students should score a mean of 3.00 or higher on research skills. 80% of students who complete PSCI 340 during the academic year should earn a grade of C or higher.	On the Methodology section of the MFT, the departmental mean was 50, and only 36% of other departmental scores were below ours. Of the 8 students who submitted a research paper, only 4 scored a mean of 3.00 or higher. Departmental mean was 3.10. 61% (11 out of 18) students who completed PSCI 340 in Fall 2017 earned a C or better in the course.	Department has yet to discuss the results of this assessment.
5. Content Knowledge in American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Philosophy	In PSCI 499, students complete the MFT which has sections in these four content areas.	Am. Pol: MFT departmental mean subscore should have 70% of other institutional means below ours Comp. Pol: MFT departmental mean should have 70% of other institutional means below ours Int'l Relations: MFT departmental mean should have 50% of other	MFT Am Pol subscore: 56, with 70% below ours MFT Comp Pol subscore: 57, with 74% below ours MFT IR subscore: 53, with 51% below ours	Department has yet to discuss the results of this assessment.

		institutional means below ours.		
		Pol Theory: MFT departmental mean subscore should have 30% of other institutional means below ours.	MFT Pol Theory subscore: 49, with 26% below ours	

Note: *If you would like to report on more than three outcomes, place the cursor in the last cell on the right and hit "tab" to add a new row.*

Notes
  a. Use your outcomes library as a reference.
  b. Each outcome must be assessed by at least one direct measure (project, practica, exam, performance, etc.). If students are required to pass an examination to practice in the field, this exam must be included as one of the measures. At least one of the program's outcomes must use an indirect measure (exit interview, focus group, survey, etc.). Use your curriculum map to correlate outcomes to courses.
  c. Identify the score or rating required to demonstrate proficiency (e.g., Students must attain a score of "3" to be deemed proficient; at least 80% of students in the program will attain this benchmark."
  d. Note what the aggregate level of proficiency actually was and the number of students included in the cohort or sample (e.g., "85% of the 25 students whose portfolios were reviewed met the established benchmark").

Part 1b: Continuous Quality Improvement
In no more than one page, summarize 1) the discoveries assessment has enabled you to make about student learning (a. What specifically do students know and do well—and less well? b. What evidence can you provide that learning is improving?); 2) what your assessment plan will focus on in the coming year; and 3) how will this information be shared with other stakeholders?

1) Because the department has not consistently used assessment rubrics year-to-year (other than the Major Field Test), it is difficult to draw comparisons over time. This will be a topic for the department to address this year: developing a standard set of rubrics and measurements. Regarding the MFT, ETS changed the test after June 2016, and so we only have two years of data with the new test – meaning it is still too early to determine what our targets should be in each subsection. Utilizing "percent below" our institutional means should allow us some comparability, but our students have done significantly worse on the new exam comparted to the early 2010s when we often had subscore means with 70% to 90% of other institutional means below ours. After PSCI 499 in Spring 2019, we will hopefully have a better sense of how our students are doing on the new exam and can set better target scores.

2) Department has yet to discuss this.

3) Department has yet to discuss this.

Part 2a: Summary of Student Success Activities
Based on the results of your assessment of student learning outcomes from Part 1 above, reflect on how this data will impact student success within your unit/program.

a. What goals/objectives were established this past year to aid student performance, retention, persistence, and completion?	b. What primary action steps were taken to make progress on each goal and who was responsible?	c. What data informs progress on each goal?*	d. What were some accomplishments or achievements for each goal and/or challenges confronted?	e. Please indicate goals that are continuing and any goals that will replace a previous goal. Any additional goals can also be added on a new line.
1.Reduce DFDr rates in PSCI 340 (complements #4, above)	Changes in undergrad curriculum. Political science program and instructors in PSCI 340	DFDr rates for PSCI 340	In Fall 2017, 42% of the students originally enrolled were DFDr.	This is a surprising finding. Our goal remains to reduce DFDr rates in this course.
2.Reduce DFDr rates in 400** level PSCI courses (complements #2,3, 4, and 5, above)	Political science program and instructors of 400 level courses. Audits of transcripts.	DFDr rates for 400 level courses	In AY 2015-16, our DFDr rate for all 400 level courses averaged 31.52%. In AY 2017-18, that total was down to 12.13%.	Twelve percent is very low, and represents a positive trend. We aim to keep that number below 20% per semester.
3.Increase one-year retention rates	Political science program, instructors and advisers. Changes in learning community. Changes in curriculum, including moving 245 to 340. Transcipt audits. Advisement survey administered to identify weaknesses of the advisement process.	One-year retention rates.	Over the seven years from 2011 through 2017, the political science program averaged a retention rate of .687 from one Fall to the next. This is slightly above the CAS average over the same period of 66.7%. It is comparable to that of departments of equivalent size: History, 66.9%; Music, 71.3%; and Chem, 72.8%	The program aims to stay at or above the CAS retention rate; and to remain comparable to that of departments of similar size.
4. Raise average student credit hours to 15 per semester	Same as 3, above.	Student credit hours, Fall to Fall.	Average Fall credit hours for students in the political science program have risen to 15 credit hours per student in Fall, 2018.	Maintain average credit hours between CAS average (about 13.1 in Fall, 2018) and 15 credit hours per student.
5. Increase four- and six-year graduation rates	Same as 3 above.	Four- and six-year graduation rates, by cohort.	Four-year graduation rates for political science students have risen from 10% (2009	Maintain or increase cohort graduation rates to about 50%, which the 2011 cohort

			cohort) to 47.6% (2014 cohort). Six-year graduation rates average about 40% per cohort, beginning with the 2007 cohort.	did achieve. Increase 6-year cohort graduation rate to the CAS average (about 46% for the 2012 cohort).
*Data source: Blue Reports **Includes PSCI 400, but excludes all course numbers below 400. Includes PSCI 499. Excludes PSCI courses 495, 497 and 498; and LS courses 418 and 419.				

Part 2b: Continuous Quality Improvement

In no more than one page, summarize 1) the discoveries that attention to student performance, retention, persistence, and completion has enabled you to make about program/department systems, processes, and norms as it effects students; and 2) how this will positively impact student success, including with regard to the readiness of students for graduate study or a career?

In recent years, we have made changes to our curriculum, and our learning community. As a result, our student retention rates remain constant at about 72% per Fall registration over the seven year period between Fall, 2011, and Fall, 2017. This is slightly above the CAS average for the same period, and equivalent to graduation rates of other CAS programs of roughly the same size. On average, by cohort, 37% of our students graduate by their fourth year, and about 40% by their sixth year. The six-year rates is slightly higher, as might be expected. We also find that student credit hours per have risen.

In terms of student success in our courses, we are disappointed to find that the DFDr rate remains high in PSCI 340. PSCI 340 is a foundation course for the political science major--an undergraduate methods course in political inquiry. We recently altered this course, changing it from a 200-level to a 300-level course. The aim was to place it in the curriculum so that it would be more likely taken by students with more experience in political science instruction. So far, the results are disappointing. On a positive note, however, we find that the DFDr rates for our 400-level courses dropped to about 12%. This is a very welcome finding for students who are poised for graduation toward the end of our program.

In sum, with one exception, we find that markers for student success in our program have remained constant or remained the same.

Dear Mike, Samory, and Stan,

Thank you so much for sharing your assessment process and findings for AY 2017-18 with the Assessment and Student Success Councils. You will find a comprehensive synthesis of the feedback compiled by both groups below. It is understood that some of the feedback might encompass practices that you already engage in but that are not documented in this report. As the purpose of this evaluation is focused on recognizing great work and helping faculty improve assessment practice, it is not necessary to retroactively add documentation. Please feel free to let me know if you have any questions or if there is any way I can assist you in further developing assessment in your program.

This report will be shared with the Associate Dean(s) and Dean of your college and summarized findings will be shared as composite college/institutional data with the President's Office and the Provost's team.

Sincerely,

Kelley (x7975)

Program: BS Political Science

Assessment Practice Overall Rating: Developing (1.625/3.00)
Student Success Practice Overall Rating: Mature (2.50/3.00)

Strengths	Recommendations
- Sub-sections under some outcomes are specific and measurable (see recommendations). - Clear information is provided about the courses in which certain learning outcomes will be measured, as well as the assignments used for measurement. - Some information provided about the expectations for student performance is clear. - Good use of modified AACU rubrics to evaluate student performance. **Strong goals for student retention and completion.** **Good information provided about actions taken to improve retention, enrolled credit hours, and graduation rates.**	- The Oral Communication: Civil Discourse outcome needs to be more specific about what students should display to demonstrate civil discourse in oral communication. Similarly, the Content Knowledge outcome should be more specific. Being specific allows you to more accurately define student learning achievement and measure their performance. - For your outcomes 2-4: because there are so many sub-sections under your initial headings make sure that the assignments used will give students the opportunity to display all of the things you're looking for and that the evaluations of student work address each of the things you're looking for. Truly, the headings ("Written Communication," for example, are broad objectives), while the sub-sections ("write a persuasive argument supporting by evidence," etc.) are the specific outcomes. - Some assignments used for students to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes are not a good fit, while others need to be described more clearly. For instance, overall course grades are a poor measure of student learning on a specific learning outcome because course grades reflect the composite performance of a student on many learning outcomes. There is no way to distill from a course grade the student's specific mastery of a specific learning

	outcome. This same principle applies to other types of large or broad assignments and tests, where just a certain set of questions or section of a paper may apply to the stated outcomes intended to be measured. Keep this in mind designing future plans.
	• Indicate how civil discussion is defined in class and how students were evaluated.
	• I know that there wasn't a chance to discuss findings prior to the report being submitted. Consider updating this document to include that information so it is part of your departmental historic record for use in future planning or analysis.
	• **Clarify action plans for reducing the DFDr rates.**

Assessment (Parts 1a & 1b) Scoring Rubric is included below. Student Success (Parts 2a & 2b) Scoring Rubric is included below with no notations just for your reference (the SSC did not choose to report in this way).

Score was calculated on a 0 (undeveloped), 1 (developing), 2 (mature), 3 (exemplary) scale.

Evaluation Criteria	Exemplary	Mature	Developing	Undeveloped
Student Learning Outcomes	At least one learning outcome that is aligned with program coursework is assessed this cycle. Learning outcome(s) is specific, measureable, and student-centered. Rationale for assessment of this outcome(s) is made clear (ex: it is part of a standing assessment cycle, a need was identified, etc.) Learning outcome(s) directly link to college, institutional, and/or accreditor goals/standards.	At least one learning outcome that is aligned with program coursework is assessed this cycle. Learning outcome(s) is specific, measureable, and student-centered. Rationale for assessment of this outcome(s) is made clear (ex: it is part of a standing assessment cycle, a need was identified, etc.)	At least one learning outcome that is aligned with program coursework is assessed this cycle. Learning outcomes(s) is measurable.	No learning outcomes are identified for assessment or the outcomes that are identified are not linked to program outcomes aligned with program coursework (e.g. – curriculum map) or are not measurable.
Performance Goals & Measures	Performance goal identified for each learning outcome is clear and reasonable (ex: based on previous performance data, professional standards, etc.). Identified measures are designed to accurately reflect student learning, including at least one direct measure. Tools used to measure student performance are described and were reviewed for validity or trustworthiness prior to use (note this in the report; attach tools if applicable – ex: rubrics, checklists, exam keys, etc.).	Performance goal identified for each learning outcome is clear and reasonable (ex: based on previous performance data, professional standards, etc.). Identified measures are designed to accurately reflect student learning, including at least one direct measure. Tools or processes for evaluating student performance on measures are described (attach tools if applicable – ex: rubrics, checklists, exam keys, etc.).	Performance goal(s) is identified for each learning outcome. Identified measures (ex: assignments, projects, tests, etc.) are poorly suited to performance goals or are solely indirect measures. Tools or processes for evaluating student performance on measures are not described.	No goals for student performance of learning outcomes is identified, and/or no measures are provided.

Analysis & Results	Data is collected using the measures and tools identified. Results are reported with clear description of quality analysis (e.g., analysis follows accepted statistical or qualitative procedures). Results are shared in relation to performance goals. Results are discussed in relation to college, institutional, and/or accreditor goals/standards.	Data is collected using the measures and tools identified. Results are reported with clear description of analysis (e.g., analysis follows accepted statistical or qualitative procedures). Results are shared in relation to performance goals.	Data is collected using the measures and tools identified. Results are reported with little description of analysis.	No data is being collected. No results are provided.
Sharing & Use of Results for Continuous Improvement	Clear information is provided about sharing and using results to inform practice. Discussion of what was learned from results is provided and connected to plans for sharing and using results to inform practice. A plan for adjusting performance, goals, assessment, and/or program components based on results is outlined.	Clear information is provided about sharing and using results to inform practice. Discussion of what was learned from results is provided and connected to plans for sharing and using results to inform practice.	Limited information is provided about sharing or using results to inform practice. Some discussion of what was learned from results is provided.	No information is provided about sharing or using results to inform practice. No evidence of reflection on results is provided (ex: discussion, conclusions drawn)
Overall Rating	□ Exemplary	□ Mature	X Developing	□ Undeveloped

Student Success Activities Report Rubric (Part 2 of Student Outcomes Assessment Report)**Unit/Program:**
Office of Student Success/Office of Assessment & Accreditation Evaluation Date:

Evaluation Criteria	0 Undeveloped	1 Developing	2 Mature	3 Exemplary
Goals/ Objectives	No goals/objectives are identified.	Goals/objectives are poorly suited to addressing student performance, retention, persistence, and/or completion. Goals/objectives may also be modest at best such that little effort is required.	Goals/objectives are generally clear and reasonably well suited to addressing student performance, retention, persistence, and/or completion. Goals/objectives are also generally at least moderately aggressive such that appropriate effort is required.	Goals/objectives are all clear and well suited to addressing student performance, retention, persistence, and/or completion. Goals/objectives are also at least moderately aggressive in all cases such that appropriate effort is required.
Action Steps	No action steps are identified.	Action steps are weak, underdeveloped, and/or poorly suited to making progress on goals/objectives. No person(s) or group(s) indicated who will be responsible for the actions.	Action steps are generally clear and reasonably well suited to making progress on goals/objectives. Person(s) or group(s) responsible for the actions are indicated in most cases.	Action steps are all clear and well suited to making progress on goals/objectives Person(s) or group(s) responsible for each action are indicated, ideally with a timeline.
Data that Informs Progress on Each Goal/Objective	No data, quantitative or qualitative, is identified.	Data to inform progress are poorly suited to measure progress on goals/objectives.	Data to inform progress are generally well suited to measure progress on goals/objectives.	Data to inform progress are all well suited to measure progress on goals/objectives.
Assessment of Outcomes and Continuous Improvement	For goals/objectives in place the prior year, no reflection provided on achievements/challenges, sharing results, and/or plans for improvement or change based on results. No reflection on outcome assessment plan for continuous improvement provided for new goals/objectives.	For goals/objectives in place the prior year, modest at best reflection provided (and/or is vague or of questionable connection to results) on achievements/challenges, sharing results, and/or plans for improvement or change based on results. Modest at best reflection on assessment plan for continuous improvement provided for new goals/objectives.	For goals/objectives in place the prior year, generally appropriate reflection provided (and is reasonably well connected to results) on achievements/challenges, sharing results, and/or plans for improvement or change based on results. Reasonable reflection on assessment plan for continuous improvement provided for new goals/objectives.	For goals/objectives in place the prior year, strong reflection is provided in all cases (and is well connected to results) on achievements/challenges, sharing results, and/or plans for improvement or change based on results. Well-developed reflection on assessment plan for continuous improvement provided for new goals/objectives.
Overall Rating	□ **Undeveloped**	□ **Developing**	□ **Mature**	□ **Exemplary**