

Institutional Effectiveness Report 2021-22

Program: Political Science BS

College and Department: College of Arts & Sciences – Department of Sociology and Political Science

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Mission: Within the context of the University's mission, the mission of the Department is to provide students with a quality liberal arts education that prepares them for a rapidly changing world and a variety of work environments and post-graduate educational possibilities.

The Department of Sociology and Political Science has the primary mission of offering strong academic programs in sociology, criminology and criminal justice, social work and political science. It provides students with a quality liberal arts education that prepares them for a rapidly changing world and a variety of work environments and postgraduate educational possibilities. Students are educated to not only master a diverse body of knowledge but also to think critically, analyze data, and clearly communicate what they know and discover. Recognizing that we live in an increasingly technological and diverse world, we seek to incorporate technological expertise and appreciation of human diversity into our courses. The Department also strives to serve the wider university, the Upper Cumberland region, and the nation through research and public service.

Program Goals:

- PG 1: The Program of Political Science will recruit a sufficient number of students to sustain a strong educational program and promote lifelong learning in support of the strategic plan (Strategic Goal Two: Tactics www.tntech.edu/strategic).
- PG 2: Students will judge that a sufficient number of curricular and co-curricular activities were offered by the program.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)s

- SLO 1: Students will acquire the critical thinking skills to be prepared for employment and graduate/law school. (See Strategic Plan Education for Life/ Tactics B ii: "...promote analytical thinking and problem solving in every discipline." www.tntech.edu/strategic)
- SLO 2: Students will demonstrate appropriate knowledge of their concentration by their senior year.

Assessment Methods With Thresholds Of Acceptability:

Program Goals:

- PG 1: The Program of Political Science will recruit a sufficient number of students to sustain a strong educational program and promote lifelong learning in support of the strategic plan.*
1. The Program will monitor enrollment and graduation rates.

Year	Number of POLS General Track	Number of POLS Legal Studies	Number of Total POLS Majors
2021	39	43	82
2020	42	44	86
2019	52	34	86
2018	48	36	84
2017	62	32	94
2016	48	31	79

Threshold of Acceptability: The enrollment threshold for Political Science is 75 students; if our number of majors fall below that threshold we will increase our recruitment initiatives. The 6-year graduation threshold of acceptability for Political Science is 55% and if the program's rate falls below that, tutoring will be emphasized. Graduation: Fall 2015 cohort: 59.9% graduated within 6 years from Tennessee Tech.

1. The Program is dedicated to remaining involved in recruitment initiatives including TTU Fall Preview Day and Spring Showcase during which we give out TTU "swag" to prospective students.

PG 2: Students will judge that a sufficient number of curricular and co-curricular activities were offered by the program as reported by our students.

1. Departmentally-designed Qualtrics student satisfaction survey.

Thinking about the entire political science curriculum, please tell us your level of agreement with the following statements: (N=12)

2021-2022 POLS Major Survey

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The political science curriculum exposes me to a broad range of content in the field of political science.	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	1 8.33%	5 41.67%	6 50.00%
The courses have been intellectually stimulating.	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0%	5 41.67%	7 58.33%
The courses have been academically rigorous.	0 0.0%	1 8.33%	1 8.33%	1 8.33%	5 41.67%	4 33.33%

The courses have utilized a variety of teaching methods to enhance my learning	0	0	0	1	5	6
	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.33%	41.67%	50.00%

Threshold of Acceptability: The threshold of acceptability for the Qualtrics Student Survey is that the majority of students are on the positive side of the Likert responses (indicated in purple). In the event this does not happen faculty will assess possible remediation.

2. Student Assessment of Curricular Effectiveness: Completed by student majors (see Appendix 1).

Threshold of Acceptability: The threshold of acceptability for the student-evaluated curriculum map is that the students determine a majority of the courses prepare them for written and oral communication as well as prepare them for proficiency in their concentration. Absent this, a re-evaluation of the curriculum would be undertaken.

3. Co-Curricular Options (“Expand and improve academic and co-curricular programs to enhance global understanding, experience, and education” www.tntech.edu/strategic):

- 1) Competition courses: Moot Court and Model UN (not an option in 2021-2022 due to COVID)
- 2) Experiential Learning Course: Mock Trial
- 3) Internships: Federal; State; Local
- 4) Internships: Legal Studies
- 5) Pi Sigma Alpha (Political Science Honor Society)
- 6) Constitution Day: POLS Student Majors serve on the Committee
- 7) YAL: Young Americans for Liberty Libertarian Student Group
- 8) Guest Speakers: Elected Officials; Law Student Alumni
- 9) Student Teaching Assistantships/Research Assistantships
- 10) Pre-Law Club

Threshold of Acceptability: The threshold of acceptability is to offer co-curricular options in political science “to enhance global understanding, experience, and education” www.tntech.edu/strategic. Absent this, a re-evaluation of the faculty service options would be undertaken.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

SLO 1: Students will acquire the critical thinking skills to be prepared for employment and graduate/law school.

1. The California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) is a senior exit exam taken by all graduate seniors at Tennessee Tech University. Political Science majors will average 90% of the TTU average on the California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST):

2021 CCTST Scores	Mean	N
POLS	74.5	21
TTU	75.2	1457
TTU CAS	75.3	283
CCTST National	73.3	n/a

Threshold of Acceptability: Faculty seek to emphasize student critical thinking gains through use of the California Critical Thinking Test as a component of SLO 1. Specifically, students must score 90% of TTU's mean score on the CCTST.

2. Educational Testing Services (ETS) major field examination is administered each fall and spring semester to all enrolled majors with senior classification. The ETS exam measures Analytical and Critical Thinking, Methodology, and Political Thought.

3. ETS Major Field Assessment Indicator			
Fall 2021	N	TTU Mean	Frequency distribution
Analytical and Critical Thinking	8	50	8
Methodology	8	48	8
Political Thought	8	34	8

ETS Major Field Assessment Indicator			
Spring 2022	N	TTU Mean	Frequency distribution
Analytical and Critical Thinking	7	45	7
Methodology	7	31	7
Political Thought	7	27	7

Threshold of Acceptability: Performance at a level within 10% of a mean of 50 on the ETS Major Field Examination Analytical and Critical Thinking Score is expected. If this mean drops, faculty will re-evaluate.

3. Departmentally-designed Qualtrics student satisfaction survey.

Thinking about the entire political science curriculum, please tell us your level of agreement with the following statements: (N=12) **2021-2022 POLS Major Survey**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The political science curriculum has improved my ability to think critically.	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	5 41.67%	7 58.33%

Threshold of Acceptability: The threshold of acceptability for the Qualtrics Student Survey is that the majority of students self-select on the positive side of the Likert responses (indicated in purple). In the event this does not happen, faculty will assess possible solutions.

SLO 2: Students will demonstrate appropriate knowledge of their discipline.

4. Students in the General Education POLS 1030 American Government course will demonstrate gains in the post-test mean from the pre-test mean.

Gen Ed Pre Test/ Post Test Fall 2021-Spring 2022 POLS 1030			
	Pre Test Average	Post Test Average	Gains
Fall 2020	62.65	88.14	25.49
Spring 2021	64.89	90.49	25.60
Fall 2021	63.79	87.88	24.09
Spring 2022	58.18	91.3	33.12

Threshold of Acceptability: Students should demonstrate at least ten point gains each semester on the General Education POLS 1030 Pre/Post. If this rate of gain drops, review sessions will be offered.

2. Educational Testing Services (ETS) major field examination is administered each fall and spring semester to all enrolled majors with senior classification. The ETS exam outlines content questions related to Comparative Government and Politics, International Relations, and United States Government and Politics.

ETS Assessment Indicators				
Fall 2021	N	TTU Mean	SD	National Mean
US Government and Politics	8	47	13	44
Comparative Government and Politics	8	42	12	44
International Relations	8	47	8	44

ETS Assessment Indicators				
Spring 2022	N	TTU Mean	SD	National Mean
US Government and Politics	7	42	11	37
Comparative Government and Politics	7	38	10	37
International Relations	7	37	12	37

Threshold of Acceptability: Performance at a level within 10% of the national mean on the ETS Major Field Examination Sub Score content areas is expected. If scores are below the national mean, faculty will re-evaluate.

Modifications for Improvement:

1. The California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) was added as a new measure of critical thinking in 2020-2021 and Political Science continues to score well on this measure. The CCTST is a senior exit exam taken by all graduate seniors at Tennessee Tech University. The University expects program scores to be above a 90% threshold in comparison to the TTU institutional score with the goal of 100%.
2. To expand curricular options, Political Science and Sociology now house the NSF-grant funded “Cyber Crime, Law and Society Minor” in collaboration with the College of Engineering. See Appendix 2 for Curriculum.

Threshold of Acceptability: Political Science and Sociology anticipated 5-10 students to be interested in the grant-funded minor three years ago when first writing the NSP application with PI Dr. Ambareen Siraj. Ten students in the POLS 1030-777 CYBER sections remains the acceptable limit. This fall the section had to be opened from an initial enrollment of 25 to a double section.

Appendix 1: Student Assessment of Curricular Effectiveness

COURSES: Required; POLS-LS; POLS-IRCG (withdrawn and teach-out plan just completed)		Capable of effective oral and written communication.	Demonstrate proficiencies in the program concentration(s).
POLS 1030	American Government	Yes	Yes
POLS 1100	Intro to Political Science	Yes	Yes
POLS 2250	Mock Trial	Yes	Yes
POLS 3000	Data Analysis	Yes	Yes
POLS 3100	Model United Nations I	Yes	Yes
POLS 3101	Model United Nations II	Yes	Yes
POLS 3110	Intro to Legal Reasoning and Analysis	Yes	Yes
POLS 3120	Legal Research and Writing	Yes	Yes
POLS 3130	Moot Court	Yes	Yes
POLS 3200	American Political Thought	Yes	Yes
POLS 3300	Intro to Latin American Politics	Yes	No
POLS 3310	Politics of Developing Nations	Yes	Yes
POLS 3320	U.S. Policy Toward Latin America	Yes	No
POLS 3330	State and Local Government	Yes	Yes
POLS 3400	Gender and Politics	Yes	Yes
POLS 3500	Political Conspiracy Theories	Yes	Yes
POLS 3610	International Politics	Yes	Yes
POLS 3650	International Organizations	Yes	Yes
POLS 3670	Foreign Policy	Yes	Yes

POLS 3700	The Legislative Process	Yes	Yes
POLS 3710	The American Executive	Yes	Yes
POLS 3810	Judicial Process	Yes	Yes
POLS 4100	International Law	Yes	Yes
POLS 4210	American Political Parties	Yes	Yes
POLS 4220	Campaigns and Elections	Yes	Yes
POLS 4230	Scandal and Corruption in US Politics	Yes	Yes
POLS 4250	Political Communications	Yes	Yes
POLS 4310	CON LAW I: Struggle for Federal Powers and Accountability	Yes	Yes
POLS 4320	CON LAW II: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	Yes	Yes
POLS 4400	Political Satire	Yes	Yes
POLS 4410	Political Theory: Ancient and Medieval	Yes	Yes
POLS 4420	Political Theory: Early Modern	Yes	Yes
POLS 4430	Power and Privilege on the Screen	Yes	Yes
POLS 4510	Comparative Government: Europe	Yes	Yes
POLS 4520	Comparative Political Behavior	Yes	Yes
POLS 4610	Public Administration & Public Policies	Yes	Yes
POLS 4700	Tennessee Trial Practices	Yes	Yes
POLS 4730	First Amendment Law and Analysis	Yes	Yes
POLS 4910	Seminar in Public Law	Yes	Yes
POLS 4911	Special Projects	Yes	Yes
POLS 4920	Seminar in Comparative Politics	Yes	Yes
POLS 4950	Political Participation Internship	Yes	Yes

Appendix 2: Cyber Crime, Law and Society Minor



Cyber Minor
Curriculum.pdf