

Assessment Plan – Department of Political Science/Planning BA/BS

Description of Assessment Methods

Every student will develop skills and gain knowledge consistent with the following learning objectives.

1. An understanding of the basic values of American civic culture.
2. An understanding of the institutional, political and legal processes of the United States and Georgia.
3. An understanding of the public policies of the U.S. and the ways in which they are carried out through the political process.
4. An understanding of the basic theories and concepts of the subfields of political science.
5. An understanding of the relationship between the basic theories and concepts of the subfields of political science.
6. The ability to apply social science and statistical methods to practical problems within the discipline.
7. The ability to communicate their knowledge orally and in writing.

Senior Seminar: To evaluate whether the program has adequately prepared students to master these objectives, we evaluate a sample of papers submitted in our required senior research seminars and a sample of final projects in the required research methods class. We anticipate that the senior seminar research papers will provide the best opportunity to evaluate these objectives. Evaluations will take place every spring term. The department's data report, along with the Department's response, will be updated every year.

Exit Survey: In their senior year, prior to graduation, all students complete a questionnaire to determine the degree to which the program has achieved its states goals and to learn from the seniors what they believe are the strengths and weaknesses of the program. The survey includes questions pertaining to American national government, public policy, comparative government, statistics, and 19 other topics.

Use of Assessment Results

Department members will analyze assessment findings each fall and make appropriate recommendations regarding improvements in the degree programs. Possible changes might include

- Addition / deletion of courses or changes in course sequences
- Changes in degree requirements
- Use of assessment information to facilitate curriculum discussions at faculty meetings
- Use of assessment information to guide changes in degree programs
- Justification of past curriculum changes and to show program improvement resulting from those changes
- Changes in advising processes
- Development of program-based websites to provide students with academic and program information
- Use of assessment information to further refine the assessment methods