



**Department of Political Science
Assessment Plan, 2010-11**

Department Mission

The Department of Political Science is located in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Dayton. The department's vision and mission statements (below) reflect the University's *Vision for Excellence*, *Strategic Plan*, and *Habits of Inquiry and Reflection*. Those statements make clear the department's commitment to scholarship, critically evaluating the contemporary world, especially in relationship to politics and public life, and producing graduates who share that commitment and possess the requisite knowledge, capabilities, and habits to do so in a manner consistent with a strong university education in the Catholic-Marianist tradition.

Department Vision Statement

To be a highly supportive, dynamic and productive academic department of teacher-scholars dedicated to the formation of intellectually deep, civically engaged, globally aware, and ethically minded students who accept in the Catholic and Marianist spirit the challenge to be distinctive, thoughtful, skilled, and service-oriented critics of society and agents of change as they faithfully pursue justice and peace in their individual lives, communities, and the world.

Department Mission Statement

As a vibrant academic department in the College of Arts and Sciences grounded in the Catholic and Marianist character of the University of Dayton, we actively serve our various and multiple communities. We produce high quality scholarship within the broad contours of our discipline. We provide an academically rigorous, critical, intellectually diverse, and praxis-oriented set of educational degree programs in political science, human rights studies, and public administration intended to properly educate and equip our students for life-long learning, faithful citizenship and positions of conscientious leadership and service to their professions, community, and the world.

Learning Outcomes to be Assessed

The department proposes to assess the following learning outcomes: Scholarship and Critical Evaluation of our Times.

Learning Outcome #1 Scholarship: All undergraduates will develop and demonstrate advanced habits of academic inquiry and creativity through the production of a body of artistic, scholarly or community-based work intended for public presentation and defense.

Learning Outcome #6 Critical Evaluation of our Times: Through multidisciplinary study, all undergraduates will develop and demonstrate habits of inquiry and reflection informed by familiarity with Catholic Social Teaching, that equip them to evaluate critically and imaginatively the ethical, historical, social, political, technological, economic, and ecological challenges of their times.

Assessment Schedule and Responsibilities

This fall, the department will form a new Assessment Committee responsible for implementing, in close collaboration with the Chair, the department's assessment plan.

The department will assess each learning outcome in alternating years by utilizing direct and indirect measures. Thus, Learning Outcome #6 will be assessed in the 2010-11 academic year and Learning Outcome #1 will be assessed in the 2011-12 academic year.

In the fall semesters, the Assessment Committee will collect data that directly measure the learning outcome. These data will be secured by reviewing a random sample of exam essays, term papers or presentations from POL 207 Political Analysis, a required course for all majors, and two upper-level Political Science courses. The Committee will develop and utilize a rubric to evaluate how and to what extent the students' work reflects the learning outcome. The Committee will determine the appropriate sample sizes that ensure reliable and useful assessments, and will construct methods for securing copies of the work that preserve student anonymity.

In the spring semesters, the Assessment Committee will administer a written survey to all graduating seniors—typically in May, just before graduation—that measures the learning outcome. This survey, an indirect measure, will be paired with the direct measure described above. The Committee is responsible for submitting an assessment report to the Chair by the end of May. The results from the annual assessment will be used primarily for the evaluation, enhancement, and revision of curriculum and pedagogical approaches within the department.

It should be noted that this plan augments the department's extant plan in important ways. It creates a new Assessment Committee. It adds a second learning outcome—Scholarship—to the assessment plan. This addition requires the Chair and Committee this fall to articulate the goals, measures, and questions specific to assessing this new learning outcome. Finally, it adds a direct measure of student learning to the indirect measures that the department has employed in recent years.