

Program Assessment: *Annual Report*

Program(s): Public and Social Policy, Ph.D. Program.

Department: Sociology and Political Science

College/School: College of Arts and Sciences

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1. Which program student learning outcomes were assessed in this annual assessment cycle?

#2 Students will be able to identify and evaluate ethical problems related to research and public policy.

1. *This year we used the preliminary exam process that requires students to submit two papers, one demonstrating the ability to construct a researchable problem and marshal the theoretical and conceptual information necessary to demonstrate the importance of the problem for the field. The second paper focuses on the methodological processes necessary to research the problem. Students are then required to present and defend their papers, which then form the basis for the first two chapters of their dissertations. Students receive feedback from their examination panel and their dissertation chair in order to develop the papers into dissertation chapters. Students also participated in an informal research pro-seminar providing opportunities for them to reflect on their research and implications to evaluate potential ethical problems. (see rubric used for feedback to students – Appendix B)*
2. *As part of the exam, students are expected to explore, in the methods section, potential ethical problems with the study design of their research.*
3. *All new PSP students are required to take the CITI training and pass the test to learn about ethical problems in research. All students that took the CITI training passed the exam.*

2. What data/artifacts of student learning were collected for each assessed outcome? Were Madrid student artifacts included?

1. *We collected the written exams for the Fall 2017 and Spring 2018.*
2. *Annual evaluations were collected from students. The annual evaluations give students the opportunity to share their professional development activities such as CITI training.*
3. *No artifacts were collected from the Madrid campus.*

3. How did you analyze the assessment data? What was the process? Who was involved?

NOTE: If you used rubrics as part of your analysis, please include them in an appendix.

1. *The PSP program used a rubric developed by the PSP faculty to assess the written exams. All core faculty members identified by the student as a potential dissertation committee member read the written exams. Two students took the written exam during this time period. One student passed the exam with an **exemplary score**. In the other case, the exams were shared with all core PSP faculty members for additional feedback to the student. This student was asked to revised the exams to address faculty comments for area of improvements.*
2. *All faculty members have access to all completed students evaluations, which are located on a shared drive. The results of the evaluations are shared with faculty members at the September core faculty meeting. At the beginning of the fall semester a detailed report is given to all core faculty members on each student and the overall assessment of the learning outcomes is reported to faculty members.*
3. *At the annual retreat, faculty members and students, review the results of the learning outcomes and provide feedback to refine the outcomes and rubrics that are used to measure the student learning outcomes.*

4. What did you learn from the data? Summarize the major findings of your analysis for each assessed outcome.

NOTE: If necessary, include any tables, charts, or graphs in an appendix.

There were three findings from this year's assessment:

1. *The big conclusion from this year's assessment is the PSP program needs a new road map of learning outcomes that better aligns with classes being taught and artifacts produced by the students. Because of faculty members that left the university, two of the classes identified for this year's learning outcomes were not offered.*
2. *The rubric currently used to assess the written exams needs to be redeveloped to align with the overall learning outcomes of the PSP program. Our conclusion was informed from feedback from students who took the exam and faculty members who provided feedback using the rubric.*
3. *Based on the data and artifacts used this year, PSP will also start using the completed dissertations to assess the learning outcomes.*
 - a. *Each year a different thematic chapter will be evaluated using a standardized rubric.*
 - i. *Year 1 – Methods*
 - ii. *Year 2 – Theory or Literature Review*

5. How did your analysis inform meaningful change? How did you use the analyzed data to make or implement recommendations for change in pedagogy, curriculum design, or your assessment plan?

1. A revised roadmap of learning outcomes will be presented to faculty and ALL students who attend the Fall 2018 retreat. Feedback from the retreat will be included in the new roadmap and the core faculty members will officially vote on the new learning outcomes and roadmap at the October PSP meeting. The revised roadmap of learning outcomes and rubrics will be submitted in November 2018 for approval.
2. A new rubric is currently under development for the written exams. We will recommend the implementation of the new rubric at the Fall 2018 retreat, which will held in September. Faculty members and ALL students who attend the retreat will have the opportunity to review the new rubric and make suggestions. Students who are not able to attend the retreat will be given the opportunity for feedback by email. All feedback will be included in the revised rubric, when appropriate. Faculty members will officially vote on the new rubric for the written exams at the October PSP meeting. The new rubric, for the written exams, will be implemented for students taking the written exams beginning Spring 2019.

6. Did you follow up (“close the loop”) on past assessment work? If so, what did you learn? (For example, has that curriculum change you made two years ago manifested in improved student learning today, as evidenced in your recent assessment data and analysis?)

1. The PSP programs offers at minimum four open fora in which all students can attend. (1) Fall orientation; (2) Annual Faculty and Student Retreat (Fall), Fall PSP Graduate Roundtable (December) and Spring PSP Graduate Roundtable (May). A significant amount of time at the annual retreat is devoted to assessment.
2. At the 2017 faculty and student annual retreat, students were given the opportunity to talk about and offer feedback on the learning outcomes and rubric used for the written exam.
3. Based on the feedback from students and faculty, the rubric used for the written exam will be revised.

IMPORTANT: Please submit any revised/updated assessment plans to the University Assessment Coordinator along with this report.

APPENDIX A

Rubric for Learning Outcome

#2 Students will be able to identify and evaluate ethical problems related to research and public policy.

Dimension One - Comprehension				
	Weak	Adequate	Good	Excellent
Ethical Problems	No understanding of ethical problems related to research and public policy.	Limited understanding of ethical problems related to research and public policy.	Comprehensive understanding of ethical problems related to research and public policy.	Outstanding understanding of ethical problems related to research and public policy.
Dimension Two - Synthesis				
	Weak	Adequate	Good	Excellent
Ethical Problems	No evidence of synthesis of how ethical problems are related to research and public policy.	Limited evidence of synthesis of how ethical problems are related to research and public policy.	Moderate evidence of synthesis of how ethical problems are related to research and public policy.	Comprehensive evidence of synthesis of how ethical problems are related to research and public policy.
Dimension Three - Comparison and Organization				
	Weak	Adequate	Good	Excellent
Ethical Problems	No comparison of how ethical problems are related to research and public policy.	Limited comparison of how ethical problems are related to research and public policy.	Moderate comparison of how ethical problems are related to research and public policy.	Exhaustive comparison of how ethical problems are related to research and public policy.

APPENDIX B
Rubric for Written Exam

The first paper focuses on the ability of the student to identify and formulate a researchable problem.

Developing	Competent	Exemplary	Points
1 point	2 points	3 points	

A. The paper provides sufficient background to demonstrate that there is in fact a problem. The author presents a succinct but thorough summary of anomalies, contradictions, and issue importance as they occur in both past and current research literature relevant to the problem area. The reader should be able to clearly answer the question, "Why study this?"

B. Flowing from the background information, a problem statement specifically describes the gap in knowledge that the research will fill. Theoretical and empirical terms must be clearly articulated and explained. From within the larger problem space, the precise issue the research targets must be readily apparent.

C. The theoretical/conceptual framework that anchors the problem is explicated sufficiently so that the paper demonstrates knowledge of the field or subfield the student is addressing.

D. The policy implications of the research are articulated and anchored in the appropriate policy literature.

E. The method for researching this problem is clearly stated and justification is provided for why the method is appropriate.

The second paper focuses on the ability of the student to identify literature relevant to the problem being addressed, to critique the existing research and clearly articulate the strengths and weaknesses of the studies relevant to the student's own project; to demonstrate how the current project fits into the scholarly flow of research in the area

	Developing	Competent	Exemplary	Points
	1 point	2 points	3 points	

A. Knowledge of the most recent scholarship in the area of concern.

B. Knowledge of historical scholarship relevant to the topic.

C. An understanding of the theoretical and conceptual literature linked to the research being undertaken.

D. Ability to link the project to ongoing policy discussions and debates both at the theoretical and applied levels.

E. Clear articulation of the contribution of the dissertation.