

## 2014-2015 Instructional Program Review

Program Name: **Political Science**

Program Contact: **Miller, Lee Ryan**

Academic Year: **2014-2015**

Status: **Submitted for review**

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### 1. Description of Program

Provide a brief description of the program and how it supports the college's **College Mission and Diversity Statements, Institutional Priorities, 2013/14-2015/16, 5 in 5 College Strategies, Spring 2011**, and other **Institutional Program Planning** as appropriate.

The political science program offers a variety of courses, which are taken primarily by students who are transferring and/or seeking an AA/AS degree. Consistent with the CSM Mission Statement, the program "provides an exceptional educational opportunity to residents of San Mateo County and the Greater Bay Area Region." Political science is a student-centered program that, consistent with the CSM Mission Statement, "serves the diverse educational, economic, social, and cultural needs of its students and the community" and "fosters a culture of excellence and success that engages and challenges students" with the goal of preparing students "to be informed and engaged citizens in an increasingly global community." The political science program actively collaborates with the Learning Center's peer tutoring program, with the aim of enhancing student success. The political science program supports the values described in the CSM Diversity Statement, "a dynamic learning ... environment that encourages multiple perspectives and the free exchange of ideas." The political science program curriculum is designed around these values, and teaches students about the "the principle of equal opportunity for all without regard to gender, color, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, economic background, sexual orientation, and physical, learning, and psychological differences," as articulated in the CSM Diversity Statement. The 2014-2015 CSM course catalogue lists seven courses offered by the program. Five of those seven courses have been offered during the past three years. Program SLOs are aligned with GE SLOs. Course SLOs for three of the seven courses are aligned with program SLOs. Course outline updates for an additional two courses, aligning course SLOs with program SLOs, have been awaiting dean's approval since 11/4/2013.

### 2. Student Learning and Program Data

#### A. Discuss Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

1. Reflect on recent SLO assessment results for courses offered by the program. Identify trends and discuss areas in need of improvement.

SLOs have been assessed for 4 of the 7 courses offered by the department. The 4 courses assessed are the courses taught by the one full-time faculty member in the department. The lack of assessment of the other courses reflects difficulty in gaining the cooperation of part-time faculty in SLO assessment.

Success rates are as follows:

PLSC 100

- SLO 1 93%
- SLO 2 90%
- SLO 3 90%
- SLO 4 86%
- SLO 5 90%
- SLO 6 90%

- SLO 7 89%

PLSC 110

- SLO 1 93%
- SLO 2 90%
- SLO 3 93%

PLSC 210

- SLO 1 62%
- SLO 2 59%
- SLO 3 59%
- SLO 4 62%
- SLO 5 62%

PLSC 215

- SLO 1 100%
- SLO 2 88%
- SLO 3 85%
- SLO 4 92%

Success rates in 3 of the 4 courses met the criteria and no action is warranted. Success rates for PLSC 210 failed to meet the criteria. Changes were made to the curriculum, incorporating online quizzes and online discussion forums that help the students to prepare for the final exam. The expectation is that the student success rates should climb as a result of these changes. The next assessment of PLSC 210 is scheduled to occur based on data from the spring 2015 semester. In addition, the program is working with the Learning Center to provide Supplemental Instruction, starting in fall 2015.

2. Comment on the success rates in the program SLOs that are aligned with specific course SLOs. What do the program SLO and course data reveal about students completing the program? Identify trends and discuss areas in need of improvement. Is the alignment between course and program SLOs appropriate and informative? See **course-to-program SLO alignment mapping**.

Success rates in program SLOs that are aligned with specific course SLOs are congruent with success rates in program SLOs that are not aligned with specific course SLOs.

3. Evaluate the program SLOs in relation to survey data from the degree and certificate award earners survey. What does the survey data reveal about the effectiveness of the program SLOs? Identify trends and discuss areas in need of improvement.

No survey data available for comparison.

4. Describe any additional methods used to assess program SLOs and reflect on the results of those assessments.

There has been no assessment of program SLOs.

5. For any courses in the program that satisfy a GE requirement, which GE SLOs are supported or reinforced by the course SLOs? What do assessment results for the course SLOs reveal about student attainment of the GE SLOs? See **GE SLO Alignment Summary Report** or **All Courses GE SLO Alignment Data**.

Program is the process of revising course SLOs to align with program SLOs. Course SLOs for three of the seven courses offered by the program are now aligned with program SLOs. Course outline updates for an additional two courses, aligning course SLOs with program SLOs, have been awaiting dean's approval since 11/4/2013. SLOs were assessed for PLSC 110 in August 2014. Success rate was in the range of 88-93% for all course SLOs (all 4 of which are aligned with program SLOs).

## B. Student Success Indicators

1. Review **Student Success and Core Program Indicators** and discuss any differences in student success indicators across demographic variables. Also refer to the **College Index** and other relevant sections of the **Educational Master Plan: Update, 2012**, e.g., Student Outcomes and Student Outcomes: Transfer. Basic Skills programs should also refer to **ARCC** data.

The overall student success rate has continue to climb: from 54.9% in 2010-11 to 68% in 2013-2014. Success rates increased dramatically for Blacks, from 43.9% in 2012-2013, to 74.32% in 2013-2014. As a result, Black success rate is now comparable to that of whites for the first time. White success rate increased from 64.2% in 2012-2013 to 76.6% in 2013-2014. Unfortunately, Filipino, Hispanic and Pacific Islander success rates have continued to lag, all falling into the 51% to 57% range in 2013-2014. Asians continues to out-perform all other demographic groups, with a 79.4% success rate. (Native Americans have a 100% success rate, but with a sample size of 1-2, the results are not robust.)

It is unclear why Black success rates have climbed so dramatically. Hopefully, the college can research this question with the aim of replicating these results for Filipinos, Hispanics and Pacific Islanders.

Male and female success rates continue to climb in synch; they are within 1.6 percentage points of one another.

2. Discuss any differences in student success indicators across modes of delivery (on-campus versus distance education). Refer to **Delivery Mode Course Comparison**.

PLSC 200 and 310 have not been offered in distance education format for several years. Success rates for PLSC distance education classes continue to climb from 25.9% in fall 2011 to 46.4% in fall 2013. The fall 2013 success rate for PLSC 210 distance education classes now exceeds that of traditional PLSC 210 classes in fall 2013. However, the success rate for traditional classes has also continued to climb- to 67% in 2012. This means that success rates for distance education PLSC 210 classes continue to lag behind those of traditional PLSC 210 classes.

Overall, it must be noted that statistical results from a single section of 27-39 distance education students must be viewed with some skepticism.

However, there are a number of possible explanations for the gap in success rates between traditional and distance education students:

- (a) Selection bias (students choosing distance education over traditional classes under the mistaken belief that it will be easier).
- (b) Inherent challenges associated with distance education. (Success in distance education may require students to be more self-motivated than traditional courses.)
- (c) Instructors are more skilled at teaching traditional than distance education classes.

The one adjunct faculty member who has taught distance education classes in recent years, plus the one full-time faculty member in the department, both received STOT training in fall 2014. Hopefully, this training will contribute to closing the student success gap between PLSC 210 traditional and distance education classes.

C. Program Efficiency Indicators. Do we deliver programs efficiently given our resources?

Summarize trends in program efficiency as indicated in the **Student Success and Core Program Indicators** (LOAD, Full-time and Part-time FTEF, etc.)

LOAD increased 466.7 in 2011-12 to 579.8 in 2013-14. This was primarily due to a drop in total FTEF from 6.7 to 5, as a result of the retirement of 1 of the 2 full-time faculty members. Adjunct FTEF has remained relatively stable. Overall, the number of sections offered has been reduced, and the average enrollment has increased.

### 3. Additional Factors

Discuss additional factors as applicable that impact the program, including changes in student populations, state-wide initiatives, transfer requirements, advisory committee recommendations, legal mandates, workforce development and employment opportunities, community needs. See **Institutional Research** as needed.

Although Cañada College offers two different political science majors for an AA degree, College of San Mateo offers no political science majors, either for a traditional AA degree, or for an AA-T transfer degree.

The CSM political science program's application for an AA-T degree was rejected by the state because two courses, PLSC 200 and PLSC 210, were deemed to be too similar to one another. The program responded by submitting to the Committee on Instruction course outline updates for both courses, modeled on the course outlines for the same courses offered at Skyline College. The Committee on Instruction has taken no action on these proposals. For the past 18 months, since 10/3/2013, the proposals have been awaiting approval. The reason for this delay remains a mystery, because all questions regarding the program's COI submissions were answered in writing 17 months ago.

There are additional challenges faced by the program. The number of sections of political science courses scheduled has declined from 38 sections (16 fall, 17 spring, 5 summer) in 2011-12 to 30 (13 fall, 13 spring, 4 summer) in 2013-2014 to 26 (11 fall, 11 spring, 4 summer) in 2014-15. Moreover, sections are frequently cancelled due to low enrollment, when electives and core courses are scheduled in the same time-slot. Each semester, program faculty have requested that course scheduling be modified to avoid such conflicts. Program faculty hope that these requests will eventually be heeded. Student enrollment in the program has remained fairly constant, but the number of sections offered by the program, and the number of faculty teaching those sections, has declined steadily. As a result, class sizes have been grown substantially, and faculty workload has as well. This trend threatens the ability of faculty to adequately serve student populations.

In January 2014, part of the core mission of the program was threatened by a letter from the District threatening disciplinary action against program faculty for student assignments associated with political participation and civic engagement. The District's position is puzzling because such assignments are encouraged by the American Political Science Association and are consistent with The Democracy Commitment signed by Chancellor Galatolo. Program faculty are eager to receive District support forencouraging student political participation and civic engagement.

## 4. Planning

### A. Results of Program Plans and Actions

Describe results, including measurable outcomes, from plans and actions in recent program reviews.

#### **AA-T DEGREE**

The 2012 program review indicated plans to establish an AA-T degree in political science. This goal has not been accomplished. The first step toward accomplishing this goal was achieved with COI approval of the proposal in fall 2012. Unfortunately, the proposal was rejected by the state in spring 2013. The response from the state indicated that two courses, PLSC 200 and PLSC 210, were too similar. In response, the political science program drafted new course outlines for these two courses, modeled after the same courses at Skyline College. These course outline revisions were submitted to COI on 10/3/2013. Six months have passed since that submission, but COI has not yet placed the items on its agenda. This is because COI is still awaiting approval of the division dean. The reasons for this 18-month delay remain unclear. All questions from the division dean were answered in writing some 17 months ago.

#### **ARTICULATION**

In the 2012-2013 academic year, the political science program began the process of articulation of all of its courses with 13 comparable courses at our 6 primary transfer institutions: San Francisco State, San Jose State, CSU East Bay, Sonoma State, UC Berkeley, UC Santa Cruz, and UC Davis. This goal has been accomplished.

#### **SLO ASSESSMENT**

The 2014 program review listed the goal of assessing the SLOs for one course via WebAccess each year. This continuing goal has been accomplished; PLSC 100 was assessed in spring 2014 and PLSC 110 in fall 2014. The implementation automated SLO assessment via WebAccess, starting in spring 2015, should facilitate SLO assessment.

#### **STOT TRAINING**

The 2014 program review lists STOT training for faculty as a goal. Student success rates in political science distance education courses remain considerably lower than in traditional courses. It is hoped that STOT training for program faculty will support student success by improving the distance education instructional skills of faculty. In fall 2014, two faculty members received STOT I training. It is hoped that this training, plus additional STOT II during spring 2015, will result in higher student success rates in distance education courses.

#### **IMPROVE PLSC 210 STUDENT PERFORMANCE ON SLOs**

The 2015 program review listed a goal of improving PLSC 210 student performance on SLOs. Less than 2/3 of students in PLSC 210 accomplished student learning outcomes, according to the most recent assessment. Program faculty implemented online quizzes and discussion forums in WebAccess as a final exam study aid to improve student performance on SLOs. A new assessment of PLSC 210 SLOs is scheduled for spring 2014, and it is hoped that at least 75% of students will accomplish student learning outcomes. In addition, the program is working with the Learning Center to provide Supplemental Instruction for PLSC 210, starting in fall 2015.

#### IMPROVE AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENT SUCCESS RATES

Success rates in political science courses for African American students have traditionally lagged behind those of students from other demographic groups. This is no longer the case. Success rates increased dramatically for Blacks, from 43.9% in 2012-2013, to 74.32% in 2013-2014. As a result, Black success rate in the political science program is now comparable to that of whites.

#### B. Program Vision

What is the program's *vision* for sustaining and improving student learning and success over the next three years? Make connections to the **College Mission and Diversity Statements, Institutional Priorities, 2013/14-2015/16**, and other **Institutional Program Planning** as appropriate. Address discussion in the Student Learning and Program Data section: SLO assessment results and trends in student success indicators.

**[Note:** Specific plans to be implemented in the next year should be entered in C of the Planning section.

CTE programs must address changes in the context of completion and employment rates, anticipated labor demand, and any overlap with similar programs in the area as noted in D1 and D2 of the Career Technical Education section.]

The political science program is committed to improving student success (Institutional Priority #1), promoting academic excellence (Institutional Priority #2), and being a relevant, high-quality program (Institutional Priority #3). The curriculum in all political science courses emphasizes the values stated in the Diversity Statement: "a policy of inclusiveness that recognizes, values and reflects the diversity of the community we serve." Political Science strives to "foster a dynamic learning and working environment that encourages multiple perspectives and the free exchange of ideas. We abide by the principle of equal opportunity for all without regard to gender, color, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, age, economic background, sexual orientation, and physical, learning, and psychological differences." These are core values in the instruction provided by the Department of Political Science. We will continue to follow these goals and promote these values over the next 3 years.

1. To guide future faculty and staff development initiatives, describe the professional activities that would be most effective in carrying out the program's vision to improve student learning and success.

Distance education students are currently under-served by the program. Distance education enrollment increased by 39% from fall 2012 to fall 2013. However, after the program lost to retirement one of its two distance education faculty (a full-time faculty member), the distance education course offerings were reduced to one course per semester. The program's sole (part-time) faculty member teaching distance education courses received STOT training in fall 2014. The program's sole remaining full-time faculty member also received STOT training in fall 2014, but has yet to be assigned any distance education courses. Program faculty have applied for additional STOT II training in spring 2015. It is hoped that the STOT training received by program faculty will improve student success in distance education courses and enable the program to offer more than one section of distance education courses per semester.

2. To guide future collaboration across student services, learning support centers, and instructional programs, describe the interactions that would help the program to improve student success.

The political science program actively collaborates with the Learning Center. A political science student, upon the recommendation of political science program faculty, was hired as a peer tutor, a peer mentor, and a social science writing tutor. In fall 2015, the program will begin offering Supplemental Instruction. The program will continue to support the efforts of the Learning Center to improve student success.

Program faculty have participated in the Honors Project, supervising student research, in an effort to improve student success.

A program faculty member has volunteered with Project Change, which mentors formerly incarcerated youths in order to improve student success.

3. To guide the **Institutional Planning Budget Committee (IPBC)** in long-range planning, identify any major changes in resource needs anticipated during the next three years. Examples: faculty retirements, equipment obsolescence, space allocation.

See the Resource Requests section below to enter itemized resource requests for next year.  
Leave sections blank if no major changes are anticipated.

Faculty

Load has increased 24% from 2011-12 to 2013-14 due to the retirement of 1 of the 2 full-time faculty members in the program. A second full-time faculty member needs to be hired.

Equipment and Technology

Laptop computers used by program faculty are more than 4 years old. They need to be replaced.

Instructional Materials

Classified Staff

Facilities

C. Program Plans and Actions to Improve Student Success

Prioritize the plans to be carried out next year to sustain and improve student success. Briefly describe each plan and how it supports the **Institutional Priorities, 2013/14-2015/16**. For each plan, list actions and measurable outcomes. (Plans may extend beyond a single year.)

**1. SLO ASSESSMENT**

Assessment of student learning outcomes will support student success because it will enable to program to evaluate the degree to which student learning outcomes are being met, and to determine whether changes to instruction are warranted to improve student performance on SLOs. The new version of WebAccess has the potential to facilitate the assessment of SLOs by automating the process, via online quizzes. The first goal is to assess at least one course per year and to record the results in the TrakDat database. The second goal is to evaluate the results to determine whether changes to instruction are warranted in order to improve student performance on SLOs. The third goal is to develop a plan of action to improve student performance on SLOs, if warranted.

**2. STOT TRAINING**

Student success rates in political science distance education courses are considerably lower than in traditional courses. It is hoped that STOT training for program faculty will support student success by improving the distance education instructional skills of faculty. The primary goal is for at least two faculty members to be certified in STOT I and STOT II during the 2014-15 academic year.

**3. IMPROVE PLSC 210 STUDENT PERFORMANCE ON SLOs**

Less than 2/3 of students in PLSC 210 accomplished student learning outcomes, according to the most recent assessment. Program faculty

implemented online quizzes and discussion forums in WebAccess as a final exam study aid to improve student performance on SLOs. A new assessment of PLSC 210 SLOs is scheduled for spring 2014. The goal is to improve student performance on SLOs. The measurable outcome will be 3/4 of students accomplishing student learning outcomes. In addition, the program is working with the Learning Center to provide Supplemental Instruction for PLSC 210, starting in fall 2015.

**4. IMPROVE HISPANIC, PACIFIC ISLANDER AND FILIPINO STUDENT SUCCESS RATES**

Success rates in political science courses for Hispanic, Pacific Islander and Filipino students have lagged behind those of students from other demographic groups. The program has achieved success at raising student success rates of African American students to those of white students. The goal is to improve success rates of Hispanic, Pacific Islander and Filipino political science students as well. Measurable outcomes will be established in a subsequent program review, after further analysis of why student success rates for African American students have risen.

**5. Resource Requests**

Itemized Resource Requests

List the resources needed for ongoing program operation.

Faculty

**NOTE:** To make a faculty position request, complete **Full-time Faculty Position Request Form** and notify your Dean. This request is separate from the program review.

Full-time faculty requests	Number of positions
Specialties in American Politics plus Methodology or Political Theory	1

Equipment and Technology

Description	Cost
4 New laptop computers for program faculty, 15-inch, 16 GB	\$2400 each


Instructional Material

Description	Cost

Classified Staff

Description	Cost

Facilities



For immediate or routine facilities requests, submit a CSM Facility Project Request Form.

Description	Cost

**6. Program Maintenance**

A. Course Outline Updates

Review the **course outline update record**. List the courses that will be updated in the next academic year. For each course that will be updated, provide a faculty contact and the planned submission month. See the **Committee on Instruction website for course submission instructions**. Contact your division's **COI representatives** if you have questions about submission deadlines. **Career and Technical Education courses must be updated every two years.**

Courses to be updated	Faculty contact	Submission month
PLSC 200	Lee Miller	(submitted 10/13 but no action taken by COI)
PLSC 210	Lee Miller	(submitted 10/13 but no action taken by COI)
PLSC 100	Lee Miller	10/2015
PLSC 150	Lee Miller	10/2015
PLSC 310	Lee Miller	10/2015

B. Website Review

Review the program's website(s) annually and update as needed.

Faculty contact(s)	Date of next review/update
Lee Miller	3/2016

C. SLO Assessment Contacts

Faculty contact(s)	Date of next review/update
Lee Miller	5/2015