

Instructional Program Review Report

Sierra College, 2017-18

Department/Program Name: Political Science

Date Submitted: 3/2/2018

Submitted By: Winsome Jackson

Ideally, the writing of a Program Review Report should be a collaborative process of full-time and part time faculty as well as the appropriate educational administrator, instructional assistants, classified staff members and students who have an interest in the present and future vision of the program at all sites throughout the district. The Program Review Committee needs as much information as possible to evaluate the past and current performance, assessment, and planning of your program.

Please attach your Department Statistics Report (DSR) and your ePAR Report when sending in your Program Review.

1) Relevancy: This section assesses the program's significance to its students, the college, and the community.

1a) To provide context for the information that follows, describe the basic functions of your program.

Political Science is a disciplined study and analysis of power, politics, and government. The curriculum focus on political authority and the making of policy and rules in addition to how diverse ideas and interests produce political behavior such as cooperation and conflict. Understanding and explaining political problems permits students to critically consider solutions.

The department offers a major in Political Science (AA-T Degree), which prepares students for transfer into upper division courses within the California State University system. Additionally, most students receive credit fulfilling GE requirements to a plethora of higher learning institutions.

Four-year graduates in Political Science are qualified for staff and management positions in local, state and federal government as well as business and industry. Many work as lobbyists, journalists and in public relations. Being situated near the state capitol affords ample opportunity for internships, thereby positioning students for greater job prospects.

1b) How does your program support the district mission, as quoted below? Please include an analysis of how your program supports ISLOs (Institutional Student Learning Outcomes): Communication, Technology and Information Competency, Critical and Creative Thinking, and Citizenship?

“Sierra College provides an academic environment that is challenging and supportive for students of diverse backgrounds, needs, abilities, and goals with a focus on access, equity, student-centered learning, and achievement. The college is committed to practicing diversity and inclusion, and recognizes that a diverse and inclusive curriculum and workforce promotes its educational goals and values. Institutional learning outcomes guide the college’s programs and services, encouraging students to identify and expand their potential by developing knowledge, skills, and values to be fully engaged and contributing members of the global community. Sierra prepares students by offering Associate’s and transfer degrees, certificates, career and technical education, foundational skills, as well as lifelong learning and enrichment.”

Similar to the mission of the college, the Political Science department provides a challenging yet supportive learning environment for students with diverse interests, goals, abilities, and needs. Students who are majoring in Political Science can complete their lower division coursework (AA-T Degree), while other students have the ability to complete their general education requirements and enter the field of their choice. Additionally, many students simply take courses in Political Science for lifelong learning.

All courses are particularly helpful to students seeking careers in teaching, law, government, research, analysts, media, and positions requiring knowledge of the world beyond the U.S. borders. As a result, students are encouraged to seek applicable internships and the Political Science Club provides great skill building and leadership ability for students. Students are involved in campus activities that raise awareness and understanding of global and domestic issues. Students are able to participate in honors project to enhance their research, analytical, and presentation skills.

The course student learning outcomes (CSLOs) as well as the Program outcomes (PSLOs) are interconnected and linked to equity and diversity. Members of the department recognize the diversity of our students, which is why we have incorporated the following learning outcomes at the program and course level: 1. Analyze and explain the impact of diversity on government and politics. 2. Analyze the role of ideology, culture and diversity in shaping public opinion and public policy in the United States and California. 3. Define civil liberties and civil rights, identify their sources and outline how and why they have

changed over time. 4. Analyze the interactions of race, gender, class and legal status in women's everyday practices of citizenship. This is just a sampling of the outcomes across courses and the department.

1c) Program offerings align with which of the following mission categories (check all that apply):

X Transfer Career Technical Education
 Basic Skills X Personal Development/Enrichment X Lifelong Learning

1d) Please analyze your department's success in supporting the mission categories marked in 1c above. Please provide evidence in support of this analysis, including data from the dashboard relevant to this evaluation. If any of the following apply to your program, please address them in your analysis.

- Degrees, certificates, and/or licenses your department has generated:
 - The alignment of these awards with the district's mission and/or strategic goals. (See the district "Awards Data File, available from Research and Planning, for your numbers).
- Job placement or labor market information for your program's awards and licenses.
- The contribution your program makes to student transfer.
- Participation in basic skills programs.

Students who are interested in transferring to four-year institutions can complete a major in Political Science, which satisfies the needs of lower division course work for most four-year institutions. The most recent data shows that the department has had an uptick in the number of students completing the Political Science major for transfer, especially during the fall semester (94 in Fall 2014, 103 in Fall 2015 and 118 in Fall 2016). The department has also seen an increase during the spring semesters (93 in Spring 2015, 111 in Spring 2016, and 116 in Spring 2017).

All the course offerings for the major have been vetted and approved through the state CI-D process. Final curriculum updates/approval for "all" courses were approved in 2017. Students who have an interest in life long learning, especially in understanding how government affects their lives tend to sign up for political science 1 (American Government). The Program has seen a number of students registering for online political science classes such as (POLS 27) – Women and Politics in a Global Society and California Government (POLS 5). Most of these students are registering not only because of a major or general education requirement but because they have a genuine interest in learning about global politics and its impact on women as well as the current issues facing the state of California. These interests certainly fall in the category

of personal development/enrichment as well as lifelong learning. Similar interests manifest themselves in course offerings such as POLS 12 (Terrorism) and POLS 9 (Politics of the Middle East), which address issues of national interests. Additional courses in the department include: POLS 2 (Comparative Government), POLS 3 (International Relations), POLS 4 (Russian and East European Political Systems), POLS 8 (American Foreign Policy), POLS 16 (Introduction to Political Theory), POLS 17 (Research Methods) and opportunities for independent work. Hence, the program offers a variety of courses to educate, empower and prepare citizens to navigate the interconnected and interrelated global world.

- 1e) Optional Additional Data: Comment on any other relevant contributions of your program to the district mission, goals, outcomes, and values not incorporated in the answers above. Examples include but are not limited to contributions to student equity and success, diversity, campus climate, cultural enrichment, community ties, partnerships and service, etc. Include specific data and examples.

Members of the department have been and are intricately involved in equity related issues, improving campus climate, diversifying the staff, cultural enrichment events and community connections and partnerships.

The department members continue to analyze retention and success data with particular emphasis on finding solutions to improve the success rate for our equity population who show disparate impact. Some members of the department have participated in the CORA training to learn strategies to improve the success rate for African American male students. Two members of the department attended the Sierra College Equity Retreat to better understand how biases and lack of cultural understanding can affect not only how we interact with colleagues but also how these biases impact the learning outcomes of our students. Something as simple as changing the language in the syllabus can contribute to a more inclusive classroom. Also, avoiding language, that have a triggering impact on students and colleagues was an important outcome of the retreat.

Professor Winsome Jackson is intricately involved in the Equity work at Sierra College – from serving on the hiring committee to select the first Dean of Student Equity to the most recent selection committee that culminated in the hire of a brand new Director of EEO, Diversity and Title IX (something that

she has championed for the past five years). Professor Jackson is a member of the Academic Senate, which examines “all” aspects of the college.

Additionally, as a member of the EEO Advisory Committee, and Chair of the New Legacy Committee, she is intricately involved in all aspects of equity (diversity, campus climate, values, cultural enrichment, community ties, partnerships and service) that touches both students and staff. Examples include involvement and promoting events such as African American History and Culture month, La Semana Latina, Cesar Chavez Speaker Series, Indigenous Peoples Days, DACA workshops and passing resolution, involvement in the Student Engagement Centers as well as equity training workshops.

Last but certainly not least – the New Legacy Committee’s mission is to create strategies, which contribute to the success of historically underrepresented students (primarily African American, Latino/a and Native American students). Therefore, the work of the committee is directly linked to the college’s mission.

2) Currency: This category assesses the currency of program curricula as dictated by Title 5 and the currency of efforts in meeting accreditation standards as well as improving pedagogy and engaging in professional development.

2a) Curriculum: Comment on the currency of your program’s curricula, including discussion of any recent or projected changes. Please describe your process for evaluating and revising curriculum, including the use of SLOs.

Please describe and analyze any effects of R4S and other developments in curriculum and program planning.

The curriculum is 100% current and has been updated to include statewide descriptors. All courses in the Political Science major has been reviewed, updated and approved, thus meeting the state CI-D requirements for AA-T Degree Transfer as well as the college’s curriculum process. The department has added a number of courses since the last Program Review to accommodate the needs of students (Research Methods - POLS 17); California Government (POLS 5); and a one-unit summer course, which fulfills the CA Institution requirement. In terms of R4S, the department participated in the activities to streamline general education requirements, incorporate elective courses with an eye towards equity and diversity, and apply the less is more approach (what specific skills are desirable). Additionally, the department synced the course

offerings so students have the opportunity to complete the major requirements and general education requirements in a shorter period of time (three years or less).

- 2b) Student Learning Outcomes Assessment: Analyze your program's assessment of course outcomes, analysis of results, and improvements/changes made to the program as a result of this assessment. Please provide specific data and analysis in the space provided.

In the space below, please describe or attach the cycle you have developed for outcomes assessment.

The department continues to review all courses and evaluate the relevancy of student learning outcomes (SLOs). For over nine (9) years the department has used a pre/post test to assess all sections of POLS0001 (American Government) survey course. The standardized survey is conducted in the fall and results are analyzed in the spring during the Planning and Assessment meeting to encourage maximum department participation. Results are tabulated and analyzed and necessary updates are made. The Research Office has been instrumental in assisting the department with the data analysis for the sixteen questions, which encapsulates the outcomes for the program. The survey questions were first revised in 2011 in light of issues raised in departmental meetings about prior results. For example, one question pretested too high while another had ambiguous wording. Because POLS0001 make up 3/4s of the sections, the department can readily assess learning for most of its students. The department has updated the survey questions three times in an attempt to improve student learning. Each student-learning outcome for POLS0001 is cross listed with the department's program outcomes as well as the survey questions that relate to each. Over the years, student scores range 15 – 25% higher on the posttest than the pretest, indicating successful learning. The Department's experience with this method of assessment for POLS0001 has been positive and was highlighted and featured in the Student Learning Committee's Update of October 19, 2011. The department continues to use this tool along with individual faculty assessments to improve teaching and learning for students enrolled in POLS0001 each fall, with the latest survey conducted in fall 2017 and analyzed in spring 2018. The latest results show continued improvement on most questions. However, the department has highlighted two specific areas to work on (ideas and processes). The department has also developed an assessment plan for the remaining courses. Here is a breakdown

(POLS002 – spring semesters; POLS003 – fall semester; POLS004 – fall semester every other year; POLS008 – spring semester every two years; POLS009 – fall semester every other year; POLS012 – twice every two years; POLS016 – every spring semester; POLS027 – every spring semester and the most recent courses (POLS0005 and POLS0017) will be assessed each spring, commencing spring 2018. Faculty members are required to submit at least two assessed SLOs based on the department assessment guidelines, which has been accomplished as indicated in the most current district POLS Program SLO Spreadsheet (Fall 2013 – Spring 2018).

2c) Professional development: Please describe how your department's individual and group activities and professional development efforts serve to improve teaching, learning and scholarship.

The Planning and Assessment meetings have provided a great opportunity for members of the department not only to analyze the program's effectiveness but also to share strategies to improve teaching and learning. In particular, during the spring 2018 department data analysis session, the department endorsed the following strategies with an emphasis on equity - 1. Focus on attendance and clear rosters prior to census. 2. Incorporate a syllabus quiz and a content assignment both on ground and online the first week. 3. Encourage and organize study groups during the first two weeks. 4. Incorporate an icebreaker activity and encourage a buddy system during week one. 5. Be flexible (encourage students to redo assignments – the ultimate objective is to get them to produce a good product). 6. Introduce tutors to students (they like hearing from their peers). 7. Give points for Writing Center drafts. 8. Give students an opportunity to take practice quizzes. 9. Provide some flexibility on quizzes and or exams (allow for progression). 10. Incorporate take-home assignments and online quizzes.

In addition to the specific strategies mentioned above, members in the department continue to have discussions around specific writing assignments and rubrics, questions that encourage student participation, web-enhanced/online instruction, multiple teaching modalities, supervising honors contracts/internships/independent studies as well as

encouraging campus wide student participation by offering “involved” points (aka extra credit). Studies show that 80 percent of learning takes place outside the classroom so this is of great benefit to both students and faculty.

The department embraced the following suggestions that were submitted by a faculty member who was unable to attend the meeting. These are suggestions that “all” faculty should embrace regardless of the discipline, which is why most of this information is in the “first” person.

1) Repetition and seeing/hearing concepts more than once are vital to student success. I try to incorporate what I believe are key concepts of the class into multiple class assignments, including reading quizzes, class participation work (small group work, free-writing, pair-and-share) and homework assignments, so they are seeing and learning these concepts more than once. For example, to better understand checks and balances, I quiz them on it, have a HW assignment about the pros/cons of checks and balances, draw a diagram on whiteboard illustrating checks and balances in a class lecture/discussion, and we have an in-class assignment where I ask them to pretend they are explaining checks and balances to someone who has no knowledge of this concept. In the end, the hope is that students work through any challenges or difficulties with course concepts before they are tested on it and, most importantly, before they finish my class

2) Provide multiple ways for students to reach out for help—and don’t wait for them to come to you. I have learned over the years, especially with holding office hours, that students won’t visit you unless they absolutely need to. Sometimes students don’t feel they have the confidence or are embarrassed to ask for help face-to-face. I try to provide students with multiple ways to get help. For example, this semester, I offer students e-office hours, on-ground office hours, Help Corner in Discussions, prompt email replies (within 24 hours, even on weekends). I also utilize Starfish or simply email students directly when I have a concern about their academic standing in my class/attendance.

Also, at the beginning of our coverage of a new chapter, I have students write down “Muddy (or most confusing) Questions” from reading and anonymously submit them before class. I will usually cover

those questions over one to two classes. I also anticipate that certain concepts—like Necessary and Proper Clause or Marbury v. Madison—are more difficult to grasp than others and so I tend to allot more time to cover them--and where students can practice their understanding of them-- in class.

3) Try to connect with your students as much as possible the first week of class. I believe students want to feel connected to you (and the course) and are deciding whether they want to stay on or move on (to another class). The first week, I share personal stories about myself—how I was once a community college student, how difficult it is raising two young children and balancing work, etc. I also provide introductory questions to course that are open-ended and intended to engage students in conversation about American government and politics no matter what political knowledge they have. I try to tie questions to things I believe most relate to their age group (18-24 year olds), though I realize I have older students too. For example, the first week of POLS 1 this semester, I asked my on-ground class how they believe the hashtag culture (#MeToo, #NotMyPresident, #NoBanNoWall, etc.) can influence our understanding of American government and politics.

Finally, members of the department attend conferences and workshops, read political journals, travel extensively, and participate in political symposiums to stay current. This information is shared at department meetings or through social connections.

2d) Optional Additional Data: Enter additional data here that you believe to be an indicator of your program's effectiveness and explain why.

3) Effectiveness: This section assesses the effectiveness of the program in light of traditional measurements.

3a) Retention and Success: Identify and explain the three-year trends in your program's data contained in the DSR and analyze any relevant information found in the data dashboard related to retention and success. Address separately the data for on ground and on-line course. Evaluate the significance of the trends, including any challenges experienced by the program and any relevant data/analysis from your course and program outcomes assessments. Please analyze any significant trends related to student equity and success. If you determine that you need to improve the program's performance, please describe how you plan to achieve this goal. Please include the results of your outcomes assessments, as appropriate.

Retention/Success: On-ground: The department retention for the Fall

2011 (80%); Spring 2012 (78%); Fall 2012 (82%); Spring 2013 (80%); Fall 2013 (78%); Spring 2014 (77%); Fall 2014 (78%); Spring 2015 (77%); Fall 2015 (80%); Spring 2016 (80%); Fall 2016 (82%); Spring 2017 (80%) which equates to an 80% average over the last three years. This is one percentage point increase over the previous years and the department is pleased to see this positive trend. In spite of this positive trend, the department continues to take steps to bring the department retention average on par with the district by continuing to mandate the use of the Writing Center and encouraging students to use tutors, who are paid by the district. The department continues to recruit tutors to assist students who are having difficulties in all course offerings. In addition to the pre and posttest in POLS0001, the department does periodic SLO assessments for all courses even if they are off cycle. Department members are hopeful that these strategies and the ones highlighted in section (2c) will yield even better results going forward for all students, especially our equity population.

The department would like to see greater retention and success rates for all our equity population. While the numbers are somewhat challenging (small sample size, Asians presented as a monolithic group, Filipino separated, etc., the conclusion is that students who have been historically underrepresented (with the exception of the small number of American Indian/Alaskan Native – 87% retention average over three years and 70% success) are not being retained and are also the least successful. Former Foster Youth and African Americans have the lowest retention and success rates, followed by Hispanic/Latino and Pacific Islander. White students are being retained at a higher percentage rate but they are also the majority of students enrolled in Political Science classes. Interestingly, male and female retention and success rates are relatively close (female and male retention at 80% and female and male success rate at 65 and 64% respectively). While the overall retention rate is troublesome, the more immediate concern for the department is the success rates for all students. The department will focus on the high impact strategies outlined above but has identified student's lack of responsibility to drop classes as a major factor for the low success rate. One instructor mentioned having several "F's" at the end of the semester because students stopped attending and neglected to drop the course. It is now incumbent on

faculty to drop students in order to have more accurate success data. The department also discussed the fact that numbers do not tell the full story about student success - external factors in students lives such as work, family commitments are variables that impact student success. Also, how do faculty account for students who simply disappear after the withdrawal deadline, neglect to take exams or turn in written assignments? The department has seen a trend with students who simply do not want to write – how is this addressed in the numbers? Some students remain in classes with the intention of earning an “F” to maintain full time status. More importantly, the department is committed to increasing the success rate by 5% over the next five (5) years. This is why the department will continue to utilize the strategies outlined above and continue to do its best to ensure that “all” students are successful. While this is a goal, faculty are mindful of the fact that 100% success rate would be a “red” flag around grade inflation.

Online retention and success is more erratic not only in the Political Science Department but across the district. The department has seen an average retention rate of 76% and success rate of 65% over the last three years. The department has also added a number of new online classes as well as new instructors over the past three years. Ironically, the department online success rate is identical to the on-ground success rate. However, the retention rate for the department on-ground classes are four (4) percentage points higher than online (80% and 76% respectively). While the department would like to see an increase in both the retention and success rates for online students, the faculty are pleased to see a positive trend in both retention and success online and would like to replicate the retention and success rate of Spring 2015 and Fall 2016 (80% retention and 75% success in Spring 2015 and 81% retention and 73% success in Fall 2016). The department would like to use these semesters as case studies – what are the variables that were at play? More research will be needed from the Research Office.

The department will be more proactive in dropping online students prior to census and the withdrawal date. Giving a substantive (content assignment) during the first week will also provide insights into the level of commitment from students and there understanding of the challenges that come with an online class. Many students prefer online classes because of the convenience

and thinking that they are “easy”. However, the majority of the students are simply not prepared for the online environment due to lack of time management and organizational skills. Additionally, faculty tends to add online students after the first week and the consensus is that this is a recipe for disaster. Faculty members recounted the number of times that they have added students after the first week and the results have not been positive. Department members will have to balance this against their retention and success rates. Like the on-ground environment, department members will continue to incorporate strategies to assist students but also to remove students who are not participating online. Strategies such as clearing rosters early, dropping students who miss a requisite number of discussion board assignments prior to the withdrawal date, providing greater instructor presence and feedback, incorporating the online Writing and Tutor Center, responding to students throughout the week (including weekends). The department also discussed opening the course early so students can get a head start and emailing add codes to students no later than the first day of the class, then hold the line on late adds. Finally, the department will continue to use these strategies and seek new ones in an effort to maintain and improve the retention and success rates for our online students.

3b) Enrollment Trends: Identify and explain the three-year enrollment trends in your program’s DSR data. In addition, analyze any relevant information found in the data dashboard related to these trends. Address separately the data for on ground and on-line, as well as the data at the various centers in which your program may operate. Evaluate the significance of the trends including any challenges experienced by the program. Please analyze any significant trends related to student equity and success. If you determine that you need to improve the program’s performance in any way, please describe how you plan to achieve this goal.

The department enrollment trends show a similar pattern as the district (high numbers in fall and lower numbers in the spring. Enrollment numbers has been decreasing over the last three years with the exception of fall 2016, where the department saw an increase over the fall 2014 semester (from 688 to 696). The department has also increased its online course offerings due to the district’s push to add online classes based on student demand. The downside to this is that most students are not prepared for the online environment, with the exception of the mature students. Students who are at four-year institutions or mature students who are taking courses for personal

enrichment tend to do better in the online environment. The department fill rate over the last three years is 82.2 percent compared to the district's 90.6 percent. The department has identified a number of potential reasons for this (increase courses online, increase courses to fulfill major requirements, decreasing enrollment across the district and the state, etc.) While the department would like to see 100 percent fill rate, the department is also aware of external factors beyond its control. The department will continue to alternate between course offerings in order to increase fill rate. For example, offering the core courses each semester (POLS001, POLS0002, POLS0003, POLS0016, POLS0027, POLS0017 and elective courses such as POLS0004, POLS0008, POLS0009, POLS0012 and POLS0005 once a year or every other year). Enrollment at the Truckee and NCC campuses continue to lag behind the Rocklin campus. The program is down to one section on the Truckee campus and continues to offer two on the NCC campus (a day and an evening section to meet the needs of the students in that area). Promoting lower enrolled classes is an ongoing strategy of the department and instructors are encouraged not to add too many students beyond capacity while other classes linger. Additionally, students seem to be choosing between a job and school and the upswing in the economy over the past two years could be another contributing factor to the department enrollment figures. Increasing enrollment is an ongoing interest of the department and is captured in the ePAR.

- 3c) Productivity: Comment on how the program contributes to overall district productivity. Evaluate the significance of the trends including any challenges experienced by the program. If you believe the statistical trends need improvement, and can be affected by your actions, If you determine that you need to improve the program's performance in any way, please describe how you plan to achieve this goal.

The last three-years efficiency (WSCH/FTEF) level of the department is above that of the districts (507.2 compared to the districts 449). With the exception of the spring semesters, which is a district trend, the department has seen a consistent increase in its efficiency rate during the fall semesters, with the only exception occurring in Fall, 2015). Otherwise, the numbers are as follows (Fall 2014 – 517, Fall 2016 – 524, Fall 2017 – 537).

3d) Analysis and Planning: Referring to your ePAR Report of Goals, Strategies, Actions, and outcomes assessment cycle and relevant assessments/evaluations, please describe your program's plans to maintain or increase its effectiveness and analyze and evaluate your efforts to achieve these goals. Please describe and analyze the impact of any R4S initiatives on your program and incorporate any relevant information in the data dashboard related to student success, equity, and other measures of success including any relevant information addressed in sections 2 and 3.

The department continues to focus on increasing student-learning outcomes (SLOs) and program outcomes through systematic and relevant assessments in all classes. Additionally, the department has been focused on increasing student success and retention and the (Spring 2018) data analysis sessions provided a more focused approach on using data to improve teaching and learning. The department has met the three-year cycle of assessing most of its student learning outcomes, which are linked to the program outcomes. All courses have been assessed, analyzed, and evaluated by the department. The department continues to discuss and analyze the data from the pre and posttest for POLS0001 and the individual instructor assessments for the remaining courses. Best practices and strategies for improvement discussions continue to take place during department meetings as well as the Planning and Assessment meetings. The incentives for including part-time faculty in these discussions are vital for student retention and success, particularly as it pertains to our equity population because part-time faculty teaches the majority of our courses.

The department will continue to evaluate the disparities in retention and success rates for our equity population and seek targeted training for department members. Department members are encouraged to take the CORA training, which provides effective strategies for teaching African American male students, flex training on creating equitable syllabi, attending diversity and training workshops, utilizing inclusive language in the classroom, incorporating culturally relevant materials in the curriculum, attending culturally relevant conferences and collaborating with faculty who may have more of an expertise in this area. These strategies are vital in combating unconscious biases in an interest to improve teaching and learning, which ultimately benefits students.

The district will need to provide professional development workshops geared

towards equity and teaching and learning. Part-time faculty will need to be incentivized to attend the workshops or online trainings. Full-time faculty will need to be accountable for attending workshops or trainings that heightens awareness of the diverse students that are served at the college.

3e) Optional Additional Data: Enter additional data here that you believe to be an indicator of your program's effectiveness and explain why.

4) Resources: This category assesses the adequacy of current resources available to the program and describes and justifies the resources required to achieve planning goals by relating program needs to the assessments above.

4a) Please describe the future direction and goals of your program for the next three years in terms of sustaining or improving program effectiveness, relevance, and currency; include any analysis of R4S initiatives in the development of these goals and plans. Please incorporate analysis of any relevant outcome or other data in this description, including any data from the dashboard.

The primary focus of the department is to increase student-learning outcomes (SLOs) through systematic and relevant assessments. Secondly, continued collaboration with the majority part-time faculty members to ensure consistency across the curriculum. Third, continue to share best practices in the discipline, particularly information gained from workshops, conferences and reading material. Fourth, continue to discuss assessment tools such as the pretest posttest used for all POLS0001 courses as well as individual instructor assessments for all courses in the department. Fifth, continue to work on strategies highlighted in this document to improve student success and retention. Tools discussed in department meetings include (greater utilization of both on ground and online Writing Center, targeting and recommending Political Science tutors to reach the greatest number of students in POLS001 as well as more advanced courses in the major such as POLS0002, POLS0003, POLS0016 and POLS0027, to name a few). Sixth, continue to upgrade technology in the department to deliver on demand information to our growing technologically savvy student population. Seventh, require all instructors who teach POLS0001 to complete an individual assessment separate from the pretest posttest that's administered collectively in order to move beyond a general conversation to a more focused individual conversation. The rationale here is that each instructor will see how she/he is doing relative

to the department (individual accountability is the goal). Eight, the department has eliminated hybrid courses as these courses were having a major impact on retention and success. The pretest posttest for POLS0001 has been effective because through statistical analysis, the department has been able to eliminate ambiguous questions in order to improve student learning outcomes as well as program outcomes. The student learning outcomes for POLS0001 is linked to the Program Outcomes, essentially enabling the department to assess the course at both the department and program level with one instrument.

4b) Equipment and Technology: Comment on the adequacy of the program's equipment and technology funding level for the District as well as for specific sites, including a projection of equipment and technology needs for the next three years. Please provide a justification for these needs, incorporating relevant assessments of the data above in this explanation.

It is important that the district continue to upgrade the computer in Weaver 206, which is a dedicated classroom for the Political Science department. All faculty use the technology in the classroom to teach and our students use it for assignments such as presentations. The members of the department have become quite dependent on technology in the classroom to enhance teaching and learning. Also, the institution has become much more reliant on the use of technology so the faculty cannot conduct business without the use of updated technology. Department meetings, planning and assessments, program reviews, demonstrating the use of online teaching, accessing the online tutor and writing centers, curriculum updates, are all done through the use of technology. Clearly we have become quite dependent on technology to deliver services to our students and function within the institution.

The two full-time faculty members' offices should also be updated with current software and operating system. The Macintosh computer in Weaver 225 should be reviewed and upgraded. It is not at optimal capacity. Finally, the department continue to ask for permanent anchoring of the flags in Weaver 206. This has been an ongoing challenge in the department. The flags continue to separate from the wall, which is not esthetically pleasing and makes it difficult to use as a teaching tool.

4c) Staffing: Comment on the adequacy of your program's faculty, classified, and student help staffing levels for the overall District as well as specific sites, including a projection of staffing needs for the next three years. Please provide a justification for these needs, incorporating relevant assessments of the data above in this explanation.

The department's growth and stability is inhibited by a lack of full-time

faculty. Having only two full-time faculty makes the department vulnerable such as temporary unavailability of one of the two through reassign time, sabbatical or illness. This is particularly of concern now that the department has established a major. Having to seek out part-time faculty to teach core major requirements is extremely challenging and does not provide stability for students who would like to complete their core requirements in a timely fashion. It's important to have faculty skilled in teaching courses such as comparative politics and international relations, political theory and methodologies, which part-time faculty typically do not have the minimum qualifications to teach or they are at capacity in their teaching load. Additionally, the department would like to devote more time to the Political Science Club, connecting students majoring in Political Science to members at the State Capitol, organizing trips to Washington D.C., supervising more honors contracts, internships and independent studies as well as getting students more involved in community service. Establishing a Module UN program is of vital interest to the department. However, the time and effort that's required is not feasible with only two full-time faculty. For these reasons, the department seeks an additional full-time member. This would also create a shift in our full-time part-time ratio.

4d) Facilities: Comment on the program's fill rate and the adequacy of the facilities for the District as well as specific sites, including a projection of facility needs for the next three years. Please provide a justification for these needs, incorporating relevant assessments of the data above in this explanation.

Weaver 206 is a dedicated classroom for the Political Science Department, which currently suits our needs. We currently offer two sections of POLS1 at the NCC campus and one section at Tahoe Truckee (the Truckee class continues to be problematic because the numbers are extremely low). Classroom assignments at the NCC and Tahoe Truckee sites are managed by the Educational Administrators and we have not encountered any problems. The department is currently focused on growth as well as success and retention. As a result of the districts push for growth, the department is slowly adding more courses online. However, we are mindful of the impact on face-to-face enrollment. Strategic scheduling and enrollment management is critical over the next three years. It's difficult to balance online growth with retention and success, which undoubtedly impacts the retention and success

data in the department.

4e) Please check the appropriate boxes in the chart below indicating the general reasons for the resource requests described above (please check all that apply):

Function/Role	Maintenance	Development	Growth	Safety	Outcomes	Other success measures	No Requests
X	X	X	X				

5) Summary/Closing

5a) Based on the analysis above, briefly summarize your program’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges.

Strengths: Political Science is above average in efficiency and has been assessing program outcomes and SLOs prior to the mandate from the accreditation team. The full-time and part-time faculty has developed a good working relationship and the part-time faculty commends the chair for fostering an inclusive collaborative environment. The department has created a pre and posttest for POLS0001, which is taught by all faculty. The SLOs are tied to the program outcomes and ongoing evaluations, analysis and adjustments has been made over the past nine years, with an eye towards student success. Because all faculty teaches POLS0001, this assessment tool allows for optimum collaboration around effective teaching strategies, which are applicable to “all” courses in the department. The department is extremely proud of the creation of a Political Science major.

With the exception of one faculty, all members of the department participated in the data analysis sessions (during flex week and the follow up session). Some faculty participated online even though they were unable to attend the physical sessions. The department is willing to have difficult conversations around student success.

Challenges: The department serves a diverse group of students that enter the college with their own sets of challenges (working full-time, limited college ready skills, childcare responsibilities, physical and mental challenges, etc.) Even though a variety of support services are offered (tutoring, Writing Center) students do not always take advantage of these services for a variety

of reasons. For example, the Political Science Department has two tutors for POLS0001 and this semester (3/2/2018), only two students have taken advantage of the tutors. Procrastination is a huge problem for students and this is even more problematic with online classes. Another challenge is the sporadic attendance, which might be impacted by several of the reasons presented above. How does the department balance this in the quest for better retention and success?

Finally, the department struggles with limited resources to attend professional conferences and join professional organizations related to the discipline and subscription to journals are not available. Additionally, with the focus on equity, resources is needed to attend equity related workshops and conferences.

5b) How has the author of this report integrated the views and perspectives of stakeholders in the program?

The department is relatively small, full-time and part-time faculty members have been engaged and continue to be engaged through department meetings, planning and assessment day, emails, phone calls and the brief interchanges between classes. Members of the department have discussed program outcomes, student-learning outcomes, and development of the Political Science major and celebrated its approval, curriculum development and updates, accreditation, assessment plans as well as best practices for improving success and retention.

The author informed department members about the program review process and solicited input. The interest of students was the driving force behind the creation of a Political Science major. This has attracted more students into the major, who become more involved in the Political Science Club and serve as great resources for providing feedback on the program. Consultation with students at Tahoe Truckee and NCC is primarily through online mediums, especially those who are enrolled through Distance Education. Both full-time and part-time faculty have been involved in the Political Science Club - serving as advisors or promoting the program.