For Academic Programs

Informed by your assessment activities related to student learning, what changes have you made in your degree program in the last three to five years? Describe the changes (e.g., curriculum revision, new courses, faculty development), the general results that prompted the changes (e.g., student performance on an assessment measure), and any impact on student learning that you might attribute to these changes.

Primary assessment of Masters of Public Administration occurs during comprehensive exams and research methods courses. MPA students are expected to describe the literature and synthesize the literature in comprehensive exams. These assessment measures were put into place due to inadequate description and synthesis of the literature in MPA comprehensive exams. Subsequent assessment suggests that some students continue to struggle in these areas. The determination was made, based on assessment measures, that we were requiring the MPA students to test in too many subfields. We reduced the number of subfield comprehensive exams from three to two, which is more common in MPA programs across the country. Generating research questions, hypotheses, and mastery of statistical concepts are other areas of assessment of MPA students. The ability to generate research questions and hypotheses is assessed in PSC 521 (Research Design). Assessment data will be gathered and reported in the next assessment reporting cycle. Mastery of statistical concepts is measured in PSC 522 (Quantitative Analysis 1). Assessment data suggest that most students fall into the 'adequate' category. We will continue to monitor MPA student progress on this important assessment measure. In addition, we assess MPA student ability to apply theory to real world issues. This is an assessment measure that has been in place for two years. Assessment occurs in two courses, PSC 664 (Problems in Public Policy) and PSC 667 (Public Budgeting). Thus far, all students have been assessed as either exemplary or adequate in ability to apply theory to real issues.

Mission / Purpose

The Department of Political Science at the University of Alabama seeks to meet the highest standards of research, teaching, and service. In research, it examines important questions of political institutions, behavior, and thought. It strives for publication in outlets of the highest quality and visibility to achieve maximum exposure for its ideas and to have the greatest impact on peers in the academy and on policy makers. In teaching, the Department provides undergraduate students with timely information about the political world and instruction that enhances their skills as citizens and future leaders. At the graduate level, the Department is the only full-service program in political science in the state of Alabama, preparing students for successful careers in teaching, research, and government service. At all levels, the Department strives to enhance appreciation for the science of politics and to inspire the quest for truth and excellence in the study and practice of politics. The Department commits itself to serve the profession by contributing to its growth and improvement; to serve the institution through participation in its governing structures; and to serve the community by sharing ideas and helping to provide perspective on political issues for decision makers and citizens.

Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

SLO 1: Mastery of PA literature

Students will demonstrate the ability to understand, evaluate, and synthesize the literature in the field of Public Administration.

Connected Documents
Curriculum Map II-Public Administration M.A
Curriculum Maps I-Public Administration M.A

Related Measures

M 1: Accurately Describe PA literature

We will assess this outcome by evaluating the extent to which students correctly describe the relevant literature in the Masters of Public Administration Comprehensive Exams.

Source of Evidence: Comprehensive/end-of-program subject matter exam

Target:
No target established.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

Revise Comprehensive Exam Process

We plan to revise the comprehensive exam process to focus on the core literature in public administration. Currently, MPA students are required to complete comprehensive exams in the specific areas of concentration as well as the core literature. We plan to eliminate comprehensive exams in the areas of concentration. This change stems from disappointing results in the quality of the students' answers to comprehensive exam questions and from our perception that fewer the comprehensive exam process as currently configured is too cumbersome. We hope that by allowing our graduate students to focus their preparation for these exams on a smaller amount of material that they will produce better answers on their comprehensive exams.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
  Measure: Accurately Describe PA literature | Outcome/Objective: Mastery of PA literature

Implementation Description: We will begin the process of implementing this change during the 2012-2013 academic year. However, the change may require approval from the Graduate School, and so may not be fully implemented this academic year.

Projected Completion Date: 05/2014

M 2: Correctly Synthesize PA Literature
We will assess this outcome by evaluating the extent to which students adequately synthesize the relevant literature into a coherent essay for the Masters of Public Administration Comprehensive Exams.
Source of Evidence: Comprehensive/end-of-program subject matter exam
Target: No target established.

SLO 2: Demonstrate Methodological Skill
Students will demonstrate the methodological skills necessary to succeed in the public sector.

Connected Documents
  Curriculum Map II-Public Administration M.A
  Curriculum Maps I-Public Administration M.A

Related Measures

M 3: Basic Probability and Statistics
We will assess this outcome through a course-embedded assessment in PSC 522 (Quantitative Analysis I) covering probability and basic statistical concepts. Results of this assessment will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other
Target: At least 90 percent of the students will be adequate or exemplary in their mastery of basic probability and statistics.

M 4: Interpretation of Complex Statistical Analyses
We will assess this outcome through a course-embedded assessment PSC 522 (Quantitative Analysis I) covering the interpretation of the results of more complex statistical analyses. Results of this assessment will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other
Target: At least 90 percent of the students will be adequate or exemplary in their ability to interpret the results of complex statistical analyses.

SLO 3: Apply Learning to Real PA Issues
Students should demonstrate the ability to apply information taught in class to real-life public administration problems.

Connected Documents
  Curriculum Map II-Public Administration M.A
  Curriculum Maps I-Public Administration M.A

Related Measures

M 5: Knowledge Gain in Public Administration
We will assess this outcome in PSC 565 (Survey of Public Administration) through diagnostic tests administered at the beginning of the course and again at the end of the course. Results of these tests will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Faculty pre-test / post-test of knowledge mastery
Target: No Target Established

M 6: Ability to Apply Theory to Real Issues
We will assess this outcome in PSC664 (Problems of Public Policy) and 667 (Public Budgeting) using assignments designed to test the students’ abilities to apply the theories and concepts of public personnel management to real-world controversies. Results of these assignments will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric
Target: No Target Established

Other Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

OthOtcm 4: Program Outcome: High Level of Recognized Quality
The program will improve and sustain a high level of recognized quality.

Related Measures

M 7: Strengths from Program Review
A list of the strengths of the department from the most recent program review (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

M 8: Opportunities from program review
A list of the opportunities for improvement from the most recent program review (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.
M 9: List of recommendations
A list of recommendations (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.

M 10: List of actions in response to the recommendation
A list of actions in response to the recommendation (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.

M 11: Summary of impacts
A summary of the impacts of the actions (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.

M 12: Survey done by graduating seniors
Graduating seniors complete a survey, including a question asking them to rate the overall quality of the major. The percent of students choosing each possible response to the question will be reported. This assessment is aimed at the undergraduate majors, so no data will be reported for this assessment.

OthOtcm 5: Program Outcome: Sustain Optimal Level of Enrollment
The program will build and sustain an optimal level of annual program enrollments and degree completion.

Related Measures

M 13: Number of Students in Master Program
We will assess this outcome using the number of students in the graduate program for the last three fall semesters.
Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target:
No target established.

M 14: Comparing the number of degrees awarded to ACHE
We will assess this outcome by comparing the number of degrees awarded in the last three years with the ACHE viability standards.
Source of Evidence: Benchmarking of learning outcomes against peers

Target:
We intend to maintain the number of degrees at a number greater or equal to the ACHE standard of 3.75 degrees per year.

OthOtcm 6: Program Outcome: Highly Valued by Program Graduates
The program will be highly valued by its program graduates and other key constituencies it serves.

Related Measures

M 15: Employment rate
We will assess this outcome using data on the extent to which graduates of the program are able to find employment related to the discipline. The percent of students choosing each possible response to the question will be reported. This assessment is aimed at the undergraduate majors, so no data will be reported for this assessment.
Source of Evidence: Job placement data, esp. for career/tech areas

M 16: Evaluation of the value of the program
We will assess this outcome using a survey of current graduate students aimed at eliciting their evaluations of the value of the program in terms of helping them reach their career goals. The percent of students choosing each possible response to the question will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Student course evaluations on learning gains made

Target:
No target established.

OthOtcm 7: Department Outcome: Faculty Contribution
The Department expects its faculty to contribute to the discipline through the publication of significant and visible research.

Related Measures

M 17: Faculty Publications
The Department Chair monitors each faculty member's publications through the annual Faculty Activity Report and will report the total number of refereed publications and average number per faculty for the past 3 years. Our general expectation is that total refereed publications, forthcoming and in print (including books, articles, and book chapters), will meet or exceed 1.5 contributions per faculty member per year. This is an increase from last year's expectation of 1.0 contribution per faculty member.
Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target:
Our general expectation is that total refereed publications, forthcoming and in print (including books, articles, and book chapters), will meet or exceed 1.5 contributions per faculty member per year. This is an increase from last year's expectation of 1.0 contribution per faculty member.

M 18: Faculty Research Presentations
The Department Chair monitors faculty research presentations at national and regional academic conferences through the annual Faculty Activity Report and will report the total number of presentations and average number per faculty. The expectation is that total research presentations will meet or exceed one presentation per year per faculty.
OthOtcm 8: Department Outcome: Faculty Service
The Department expects its faculty, where appropriate, to serve the discipline of political science and the Alabama community.

Related Measures

M 19: Faculty Service to the Community
The Department Chair monitors each faculty member’s service to the Alabama community, including interviews to members of the press and presentations to community groups, through the annual faculty activity reports. The number and types of service to the community will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target:
No target established

M 20: Faculty Service to the Discipline
The Department Chair monitors service to the discipline, including reviewing journal articles and service to disciplinary organizations, through the annual faculty activity report. The number and types of service to the discipline will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target:
No Target Set

OthOtcm 9: Department Outcome: Provide adequate course availability
The department will provide adequate course availability to allow students to finish the Political Science and International Studies majors within 5 years.

Related Measures

M 21: time-to-degree data
This outcome was not intended to be assessed with regard to this degree program. No data was collected.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target:
No target established.

M 22: Students’ perceptions of the availability of courses
This assessment is aimed at the undergraduate program, so no findings will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Student course evaluations on learning gains made

OthOtcm 10: Department Outcome: Competitiveness in Graduate Acceptance and Placement
The department expects its undergraduate majors and graduate students to be competitive with other students throughout the United States in terms of admission to graduate study or obtaining employment related to political science.

Related Measures

M 23: Exit Survey Results
We will assess this outcome by using an exit survey to gather information on the proportion of MPA, MA, and PhD program graduates who have secured employment or job interviews in public administration, political science, or a related field.

Source of Evidence: Student satisfaction survey at end of the program

Target:
No target set.

M 24: Survey questions related to the quality of the major
This assessment is aimed at the undergraduate program, so no findings will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Student satisfaction survey at end of the program

Details of Action Plans for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)

Revise Comprehensive Exam Process
We plan to revise the comprehensive exam process to focus on the core literature in public administration. Currently, MPA students are required to complete comprehensive exams in the specific areas of concentration as well as the core literature. We plan to eliminate comprehensive exams in the areas of concentration. This change stems from disappointing results in the quality of the students’ answers to comprehensive exam questions and from our perception that fewer the comprehensive exam process as currently configured is too cumbersome. We hope that by allowing our graduate students to focus their preparation for these exams on a smaller amount of material that they will produce better answers on their comprehensive exams.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Accurately Describe PA literature | Outcome/Objective: Mastery of PA literature

Implementation Description: We will begin the process of implementing this change during the 2012-2013 academic year. However, the change may require approval from the Graduate School, and so may not be fully implemented this
academic year.
Projected Completion Date: 05/2014
Mission / Purpose

The Department of Political Science at the University of Alabama seeks to meet the highest standards of research, teaching, and service. In research, it examines important questions of political institutions, behavior, and thought. It strives for publication in outlets of the highest quality and visibility to achieve maximum exposure for its ideas and to have the greatest impact on peers in the academy and on policy makers. In teaching, the Department provides undergraduate students with timely information about the political world and instruction that enhances their skills as citizens and future leaders. At the graduate level, the Department is the only full-service program in political science in the state of Alabama, preparing students for successful careers in teaching, research, and government service. At all levels, the Department strives to enhance appreciation for the science of politics and to inspire the quest for truth and excellence in the study and practice of politics. The Department commits itself to serve the profession by contributing to its growth and improvement; to serve the institution through participation in its governing structures; and to serve the community by sharing ideas and helping to provide perspective on political issues for decision makers and citizens.

Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

SLO 1: Mastery of PA literature
Students will demonstrate the ability to understand, evaluate, and synthesize the literature in the field of Public Administration.

Connected Documents
- Curriculum Map II-Public Administration M.A
- Curriculum Maps I-Public Administration M.A

Related Measures

M 1: Accurately Describe PA literature
We will assess this outcome by evaluating the extent to which students correctly describe the relevant literature in the Masters of Public Administration Comprehensive Exams.

Source of Evidence: Comprehensive/end-of-program subject matter exam

Target: No target established.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle

Results Summary: We assessed this outcome by evaluating the extent to which students correctly described the relevant literature in each individual essay written for the Masters of Public Administration Comprehensive Exams. Results: 0 exemplary, 14 adequate, and 2 inadequate. Interpretations and Conclusions: No target is established for this measure. While we would like to see more exemplary essays, the vast majority were adequate, with only two inadequate essay responses.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

Revise Comprehensive Exam Process
We plan to revise the comprehensive exam process to focus on the core literature in public administration. Currently, MPA students are required to complete comprehensive exams in the specific areas of concentration as well as the core literature. We plan to eliminate comprehensive exams in the areas of concentration. This change stems from disappointing results in the quality of the students’ answers to comprehensive exam questions and from our perception that fewer the comprehensive exam process as currently configured is too cumbersome. We hope that by allowing our graduate students to focus their preparation for these exams on a smaller amount of material that they will produce better answers on their comprehensive exams.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):

Measure: Accurately Describe PA literature | Outcome/Objective: Mastery of PA literature

Implementation Description: We will begin the process of implementing this change during the 2012-2013 academic year. However, the change may require approval from the Graduate School, and so may not be fully implemented this academic year.

Projected Completion Date: 05/2014

M 2: Correctly Synthesize PA Literature
We will assess this outcome by evaluating the extent to which students adequately synthesize the relevant literature into a coherent essay for the Masters of Public Administration Comprehensive Exams.

Source of Evidence: Comprehensive/end-of-program subject matter exam

Target: No target established.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle

Results Summary: We assessed this outcome by evaluating the extent to which students adequately
synthesized the relevant literature into a coherent essay in each individual essay written for the Masters of Public Administration Comprehensive Exams. Results: 2 exemplary, 14 adequate, 0 inadequate. Interpretations and Conclusions: While we would like to see more exemplary essays, we are pleased there were no inadequate essays. No changes are planned.

**SLO 2: Demonstrate Methodological Skill**

Students will demonstrate the methodological skills necessary to succeed in the public sector.

**Connected Documents**

Curriculum Map II-Public Administration M.A
Curriculum Maps I-Public Administration M.A

**Related Measures**

**M 3: Basic Probability and Statistics**

We will assess this outcome through a course-embedded assessment in PSC 522 (Quantitative Analysis I) covering probability and basic statistical concepts. Results of this assessment will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

**Target:**

At least 90 percent of the students will be adequate or exemplary in their mastery of basic probability and statistics.

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met**

Results Summary: Instructor in PSC 522 used course-embedded assessments to evaluate students’ abilities in basic probability and statistics. Results from the 6 MPA students in the course: 0 exemplary, 6 adequate, 0 inadequate. Interpretations and Conclusions: We met our goal and no changes are planned.

**M 4: Interpretation of Complex Statistical Analyses**

We will assess this outcome through a course-embedded assessment PSC 522 (Quantitative Analysis I) covering the interpretation of the results of more complex statistical analyses. Results of this assessment will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other

**Target:**

At least 90 percent of the students will be adequate or exemplary in their ability to interpret the results of complex statistical analyses.

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met**

Results Summary: Instructor in PSC 522 used course-embedded assessments to evaluate students’ abilities to estimate and interpret the results of an ordinary least squares regression. Results from the 6 MPA students in the course: 0 exemplary, 6 adequate, 0 inadequate. Interpretations and Conclusions: We met our target and no changes are planned.

**SLO 3: Apply Learning to Real PA Issues**

Students should demonstrate the ability to apply information taught in class to real-life public administration problems.

**Connected Documents**

Curriculum Map II-Public Administration M.A
Curriculum Maps I-Public Administration M.A

**Related Measures**

**M 5: Knowledge Gain in Public Administration**

We will assess this outcome in PSC 565 (Survey of Public Administration) through diagnostic tests administered at the beginning of the course and again at the end of the course. Results of these tests will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Faculty pre-test / post-test of knowledge mastery

**Target:**

No Target Established

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**

Data are not currently available.

**M 6: Ability to Apply Theory to Real Issues**

We will assess this outcome in PSC664 (Problems of Public Policy) and 667 (Public Budgeting) using assignments designed to test the students’ abilities to apply the theories and concepts of public personnel management to real-world controversies. Results of these assignments will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric

**Target:**

No Target Established

**Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**

Results Summary: Instructor in PSC 664 (“Problems in Public Policy”) evaluated students’ success in writing a policy analysis to inform elected officials, public managers and the public about the policy alternatives for handling an issue of public policy. Results from this assessment: 7 exemplary, 4 adequate, 0 inadequate. Instructor for PSC 667 (“Public Budgeting”) assessed the students’ abilities to write a professional report on a public budgeting issue to inform elected officials, public managers, and the public about the issue and identify a recommended course of action. There were 4 exemplary and 4 adequate. Interpretations and Conclusions All students performed at an adequate or exemplary level. Although we did not establish a target, these results are very encouraging. No changes are planned.

**Other Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans**

**OthOtcm 4: Program Outcome: High Level of Recognized Quality**

The program will improve and sustain a high level of recognized quality.

**Related Measures**
M 7: Strengths from Program Review
A list of the strengths of the department from the most recent program review (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

M 8: Opportunities from program review
A list of the opportunities for improvement from the most recent program review (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

M 9: List of recommendations
A list of recommendations (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

M 10: List of actions in response to the recommendation
A list of actions in response to the recommendation (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

M 11: Summary of impacts
A summary of the impacts of the actions (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

M 12: Survey done by graduating seniors
Graduating seniors complete a survey, including a question asking them to rate the overall quality of the major. The percent of students choosing each possible response to the question will be reported. This assessment is aimed at the undergraduate majors, so no data will be reported for this assessment.

Source of Evidence: Student satisfaction survey at end of the program

OthOtm 5: Program Outcome: Sustain Optimal Level of Enrollment
The program will build and sustain an optimal level of annual program enrollments and degree completion.

Related Measures

M 13: Number of Students in Master Program
We will assess this outcome using the number of students in the graduate program for the last three fall semesters.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target:
No target established.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Results Summary: We assess this outcome using data on students enrolled from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. In Fall semester 2012 there were 13 students enrolled in the MPA Program. In Fall 2011 there were 15 students enrolled in the MPA Program, compared with 13 in Fall 2010. Interpretations and Conclusions: Although we did not establish a target for this assessment, these numbers indicate a sustainable and growing population of students in the program. No changes are planned.

M 14: Comparing the number of degrees awarded to ACHE
We will assess this outcome by comparing the number of degrees awarded in the last three years with the ACHE viability standards.

Source of Evidence: Benchmarking of learning outcomes against peers

Target:
We intend to maintain the number of degrees at a number greater or equal to the ACHE standard of 3.75 degrees per year.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
Results Summary: The number of degrees awarded by the Masters of Public Administration program was 3 in degree year 2010, 8 in 2011 and 9 in 2012. The average of these three years is 6.67 degrees per year. Interpretations and Conclusions: This number is well above the ACHE standard for a Master's program. The trend is also positive. No changes are planned.

OthOtm 6: Program Outcome: Highly Valued by Program Graduates
The program will be highly valued by its program graduates and other key constituencies it serves.

Related Measures

M 15: Employment rate
We will assess this outcome using data on the extent to which graduates of the program are able to find employment related to the discipline. The percent of students choosing each possible response to the question will be reported. This assessment is aimed at the undergraduate majors, so no data will be reported for this assessment.

Source of Evidence: Job placement data, esp. for career/tech areas

M 16: Evaluation of the value of the program
We will assess this outcome using a survey of current graduate students aimed at eliciting their evaluations of the value of the program in terms of helping them reach their career goals. The percent of students choosing each possible response to the question will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Student course evaluations on learning gains made

Target:
No target established.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Data are not available at this time.
OthOtcm 7: Department Outcome: Faculty Contribution
The Department expects its faculty to contribute to the discipline through the publication of significant and visible research.

Related Measures

M 17: Faculty Publications
The Department Chair monitors each faculty member's publications through the annual Faculty Activity Report and will report the total number of refereed publications and average number per faculty for the past 3 years. Our general expectation is that total refereed publications, forthcoming and in print (including books, articles, and book chapters), will meet or exceed 1.5 contributions per faculty member per year. This is an increase from last year's expectation of 1.0 contribution per faculty member.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other
Target:
Our general expectation is that total refereed publications, forthcoming and in print (including books, articles, and book chapters), will meet or exceed 1.5 contributions per faculty member per year. This is an increase from last year's expectation of 1.0 contribution per faculty member.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
Results Summary: We assessed faculty publication rates by counting the number of publications (forthcoming and in print) listed in Faculty Activity Reports for the period from April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013. The 19 faculty had a total of 41 forthcoming and in print publications. Interpretations and Conclusions: The number of publications for the department exceeds the target for this assessment. No changes are planned.

M 18: Faculty Research Presentations
The Department Chair monitors faculty research presentations at national and regional academic conferences through the annual Faculty Activity Report and will report the total number of presentations and average number per faculty. The expectation is that total research presentations will meet or exceed one presentation per year per faculty.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other
Target:
The expectation is that total research presentations will meet or exceed one presentation per year per faculty.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Met
Results Summary: We assessed faculty presentation rates by counting the number of research presentations listed in Faculty Activity Reports for the period from April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013. The faculty made 45 such research presentations. This is an average of 2.4 presentations per faculty member.

Interpretations and Conclusions: The 2.4 presentations per faculty member exceeds the target for this assessment. No changes are planned.

OthOtcm 8: Department Outcome: Faculty Service
The Department expects its faculty, where appropriate, to serve the discipline of political science and the Alabama community.

Related Measures

M 19: Faculty Service to the Community
The Department Chair monitors each faculty member's service to the Alabama community, including interviews to members of the press and presentations to community groups, through the annual faculty activity reports. The number and types of service to the community will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other
Target:
No target established

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Results Summary: We assessed faculty service to the community by counting the numbers of press contacts and presentations to community groups listed in Faculty Activity Reports for the period from April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013. Although press contacts were not systematically reported, department faculty members appeared in various media as experts at least 20 times. The largest number of such appearances were by Department Chair Dr. Richard Fording. Interpretations and Conclusions: Although we did not establish a target for this assessment, the results show that the Political Science Faculty is an valued resource for the local, state, and national media, and that appearances in the media promote the University's scholarly image. No changes are planned.

M 20: Faculty Service to the Discipline
The Department Chair monitors service to the discipline, including reviewing journal articles and service to disciplinary organizations, through the annual faculty activity report. The number and types of service to the discipline will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other
Target:
No Target Set

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Results Summary: We assessed faculty service to the discipline by counting the numbers of scholarly reviews listed in Faculty Activity Reports for the period from April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013. Our faculty reviewed 98 manuscripts during the period. Interpretations and Conclusions: Although we did not establish a target for this assessment, the results show that the Political Science Faculty is active in service to the discipline. No changes are planned.

OthOtcm 9: Department Outcome: Provide adequate course availability
The department will provide adequate course availability to allow students to finish the Political Science and International
Studies majors within 5 years.

Related Measures

M 21: time-to-degree data
This outcome was not intended to be assessed with regard to this degree program. No data was collected.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target:
No target established.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Data are not available at this time.

M 22: Students' perceptions of the availability of courses
This assessment is aimed at the undergraduate program, so no findings will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Student course evaluations on learning gains made

OthOtcm 10: Department Outcome: Competitiveness in Graduate Acceptance and Placement
The department expects its undergraduate majors and graduate students to be competitive with other students throughout the United States in terms of admission to graduate study or obtaining employment related to political science.

Related Measures

M 23: Exit Survey Results
We will assess this outcome by using an exit survey to gather information on the proportion of MPA, MA, and PhD program graduates who have secured employment or job interviews in public administration, political science, or a related field.

Source of Evidence: Student satisfaction survey at end of the program

Target:
No target set.

Finding (2012-2013) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Data are not available at this time.

M 24: Survey questions related to the quality of the major
This assessment is aimed at the undergraduate program, so no findings will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Student satisfaction survey at end of the program

Details of Action Plans for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)

Revise Comprehensive Exam Process
We plan to revise the comprehensive exam process to focus on the core literature in public administration. Currently, MPA students are required to complete comprehensive exams in the specific areas of concentration as well as the core literature. We plan to eliminate comprehensive exams in the areas of concentration. This change stems from disappointing results in the quality of the students' answers to comprehensive exam questions and from our perception that fewer the comprehensive exam process as currently configured is too cumbersome. We hope that by allowing our graduate students to focus their preparation for these exams on a smaller amount of material that they will produce better answers on their comprehensive exams.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
  Measure: Accurately Describe PA literature | Outcome/Objective: Mastery of PA literature

Implementation Description: We will begin the process of implementing this change during the 2012-2013 academic year. However, the change may require approval from the Graduate School, and so may not be fully implemented this academic year.

Projected Completion Date: 05/2014
Mission / Purpose

The Department of Political Science at the University of Alabama seeks to meet the highest standards of research, teaching, and service. In research, it examines important questions of political institutions, behavior, and thought. It strives for publication in outlets of the highest quality and visibility to achieve maximum exposure for its ideas and to have the greatest impact on peers in the academy and on policy makers. In teaching, the Department provides undergraduate students with timely information about the political world and instruction that enhances their skills as citizens and future leaders. At the graduate level, the Department is the only full-service program in political science in the state of Alabama, preparing students for successful careers in teaching, research, and government service. At all levels, the Department strives to enhance appreciation for the science of politics and to inspire the quest for truth and excellence in the study and practice of politics. The Department commits itself to serve the profession by contributing to its growth and improvement; to serve the institution through participation in its governing structures; and to serve the community by sharing ideas and helping to provide perspective on political issues for decision makers and citizens.

Student Learning Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans

SLO 1: Mastery of PA literature
Students will demonstrate the ability to understand, evaluate, and synthesize the literature in the field of Public Administration.

Connected Documents
Curriculum Map II - Public Administration M.A
Curriculum Maps I - Public Administration M.A

Related Measures

M 1: Accurately Describe PA literature
We will assess this outcome by evaluating the extent to which students correctly describe the relevant literature in the Masters of Public Administration Comprehensive Exams.

Source of Evidence: Comprehensive/end-of-program subject matter exam

Target:
No target established.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle

Results Summary
We assessed this outcome by evaluating the extent to which students correctly described the relevant literature in each individual essay written for the Masters of Public Administration Comprehensive Exams.
Results: 2 exemplary, 12 adequate, and 6 inadequate.

Interpretations and Conclusions
Seventy percent of the essays were adequate or exemplary. This is a lower proportion than we would hope for. One problem may be that the breadth and variety of material tested on the exams as they are currently configured may be unrealistic for students to master. We plan to change the nature of the MPA comprehensive exams to allow students to focus on the core literature in public administration. These changes are outlined in the action plan for this degree program.

Related Action Plans (by Established cycle, then alpha):

Revise Comprehensive Exam Process
We plan to revise the comprehensive exam process to focus on the core literature in public administration. Currently, MPA students are required to complete comprehensive exams in the specific areas of concentration as well as the core literature. We plan to eliminate comprehensive exams in the areas of concentration. This change stems from disappointing results in the quality of the students’ answers to comprehensive exam questions and from our perception that fewer the comprehensive exam process as currently configured is too cumbersome. We hope that by allowing our graduate students to focus their preparation for these exams on a smaller amount of material that they will produce better answers on their comprehensive exams.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Accurately Describe PA literature | Outcome/Objective: Mastery of PA literature

Implementation Description: We will begin the process of implementing this change during the 2012-2013 academic year. However, the change may require approval from the Graduate School, and so may not be fully implemented this academic year.

Projected Completion Date: 05/2014

M 2: Correctly Synthesize PA Literature
We will assess this outcome by evaluating the extent to which students adequately synthesize the relevant literature into a coherent essay for the Masters of Public Administration Comprehensive Exams.

Source of Evidence: Comprehensive/end-of-program subject matter exam
Target:
No target established.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Results Summary
We assessed this outcome by evaluating the extent to which students adequately synthesized the relevant literature into a coherent essay in each individual essay written for the Masters of Public Administration Comprehensive Exams. Results: 1 exemplary, 17 adequate, 3 inadequate.

Interpretations and Conclusions
Eighty-six percent of the essays were exemplary or adequate. No changes are planned.

SLO 2: Demonstrate Methodological Skill
Students will demonstrate the methodological skills necessary to succeed in the public sector.

Connected Documents
Curriculum Map II-Public Administration M.A
Curriculum Maps I-Public Administration M.A

Related Measures

M 3: Basic Probability and Statistics
We will assess this outcome through a course-embedded assessment in PSC 522 (Quantitative Analysis I) covering probability and basic statistical concepts. Results of this assessment will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other
Target:
At least 90 percent of the students will be adequate or exemplary in their mastery of basic probability and statistics.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
Results Summary
Instructor in PSC 522 used course-embedded assessments to evaluate students’ abilities in basic probability and statistics. Results from the 3 MA students in the course: 0 exemplary, 3 adequate, 0 inadequate.

Interpretations and Conclusions
All of the students were at least adequate in their mastery of basic probability and statistics. No changes are planned.

M 4: Interpretation of Complex Statistical Analyses
We will assess this outcome through a course-embedded assessment PSC 522 (Quantitative Analysis I) covering the interpretation of the results of more complex statistical analyses. Results of this assessment will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Academic direct measure of learning - other
Target:
At least 90 percent of the students will be adequate or exemplary in their ability to interpret the results of complex statistical analyses.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Met
Results Summary
Instructor in PSC 522 used course-embedded assessments to evaluate students’ abilities to estimate and interpret the results of an ordinary least squares regression. Results from the 3 MPA students in the course: 0 exemplary, 2 adequate, 1 inadequate.

Interpretations and Conclusions
Sixty-seven percent of the students performed at an adequate or exemplary level, which is below our target.

SLO 3: Apply Learning to Real PA Issues
Students should demonstrate the ability to apply information taught in class to real-life public administration problems.

Connected Documents
Curriculum Map II-Public Administration M.A
Curriculum Maps I-Public Administration M.A

Related Measures

M 5: Knowledge Gain in Public Administration
We will assess this outcome in PSC 565 (Survey of Public Administration) through diagnostic tests administered at the beginning of the course and again at the end of the course. Results of these tests will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Faculty pre-test / post-test of knowledge mastery
Target:
No Target Established

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
The post-course diagnostic test was not administered, so we have no data at this time.

M 6: Ability to Apply Theory to Real Issues
We will assess this outcome in PSC 664 (Problems of Public Policy) and 667 (Public Budgeting) using assignments designed to test the students’ abilities to apply the theories and concepts of public personnel management to real-world controversies. Results of these assignments will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Written assignment(s), usually scored by a rubric
Target:
No Target Established

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Results Summary
Instructor in PSC 664 ("Problems in Public Policy") evaluated students' success in writing a policy analysis to inform elected officials, public managers and the public about the policy alternatives for handling an issue of public policy. Results from this assessment: 4 exemplary, 7 adequate, 0 inadequate.

Instructor for PSC 667 ("Public Budgeting") assessed the students' abilities to successfully construct a policy memo informing government officials about an issue of public budgeting. Results from this assessment: 5 exemplary, 5 adequate, 0 inadequate.

**Interpretations and Conclusions**
All students performed at an adequate or exemplary level. Although we did not establish a target, these results are very encouraging. No changes are planned.

**Other Outcomes, with Any Associations and Related Measures, Targets, Findings, and Action Plans**

OthOutcm 4: Program Outcome: High Level of Recognized Quality
The program will improve and sustain a high level of recognized quality.

**Related Measures**

**M 7: Strengths from Program Review**
A list of the strengths of the department from the most recent program review (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**M 8: Opportunities from program review**
A list of the opportunities for improvement from the most recent program review (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**M 9: List of recommendations**
A list of recommendations (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**M 10: List of actions in response to the recommendation**
A list of actions in response to the recommendation (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**M 11: Summary of impacts**
A summary of the impacts of the actions (specific to the MA in Public Administration) will be reported.
Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**M 12: Survey done by graduating seniors**
Graduating seniors complete a survey, including a question asking them to rate the overall quality of the major. The percent of students choosing each possible response to the question will be reported. This assessment is aimed at the undergraduate majors, so no data will be reported for this assessment.
Source of Evidence: Student satisfaction survey at end of the program

OthOutcm 5: Program Outcome: Sustain Optimal Level of Enrollment
The program will build and sustain an optimal level of annual program enrollments and degree completion.

**Related Measures**

**M 13: Number of Students in Master Program**
We will assess this outcome using the number of students in the graduate program for the last three fall semesters.
Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

**Target:**
No target established.

**Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle**
Results Summary We assess this outcome using data on students enrolled from the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. In fall semester 2011 there were 15 students enrolled in the Masters Program in Political Science, compared with 13 in fall 2010 and 11 in fall 2009.

Interpretations and Conclusions
Although we did not establish a target for this assessment, these numbers indicate a sustainable and growing population of students in the program. No changes are planned.

**M 14: Comparing the number of degrees awarded to ACHE**
We will assess this outcome by comparing the number of degrees awarded in the last three years with the ACHE viability standards.
Source of Evidence: Benchmarking of learning outcomes against peers

**Target:**
We intend to maintain the number of degrees at a number greater or equal to the ACHE standard of 3.75 degrees per year.

**Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met**
Results Summary
The number of degrees awarded by the Masters of Public Administration program was 3 in degree year 2010, 8 in 2011 and 9 in 2012. The average of these three years is 6.67 degrees per year.

Interpretations and Conclusions
This number is well above the ACHE standard for a Master's program. The trend is also positive. No change
are planned.

OthOtcm 6: Program Outcome: Highly Valued by Program Graduates
The program will be highly valued by its program graduates and other key constituencies it serves.

Related Measures

M 15: Employment rate
We will assess this outcome using data on the extent to which graduates of the program are able to find employment related to the discipline. The percent of students choosing each possible response to the question will be reported. This assessment is aimed at the undergraduate majors, so no data will be reported for this assessment.

Source of Evidence: Job placement data, esp. for career/tech areas

M 16: Evaluation of the value of the program
We will assess this outcome using a survey of current graduate students aimed at eliciting their evaluations of the value of the program in terms of helping them reach their career goals. The percent of students choosing each possible response to the question will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Student course evaluations on learning gains made

Target: No target established.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Data are not available at this time.

OthOtcm 7: Department Outcome: Faculty Contribution
The Department expects its faculty to contribute to the discipline through the publication of significant and visible research.

Related Measures

M 17: Faculty Publications
The Department Chair monitors each faculty member's publications through the annual Faculty Activity Report and will report the total number of refereed publications and average number per faculty for the past 3 years. Our general expectation is that total refereed publications, forthcoming and in print (including books, articles, and book chapters), will meet or exceed 1.5 contributions per faculty member per year. This is an increase from last year's expectation of 1.0 contribution per faculty member.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target:
Our general expectation is that total refereed publications, forthcoming and in print (including books, articles, and book chapters), will meet or exceed 1.5 contributions per faculty member per year. This is an increase from last year's expectation of 1.0 contribution per faculty member.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
Results Summary We assessed faculty publication rates by counting the number of publications listed in Faculty Activity Reports for the period from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012. The faculty produced 18 journal articles, four books and seven book chapters during that period, for a total of 29 published contributions. This is an average of 1.61 contributions per faculty member. Interpretations and Conclusions The 1.61 contributions per faculty member exceeds the target for this assessment. No changes are planned.

M 18: Faculty Research Presentations
The Department Chair monitors faculty research presentations at national and regional academic conferences through the annual Faculty Activity Report and will report the total number of presentations and average number per faculty. The expectation is that total research presentations will meet or exceed one presentation per year per faculty.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target:
The expectation is that total research presentations will meet or exceed one presentation per year per faculty.

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Met
Results Summary We assessed faculty presentation rates by counting the number of research presentations listed in Faculty Activity Reports for the period from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012. The faculty presented 25 such research presentations. This is an average of 1.4 presentations per faculty member. Interpretations and Conclusions The 1.4 presentations per faculty member exceeds the target for this assessment. No changes are planned.

OthOtcm 8: Department Outcome: Faculty Service
The Department expects its faculty, where appropriate, to serve the discipline of political science and the Alabama community.

Related Measures

M 19: Faculty Service to the Community
The Department Chair monitors each faculty member’s service to the Alabama community, including interviews to members of the press and presentations to community groups, through the annual faculty activity reports. The number and types of service to the community will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target:
No target established

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Results Summary We assessed faculty service to the community by counting the numbers of press contacts and presentations to community groups listed in Faculty Activity Reports for the period from April 1, 2011 to
March 31, 2012. Although press contacts were not systematically reported, department faculty members appeared in various media as experts at least 25 times. The largest number of such appearances were by Department Chair Dr. Richard Fording. In addition one of our faculty members, Dr. Norman Baldwin, supervised more than 150 students working in disaster relief after the tornado of April 27, 2011. Interpretations and Conclusions Although we did not establish a target for this assessment, the results show that the Political Science Faculty is an valued resource for the local, state, and national media, and that appearances in the media promote the University’s scholarly image. No changes are planned.

M 20: Faculty Service to the Discipline
The Department Chair monitors service to the discipline, including reviewing journal articles and service to disciplinary organizations, through the annual faculty activity report. The number and types of service to the discipline will be reported. Sources of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target: No Target Set

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Results Summary We assessed faculty service to the discipline by counting the numbers of scholarly reviews listed in Faculty Activity Reports for the period from April 1, 2011 to March 31, 2012. Our faculty reviewed 102 manuscripts during the period. Interpretations and Conclusions Although we did not establish a target for this assessment, the results show that the Political Science Faculty is active in service to the discipline. No changes are planned.

OthOtcm 9: Department Outcome: Provide adequate course availability
The department will provide adequate course availability to allow students to finish the Political Science and International Studies majors within 5 years.

Related Measures

M 21: time-to-degree data
This outcome was not intended to be assessed with regard to this degree program. No data was collected.

Source of Evidence: Academic indirect indicator of learning - other

Target: No Target Set

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Data are not available at this time.

M 22: Students’ perceptions of the availability of courses
This assessment is aimed at the undergraduate program, so no findings will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Student course evaluations on learning gains made

OthOtcm 10: Department Outcome: Competitiveness in Graduate Acceptance and Placement
The department expects its undergraduate majors and graduate students to be competitive with other students throughout the United States in terms of admission to graduate study or obtaining employment related to political science.

Related Measures

M 23: Exit Survey Results
We will assess this outcome by using an exit survey to gather information on the proportion of MPA, MA, and PhD program graduates who have secured employment or job interviews in public administration, political science, or a related field.

Source of Evidence: Student satisfaction survey at end of the program

Target: No target set

Finding (2011-2012) - Target: Not Reported This Cycle
Data are not available at this time.

M 24: Survey questions related to the quality of the major
This assessment is aimed at the undergraduate program, so no findings will be reported.

Source of Evidence: Student satisfaction survey at end of the program

Details of Action Plans for This Cycle (by Established cycle, then alpha)

Revise Comprehensive Exam Process
We plan to revise the comprehensive exam process to focus on the core literature in public administration. Currently, MPA students are required to complete comprehensive exams in the specific areas of concentration as well as the core literature. We plan to eliminate comprehensive exams in the areas of concentration. This change stems from disappointing results in the quality of the students’ answers to comprehensive exam questions and from our perception that fewer the comprehensive exam process as currently configured is too cumbersome. We hope that by allowing our graduate students to focus their preparation for these exams on a smaller amount of material that they will produce better answers on their comprehensive exams.

Established in Cycle: 2011-2012
Implementation Status: Planned
Priority: High

Relationships (Measure | Outcome/Objective):
Measure: Accurately Describe PA literature | Outcome/Objective: Mastery of PA literature

Implementation Description: We will begin the process of implementing this change during the 2012-2013 academic
year. However, the change may require approval from the Graduate School, and so may not be fully implemented this academic year.

**Projected Completion Date:** 05/2014
## Curriculum Map II  (What assessment measures will be employed in which courses/activities/assignments for each Student learning Outcome)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 1</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 2</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Describe, evaluate and synthesize literature.</td>
<td>Demonstrate methodological skills</td>
<td>Apply learning to real-world situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course 1</td>
<td>PSC 522</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course 3</td>
<td>PSC 562</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Course 4</td>
<td>PSC 565</td>
<td>Course-embedded assessments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course 4</td>
<td>PSC 664</td>
<td></td>
<td>Course-embedded assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Comprehensive Exams</strong></td>
<td>Rubric to evaluate comprehensive exams answers for accuracy and synthesis.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Curriculum Maps #1 (In which courses or in what activities or assignments are Student Learning Outcomes Addressed)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 1 Describe, evaluate and synthesize literature.</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 2 Demonstrate methodological skills</th>
<th>Student Learning Outcome 3 Apply learning to real-world situations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course 1</td>
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<td>PSC 522</td>
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<td>Course 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSC 667</td>
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<tr>
<td>Common Experience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Exams</td>
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