

Program Performance Review: Culmination Meeting Memo Political Science, BA and MA

The 2016-2017 Program Performance Review (PPR) process for Political Science - BA and MA programs concluded with a culmination meeting on February 16, 2018.

The following people attended the meeting: Kari Knutson Miller (Provost), Pamella Oliver (AVPAP), Sheryl Fontaine (Dean, HSS), Lynn Sargeant (Associate Dean, HSS), Matt Jarvis (Acting Chair), Sarah Hill (Coordinator for Political Science), Sam Stone (Incoming Coordinator for Public Administration) and Su Swarat (Asst. VP for Institutional Effectiveness).

The program was commended for the significant progress it has made since the last PPR. The Provost, in particular, highlighted the program's success in engaging students in immersive learning experiences (e.g. DC program, Moot Court, Model UN, and Town hall).

Major recommendations and concerns raised through the PPR process were discussed as follows:

1. Division climate:

- The Provost commended the division on its commitment to change the divisional climate, and recommended the division to work as a community, instead of in silos.
 - o The Chair indicated that the core issue is the RTP process, which has not been updated for 20 years. Faculty also did not have a shared understanding of the standards. To help resolve the issue, two Organizational Development facilitators visited the division in fall 2017, which was helpful. The Dean commented that the faculty's commitment significantly contributed to the success of the visit.
 - o The Chair reported that "healing" has taken place as the first step to improve divisional climate, but there is more work to be done. The RTP standards are being revised through a process that is intended to achieve "as much consensus as possible". The other work such as curriculum and assessment has been placed on hold to prioritize rebuilding the climate.

2. Student success:

- POSC 100 was a focus of discussion. The Provost inquired whether POSC 100 was the only "touch point" for political science, where faculty's interactions with the students help encourage more majors.
 - o The Chair commented that there are typically 9-10 POSC 100 sections per semester, taught in large classrooms. Due to the availability of large classrooms and to ensure equity between full-time and part-time faculties, these sections are often offered at undesirable times (e.g. early morning, evening). In order to accommodate more students and/or to offer classes at desired times, classrooms that can hold over 200 people (i.e. RGC 013 and SGMH 1502) are needed. The Provost acknowledged that access to dedicated large classrooms is a challenge on campus, and suggested the program explore other strategies. The Associate Dean commented that such explorations are taking place. For example, the division's success coordinators met with the Dean's Office to review relevant data to discuss student success strategies.
- The Provost commented that, given the GI 2025 context, POSC 100 could offer a robust learning experience for the students, a place where students make early yet meaningful connections with not only the program but the university. The Associate Dean echoed

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the statement, and suggested the captive nature of POSC 100 makes it an ideal location for student support. The program is encouraged to consider adopting similar practices as Criminal Justice in terms of student retention or as Psychology 101 in terms of a student early warning system.

- The Chair indicated that additional resources would be helpful to strengthen POSC 100's ability to contribute to student retention. The Dean suggested the program to consider embedding or connecting students with GAs in the Writing Center or the University Learning Center, reaching out to students during the NSO, incorporating Supplemental Instruction, and offering additional workshops targeting at-risk students.
- The Chair also suggested that outreach to 100 or 200 level students would be useful to attract majors. The program was encouraged to consider adding additional HIPs experience for majors only in these courses, as a way to balance limited resource and retaining majors.

3. Resource:

- The Dean suggested that the programs and the division should consider diversifying their revenue streams, not relying only on traditional funding sources such as the IRA. The successful fundraising practice by the DC Scholars program is a good example to follow.

4. PPR review schedule:

- The Chair requested that the PPR for BA-Public Administration takes place separately from the BA/MA-Political Science, so that focused attention could be paid to the program. The PPR schedule for MPA depends on its NASPAA accreditation cycle.

The Provost concluded the meeting by commending and thanking the contribution by the Political Science faculty to the students and the university.