



Political Science [POLS]

Cycles included in this report:

Jun 1, 2021 to May 31, 2022

This PDF document includes any files attached to fields in this report.

To view the attachments you should view this file in Adobe Acrobat XI or higher, or another PDF viewer that supports viewing file attachments.

The default PDF viewer for your device or web browser may not support viewing file attachments embedded in a PDF.

If the attachments are in formats other than PDF you will need any necessary file viewers installed.

Program Name: Political Science [POLS]

Reporting Cycle: Jun 1, 2021 to May 31, 2022

1 Is this program offered via Distance Learning?

100% Traditional or less than 50% Distance/Traditional

2 Is this program offered at an off-site location?

No

2.1 If yes to previous, provide addresses for each location where 50% or more of program credits may be earned.

3 Example of Program Improvement

2017-2018:

Increased writing requirements for students enrolled in POLS courses, based on writing expectations within the political science profession.

2018-2019:

No changes were made to master plan assessments. No discussions occurred regarding assessment metrics or measurements. The program did include the hire of another full-time faculty position.

2019-2020:

During the 2019-2020, we hired a new POLS tenure-track faculty member, Dr. Diane Verrill. However, after the Spring 2020 semester, Ms. Jessica Markstrom was not retained as an Instructor of Political Science. With the above-noted changes in the POLS faculty within the Department of SOSC, it is anticipated that the assessments found within the POLS program plan will be revised by Dr. Verrill during the 2020-2021 reporting period. Finally, under the guidance and training of Dr. Angelica Ogea, Dr. Verrill is currently taking part in revising the POLS 201 class for the General Education curriculum at McNeese.

2020-2021:

During 2020-2021, POLS 201 was included in the General Education curriculum redesign. Based on the redesigned schedule, the training is completed during the summer of 2021, the course will be redesigned during the fall 2021, a pilot course will be taught during the spring 2022, and the fully redesigned course with increased student enrollment is planned for the fall 2022. The new redesigned course will include a major civic engagement component that has been missing from previously taught POLS 201 courses.

2021-2022:

During the 2021-2022 reporting period, an example of program improvement was the implementation of the redesign of the POLS 201 course. This class includes a major civic engagement component that was missing in previous taught introductory American Government classes. On a side note, Dr. Diane Verrill, the POLS coordinator, resigned from McNeese on March 8, 2022. With the departure of Dr. Verrill, the Department of Social Sciences is in the process of hiring a replacement that will "embrace excellence with a personal touch" as a servant leader for Political Science degree program within the Department of SOSC.

4 Program Highlights from the Reporting Year

2017-2018:

The program had 16 graduates in the reporting period, evenly divided between the fall and spring semesters. See attached file for program and faculty highlights.

2018-2019:

The program had 6 graduates within the 2018-2019 term. Dr. Rathnam Indurthy published "India-Pakistan Wars and the Kashmir Crisis" in February 2019 with Routledge India Publishers. Dr. Henry Sirgo served as the program chair and Vice President for the Louisiana Political Science

Association and also traveled with two students to the University of Louisiana System Summit. Jessica Markstrom created a pre-law concentration and made alterations to the general concentration in Political Science.

2019-2020:

During the 2019-2020 reporting period, Dr. Michael Buckles appointed Dr. Diane Verrill as the Associate Dean of Internships and Research for the College of Liberal Arts. In addition, two POLS students (Alexys Peron and Alexandra Williams) were chosen for internships in Washington, DC by Senator Bill Cassidy.

2020-2021:

During the spring 2021 semester, one POLS student (Ryan Gardebled) is studying abroad in Lithuania. Alexys Peron graduated and is now attending Loyola University Law School in New Orleans. Two students are graduating in the spring 2021 and will be attending graduate school in the fall. Kerven Adajanov will be attending Hamad bin Khalifa University in Doha, Qatar for his M. A. degree in Political Science. Matthew Harding will be attending the University of Missouri for his MPA degree. During the summer of 2021, Dr. Diane Verrill has two conference presentations. In July, she will be presenting "Food Incubators: A Survey of the Industry" with her co-authors at the Community Development Society Conference. In August, she will be presenting "Generating Social Enterprise in Local Food Systems: A Survey of Food Incubator" with her co-authors at the International Society for Quality of Life Studies.

2021-2022:

During the Fall 2021 semester in the POLS 201 course, Dr. Diane Verrill hosted a Congressional Debate between two candidates that were running for a political office. Within that POLS 201 class, students were able to develop questions that were used during the congressional debate. In short, the use of this debate format reinforced the civic engagement component of the redesigned POLS 201 class.

Files: See list of attachments to view. (Requires Adobe Reader or compatible viewer).

POLS(BA) 2017-18 Achievements

5 Program Mission

The purposes of the Bachelor of Arts degree in political science are:

- Students will broaden their knowledge of political science through a program of liberal arts study as well as specialized study in political sciences.
- Students will be introduced to political theories, comparative politics, political history, and other important aspects of government and its historical development.
- To offer students opportunities to minor in political science and/or better acquaint themselves with political sciences.
- All political science majors will receive instruction in statistics, the scientific method, languages, and philosophy to enhance their political science studies.
- To prepare interested political science majors for the study of law or graduate level study in political sciences.
- To serve the University, the academic community, and Southwest Louisiana through teaching, research, community service and University service. Faculty is encouraged to be engaged in research and publication.

6 Institutional Mission Reference

This degree supports the University's fundamental mission to offer baccalaureate curricula in service to the residents and employers of the SWLA region and beyond. It provides opportunities for student internships in local industry and prepares students to become effective in academic and professional environments.

7 Assessment and Benchmark

Assessment: POLS 201 pre-test and post-test.

Benchmark: 84% of students will earn a score of 80% or higher on the post-test.

[Outcome Links](#)

American Political System [Program]

Students will describe and analyze American political system.

International Politics [Program]

Students will analyze the international political environment.

Writing [Program]

Students will demonstrate effective written communication skills.

7.1 Data

Fall 2020:

Section	# of students completing pre- and post-test	Students meeting benchmark		Average scores		% change from pre- to post-test
		#	%	Pre-test	Post-test	
7WA	30	25	83.3%	5.5/10	8.4/10	52.7%
7WB	32	27	84.4%	5.63/10	7.69/10	36.6%

Spring 2021:

Section	# of students completing pre- and post-test	Students meeting benchmark		Average scores		% change from pre- to post-test
		#	%	Pre-test	Post-test	
7WA	21	19	90.5%	5.86/10	8.14/10	38.9%
7WB	22	18	81.8%	5.82/10	7.86/10	35.1%

Spring 2021:

Section	# of students completing pre- and post-test	Students meeting benchmark		Average scores		% change from pre- to post-test
		#	%	Pre-test	Post-test	
Fall 2021	45	17	37.8%	5.96/10	7.73/10	29.70%
Spring 2022	68	18	26.5%	5.39/10	7.49/10	38.96%

7.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2020-2021:

The results show that no changes are required at this time given that there was an approximate 50% improvement between the pretest and the posttest. The posttest is also aligned with the courses' actual grades. That being said, this was a new assessment and all four courses were held online. That will not be the case moving forward; therefore, it is anticipated that areas for course improvement will be identified once the new redesigned gen ed course is taught in a traditional in-person format.

2021-2022:

As reported elsewhere in the POLS assessment report, Dr. Diane Verrill resigned from McNeese on March 8, 2022. At the time of her resignation, Dr. Verrill was teaching this POLS 201 class in the Spring 2022 semester. The assessment data for the two POLS 201 classes (one class in the Fall 2021 semester, and one course in the Spring 2022 semester) had to be retrieved by Dr. Clark from Dr. Verrill's MOODLE classes. The assessment data, albeit trite, can be found in the data section of this report. An examination of the percent of students meeting the 80% benchmark for the post-test in the Spring 2022 POLS class reveals that only 26.5% (18 out of 68 students) met the said benchmark. In my professional opinion, the performance on the post-test was a function of Dr. Verrill resigning from McNeese at the midpoint of the semester. I have this opinion because the percent rate of students meeting the benchmark was dramatically higher in previous semesters.

The plan for continuous improvement will include adopting a new benchmark as suggested by Wesley LeJeune and IRE. The new benchmark for POLS 201 will be: 75% of students will correctly answer eight of the 10 questions on the post-test, and there will be a 50% increase in the average score on the post-test over the pre-test. This change in the benchmark for the

POLS 201 course will reflect a more robust and vigorous assessment marker. Finally, this change in the benchmark for POLS 201 will be communicated to the new coordinator of the POLS degree program.

8 Assessment and Benchmark SOSC 499 Capstone Assignment

Assessment: SOSC 499 prospectus grades for political science majors.

Benchmark: 90% of students will successfully (earn a B or better) develop a prospectus for future research as their capstone assignment in SOSC 499.

Files: See list of attachments to view. (Requires Adobe Reader or compatible viewer).

SOSC499 Grades 2017-18

SOSC499 Syllabus

Outcome Links

American Political System [Program]

Students will describe and analyze American political system.

Critical Thinking [Program]

Students will demonstrate critical thinking.

International Politics [Program]

Students will analyze the international political environment.

Writing [Program]

Students will demonstrate effective written communication skills.

8.1 Data

Term	Students earning B or higher		Benchmark met?
	#	%	
Fall 2016	—	100%	Yes
Spring 2017	14/15	93.3%	Yes
Fall 2017	21/21	100%	Yes
Spring 2018	29/30	97%	Yes
Summer 2018	7/7	100%	Yes
Fall 2018*	—	—	—
Spring 2019	4/4	100%	Yes
Fall 2019	3/3	100%	Yes
Spring 2020	2/2	100%	Yes
Fall 2020*	—	—	—
Spring 2021	5/5	100%	Yes
Fall 2021	1/1	100%	Yes
Spring 2022	7/7	100%	Yes

*No Political Science majors were enrolled in SOSC 499 for the Fall 2018 or Fall 2020 semesters.

8.1.1 Analysis of Data and Plan for Continuous Improvement

2017-2018:

Between 97% and 100% of the students earned a grade of B or better on the assessment. Benchmark exceeded.

2018-2019:

While the benchmark was met and exceeded this year, as well as years past, room for improvement exists regarding how the benchmark is assessed.

Political Science seeks to improve its benchmark by requesting a meeting with the Political Science faculty and IRE members. Evaluation of benchmarks and how they are assessed

need discussion and potential revision. While the SOSC 499 paper is an instrument to determine student's reasoning and writing skills, the letter grade itself does not demonstrate in a specific, measurable manner of how those skills presented themselves. Another benchmark that determines these skills should replace the letter grade benchmark.

2019-2020:

SOSC 499 is offered every Fall and Spring Semester. During the present reporting period, five students that are majoring in POLS took the SOSC 499 class. In analyzing the data from the Fall and Spring SOSC 499 courses, all five POLS students scored above 90% on the SOSC 499 assignment. The scores are as follows:

Fall 2019: 94, 93, 90

Spring 2020: 94, 92

The data suggest that the POLS students have a good understanding of how to critically apply their knowledge in a theoretical way to a research endeavor. The plan for continuous improvement will center on refining the SOSC 499 assignment to enhance the quality of the assessment.

2020-2021:

The SOSC capstone assignment used to assess the QEP outcome of demonstrating competency in professional writing involved each POLS student developing a prospectus for future research (please see the attached assignment). Simply put, this assignment allowed the student to demonstrate his or her knowledge with respect to explaining how he or she would use a particular research methodological approach to study or to understand a societal issue or problem. During the 2020-2021 reporting period, five POLS students were enrolled in SOSC 499 (all during the Spring 2021 semester). The final scores for the capstone project are as follows:

Spring 2021: 95, 94, 94, 92, 90

After analyzing the data, it is evident that the POLS students have an excellent command of how to analyze and assess a contemporary social or political issue by utilizing their critical thinking skills that they have acquired by taking classes at McNeese. Indeed, their average scores are higher than students from other disciplines (CJUS, CJSO, SOCL, SOCO) that took the same class during the 2020-2021 reporting period. Finally, a plan for continuous improvement will include a refinement of the assignment because the POLS students have consistently met the benchmark that has been set for this particular assessment.

2021-2022:

The SOSC capstone assignment used to assess the QEP outcome of demonstrating competency in professional writing involved each POLS student developing a prospectus for future research (please see the attached assignment). Simply put, this assignment allowed the student to demonstrate his or her knowledge with respect to explaining how he or she would use a particular research methodological approach to study or to understand a particular political issue. During the 2021-2022 reporting period, eight POLS students were enrolled in SOSC 499 (one POLS student in the Fall 2021 semester; seven POLS students in the Spring 2022 semester). The final scores for the capstone project are as follows:

Fall 2021: 95

Spring 2022: 95, 94, 93, 93, 93, 92, 90

After assessing the data for the POLS students, it is evident that they have an excellent command of how to analyze and assess a contemporary social or political issue by utilizing their critical thinking skills that they have acquired by taking classes at McNeese. Indeed, their average scores (93%) are higher than students from other disciplines (CJUS, CJSO, SOCL, SOCO) that took the same class during the 2021-2022 reporting period. Finally, a plan for continuous improvement will include a rough draft assignment that will be due at the approximate midpoint of the semester.

Files: See list of attachments to view. (Requires Adobe Reader or compatible viewer).

SOSC 499 assignment

SOSC 499 Rubric

End of report