

M.A. in Political Science 2014-2015 Assessment Plan Summary

Learning Outcomes

- 1. Statistical Analysis-** Students will understand fundamental concepts in statistics and be able to apply the basics of statistical inference, estimation hypothesis testing and statistical reasoning. They will learn to conduct and interpret statistical analysis with statistical packages (SPSS or STATA).
- 2. Research Methods-** Students will identify the basic characteristics of the four major research designs in political science, and apply this knowledge by designing an original research project.
- 3. Formal Academic Writing and Citation-** Students will master skills of formal academic writing and citation. They will communicate information and argumentation in writing in a clear, logical and formally correct manner with good grammar and appropriate citations.

Assessment of Learning Outcomes

1.1 Statistical analysis Assessment Method- PS 5630 - passing with a grade of B or better.

Results- Fall 2014 and Winter 2015: 5 of 8 MA students taking 5630 passed with B or better. (63%)

Program Action Plan- The Graduate Programs committee will meet at the end of the academic year to review results and to make recommendations to improve attainment of program goals. With more data in Spring/Summer 2016, revise assessment tool to consider withdrawals:

- 1) should they be counted in this assessment?
- 2) why are students withdrawing from this required class?

Timeline for Action Plan Implementation-

Goal for Spring/Summer 2016:

- 1) 80% or more students passing with a B or better

Reporting to Stakeholders- The results are inputted into Compliance Assist and posted on the Political Science Department website.

1.2 Statistical Analysis Assessment Method- 1.2 PS 7660 pass exam or exercise covering data processing and analysis with a grade of B or better.

Results- Results will be available after end of Fall 2015 term when data for the course in question is next available.

Program Action Plan- The Graduate Programs committee will meet at the end of the academic year to review results and to make recommendations to improve attainment of program goals.

Timeline for Action Plan Implementation-

Goals for Spring/Summer 2016:

- 1) gather data from this section of PS 7660
- 2) 80% of students earn a B or higher

Reporting to Stakeholders- The results are inputted into Compliance Assist

2.1 Political Science OA 2.1 Research methods Assessment Method- 2.1 PS 7660 - Grade of B or better on final research design paper.

Results- Results will be available after end of Fall 2015 term when data for the course in question is next available.

Program Action Plan- The Graduate Programs committee will meet at the end of the academic year to review results and to make recommendations to reinforce attainment of program goals if necessary.

Timeline for Action Plan Implementation-

Goal for Spring/Summer 2016:

- 1) 80% of students passing research design paper with B or better

Reporting to Stakeholders- The results are inputted into Compliance Assist and posted on the Political Science Department website.

3.1 Formal Academic Writing and Citation Assessment Method- Members of the graduate committee will review each submitted MA essay or thesis to assess the quality of student's formal academic writing, rating from 1 to 3 where 1 is highest in quality and 3 is lowest.

Criteria- the introduction states a clear and meaningful thesis or research question; the body of the essay or thesis is organized as an orderly progression; the paper is substantially free of grammatical, spelling and usage errors; and a concluding section effectively sums up what the paper has demonstrated.

Results- A review of MA essays submitted in 2014-2015 is in progress. Because of the small number of submissions during this time period, results will be combined with results for 2015-2016.

Program Action Plan- Members of the graduate committee will continue to review MA essays based on the criteria above. The graduate committee will meet at the end of the 2015-2016 academic year to review the results and make recommendations.

Timeline for Action Plan Implementation-

Goal for Spring/Summer 2016:

1) revise departmental guidelines for the MA Essay

Reporting to Stakeholders- The results are inputted into Compliance Assist and posted on the Political Science Department website.

3.2 Formal Academic Writing and Citation Assessment Method- Members of the graduate committee will review each submitted MA essay or thesis to assess whether students have rigorously followed a standard citation style, assigning a grade of 1 to 3 on each (1 is highest in quality and 3 lowest).

Criteria- Standard citation style is consistently and correctly used throughout the entirety of the thesis or essay.

Results- MA Essays from 2015-2016 will be assessed together. Because of the small number of students in the program the graduate committee will review these once there are 5 or more to review.

Program Action Plan-The Graduate Programs committee will meet at the end of the academic year to review results and to make recommendations to improve attainment of program goals.

Timeline for Action Plan Implementation-

Spring/Summer 2016:

1. Complete review of MA essays for 2015-2016

2. Recommend departmental standard for citation style for MA essays.

Reporting to Stakeholders- The results are inputted into Compliance Assist and posted on the Political Science Department website.