Discipline Outcome

American Democracy: Students will be able to identify and explain the basic principles of American democracy.

Assessment Author(s)
Mary C. Carr

Measure 1 Type:
Direct

Pre-Post tests

Measure 1 Description:
Students will demonstrate a significantly improved comprehension of the basic principles of American democratic government. In terms of the basic goals of Political Science, this outcome is central to the discipline. Question 17 of the pre/post test relates to this item. This pre/post test is being administered in one section of American Government spring and fall terms of this year.

Measure 1 Sample Size:
15

1) Describe the benchmark for this measure.
Eighty-five percent of students should correctly answer or improve their post test score by 10% over that of their pre-test. Question 17 addresses a very fundamental principle of our democracy, judicial review, which should be understood by informed citizens.

2) What is the rationale for choosing this benchmark?

Basic knowledge of our system of government and its component parts is critical to the preservation of our democracy. Without a knowledgeable electorate, we cease to be a fully functioning, participatory democracy.

This discipline outcome was

Missed benchmark

Measure 1 Results:

The department compared pre- and post-test responses to question #17. Data from both methodology pre-test and the methodology post-test were collected with data included for analysis only if scores for both tests were available. For the American Government data, only 60%, not 85%, met the benchmark.

1) How did unit/department performance compare to the benchmark?

The 2016 - 2017 year was an unusual year. Given unforeseen circumstances, faculty was unable to administer the Pre/Post Tests in the fall semester. Therefore only the Spring Tests were available. Both tests were completed, and available for analysis, for only thirteen students.

2) How does the data compare to the previous year, if applicable?

The results are not comparable for this year.

1) Based on the findings, how does the unit/department rate performance in regards to this outcome (strong exceeds benchmark, neutral meets benchmark, or weak misses benchmark)?

Missed benchmark

2) How does this assessment affect plans for this coming year in terms of strategic planning, budget planning, administrative and educational support unit planning, and assessment planning?
Given the inability to conduct the Pre/Post Test in the fall semester, the results are not significant.

3) How will your assessment results enable you to improve institutional processes or academic instruction in order to support, facilitate and/or stimulate student learning?

The Department still intends to revise the evaluation measure and has held off in doing so pending the results of the statewide changes to course competencies.

Further Action:

Further Action Unnecessary

Discipline Outcome

Political Institutions: Students will be able to identify and explain the structure, powers and functions of the major institutions (Congress, the Executive and judicial branches).

Assessment Author(s)

Mary C. Carr

Measure 1 Type:

Direct

Pre-Post tests

Measure 1 Description:

Students will demonstrate a significantly improved able to identify and explain the structure, powers and functions of the major institutions (Congress, the Executive and Judicial branches). In terms of the basic goals of Political Science, this outcome foundational. Question 8 on the pre/post test relates to this measure. This pre post test is being administered in one section of POS 111, American Government, spring and fall.
Measure 1 Sample Size:
15

1) Describe the benchmark for this measure.
Eighty-five percent of students should increase their post test score by 10% over their pre test. This question, #8, addresses the checks and balances within our government, a very fundamental concept.

2) What is the rationale for choosing this benchmark?
Students should be able to clearly distinguish between the three branches of government, their structures and functions. This ability is absolutely basic to any understanding of our system of government.

This discipline outcome was
Surpassed benchmark

Measure 1 Results:
Spring Pre/Post Test results on this one foundational outcome surpassed the benchmark with fully 13 of the 13 respondents correctly identifying the answer. This provides evidence that, at least on this one measure, the department contributes to student learning at the discipline level.

1) How did unit/department performance compare to the benchmark?
On this measure respondents surpassed the benchmark with a 100% rate.

2) How does the data compare to the previous year, if applicable?
With only 13 respondents, and those only from the Spring Semester, the data is not significant.

1) Based on the findings, how does the unit/department rate performance in regards to this outcome (strong exceeds benchmark, neutral meets benchmark, or weak misses benchmark)?
Missed benchmark

2) How does this assessment affect plans for this coming year in terms of strategic planning, budget planning,
administrative and educational support unit planning, and assessment planning?

The Department will not be using data from this year as the sample was so small and covered only one of the two semesters.

3) How will your assessment results enable you to improve institutional processes or academic instruction in order to support, facilitate and/or stimulate student learning?

The Department still intends to revise the evaluation measure and has held off in doing so pending the results of the statewide changes to course competencies.

Further Action:

Further Action Unnecessary

Learning Outcome

Information Management: Students will demonstrate a significantly improved ability in information management, most specifically critical thinking. This General Education outcome should naturally flow out of instruction in Political Science to reflect critical thinking skills.

Assessment Author(s)

Mary C. Carr

Measure 1 Type:

Direct
Measure 1 Description:

In political science, students should demonstrate an ability to synthesize information and draw conclusions from data. For the objective test of student performance, the Department will compare pre and post-tests on Question 13. The pre post test is being administered in one section of POS 111, American Government, in spring and fall this year.

Measure 1 Sample Size:

15

1) Describe the benchmark for this measure.

Eighty-five percent of students should improve their post test score by 10% over that of their pre test. Question 13 addresses tolerance and political system support among citizens. It requires students to draw a conclusion about the type citizens more apt to demonstrate these characteristics.

2) What is the rationale for choosing this benchmark?

While not an optimal measure, this question (more than others) requires students to consider the traits of the supportive citizen compared with one who is more leary of government. As indicated in last year's report, the Department intends to prepare a new assessment tool. With the re-evaluation of competencies for all Guaranteed Transfer courses currently underway, however, introduction of a new assessment tool may be delayed.

This learning outcome was

Missed benchmark

Measure 1 Results:

On this measure, the Spring Pre/Post Test respondents missed the benchmark with only 69% demonstrating proficiency on the measure.

1) How did unit/department performance compare to the benchmark?

The 2016 - 2017 year was an unusual year. Given unforeseen circumstances, faculty was unable to administer the Pre/Post Tests in the fall semester. Therefore only the Spring Tests were available. Both tests were completed, and available for analysis, for only thirteen students.

1) Based on the findings, how does the unit/department rate performance in regards to this outcome (strong
exceeds benchmark, neutral meets benchmark, or weak misses benchmark)?

Missed benchmark

2) How does this assessment affect plans for this coming year in terms of strategic planning, budget planning, administrative and educational support unit planning, and assessment planning?

Given the inability to assess a comparable class in the fall semester, the results are not significant.

3) How will your assessment results enable you to improve institutional processes or academic instruction in order to support, facilitate and/or stimulate student learning?

The Department still intends to revise the evaluation measure and has held off in doing so pending the results of the statewide changes to course competencies.

Further Action:

Further Action Unnecessary

Learning Outcome

Cultural Awareness: Students will demonstrate a significantly improved level of cultural awareness. This Basic Education goal fits well with the basic thrust of political science.

Assessment Author(s)

Mary C. Carr

Measure 1 Type:

Direct
Pre-Post tests

Measure 1 Description:

In political science, it is important for students to have a basic understanding of how government and its programs can assist in creating a more equitable society. Question 20 on the pre/post test attempts to address this issue. This pre/post test is being administered in one section of POS 111, American Government, in spring and fall of this year.

As mentioned in last year's report, the Department intended to develop a new assessment tool. However, with the review of competencies for all Guaranteed Transfer courses currently underway, adoption of a new tool may be delayed.

Measure 1 Sample Size:

15

1) Describe the benchmark for this measure.

Eighty-five percent of students should exhibit an improvement of 10% from their pre test to post test score on Question 20. This question addresses what constitutes de facto segregation.

2) What is the rationale for choosing this benchmark?

It is important that students understand what steps government has the power to take and what steps are not easily mandated in a democracy like ours. Without this basic understanding, it is easy for a citizen to become totally disillusioned with our system of governance.

This learning outcome was Missed benchmark

Measure 1 Results:

On this measure, respondents of the Spring Pre/Post Test failed to meet the benchmark. Only 38% of respondents exhibited proficiency.

1) How did unit/department performance compare to the benchmark?

The 2016 - 2017 year was an unusual year. Given unforeseen circumstances, faculty was unable to administer the Pre/Post Tests in the fall semester. Therefore only the Spring Tests were available. Both tests were completed, and available for analysis, for only thirteen students.

2) How does the data compare to the previous year, if applicable?
1) Based on the findings, how does the unit/department rate performance in regards to this outcome (strong exceeds benchmark, neutral meets benchmark, or weak misses benchmark)?

Missed benchmark

2) How does this assessment affect plans for this coming year in terms of strategic planning, budget planning, administrative and educational support unit planning, and assessment planning?

Given the inability to conduct the Pre/Post Tests for the fall semester, the results for the year are not significant.

3) How will your assessment results enable you to improve institutional processes or academic instruction in order to support, facilitate and/or stimulate student learning?

The Department still intends to revise the evaluation measure and has held off in doing so pending the results of the statewide changes to course competencies.

Further Action:

Further Action Unnecessary