

UNIT REPORT

**Politics & Philosophy-Academic -
APR Self-Study Report by
Academic Unit/Department**

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Program Mission

Politics and Philosophy Mission Statement 2021

Program Mission Statement:

The objective of the Department of Politics and Philosophy is to serve the State of Idaho, the University of Idaho, and CLASS through teaching, research, service, and outreach in the disciplines of philosophy and political science.

Program Goal (add a minimum of 3 program goal "plan items")

Innovate: Scholarship

Goal Statement:

The Department of Politics and Philosophy will produce scholarship of the highest quality and scope, resulting in significant positive impact for the region and the world.

Alignment to UI Strategic Plan Goals:

Innovate (Goal 1): Scholarly and creative products of the highest quality and scope, resulting in significant positive impact for the region and the world.

Indicators/Metrics to Evaluate Progress:

The publication record of the members of the Department will indicate success toward this goal.

List of Actions the Program Will Take to Achieve Goals :

The faculty of the Department will be given resources, such as travel stipends for conferences, to develop their scholarship.

Goal Achievement Level: In Progress

Transform: Enrollment

Goal Statement:

The Department of Politics and Philosophy aims to increase its enrollment.

Alignment to UI Strategic Plan Goals: Transform (Goal 3): Increase our educational impact.

Indicators/Metrics to Evaluate Progress:

Course enrollments, major numbers, and degrees conferred will be used to evaluate progress.

List of Actions the Program Will Take to Achieve Goals :

Active recruitment and engaged advising with an eye to retention will help the Department achieve this goal.

Goal Achievement Level: In Progress

Cultivate: Diversity

Goal Statement:

The Department of Politics and Philosophy will foster an inclusive, diverse community of students, faculty, and staff and improve cohesion and morale.

Alignment to UI Strategic Plan Goals:

Cultivate (Goal 4): Foster an inclusive, diverse community of students, faculty, and staff and improve cohesion and morale.

Indicators/Metrics to Evaluate Progress:

A survey will be given to all faculty, staff, and students asking about their satisfaction with the Department's environment and commitment to inclusion.

List of Actions the Program Will Take to Achieve Goals :

The Department will recruit and seek to retain a diverse faculty, staff, and student body.

Goal Achievement Level: In Progress

Student Learning Assessment Report (add one "plan item" for each major, degree, and/or certificate offered by dept)

Philosophy BA/BS

Assessment Report Contact: hubbs@uidaho.edu

Program Changes in Past Year:

After several years of adding courses and restructuring the curriculum, we did not make any changes in the past year.

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Students in Program (check box if true): true

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Faculty (check box if true): true

Optional: Framework Alignment:

Import Outcomes Data (from Anthology Outcomes):

6.

Writing Skills

Students can write an analytic essay that exhibits both critical thinking and effective argumentation.

Academic Year 2019-2020: Philosophy (B.A., B.S.)

Term: Spring 2020

No Results

7.

Knowledge Skills

Students exhibit knowledge of diverse philosophical positions in metaphysics, epistemology, ethics, and social/political philosophy.

Academic Year 2019-2020: Philosophy (B.A., B.S.)

Term: Spring 2020

No Results

8.

Evaluation Skills

Students can distinguish between the normative and non-normative claims of a text and evaluate the arguments for these claims.

Academic Year 2019-2020: Philosophy (B.A., B.S.)

Term: Spring 2020

No Results

Summary of Student Learning:

We assess student outcomes by analyzing data from a signature assignment in PHIL 490, senior seminar. This year, we reviewed an essay from that class to assess the analytical writing outcome. 29.4 % of students exceeded the expectations of this learning outcome, 23.5% met it, 41.1% partially met it, and 5% did not meet it.

Summary of Faculty Discussion:

Discussion focused on the challenges of teaching during the pandemic. Worries were also raised about the hostile environment in the state right now aimed at Critical Race Theory. Although we don't teach CRT in any of our classes, we do discuss race, and gender, and class critically and are concerned about, e.g., students recording our classes and targeting us for discussing these issues.

Summary of Changes/Improvements Being Considered:

We are constantly looking for ways to encourage interested students to become majors, so we discussed ways of revitalizing our recruitment efforts in class.

Inter-rater Reliability:

Evaluation is spread throughout the members of the unit; we discuss when we don't agree.

Closing the Loop:

We have recently diversified our curriculum, adding classes such as PHIL 205, Topics in Social Philosophy and PHIL 209, Mind and Madness. These courses have been successful. Given our teaching demands and the size of our faculty, we are at the limit of the diversity of courses we can offer.

Political Science BA/BS

Assessment Report Contact: hubbs@uidaho.edu

Program Changes in Past Year:

The BS was simplified by dropping the advanced methods class (POLS 336) from the curriculum.

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Students in Program (check box if true): true

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Faculty (check box if true): true

Optional: Framework Alignment:

Import Outcomes Data (from Anthology Outcomes):

We were unable to collect and analyze data for 2020-21. We collect data in Senior Seminar, POLS 490. The instructor for that course went on leave unexpectedly at the very beginning of fall semester and cannot do any work. We therefore cannot get the data from the instructor, nor can we involve the instructor in the discussion of the data, which is essential to the evaluation process.

6.

Interrogative Skills

Students graduating with a B.A./B.S. in Political Science will demonstrate the ability to ask and answer political questions.

Academic Year 2019-2020: **Political Science (B.S., B.A.)**

Term: **Spring 2020**

No Results

7.

Critical Thinking

Students graduating with a B.A./B.S. in Political Science will demonstrate critical thinking skills and an ability to engage in effective argumentation.

Academic Year 2019-2020: **Political Science (B.S., B.A.)**

Term: **Spring 2020**

No Results

8.

Communication Skills

Students graduating with a B.A./B.S. in Political Science will demonstrate an ability to give effective oral presentations.

Academic Year 2019-2020: **Political Science (B.S., B.A.)**

Term: **Spring 2020**

No Results

Summary of Student Learning:

As noted above: we were unable to collect and analyze data for 2020-21. We collect data in Senior Seminar, POLS 490. The instructor for that course went on leave unexpectedly at the very beginning of fall semester and cannot do any work. We therefore cannot get the data from the instructor, nor can we involve the instructor in the discussion of the data, which is essential to the evaluation process.

Summary of Faculty Discussion:

As noted above: we were unable to collect and analyze data for 2020-21. We collect data in Senior Seminar, POLS 490. The instructor for that course went on leave unexpectedly at the very beginning of fall semester and cannot do any work. We therefore cannot get the data from the instructor, nor can we involve the instructor in the discussion of the data, which is essential to the evaluation process.

Summary of Changes/Improvements Being Considered:

As noted above: we were unable to collect and analyze data for 2020-21. We collect data in Senior Seminar, POLS 490. The instructor for that course went on leave unexpectedly at the very beginning of fall semester and cannot do any work. We therefore cannot get the data from the instructor, nor can we involve the instructor in the discussion of the data, which is essential to the evaluation process.

Inter-rater Reliability:

As noted above: we were unable to collect and analyze data for 2020-21. We collect data in Senior Seminar, POLS 490. The instructor for that course went on leave unexpectedly at the very beginning of fall semester and cannot do any work. We therefore cannot get the data from the instructor, nor can we involve the instructor in the discussion of the data, which is essential to the evaluation process.

Closing the Loop:

Previous discussions led to the revision of the BS curriculum, dropping the advanced methods class (POLS 336), in order to help students graduate in a more timely manner.

MPA

Assessment Report Contact: mks@uidaho.edu

Program Changes in Past Year:

A new internship program was added. It is a coordinated effort with the University of Idaho's career services.

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Students in Program (check box if true): true

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Faculty (check box if true): true

Optional: Framework Alignment:**Import Outcomes Data (from Anthology Outcomes):**

1.

Management Skills

Lead and Manage in Public Governance

Academic Year 2019-2020: **Public Administration (M.P.A.)**

Term: **Spring 2020**

No Results

2.

Participation Skills

Participate in and Contribute to the Policy Process

Academic Year 2019-2020: **Public Administration (M.P.A.)**

Term: **Spring 2020**

No Results

4.

Public Service Skills

Articulate and Apply a Public Service Perspective

Academic Year 2019-2020: **Public Administration (M.P.A.)**

Term: **Spring 2020**

No Results

5.

Communication Skills

Communicate and Work Productively with a Diverse and Changing Workforce and Citizenry

Academic Year 2019-2020: **Public Administration (M.P.A.)**

Term: **Spring 2020**

No Results

Summary of Student Learning:

Students overwhelmingly praise, and are satisfied by, the program overall, its content, its delivery, and learning experience. Students typically write research papers as well as presentations. Before students are cleared for graduation, students are also required to take comprehensive exam modelled under NASPAA, the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration. The students are particularly satisfied with the internship component of the program, which has been one of the great selling point for our program.

Summary of Faculty Discussion:

We are constantly focused on program growth. The program has grown significantly, from 11 in Fall 2017 to 47 in Fall 2021. The program has also been able to attract minority students. Fall 2020 data shows around 21% minority enrollment. We have also graduated students in record numbers. There is great potential to grow provided we get additional faculty and marketing resources.

Summary of Changes/Improvements Being Considered:

No changes are planned at this time.

Inter-rater Reliability:

Inter-rate reliability is produced by discussing and comparing standards.

Closing the Loop:

We have been trying to strengthen our internship component through outreach to cities and other organizations but faculty limitation (only 2 full time faculty) has been a severe constraint. Starting this Fall 2021, we have initiated MPA internship outreach in partnership with the UI Career Services, as mentioned above.

Political Science PhD

Assessment Report Contact: mks@uidaho.edu

Program Changes in Past Year:

The program is under revision. We are currently settling on a curriculum. We have three PhD students who are making good progress towards the completion of their degrees.

A note on the boxes below: faculty and students are aware of the present learning outcomes, but these are part of the curriculum revision and will need to be communicated when the new ones have been finalized.

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Students in Program (check box if true): true

Learning Outcomes are Communicated to All Faculty (check box if true): true

Optional: Framework Alignment: N/A

Import Outcomes Data (from Anthology Outcomes):

1.

Concept Skills

Knowledge of basic concepts and theories of political science and its subfields.

Academic Year 2019-2020: **Political Science (Ph.D.)**

Term: **Spring 2020**

No Results

2.

Research Skills

Awareness of basic research findings and analytical methods.

Academic Year 2019-2020: Political Science (Ph.D.)

Term: Spring 2020

No Results

3.

Application Skills

Ability to apply theories to new situations and data including those of everyday life

Academic Year 2019-2020: Political Science (Ph.D.)

Term: Spring 2020

No Results

Summary of Student Learning:

Our three PhD students are making good progress with respect to these outcomes.

Summary of Faculty Discussion:

Faculty discussion has been centered on establishing the PhD curriculum. Focal points of discussion include whether or not to require a masters for admitted students and what the qualifying exam structure should look like.

Summary of Changes/Improvements Being Considered:

As noted above, the PhD program is in flux. The major changes being discussed are the shape of the curriculum, the requirements for admission, and the structure of the qualifying exam process.

Inter-rater Reliability:

We do not have a mechanism in place for this currently. Determining this is part of our revision process.

Closing the Loop:

The program was effectively dormant but is now moving forward. Previous assessment discussions were essential to this revitalization.

Student Achievement

Student Achievement - Politics and Philosophy**Student Retention:**

We retain students through active, engaged advising and, as we have funds available, through scholarship awards.

Student Persistence:

The department monitors student persistence by tracking enrollment data.

Student Completion:

The department monitors student completion by tracking graduation rates. We aim to get our students out in four years, although many take longer than that. We have a lot of double-majors, and many of them require extra semesters to complete all of their degrees.

Student Postgraduate Success:

We do not have data on postgraduate success. We know which students go on to post-graduate education, and we know what programs they go to. We use anecdotes of these students as part of our recruiting efforts.

Identify Equity Gaps:

We have worked to close gender equity gaps in our program, but we have work to do to close racial equity gaps.

Effective Learning Environment and Closing Equity Gaps:

At faculty meetings we stress the importance of inclusiveness, and we require all instructors to include language regarding inclusiveness in their syllabi as a reminder of the importance of supporting a safe and inclusive learning environment for our students.

We also make sure our course offerings include classes that support diversity and inclusion. In the past three years we have created PHIL 408, Feminism and Philosophy, which is now regularly offered, and we have just taken POLS 423, Politics, Policy, and Gender, off of the to-go-dormant list and will be offering it next year.

Demand and Productivity

Demand and Productivity - Politics and Philosophy**External Demand:**

Demand for Political Science is high as a function of the ongoing political turmoil in the U.S. Demand for Philosophy is low amongst high school students because they have not been exposed to the subject.

Internal Demand:

Demand in both Political Science and Philosophy is high. For Philosophy, demand is high due to the number of programs that require PHIL 103 (Introduction to Ethics). For many students, this is their first exposure to Philosophy, and majors are generated by positive experiences in this course.

Credit Productivity:

Credit productivity overall is high. Political Science courses average at least 30 students/course even at the 300/400 level. Credit productivity is lower for Philosophy at that level but is offset by the high enrollments in PHIL 103, each section of which enrolls at least 50 students.

Financial Health and Resources

Financial Health and Resources - Politics and Philosophy

Financial Health:

The program is in good financial health. Its budget indexes are in order; none is in the red.

Efficient Use of Resources:

The chair closely monitors the budget and meets several times a year with the college's administrative and fiscal director to ensure that resources are being used efficiently.

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