

# Degree Program Student Learning Report

Revised November 2019

## Department of History & Political Science

### BA in Public Affairs

20<sup>20</sup> / 21  
For 2019-2020 Academic Year

#### PART 1

#### Degree Program Mission and Student Learning Outcomes

A. State the school, department, and degree program missions.

University Mission	School Mission	Department Mission	Degree Program Mission
Our mission is to ensure students develop the skills and knowledge required to achieve professional and personal goals in dynamic local and global communities.	Central to the mission of the School is the preparation of students to achieve professional and personal goals in their respective disciplines and to enable their success in dynamic local and global communities. Our strategy is to foster an academic setting of diverse curricula that inherently incorporates an environment of service and collegiality.	The mission of the Department of History and Political Science is to support discipline-specific degree programs as well as the University's general education program.	The Bachelor of Arts Degree in Public Affairs is designed to provide students with the organizational, administrative, and time management skills to excel in public service and non-profit sectors.

B. Align school purposes, department purposes, and program student learning outcomes with their appropriate University commitments.

<b>University Commitments</b>	<b>School Purposes</b>	<b>Department Purposes</b>	<b>Student Learning Outcomes</b>
<p>To provide quality associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degree opportunities and educational experiences which foster student excellence in oral and written communications, scientific reasoning and critical and creative thinking.</p>	<p>The School offers innovative degrees, which focus upon developing skills in oral and written communication, critical thinking, creativity, empirical and evidenced-based inquiry, experimental investigation and theoretical explanation of natural phenomena, and innovative technology.</p>	<p>Offers innovative and quality teaching both within the classroom and through distance education.</p>	
<p>To promote an atmosphere of academic and intellectual freedom and respect for diverse expression in an environment of physical safety that is supportive of teaching and learning.</p>	<p>The School educates its majors to think independently and have the knowledge, skills and vision to work in all types of situations and careers and communicate with all types of people.</p>	<p>Foster the skills of critical thinking, writing, research, and oral communication among our students</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate an ability to analyze and critique a variety of approaches to understanding public policies.</p>
<p>To provide a general liberal arts education that supports specialized academic programs and prepares students for lifelong learning and service in a diverse society.</p>	<p>The School offers general education courses of high quality and purpose that provide a foundation for life- long learning.</p>	<p>Serve the University and the community through the provision of quality general education courses.</p>	<p>Students will demonstrate an ability to evaluate different perspectives regarding public affairs.</p>
<p>To provide students with a diverse, innovative faculty dedicated to excellence in teaching, scholarly pursuits and continuous improvement of programs.</p>	<p>The School fosters a community of scholars among the faculty and students of the institution.</p>	<p>Foster values of scholarship, creativity, appreciation of diversity, and community service among our faculty, staff, and students.</p>	<p>Students will apply public affairs-oriented research into their analysis public affairs.</p>
<p>To provide university-wide student services, activities and resources that complement academic programs.</p>			

University Commitments	School Purposes	Department Purposes	Student Learning Outcomes
To support and strengthen student, faculty and administrative structures that promote shared governance of the institution.			
To promote and encourage student, faculty, staff and community interaction in a positive academic climate that creates opportunities for cultural, intellectual and personal enrichment for the University and the communities it serves.	The School fosters a community of scholars among the faculty and students of the institution.	Attract and retain high quality traditional and nontraditional students.	

**PART 2**  
**Revisit Proposed Changes Made in Previous Assessment Cycle**

Revisit each instructional/assessment change proposed in Part 5 of the degree program SLR for the preceding year. Indicate whether the proposed change was implemented and comment accordingly. Any changes the department implemented for this academic year, but which were not specifically proposed in the preceding report, should also be reported and discussed here. Please note if no changes were either proposed or implemented or this academic year.

Proposed Change	Implemented? (Y/N)	Comments
The faculty would like to provide more granular data on the internship, gathering information on the success of the internships from the SBS instructor and the internship host.	Y	The SBS 4033 instructors have agreed to provide information received from internship mentors to the department for analysis in future iterations.
The major will reduce the number of options, streamlining the degree and reducing the number of courses required.	Y	The department reduced the number of options in the degree.

Change sampling measure to all students who complete rather than pass the class.	Y	The sampling measure was changed.
An International Relations option was added to the degree to increase the number of students in the major.	Y	The number of Public Affairs majors has dropped dramatically. While reducing the number of options overall, the International Relations degree was added to increase the desirability of the degree.

**PART 3**  
**Response to University Assessment Committee Peer Review**

The University Assessment Committee provides written feedback on departmental assessment plans through a regular peer review process. This faculty-led oversight is integral to RSU's commitment to the continuous improvement of student learning and institutional effectiveness. UAC recommendations are not compulsory and departments may implement them at their discretion. Nevertheless, respond below to each UAC recommendations from last year's peer review report. Indicate whether the recommendation was implemented and comment accordingly. Please indicate either if the UAC had no recommendations or if the program was not subject to review in the previous cycle.

Peer Review Feedback	Implemented (Y/N)	Comments
Clarify SLO #2.	Y	SLO #2 has been rewritten.
Clarify SLO #3.	Y	SLO #3 has been rewritten.

**PART 4**  
**Evidence of Student Learning**

Evidence and analyze student progress for each of the student learning outcomes (same as listed in Part I B above) for the degree program. See the *Appendix* for a detailed description of each component. Note: The table below is for the first program learning outcome. Copy the table and insert it below for each additional outcome. SLO numbers should be updated accordingly.

**A.  
Student Learning Outcome**

SLO #1: Students will demonstrate an ability to analyze and critique a variety of approaches to understanding public policies.				
<b>B. Assessment Measure</b>	<b>C. Performance Standard</b>	<b>D. Sampling Method</b>	<b>E. Sample Size (n)</b>	<b>F. Results</b>
The course grade earned by PA majors who take POLS 2003 <i>Politics Matters</i> .	At least 80% of all BA-PA majors will earn an average grade of 80% or better on exams in POLS 2003.	All majors who take the class are included.	6	6 of 6 majors (100%) earned an 80% or better on all three examinations.
				<b>G. Standard Met (Y/N)</b>
				Y

**H.  
Conclusions**

Students appear to be able to analyze and critique a variety of approaches to understanding public policies. The average grade on the three exams was 90.38%.

**A.  
Student Learning Outcome**

SLO #2: Students will demonstrate an ability to evaluate different perspectives regarding public affairs.				
<b>B. Assessment Measure</b>	<b>C. Performance Standard</b>	<b>D. Sampling Method</b>	<b>E. Sample Size (n)</b>	<b>F. Results</b>
Public affairs majors will execute a policy or program evaluation.	90% of public affairs majors will earn an 80% or better on a policy or program evaluation in POLS 4993	All majors who take the class are included.	5	All five majors in POLS 4993 Policy and Program Evaluation earned over a 90%.
				<b>G. Standard Met (Y/N)</b>
				Y

A. Student Learning Outcome						
B. Assessment Measure	C. Performance Standard	D. Sampling Method	E. Sample Size (n)	F. Results	G. Standard Met (Y/N)	
	Policy and Program Evaluation.					
H. Conclusions						
All students earned well over the performance standard, demonstrating their ability to apply knowledge and understanding of different views regarding public affairs.						

A. Student Learning Outcome						
B. Assessment Measure	C. Performance Standard	D. Sampling Method	E. Sample Size (n)	F. Results	G. Standard Met (Y/N)	
Students will use research to produce short writing assignments.	80% of students will earn an 80% or better on writing assignments in POLS 3273 <i>Intergovernmental Relations</i> ,	All majors who take the class are included.	5	5 of 5 students earned an 80% or better on all writing assignments. The average grade was 89.1.	Y	
H. Conclusions						
Students appear to have succeeded in this learning outcome as they all achieved greater scores than the minimum requirement.						

**A. Student Learning Outcome**

SLO #4 Every student will demonstrate skills learned through internships with the law or non-profit sector, or with federal, state, or local government.						
<b>B. Assessment Measure</b>	<b>C. Performance Standard</b>	<b>D. Sampling Method</b>	<b>E. Sample Size (n)</b>	<b>F. Results</b>	<b>G. Standard Met (Y/N)</b>	
Responses from mentors evaluating them during SBS 4033 <i>Internship I</i> or SBS 4043 <i>Internship II</i> .	All public affairs majors will earn positive responses from mentors during SBS 4033 <i>Internship I</i> or SBS 4043 <i>Internship II</i> .	All majors are included.	4	All graduating Public Affairs majors completed an internship through SBS 4033.	Y	

**H. Conclusions**

This year, more granular data was not available from the instructors, but they have promised to gather responses from internship mentors for future years.

**PART 5  
Proposed Instructional or Assessment Changes**

Learning outcomes assessment can generate actionable evidence of student performance that can be used to improve student success and institutional effectiveness. Knowledge of student strengths and weakness gained through assessment can inform faculty efforts to improve course instruction and program curriculum. Below discuss potential changes the department is considering which are aimed at improving student learning or the assessment process. Indicate which student learning outcome(s) will be affected and provide a rationale for each proposed change. These proposals will be revisited in next assessment cycle.

<b>Proposed Change</b>	<b>Applicable Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Rationale and Impact</b>
The new assessment measure for SLO #2 will be "Students will produce short writing	SLO #2.	Since core courses are being changed for the major, the assessments will evaluate courses

Proposed Change	Applicable Learning Outcomes	Rationale and Impact
<p>assignments on public affairs topics" and the performance standards will be "80% of students will earn an 80% or better in writing assignments in POLS 3003 <i>Political Science Methodologies</i>."</p> <p>SLO #3 Assessment measure will be "Public Affairs majors will execute a policy or program evaluation" and the performance standard will be "90% of public affairs majors will earn an 80% or better on a policy or program evaluation in POLS 4993 <i>Policy and Program Evaluation</i>."</p>	<p>SLO #3.</p>	<p>that are required of all majors in the new program.</p> <p>Since core courses are being changed for the major, the assessments will evaluate courses that are required of all majors in the new program.</p>

### PART 6

#### Summary of Assessment Measures

- A. How many different assessment measures were used? Four different assessment measures were used.
- B. List the direct measures (see appendix): Course grades, writing assignments, internships, and senior capstone projects.
- C. List the indirect measures (see appendix): None.

### PART 7

#### Faculty Participation and Signatures

- A. Provide the names and signatures of all full time and adjunct faculty who contributed to this report.

Faculty Name	Assessment Role	Signature
David Bath	Department representative/primary author	
Michael Beauchamp	Department Review Board	



Paul Hatley	Department Review Board	<i>PH Hatley</i>
Steve Housel	Department Review Board	<i>SH Housel</i>
Jane Johansson	Department Review Board	<i>Jane Johansson - email approval</i>
Carolyn Taylor	Department Review Board	<i>Carolyn Taylor</i>
Quinton Taylor	Department Review Board	<i>Quinton Taylor</i>
Sigismond Wilson	Department Review Board	<i>Sigismond Wilson</i>

**B. Reviewed by:**

Titles	Name	Signature	Date
Department Head	Ken Hicks	<i>Ken Hicks</i>	5-28-21
Dean	Keith Martin	<i>Keith W. Martin</i>	6/8/21

## Appendix

### Student Learning Outcome

Student learning outcomes are the observable or measurable results that are expected of a student following a learning experience. Learning outcomes may address knowledge, skills, attitudes, or values that provide evidence that learning has occurred. They can apply to a specific course, a program of study, or an institution. Outcomes should be worded in language that clearly implies a measurable behavior or quality of student work. Outcomes should also include Bloom's action verbs appropriate to the skill level of learning expected of students.

#### Examples:

*Students will be able to apply principles of evidence-based medicine to determine clinical diagnoses and implement acceptable treatment modalities.*

*Students will be able to articulate cultural and socioeconomic differences and the significance of these differences for instructional planning.*

### Assessment Measure

An assessment measure is a tool or instrument used to gather evidence of student progress toward an established learning outcome. Every program learning outcome should have at least one appropriate assessment measure. Learning outcomes are frequently complex, however, and may require multiple measures to accurately assess student performance. Assessment plans should try to incorporate a combination of direct and indirect assessment measures. Direct provide concrete evidence of whether a student has command of a specific subject or content area, can perform a certain task, exhibits a particular skill, demonstrates a certain quality in their work, or holds a particular value. Because direct measures tap into actual student learning, it is often viewed as the preferred measure type. Indirect measures assess opinions or thoughts about the extent of a student's knowledge, skills, or attitudes. They reveal characteristics associated with learning, but they only imply that learning has occurred. Both types of measures can provide useful insight into student learning and experiences in a program. Each also has unique advantages and disadvantages in terms of the type of data and information it can provide. Examples of common direct and indirect measures are listed below.

#### Direct Measures

- Comprehensive exams
- Class assignments
- Juried review of performances and exhibitions
- Internship or clinical evaluations
- Portfolio evaluation
- Pre/post exams
- Third-party exams such as field tests, certification exams, or licensure exams
- Senior thesis or capstone projects

#### Indirect Measures

- Graduate exit interviews
- Focus group responses
- Job placement statistics
- Graduate school placement statistics
- Graduation and retention rates
- Student and alumni surveys that assess perceptions of the program
- Employer surveys that assess perceptions of graduates
- Honors and awards earned by students and alumni.