

**Minutes and Evaluation Report for
Audit & Review Face-to-Face Meeting
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Political Science Majors and Minors, 2016-2017**

Date: April 21, 2017

Time: 2:30-3:30

Place: LT 4012

Attended: Provost Susan Elrod; AVC Greg Cook; Dean David Travis; Department Chair Jolly Emrey; faculty and staff in the Political Science program Peter Wagner, Ted Gimbel, Jonah Ralston, Xia Lollar, Larry Anderson, and Louis Fucilla; Audit & Review Team Chair Katy Casey; Audit & Review team members Joan Cook, Ellie Schemenauer, and Amy Verbos

- 1) Call to order
- 2) Introductions
- 3) Overview of review team evaluation, program comments:

Chair Jolly Emrey provided an overview of the program's accomplishments, which included a number of successful program alumni. She further highlighted the value of a degree in Political Science. It was noted that the assessment plan had not been fully implemented, but small pieces had been addressed and a couple faculty are working on revising and implementing the plan. There was acknowledgement of the need for a strategic plan and the program will be working on visioning and planning at the fall retreat. Concerns about staffing were addressed, including recent retirements, failed searches, and a need for more diverse candidates. Data were also shared on enrollment.

- 4) Discussion of Review Team's evaluation

a) Strategic Planning. It may be worthwhile to create a strategic plan that addresses resource and staff needs, plans for assessment, and revisions to curriculum (as needed). Where does the program see itself in 5 years, and what processes, recourses, and supports are needed to get there?

i) One of the issues with planning and visioning is the shortage of faculty in some subfields. In addition, one of the retired faculty taught primarily online. Dean Travis has talked with Jolly about a possible joint position with other programs. Discussion ensued regarding joint appointments.

b) Assessment Plan. There is a need for the program to update and implement the assessment plan created in 2012. Included in the plan should be embedded assessments in select courses, creation of a committee to review procedures, analyze data, and use information to make programmatic changes (as needed). In addition, the program should consider how to best include the online major in the assessment plan.

i) Representatives from the program plan to attend the summer Assessment Institute hosted by the Office of Academic Assessment to review assessment practices and revise goals. It was recommended that the program consider a sub-committee to work on assessment as opposed to the chair and one or two faculty in order to make assessment part of the program's culture.

ii) AVC Cook asked: What were the barriers to implementing the old assessment plan? One program representative noted that the program does not have a consistent structure in place (e.g., sub-committee) to complete the work, it was largely centralized, and is the responsibility of the chair and one or two interested faculty. The entire program would need to get more invested in the process, i.e., "decentralize."

iii) Discussion ensued regarding the online program and possibility of tracking and monitoring progress of online majors. The coordinator of the online program, Dr. Ted Gimbel, described some challenges in that

the program is often taken by students who transfer from other institutions, are non-traditional, or switch majors. In addition, it is designed to provide the students with autonomy in terms of types of classes and date of program completion. Also, students can move from face-to-face to online and vice versa.

iv) It was recommended that the program may need to adopt new assessment practices. They should also consider what they are currently doing and how to pull all the pieces together.

c) Staffing. The program would benefit from a faculty line to replace the recent retirements. Further, there should be discussion on how to best support interdisciplinary programs in terms of teaching load and hiring, as well as a structure in place to facilitate frequent and consistent communication between these programs. It would benefit the program to attract faculty from under-represented minority groups, consider networking at professional conferences and/or appointing a faculty “point-person” to lead these efforts.

i) There was not a search this year to address the shortage of faculty. The faculty member who retired most recently was funded from online funds, so the line was not replaced. Dr. Gimbel reported difficulty getting a headcount in the online major for the reasons listed above (see b, 3rd bullet point above).

d) Other

i) Provost Elrod asked if the program considered advertising the online major. There is not a plan to advertise at this point and the faculty in attendance were unsure of the potential if they were to advertise.

ii) While the program is committed to the online major, it was originally designed to assist in program completion and has morphed into a fully online major.

5) **Recommended Actions**: The evaluation report lists 3 recommended actions (see page 16, point 4).

6) **Recommended Result**: Continuation with minor concerns

- **Please make use of the detailed comments in the evaluation report (below).**
- **A progress report describing progress towards recommended actions is due to the Dean of the College of Letters and Sciences on October 1, 2019 and subsequently to the Chair of the Audit and Review Committee on November 1, 2019.**
- **Next full self-study will be due on October 1, 2021.**

**University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Committee Form: Review of Audit & Review Self-Studies**

**Undergraduate Programs, 2016-2017
Majors/Minors and Standalone Minors**

Date of Evaluation March 27, 2017 Short Self Study (SS*)_____

Program Political Science Major X Minor X

Evaluations submitted by: Katy Casey, Joan Cook, Ellie Schemenauer, Dale Splinter, Amy Verbos

Review meeting attended by: Katy Casey, Joan Cook, Ellie Schemenauer, Dale Splinter, Amy Verbos

I. Program Purpose & Overview: A. Centrality

1. The program contributes to the fulfillment of UW-Whitewater's core values, Mission, and Strategic Plan.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

2. The program supports general education, proficiency, and/or other programs at UW-W.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

3. The program has achieved or is appropriately working toward achievement of at least two goals of Inclusive Excellence.

Sufficient Evidence	2
Some/Partial Evidence	3
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

4. The program has been responsive to actions recommended from the previous Audit and Review Report; Progress Reports have been submitted, if relevant.

Sufficient Evidence	0
Some/Partial Evidence	5

No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

Comments

1. Very nice description, but it is not tied to the values, Mission, and Strategic Plan of UWW. The dots just need to be connected.
 2. Statements could be supported by number of students served by these courses.
 2. Political Science obviously plays an integral role in our general education program and the commitment it displays should be commended.
 3. Although there are some interesting course offerings if not taught by diverse faculty, then how are inclusive perspectives attained? The links to IE goals appear more coincidental rather than purposeful. What data do you have on IE in the program?
 4. It appears that most of the goals were not addressed until the new self-study and so not much progress was made other than reactivating the Advisory Board. Note: There were a few sentence fragments and typos in the Report.
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4. The program has yet to carry out all of the assessment recommendations from the previous Audit and Review, but has a plan in place to do so.

I. Program Purpose & Overview: B. Program Mission, Goals, & Accomplishments

1. The program’s mission statement reflects the nature and scope of the program.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0
No/Limited Evidence	0

2. Goals and objectives were identified and undertaken to improve or advance the program.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	1
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

3. The program has a process for setting and assessing goals, and making decisions about changes to the program goals.

Sufficient Evidence	0
Some/Partial Evidence	3
No/Limited Evidence	2
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

4. The program is considering potential revisions to mission, goals, or objectives; the program has a “vision” for where it wants to be in the future and how to get there.

Sufficient Evidence	0
Some/Partial Evidence	4
No/Limited Evidence	1
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

5. The program, faculty/staff, and/or students have earned recognition or awards.

Sufficient Evidence	0
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	3
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	2

6. The program has achieved or maintained program-level accreditation or has considered seeking it, where appropriate.

Sufficient Evidence	0
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	5

Comments

1. Perhaps mention online and traditional.
2. The annual reports showed no goals for the Department itself. The stated goals appear ad hoc. SMART goals would be better. Regarding Goal 1, it would be nice to have a cross-reference, as the reader is left to find the information. One concern is having ethnic politics as a 200-level course that does not appear to count for the major and appear to be taught by people who are looking at the problems from an outside western perspective rather than a minority one. On Goal 2, phrasing of "concern about increasing enrollments" is ambiguous--is it a concern that there are not enough resources for increased enrollments or that you want to reverse declining enrollments. It appears that there are low enrollment courses, but not clear about the enrollment trends, given the mention of changes made since the last report. This "goal" then ends with another ambiguous statement about maybe returning to the goal in the future, which was confusing. Mention in 2013-14 annual report about not being able to do assessment due to IRB. Although it is understandable to want to use data for publication, it should not be a deciding factor in whether or not assessment data is collected.
3. This part was vague.

3. The department discussed goals in 2016. However, it was not clear that the process started in 2016 would continue into the future. Further, there was not information provided on how the department systematically assesses and discusses progress toward those goals.
3. Perhaps the last meeting of the academic year could be dedicated to thinking about and proposing goals for the next? The first meeting of a new academic year could then be a time to finalize those goals.
4. It is clear the department plans to enact its assessment plan, which I agree, is necessary. It also seems the faculty discusses the needs of the program regularly as evidenced by curricular changes and engaging stakeholders. Based on these discussions, what is the vision? Does the program see growth in the major? Would they like more students to participate in HIP, such as Model UN or Undergraduate Research? The vision is still unclear.
4. It seems to me that the department could benefit from doing some formal strategic planning to identify where they want to be in 5 years. Then use this strategic plan to articulate annual goals.
5. Awards were not earned during this review period.
6. Accreditation is not available

II. Assessment: A. Curriculum

1. The program has a clearly articulated, efficient, and purposeful curriculum, including options or emphases within the program (if applicable).

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

2. If program offers dual-listed courses, the expectations of graduate students differ from undergraduate students; otherwise NA

Sufficient Evidence	0
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	5

3. Appropriate assessment data were used in making curricular revisions.

Sufficient Evidence	1
Some/Partial Evidence	4
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

4. The program provides opportunities for students to learn in ways that extend beyond the classroom, and discussed the extent to which students are involved in these activities and opportunities.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0

No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

5. Online courses are evaluated in ways that ensure effective delivery, continuous improvement, and student learning (if applicable)

Sufficient Evidence	1
Some/Partial Evidence	4
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

Comments

1. Check sheets show a good variety of courses in the course catalog, but it is hard to determine which are active. Simple check marks might have helped.
 2. Program does not offer dual-listed courses.
 3. The comments indicated that systematic assessment data were not used. However, the changes were based on data from student evaluations, alumni surveys, and advisory boards. It seems data were considered when making curricular changes.
 3. Not clear of the extent to which the external sources were used in decisions.
 3. As more direct assessment data become available, I encourage the department to make sure to consider it during curricular (and within course) revisions.
 4. Lots of excellent outside-class opportunities for students.
 4. Great internship availability and variety as well as involvement in undergraduate research and promoting writing skills. Are internships paid?
 5. It appears that Quality Matters is just optional if a faculty chooses. For a major that is entirely online, a bit more systematic assessment of the program should be a priority. This was a recommendation from the prior report as well.
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5. Are the online courses are evaluated in the same ways as the in-person courses?

II. Assessment: B. Assessment of Student Learning

1. The program has a clearly articulated learning outcomes for students, courses are "mapped" to these learning outcomes, and some outcomes received specific attention during the review period.

Sufficient Evidence	3
Some/Partial Evidence	2
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

2. Student learning outcomes are aligned with the LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes in a way that is reasonable and meaningful.

Sufficient Evidence	4
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Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

3. The program has an appropriate assessment plan for measuring students' progress in attaining the outcomes.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	1
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

4. The program collected a variety of appropriate assessment data allowing judgments about the extent to which students are achieving learning outcomes.

Sufficient Evidence	2
Some/Partial Evidence	3
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

5. Program faculty consider assessment data in making changes to the curriculum, students' learning outcomes, and/or other aspects of the program.

Sufficient Evidence	1
Some/Partial Evidence	3
No/Limited Evidence	1
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

6. Results of assessment efforts have been shared with appropriate internal and external constituencies.

Sufficient Evidence	0
Some/Partial Evidence	4
No/Limited Evidence	1
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

Comments

1. Consider rephrasing several of the LOs to make them more specific, action-oriented and easier to assess (e.g., Students will learn about issues of diversity....to students will demonstrate knowledge of, or students will analyze issues of diversity and internationalism using political science theories and perspectives). LOs 1 and 7, and possibly 4, could be clarified.

1. Good mapping of LOs to courses, with clear indication of where there is a significant emphasis placed on the 3 most central LOs.
1. The only LO that may need more attention is quantitative skills. It will be important to have a direct assessment of this skill and evaluate whether more emphasis needs to be placed on this (or perhaps, more 'reminders' of these skills placed in other courses).
1. It appears that Appendix D does not take into account revisions to the learning objectives that were a part of the 2012 Assessment plan. Which of the courses in the table are required, which are presently offered, and which count as elective toward the major? Which are outside of requirements?
2. Alignment with LEAP is good. LOs listed in these tables are tailored well for the specific emphases.
2. Some of the LOs listed in the LEAP alignment tables seem different than those listed in Appendix D.
3. The Assessment Plan is thorough and well-designed but it doesn't appear that it has been used/implemented to any significant extent. What is needed to implement the plan?
3. Was the Assessment Plan from 2012 reviewed given that 5 years have passed and it has not been fully implemented? Were the new learning goals adopted? No mapping of assessments to required courses to assess learning goals. Perhaps the department needs an assessment committee to ensure locating and implementing direct measures, reviewing the data collected, and following up on closing the loop.
4. Report and Findings show considerable need for improvement, given that these are seniors and "competent" is the minimum expectation for graduates. There are no specifics as to how to use the assessment of student writing to go back and improve the courses throughout the curriculum in which students are assigned to write. This likely means earlier writing assignments with improvement opportunities.
4. The program is collecting some direct data (though they note the need to do more of this) and indirect data.
5. What is the overall PROCESS for considering assessment data? For example, is there a department assessment committee? When does the department review and discuss data (is there an annual assessment meeting)?

5. This is an area in need of improvement.
6. Assessment efforts toward student learning is lacking and needs to be incorporated, and "close the loop" so the data becomes a meaningful tool for the Department. For example, who got the writing report? What changes are recommended to enhance students' writing skills?

6. If annual meetings are held to acquire information from external constituencies, what feedback do you receive? Do you use this information to make curricular changes?

6. Seems like assessment is a work in progress, but is underway and taken seriously.

III. Student Recruitment, Enrollment, Retention, and Graduation: A. Trend Data

1-2. Five-year enrollment and graduation trends reflect program vitality and sustainability.

Sufficient Evidence	3
Some/Partial Evidence	2
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

3. [MAJORS ONLY] Credits-to-degree show that students can complete the degree in four years, or reasonably efficiently.

Sufficient Evidence	3
Some/Partial Evidence	2
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

4. Program has strategies to recruit and retain diverse students.

Sufficient Evidence	2
Some/Partial Evidence	2
No/Limited Evidence	1
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

5. [MAJORS ONLY] Composition of students approximates or exceeds the diversity of students at the University

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

6. Students can enroll in appropriate courses and proceed without delaying graduation.

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

7. Claim that the program is oversubscribed, undersubscribed, or at optimum level is justified or supported by examples or data.

Sufficient Evidence	3
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	1
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

Comments

- 1-2. In order to be meaningful, the data should be broken down into emphases, what is growing, what is shrinking?
By aggregating all majors and emphases, it is not possible to see trends in the major.
- 1-2. I need some clarification on this table. What is the difference between Political Science (1st and 2nd majors) and Political Science BSE? Which number reflects current program enrollment, both? I would have liked to see the break down between the online and in-person major enrollment.
3. Author raises a good question regarding credits to degree for BA being below 120.
3. Please follow up on the data and what it means. Not clear which majors are BS and which are BA, BSE is self-evident.
4. Acceptable response on recruitment, although many people use energetic as a synonym for young. No specific strategies on diversity, just self-selection. Equity is important, especially in creating a classroom environment where minority students can thrive and having instructors who understand them, so putting it mostly on advising seems problematic, especially in a predominantly white department. Peer mentoring or other mentoring strategies might be better. The writer assumes that underrepresented minority students have a skills gap. Is that actually true or is it more of a resources gap?

7. It is not clear what the optimal number is, it appears that the Department needs to avoid losing a faculty line, but it would be best if they provide data to better make this case. This is an important element where greater clarity might help the Dean to support the case for retaining the faculty line.

7. Loss of staff will need to be addressed to keep the program and emphases strong.

III. Student Recruitment, Enrollment, Retention, and Graduation: B. Demand for Graduates

1. [MAJORS ONLY] Placement information indicates that program graduates find employment or continue their education.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

2. Data suggests that employment opportunities for graduates of this program will remain strong.

Sufficient Evidence	1
Some/Partial Evidence	4
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

3. The program systematically tracks graduates of the program.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	1
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

Comments

2. It isn't clear how the statistics translate into opportunities for the graduates.

3. Since there are no attachments, it isn't possible to see what the response rates are. Events and an Advisory Board seem to be good things. Use of social media is fine if it is actively updated or else it does not mean a lot.

III. Student Recruitment, Enrollment, Retention, and Graduation: C. Comparative Advantage(s)

1. The program has unique features that distinguish it from competing programs--giving it a competitive edge

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

Comments

1. Nice features! This program will need continuing support from the Dean and Provost to continue in its present form.

1. The Political Science Department does a great job with the amount of resources it has!

IV. Resource Availability & Development: A. Faculty Characteristics

1-2. Information is provided about the composition of the department faculty & instructional academic staff (e.g., gender, ethnicity, expertise, academic rank, etc.)

Sufficient Evidence	5
Some/Partial Evidence	0
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

3-4. The program has identified staffing changes and anticipated areas of potential future need.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

Comments

1-2. Diversity seems to be an issue, especially in the Assistant Professor and Academic Staff ranks.

3-4. The program clearly needs more faculty resources. It is just not as explicitly stated as it ought to be. It appears that the Department has lost a tenured person to retirement and the program is relying on temporary measures. It seems a replacement ought to be in order.

3-4. Given the overall gender inequalities in politics at the national and state levels, political science courses focused on women and gender seem integral to inclusive excellence efforts at the university and beyond. Ensuring that there are faculty that can address a broad array of gender-related concerns in politics, public policy and administration is essential to this program, but many other interdisciplinary programs on campus as well (Women's and Gender Studies, Race and Ethnic Studies, Liberal Studies, International Studies, etc.).

IV. Resource Availability & Development: B. Teaching & Learning Enhancement

1-2. Faculty & instructional academic staff are engaged in activities to enhance teaching and advising.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

Comments

1-2. The student exit surveys indicated a potential issue with advising. Has the department addressed this?

1-2. It would be good to have a list. What about teaching conferences?

1-2. The department takes advising seriously, and I appreciate the efforts taken to train faculty to advise appropriately.

IV. Resource Availability & Development: C. Research & other Scholarly/Creative Activities

1-2. Faculty (and staff, if relevant) are active in research and/or scholarly/creative activities.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

Comments

1-2. It seems to be more conference presentations than publications. The assistant professors appear to be coming along. Not clear what tiers which faculty fall into.

IV. Resource Availability & Development: D. External Funding

1-2. Faculty and staff (if relevant) pursue funding through grants, contract, and/or gifts.

Sufficient Evidence	3
Some/Partial Evidence	2
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

Comments

1-2. Some limited success in contracts and one grant. Perhaps encourage grant workshops.

IV. Resource Availability & Development: E. Professional & Public Service

1-2. Faculty (and staff, if relevant) are active in professional and public service, beyond the department.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

Comments

- 1-2. Good university service. A lot of department service that is not a part of the question. Professional and public service appears limited to invited speaking and radio engagement. Are there other professional service obligations that are not being included?

IV. Resource Availability & Development: F. Resources for Students in the Program

1. The program has adequate personnel, student help, and service and supplies to serve its undergraduate students.

Sufficient Evidence	0
Some/Partial Evidence	5
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

Comments

1. The temporary measures to deal with the recent retirement do not appear sustainable and filling that line should be considered a priority. The Dean ought to take into consideration the allocations for services and supplies, as the Department has raised an equity argument that is compelling.
1. The calculation of the services and supplies budget should be considered in the future, especially if the goal is to grow the program.
1. There are areas that are going underserved due to retirements. The gap areas appear to be in places that political science has contributed to interdisciplinary areas: Women's and Gender Studies, Middle Eastern Studies, and possibly Legal Studies.

IV. Resource Availability & Development: G. Facilities, Equipment, & Library Holdings

1. The program has adequate facilities, equipment, and technological resources to effectively serve its students.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

Comments

1. Please be more specific about your needs. It is important that faculty are supported with adequate access to software and data/research resources. This could be an issue in recruiting and retaining assistant professors.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations from the Department or Program

1. Program strengths are discussed.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

2. Areas of improvement and continued progress are discussed.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

3. Recommendations and resources are discussed.

Sufficient Evidence	4
Some/Partial Evidence	1
No/Limited Evidence	0
Not Applicable (explain why in comments below)	0

4. Other comments by the program (not rated).

Yes	4
No	0

Comments

1. In addition to the strengths listed, it is clear that the online program is a unique strength of the program.
2. Direct, embedded assessments in required courses are an important and missing element.
3. In order to accomplish assessment, perhaps a department assessment committee is needed. It is also quite clear that faculty are stretched and filling the retired person's line is needed.
4. It might be less difficult if a department assessment committee coordinated the preparation of the report, followed up on assessment, and pointed toward how to close the loop. Leaving this to a department chair makes a lot of work for one person, and may be the reason that there has been little progress since the last review.

VI. Reviewer Conclusions

1. Strengths of the Program

1. Political science is a very important area of study. The Department has done an admirable job in creative work toward the general education, diversity, and its new Legal Studies emphasis. The online development is admirable as well. It is great to have a research Center that assists local communities.
2. Use of HIP, specifically in undergraduate research, internships, and the model UN program. Diversity of faculty and students in program. While the program indicated it did not enact its assessment plan, I felt there was sufficient evidence provided did reflect the program's use of data to make curricular decisions.
3. Commitment to LEAP and requirement for faculty to incorporate at least one HIP in teaching
4. Integration of critical thinking and intensive writing into program
5. Productive faculty in teaching, service and research
6. Great enrollment

2. Areas for Work or Improvement

1. Direct, embedded assessment of student learning objectives.
2. Closing the loop.
3. Assessment as a regular part of what the department does to self-evaluate and self-improve.
4. Faculty diversity. Ensuring that students from underrepresented groups are not disadvantaged by the lack of minority perspectives. How are faculty being educated on minority perspectives?
5. Better embedding inclusive excellence throughout the curriculum.
6. There was no clear mention of ethics or ethical decision-making when reviewing the program's curriculum. Consider including ethical decision-making explicitly in the curriculum, as is it such a significant societal issue.

7. Formalize a process to discuss assessment
8. As noted in self-study, assessment is still a work-in-progress, though department is obviously reflective about their work with students and program outcomes.

3. Other comments/questions

4. Recommended Actions

1. Strategic planning:
 - a. Develop a strategic plan for the program to guide program goals and direction over the next five years.
 - b. Formalize a process for setting and monitoring goals.
2. Implement the assessment plan:
 - a. Revise the existing plan as needed, then implement it.
 - b. Collect direct data on SLOs.
 - c. Develop a clear process for reviewing data, track use of data (curricular, within courses).
3. Work with Dean to secure staffing needed to continue to support the program.
 - a. Recent faculty turnover impacts the political science’s ability to contribute vital courses to interdisciplinary programs.
 - b. Try new/different strategies to attract a faculty member from an underrepresented group to enhance diversity

5. Recommended Result*

Insufficient Information in the self-study to make a determination; revise self-study & resubmit.	
Continuation without qualification	
Continuation with minor concerns	X
Continuation with major concerns in one or more of the four areas; submit annual progress report to the College Dean & Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs on progress addressing the major concerns	
Withhold recommendation for continuation, place on probation, and require another complete Audit & Review self-study within 1-3 years, at the Committee's discretion.	
Withhold recommendation for continuation, place on probation, recommend placing in receivership within the college, and require another complete Audit & Review self-study within 1-3 years at the Committee's discretion.	
Non-continuation of the program.	

***A progress report describing progress towards recommended actions is due to the Dean of the College of Letters and Sciences on October 1, 2019 and subsequently to the Chair of the Audit and Review Committee on November 1, 2019. Next full self-study will be due on October 1, 2021.**

**Agenda and Evaluation Report for
Minutes of Audit & Review Progress Report Follow-Up Meeting
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Political Science Majors and Minors, 2019-2020**

Date: 2/3/2020

Time: 8:15am

Place: Laurentide 4012

Attendees: Dean Frank Goza; Department Chair Jolly Emrey; Audit & Review Team Chair Eric Appleton; Assessment Representative Catherine Chan

1) Meeting called to order

2) Introductions

3) Review of A&R Response and Conclusion:

Great progress toward recommendations and evidence of a lot of work done;

However, the progress report requested the larger outlines of the strategic plan and assessment plan. It was also unclear if the staffing situation had been fully resolved. The committee felt that there was evidence the plans existed but just were not presented. It was the hope of the committee that the requested progress report for Oct 2020 would be little more than presenting these documents, and would help the program situate itself for the approaching self-study.

4) Program responses and comments:

Dr. Emory noted that there had been some mis-communication with the Assessment office regarding what was required for the progress report, which was why the report focused on presenting the activities rather than the plans. Dr. Emory stated that the staffing issue had been (with Dean Goza's assistance) resolved quite successfully, and that the program had indeed done its utmost in reaching out to a variety of demographics in its search. There is no current staffing issue.

Dean Goza noted that staffing will become an increasingly difficult question for programs to respond to on A&R reports due to the current university-wide fiscal crisis. Staffing needs will become more pervasive, and programs should not be faulted for unresolved staffing issues that are beyond their control.

Chan responded that A&R's intention regarding staffing concerns was to ensure that these issues were at least voiced and noted, and that A&R remains a voice of advocacy for programs.

5) Conclusions:

Dr. Emory felt that the more detailed reporting of strategic and assessment plans was doable by Oct 15, 2020.

6) Meeting adjourned.

Recommended Actions: The evaluation report lists 2 recommended actions (see page 5, points 1-2) related to strategic planning and assessment.

Final Result:

- **Please make use of the detailed comments in the evaluation report (below).**
- **Submit a progress report describing progress toward the Recommended Actions. Due dates are October 15, 2020 to the Dean of the College of Letters and Sciences and November 1, 2020 to the Office of Academic Assessment.**
- **Next full self-study will be due on October 1, 2021 to the Dean of the College of Letters and Sciences and November 1, 2021 to the Office of Academic Assessment.**

**University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
Committee Form: Review of Audit & Review Progress Report
Undergraduate Programs, 2019-2020
Majors/Minors and Standalone Minors**

Program Name: Political Science

Date of Review Team Meeting: 12/9/2019

Date of Follow-Up Meeting: 2/3/19 Time: 8:15-9:00am Location: LT 4012

Evaluations submitted by: Kimberly Nath, Pascal Letourneau, James Collins, Catherine Chan, Eric Appleton

Review meeting attended by: Kimberly Nath, James Collins, Catherine Chan, Eric Appleton

Recommendation #1

Strategic planning:

- a. Develop a strategic plan for the program to guide program goals and direction over the next five years.
- b. Formalize a process for setting and monitoring goals.

Recommendation #1 Overall Evaluation

Good Progress	2
Making Progress	3
Little/No Progress	0

Comments related to recommendation #1

- The program now has a planned/schedule meeting time to set/discuss/monitor/assess program goals.

- Lots of good work, lots of activities and engagement. Despite this, there's no strategic plan presented, something that encompassed the program as a whole and considers how all these pieces fit together into a larger picture.
 - It's noted under Curricular Review that the GE recertification was completed, prerequisites were changed, and online efforts are underway -- but what's the ultimate curricular goal of these efforts?
 - It's also noted that there is an annual retreat at which goals and projects are identified -- are each retreat's goals just for the upcoming year, or is there any long-term planning? How are projects discussed during the academic year? Does the program have more frequent program meetings for updates and questions?

- The program provided examples of impressive work that's being done in the department, all of which were disaggregated by areas of focus. Areas were identified following a department retreat and the department noted that they have been creating annual goals related to these areas of focus. No goals were provided though and a plan was not provided.
 - What are the specific plans for the department?
 - Faculty/staff are engaging in great work, but what information is driving this work and how are data being used to evaluate ongoing changes? Has a timeline been established?
- Goal topics (areas of focus) were provided (e.g., curricular review, enhancement of student engagement, etc.) and activities related to accomplishing these topics were listed, but no process or timeline was described. No mechanism for setting and monitoring goals was provided.

- How will you monitor progress in the future? How will you know when the program has successfully reached a goal? It appears that some progress has been made, yet a lot of information still needs to be formalized.

-
- It is great to see that the program has identified strategic goals and is making progress towards them. However, apart from the annual department retreat, it is still not clear what is the formal process for setting and monitoring these goals. Especially for monitoring progress of achieving department strategic goals, more frequent and intentional meetings/discussions would be helpful.
-
- The department has made good progress towards Recommendation #1. Each year the department now discusses and identified goals to meet, such as: enhancing student engagement; faculty and professional development; community outreach and engagement; and curricular review.
 - They are making good progress towards all of these goals and have clearly identified successful strategies in order to do so. In particular, Professors Lollar and Ralston have been including service learning elements in their courses to great effect.
 - Additional faculty members have made great use of opportunities on campus to enhance student engagement. The political sciences faculty should also be commended for taking advantage for the many opportunities on campus. Faculty has participated in LTC workshops, LEAP teams, and blended teaching workshops. The department should also be commended for the internship opportunities along with their community outreach.

Recommendation #2

Implement the assessment plan:

- a. Revise the existing plan as needed, then implement it.
- b. Collect direct data on SLOs.
- c. Develop a clear process for reviewing data, track use of data (curricular, within courses).

Recommendation #2 Overall Evaluation

Good Progress	0
Making Progress	4
Little/No Progress	1

Comments related to recommendation #2

- The program is now assessing the student learning and collecting direct (and indirect) assessment data. However, the process for reviewing data and using it is not articulated in this answer. We can assume that it is part of the Annual Retreat, but it is not clear.
-
- I have the same questions here as for recommendation #1. Relevant activities are noted, but the overall assessment plan isn't included. What's the next program-wide assessment project after the writing course? With the results of the writing project, what will be done to close the loop and act upon the results? It'd be good to include the conclusions of Loepp and Ralston's review. What is the rationale behind offering the Legal Studies major? What will be the impact on the program and what resources will the program need to get this rolling -- no doubt this is all documented in the proposal paperwork, but it would be good to include an overview here as well.
-
- The program listed accomplishments related to implementation of a plan (e.g., formally assessed a course, adjusted the Senior Exit Survey, etc.), but assessment outcomes are unknown. What needs did these accomplishments address? Can the department provide the revised assessment plan for this committee to review?
 - No specific SLOs were provided. Did each accomplishment directly connect with a SLO? Need more information.

- No process for reviewing data was provided. The department has been collecting data, but it's unclear how it fits into a broader assessment framework.
- I commend the program for taking on a large number of assessment projects. I understand that some projects are still in their data collection phases, and I look forward to seeing how the program uses the collected data to make informed decisions. For those projects with collected data (e.g., writing and critical thinking proficiency as assessed in Political Science 302 and a review of assessment plans and tools used by other programs and departments), how does the program plan to use these data?
- It is evident that the Political Science department has continued to improve upon and successfully assess data in regard to departmental assessment. Eric Loepp and Jonah Ralston reviewed existing data with a Winterim Assessment project in 2016. It is evidence the department used these data and made improvements overtime. The department also assessed writing in the department, measured SLOs, and provided evidence of improving surveys. Appendix D also highlights a particularly useful survey for assessment, a survey for interns, and this only demonstrates the progress the department is making to assess the opportunities available for majors.
- Regarding inclusion of the internship survey in the appendices: this was well done and should provide interesting and valuable data as it is implemented. It's a good example of the data tools of which the review committee would like to see further examples.

Recommendation #3

Work with Dean to secure staffing needed to continue to support the program.

- a. Recent faculty turnover impacts the political science's ability to contribute vital courses to interdisciplinary programs.
- b. Try new/different strategies to attract a faculty member from an underrepresented group to enhance diversity

Recommendation #3 Overall Evaluation

Good Progress	1
Making Progress	4
Little/No Progress	0

Comments related to recommendation #3

- What was tried to recruit underrepresented minorities? Was the position placed in specific outlets? The narrative lacks details.
- Turnover is noted in the recommendation, but only one new hire is noted. Was the whole issue of faculty turnover addressed with this new program member? Is the program now at strength enough to support a new major?
- New faculty member was hired.
- Not addressed.
- The department is making progress towards securing staffing in the department with the hiring of Dr. Monica Lineberger. She contributes to their growing legal studies program. That Dr. Lineberger brings additional perspectives via gender and region representation is felt to be an important addition to the program.

Recommendations for next review. Additional progress reports required?

Yes	4
No	1

If Yes, Please List Due Dates (e.g. in 1 year, 2 years)?

In one year, due Fall 2020

Next progress report, due Oct. 15 to Dean, Nov. 1 to Assessment, should specifically address the following:

- 1) Strategic Planning:
 - a. Explicit articulation of the program's 5 to 10 year plan
 - b. Brief description of work on goals in-progress during timeframe of report
 - c. Follow-up on outcomes/goals completed during timeframe of report
 - d. Description of how program will/does measure a goal's completion and/or success
 - e. Discussion of remaining staffing issues that will affect current and planned curricular offerings (such as the introduction of the new major)

- 2) Assessment:
 - a. Explicit articulation of the program's long-term assessment plan
 - b. Description of the program goals implicit in the long-term assessment plan
 - c. Clarification of program SLOs and how they connect to University ELOs
 - d. Updates on what assessment projects are currently in progress, or recently completed
 - e. Inclusion of relevant data summaries to support curricular conclusions

The committee wishes to note that the program has made considerable progress, but in the absence of articulated plans (both strategic and assessment) it's unclear just what degree of progress has truly been made and what the program hopes to accomplish next. The requested progress report is intended to aid preparation of 2021's full self-study. If these plans have already been created for use in the current progress report, the requested progress report *may* be a matter of attaching the relevant plan documents and providing brief overviews.

Additional comments:

During the follow-up meeting, the review team would like to discuss the following with the program:

- a) While much good work is occurring, an over-all long-term strategic plan was not included in the report materials. An annual retreat has been instituted, but there is little information regarding how goals are identified, how implementation occurs, and what measures are used in determining the completion and/or success of the goal. Four areas of focus were identified, and activities pertaining to each summarized; the program's long-term vision for each of these four areas of focus was, however, not articulated.
 - b) Assessment projects were noted and described; however, an assessment plan framework was missing from the report. The Loepp and Ralston review sounds important and useful, but no conclusions from that report were offered to help frame or understand over-all program assessment goals.
 - c) It's noted that due to recent turnovers, the program faced staffing concerns. It's not clear that the new hire solves all of these issues, especially with the possible implementation of a new major. Does the program have any short or long-term staffing issues that have yet to be addressed?
- Continue the annual retreats and keep working on assessment continuously. Make sure the assessment data which is collected is useful, used, and that changes, driven by assessment data, are documented.

- The appendices confused me a bit. The ELO/SLO chart wasn't filled out and it was unclear what this was meant to accompany or clarify. Appendix B is clearly the proposal for the Loepp/Ralston project -- but again, it would be more useful to have a report on the conclusions of this project. The final two pieces are documentation of LGL initiative, and then the revised internship survey. It would be nice to know what specific data caused the survey revision and what data the program hopes will be generated by the new one.
- The Political Science Department Progress report demonstrates great progress towards their three recommendations. They have utilized resources available on campus, worked collectively to achieve their goals, and should be commended on their progress. The department is working well and employing strategies to retain students and grow their program.

****A progress report will be due to the College Deans on October 15, 2020 and to the Assessment Office by November 1, 2020 to the Audit and Review Committee, addressing strategic planning and assessment.**

****Next FULL self-study will be due to the College Deans on October 1, 2021 and to the Assessment Office on November 1, 2021.**