

Departmental and Program Assessment Annual Assessment Plan Report

Academic Year: 2008-2009

Academic Unit: Politics and International Relations

Chair: Ian King

Assessment Plan

- Is there an assessment plan for your department, program, or general education component? **Yes.**
- Does the assessment plan include stated student learning goals? **Yes.**
- Does the assessment plan include a list of assessment data that are collected each year? **Yes.**
- Has your department or program done an assessment audit of your courses to determine how course goals match overall student learning goals? **We tried assessment audits this year of some of our courses but found the results to be unhelpful – too impressionistic. As a result we do not plan at present to continue with doing assessment audits.**
- Are student learning goals available to students? **Yes, they are included on course syllabi.**

Student Assessments

- Describe which *direct* assessments in your assessment plan have been collected for the year and which have not. **Senior research projects have been collected and evaluated. Further evaluation was done at our assessment meeting on May 4th, 2009. Our conclusions can be found in our on-going assessment narrative document that is attached.**
- Describe which indirect assessments in your assessment plan have been collected for the year and which have not. **Senior exit surveys have been collected. They were analyzed in detail at our assessment meeting on May 4th, 2009. Our conclusions can be found in our on-going assessment narrative document that is attached.**

Assessment Planning

- How is information about student learning shared and used for department, program, or general education component decision making? **We rely mainly on our assessment narrative document (attached) that is updated at least twice a**

year. The updates reflect the conclusions and plans we formulate as a department resulting from the two, 2-hour assessment meetings we conduct each year. Each member of the department has a copy of this document. In 2008-09 we met on September 28th, 2008 and May 4th, 2009; an additional meeting was held on January 21st, 2009.

- Describe any curricular or other programmatic changes that have been made that were based (at least in part) on the availability of your assessment data. **Changes to the Model UN course and program and to POLI 497 Senior Research Seminar. For details please see the assessment narrative document attached.**
- Describe any changes in the Assessment Plan that have been made during this academic year. (If changes have been made, please submit an electronic copy of the revised plan to Amanda Hurd.) **None.**
- What are the plans for improving student learning in your unit? **Better assignments and testing and more engaged, one-on-one instruction. Generally, to continue to do the pedagogical things we have always done. However, the size on many of our classes and the number of majors we currently have often trumps these efforts to a considerable degree. In the end, student learning is closely correlated with small class sizes and adequate faculty resources. We have neither.**
- Report on this year's action item for your unit. **POLI 497 was redesigned but mainly because the number of senior majors taking it has now become very burdensome. We are literally at breaking point with our ability to sustain our undergraduate research process; not enough faculty/too many majors. Again, please see the assessment narrative document attached.**
- Define at least one action item for your unit that will be a goal of your assessment discussions next year? **Review of POLI 100 Issues in Politics. It's been 7 years since it was inaugurated. One issue that is already apparent is that we need to have more consistency across the various sections that are offered. Again, please see the assessment narrative document attached.**