

**STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT PROGRAM
SUMMARY FORM AY 2004-2005**

**Degree and
Program Name:**

M.A. in Political Science

Submitted By:

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Please complete a separate worksheet for each academic program (major, minor) at each level (undergraduate, graduate) in your department. Worksheets are due to CASA this year by **June 1**. Worksheets should be sent electronically to cskjs@eiu.edu and should also be submitted to your college dean. For information about assessment or help with your assessment plans, visit the Assessment webpage at <http://www.eiu.edu/~assess/> or contact Karla Sanders in CASA at 581-6056.

PART ONE

What are the learning objectives?	How, where, and when are they assessed?	What are the expectations?	What are the results?	Committee/ person responsible? How are results shared?
<p>1. The student will demonstrate the ability to think and write critically.</p>	<p>How: Direct measurement: Data for this objective is gathered through the completion of a holistic assessment rubric. At the completion of a graduate student's thesis or comprehensive exam, his/her committee completes an assessment rubric (scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being exceptional, 4 being above average, 3 being satisfactory, 2 being below average, and 1 being failure), which specifically addresses this objective.</p> <p>When: Assessment rubrics are completed throughout the year, upon the completion of a thesis or comprehensive exam.</p> <p>Who: Members of each student's graduate committee are responsible for completing the assessment rubrics. The</p>	<p>Members of the student's graduate committee should express at least satisfactory evaluations (a grade of 3 or higher) for this objective for a majority of students assessed.</p>	<p>27 individual assessment rubrics were completed. 25 rubrics were graded as a 3 or better, which indicates that the vast majority of our students performed at least satisfactory or better. We were pleased to see that 8 students earned the grade of "5." 12 students earned the grade of "4". 5 students earned the grade of "3." Only 2 students scored the grade of "2."</p> <p>These findings suggest that among the overwhelming majority of our students assessed, our program is succeeding in training our students in critical thinking and writing skills.</p>	<p>The results of the direct measurements have been shared with the Department Chairman, and will be shared with the Department's Graduate Committee for their evaluation. Given our positive data for this learning objective, no program revisions have been recommended.</p>

	Department's Graduate Coordinator collates the data.			
2. The student will demonstrate at least satisfactory knowledge in one major and minor field. In the case of the M.A. thesis, the student will demonstrate knowledge of previous research in the primary subject area.	<p>How: Direct measurement: Data for this objective is gathered through the completion of a holistic assessment rubric. At the completion of a graduate student's thesis or comprehensive exam, his/her committee completes an assessment rubric (scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being exceptional, 4 being above average, 3 being satisfactory, 2 being below average, and 1 being failure), which specifically addresses this objective.</p> <p>When: Assessment rubrics are completed throughout the year, upon the completion of a thesis or comprehensive exam.</p> <p>Who: Members of each student's graduate committee are responsible for completing the assessment rubrics. The Department's Graduate Coordinator collates the data.</p>	Members of the student's graduate committee should express at least satisfactory evaluations (a grade of 3 or higher) for this objective for a majority of students assessed.	<p>27 individual assessment rubrics were completed. 26 rubrics were graded as a 3 or better, which indicates that the vast majority of our students performed at least satisfactory or better. We again were pleased to see that 7 students earned the grade of "5." 12 students earned the grade of "4". 7 students earned the grade of "3," and only 1 student scored the grade of "2."</p> <p>These findings suggest that among the overwhelming majority of our students assessed, our program is succeeding in training our students to have appropriate levels of knowledge in their major and minor concentrations, or in their area of thesis research.</p>	The results of the direct measurements have been shared with the Department Chairman, and will be shared with the Department's Graduate Committee for their evaluation. Given our positive data for this learning objective, no program revisions have been recommended.
3. The student will develop the ability to apply appropriate social science research methods.	<p>How: Direct measurement: Data for this objective is gathered through the completion of a holistic assessment rubric. At the completion of a graduate student's thesis or comprehensive exam, his/her committee completes an assessment rubric (scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being exceptional, 4 being above average, 3 being satisfactory, 2 being below average, and 1 being failure), which specifically addresses this</p>	<p>Members of the student's graduate committee should express at least satisfactory evaluations (a grade of 3 or higher) for this objective for a majority of students assessed.</p> <p>Some evidence of student research conference participation, student publications, or student research awards should also exist.</p>	<p>27 individual assessment rubrics were completed. 26 rubrics were graded as a 3 or better, which indicates that the vast majority of our students performed at least satisfactory or better. We again were pleased to see that 6 students earned the grade of "5." 13 students earned the grade of "4". 7 students earned the grade of "3," and only 1 student scored the grade of "2."</p>	<p>The results of the direct measurements have been shared with the Department Chairman, and will be shared with the Department's Graduate Committee for their evaluation. Given our positive data for this learning objective, no program revisions have been recommended.</p> <p>Similar to our evaluation</p>

	<p>objective.</p> <p>When: Assessment rubrics are completed throughout the year, upon the completion of a thesis or comprehensive exam.</p> <p>Who: Members of each student's graduate committee are responsible for completing the assessment rubrics. The Department's Graduate Coordinator collates the data.</p>		<p>The findings suggest that our department is doing an exceptional job in training our students in appropriate social science research methods.</p> <p>Additional evidence that comports with the findings of our assessment rubrics is that two graduate students won Graduate Student Investigator Awards from the College of Sciences; one student earned an "Honorable Mention Award" from the Graduate School for his M.A. thesis this year; 6 students were notified that their encyclopedia essays (two of which were co-authored with a faculty member) were accepted for publication; one student was notified of a forthcoming book review publication; and two students had articles either published or accepted for publication with two faculty members.</p>	<p>last year, we are again pleased to see that our students' research is being recognized and awarded externally from the department. Such results are good indicators that are students are meeting high research standards in other forums outside of the department.</p>
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PART TWO

Describe what your program's assessment accomplishments since your last report was submitted. Discuss ways in which you have responded to the CASA Director's comments on last year's report or simply describe what assessment work was initiated, continued, or completed.

In general, we continued with the same approach that we used in last year's assessment, given our positive findings from last year. This year, per the CASA Director's recommendation, a more precise measurement of our students' scores on the assessment rubrics were reported, which provides additional evidence that our program is succeeding in our learning objectives. Per the CASA Director's recommendations, we also expanded upon and further evaluated this year's data on what our findings suggest about the degree of success of our program itself.

PART THREE

Summarize changes and improvements in **curriculum, instruction, and learning** that have resulted from the implementation of your assessment program. How have you used the data? What have you learned? In light of what you have learned through your assessment efforts this year and in past years, what are your plans for the future?

Given our positive assessment data, at this time, we are recommending no changes in our curriculum and instruction methods at this time. This assessment data, however, will be presented to the full PLS Department in the fall for their consideration, and will also be revisited by the PLS Graduate Curriculum and Assessment Committee for additional evaluation to determine if any changes or improvements are needed at this time.