**Annual Assessment Report for 2020-2021 AY**

Reports completed on assessment activities carried out during the 2020-21 AY will be due September 30th 2021 and must be e-mailed to the Director of Assessment, Dr. Douglas Fraleigh (douglasf@csufresno.edu).

Provide detailed responses for each of the following questions within this Word document. Please do NOT insert an index or add formatting. Furthermore, only report on two or three student learning outcomes even if your external accreditor requires you to evaluate four or more outcomes each year. Also be sure to explain or omit specialized or discipline-specific terms.

Department/Program: \_\_Political Science\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Degree \_\_BA\_\_

Assessment Coordinator: \_\_\_\_Dr. Tom Holyoke\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Please list the learning outcomes you assessed this year.

For Academic Year 2020 – 2021 we used two of our four assessment measures to assess learning outcomes 1 through 4 as listed in our SOAP. Here are the four learning outcomes assessed:

* + 1. Students will learn, explain, and analyze the primary concepts, analytical techniques, and theoretical and empirical literatures in the major subfields of the academic discipline of political science.
    2. Students will be able to think critically about, and discuss their critiques of, the primary issues in American government and world affairs with these theories and techniques.
    3. Students will be able to demonstrate a mastery of critical political and policy evaluation

skills, as well as the methods necessary to effectively present analyses of issues and policies, and the arguments the information supports, in a professional fashion, which includes both oral and written communication.

* + 1. Students will show their ability to use professional statistical analysis tools to empirically

analyze, and provide written conclusions about, issues in modern politics.

1. What assignment or survey did you use to assess the outcomes and what method (criteria or rubric) did you use to evaluate the assignment? **Please describe the assignment and the criteria or rubric used to evaluate the assignment in detail and, if possible, include copies of the assignment and criteria/rubric at the end of this report.**

In the last academic year we used two of the four assessment methods laid out in our SOAP. The **first** was our pre-test / post-test assessment of how well students learned and retained basic ideas related to Political Science. This is done by a quiz given to all students in PLSI 1 (Modern Politics) and then giving the same quiz to all seniors who apply to graduate. By comparing the average of the post-test scores from the spring semester of 2021 with the average of the pre-test scores from 2019 and 2020 (we do not know exactly when the graduating students actually took PLSI 1 because we do not link them in the data set), we can see if there was positive change in the post-test from the pre-test. The quiz used is appended to this report.

As indicated in our SOAP, this method assesses learning outcomes 1, 3, and 4.

The pre-test average score (on a 6 point scale) was 3.66, and the post-test score was 5.57. This post-test score is a very high score, and one of the highest we have reported since doing assessment.

The **second** assessment method is new in the sense that we are doing it in a new way. We have used an assessment of student paper portfolios for many years to measure two of the learning outcomes, assessing a small random selection of papers written by students in our required upper-level courses. For a variety of reasons, this became increasingly difficult to do. In the meantime, in response to our last program review, the Department created a capstone requirement for our undergraduate majors, which students may complete through an internship, study abroad, or a research paper (each as the central component of a specific capstone course). Since we expect that a significant number of students will select the research paper/course option, we decided that these papers would be used for our new method of writing assessment. Last year was the first year that this was done.

As indicated in our SOAP, this method assesses learning outcomes 2 and 3. The rubric is attached.

Seven students completed papers that were assessed on a 5-point scale. The average score was 4, which is a good score considering the difficulty many students at Fresno State have in their writing.

We did not conduct our other two forms of assessment. One of these is the policy argumentation memo. This is usually done by Dr. Cummins in PLSI 150, but Dr. Cummins was on leave from the Department last year to be Interim Dean. Since he is now back, we will use this form of assessment next year. The other assessment is our alumni survey. Typically this is done every five or so years, and this academic year, during our program evaluation, is the next time we will do it.

1. What did you learn from your analysis of the data? Please include sample size (how many students were evaluated) and indicate how many students (number or percentage instead of a median or mean) were designated as proficient.

As indicated above, from the 63 students who participated in pre / post-tests, we see strong evidence of student learning. From the seven students who participated in the writing assessment, there is some evidence of good writing abilities, but also some additional work that needs to be done.

We have never used a “proficient” designation.

1. What changes, if any, do you recommend based on the assessment data?

Likely none at this time for a couple of reasons. First, in terms of learning critical knowledge in our field, the evidence is strong that our current system is working, so no change is needed. In terms of writing, our capstone research/writing course is brand new and we would prefer to wait another year or two to gain additional data before we can fully evaluate whether additional changes need to be made.

Second, this is our program review year, and we would prefer to complete the review and read the review report before instituting any changes.

1. If you recommended any changes in your response to Question 4 in last year’s assessment report, what progress have you made in implementing these changes? If you did not recommend making any changes in last year’s report please write N/A as your answer to this question.

N/A

1. What assessment activities will you be conducting during the next academic year?

We plan to do all of them: the pre/post test, the writing assessment, the policy argumentation memo assessment, and the alumni survey.

1. Identify and discuss any major issues identified during your last Program Review and in what ways these issues have or have not been addressed.

The biggest take-away from our last program review was the need to establish a capstone in the Political Science Major. We have done this. Students may complete this capstone by studying abroad, completing an internship, or by completing the research paper course. As already noted, we are up for review again this year.

**Assessment Quiz**

**Spring 2021**

**Major (if you have one): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

1. Thomas Hobbes and John Locke argued that the theoretical agreement citizens make with their political leaders, agreeing to give up some of their freedom in exchange for protection, is called the…
2. binding tie b.) social contract c.) great compromise d.) Patriot Act
3. Interest group contributions, gerrymandering, name recognition, and political experience all favor *who* in local, state, and congressional (national) legislative elections?
4. incumbents b.) state governors c.) challengers d.) nobody
5. One of the most important structural differences between the United States government and parliamentary forms of government, such as in Great Britain, is that the latter form have no…
6. monarchs b.) statutory laws c.) elections d.) separation of powers
7. In statistics, measures of central tendency, such as mean or median, give us a sense as to which values are most typical in a data distribution, while the measure used to describe the typical distance of data from the mean is called the…
8. outlier b.) mode c.) standard deviation d.) ordinal variable
9. Which of the following occurs when the private sector is inefficient and does not provide a good or service at a reasonable price?

a.) market gap b.) positive externality c.) agenda setting d.) market failure

1. The theory of international relations holding that nations act solely in accordance with their own national interests is called…
2. realism b.) positivism c.) liberalism d.) restrictivism

**Political Science Undergraduate Program**

**Student Portfolio Assessment Form**

**Date:**

**Student name:**

**Course:** PLSI 193: Senior Research Capstone

**Faculty name:**

Please assess the attached student paper according to the following scale:

**1=fail 2=weak 3=average 4=good 5=excellent**

1. Displays an understanding of issues in the pertinent literature

1 2 3 4 5

1. Quality of theoretical argument

1 2 3 4 5

1. Clarity, originality, and conciseness of the theoretical argument

1 2 3 4 5

1. Quality of organization

1 2 3 4 5

1. Quality of writing

1 2 3 4 5

1. Sources properly cited

1 2 3 4 5

1. Letter grade: A B C D F

Comments (optional):