

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

**Degree and
Program Name:**

Minor, 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. Students will demonstrate satisfactory analysis of politics, government, and public policy.</p>	<p>Student writing samples were evaluated from PLS minors enrolled in either PLS 2003 or upper division writing intensive courses, with an N of 5.</p> <p>Each writing sample is evaluated using a rubric designed by the Undergraduate Curriculum and Assessment Committee. The faculty teaching the courses completed the evaluations. The department assessment coordinator collected and analyzed the results.</p> <p>Three questions on the evaluation focus on learning objective #1:</p> <p>1. How well did the student develop his/her literature review, or use relevant documents and sources in</p>	<p>For the writing sample analysis, students should understand how to use scholarly literature, documents, and other sources to conduct Political Science research. In addition, students should be able to support their conclusions and findings, using appropriate analytical techniques or sources. Finally, students should portray satisfactory knowledge of their subject area through their writing sample.</p> <p>Given that minors have less PLS methods training than majors, we have slightly lower expectations for the writing sample analysis. At least 80% of students should be evaluated at a score of 3 or higher.</p>	<p>1. 80 percent of students were evaluated at a level of 3 or higher for their development of a literature review or use of documents & sources.</p> <p>2. 80 percent were evaluated at a level of 3 or higher for supporting their findings & conclusions.</p> <p>3. 100 percent were evaluated at a level of 3 or higher for demonstrating knowledge of their subject area.</p>	<p>The Assessment Coordinator, working with the Undergraduate Curriculum & Assessment Committee, is responsible for analyzing this learning objective.</p> <p>The results are shared with and discussed by department faculty, as well as the student representative to the Dean’s advisory board.</p>

	<p>his/her writing sample? 2. How well did the student support his/her findings & conclusions? 3. How would you rate the student's knowledge of the subject area, based on this writing sample?</p> <p>For each questions, faculty ranked students on a scale from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), or NA (not applicable).</p>			
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply critical thinking and writing skills.	<p>The same writing sample analysis described above was used for this learning objective.</p> <p>Five questions on the evaluation focus on learning objective #2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How well developed was the student's research question, hypothesis, or focus of their writing sample? 2. How well written was the student's writing sample? 3. How well-researched was the student's writing sample? 4. How well did the student apply a consistent, appropriate citation method in the writing sample? 5. How well did the student demonstrate critical thinking and writing skills in the writing sample? <p>For each questions, faculty ranked students on a scale from 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), or NA (not applicable).</p>	<p>To demonstrate satisfactory critical thinking and writing skills, students should be able to develop an appropriate research question/hypothesis, or focus for their writing. They should be able to write well, and conduct satisfactory research. Part of writing well includes their ability to cite sources appropriately. Finally, faculty were asked to directly evaluate student's critical thinking and writing skills.</p> <p>Given that minors have less Political Science methods training than majors, we have slightly lower expectations for the writing samples. At least 80% of students should be evaluated at a score of 3 or higher.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 80% were evaluated at a 3 or higher for their ability to develop a research question/hypothesis/appropriate focus. 2. 100% were evaluated at a 3 or higher for how well written their sample was. 3. 100% were evaluated at a 3 or higher for how well-researched their work was. 4. 100% were evaluated at a 3 or higher for their citation method. 5. 100% were evaluated at a 3 or higher for demonstrating critical thinking and writing skills. 	<p>The Assessment Coordinator, working with the Undergraduate Curriculum & Assessment Committee, is responsible for analyzing this learning objective.</p> <p>The results are shared with and discussed by department faculty, as well as the student representative to the Dean's advisory board.</p>
3.				

(Continue objectives as needed. Cells will expand to accommodate your text.)

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.

Unlike our major assessment, our assessment of the minor is limited due to the sample size. This year faculty made a concerted effort to identify minors—even asking them in class, but we still ended up with a very small, unreliable sample. Happily, we met our goals, but they certainly cannot indicate a full assessment of the minor program. Also, it must be noted that the PLS Minor Assessment report does not address the third assessment goal for the PLS Major: “Students will demonstrate the ability to apply skills and knowledge in practical educational settings”. There are two fundamental reasons for this. First, the focus of the minor is the development of knowledge-based analytical skills, critical thinking and writing skills in the context of a limited core of traditional courses at both the lower- and upper-division levels (i.e., the 18 credit hours required for the minor). While minors may on occasion participate in internships and simulations—the way that the department defines “practical educational settings”—this is not seen as a central part of the PLS Minor education process. Second, the limited and variable number of minors participating in internships and simulations will not contribute to meaningful assessment results.

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?

While the minor assessment is not valid or reliable, when combined with the major assessment, it can contribute to an overall perception of student learning. As a result, we will continue this method of assessment next year, with hopes of attaining a larger sample.