

**Assessment Plan and Report
Southern Utah University**

**Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice
2006-2007**

Expanded Statement of Institutional Purpose:

Mission Statement:

It is the mission of the Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice to encourage a life-long passion for learning and a quest for knowledge by providing an environment that fosters academic excellence and unfettered inquiry. We encourage the development of ethics and values that recognize knowledge in all its diverse and creative forms. The primary goal of our department is to offer excellence in instruction while meeting the academic needs of the students. Our mission is to foster a creative learning environment and assist students through meaningful and relevant experience.

<u>Goal Statements</u>	<u>Program Intended Educational Outcomes</u>	<u>Means of Program Assessment and Criteria for Success</u>	<u>Summary of Data Collected</u>	<u>Use of Results</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Guide students in developing analytical, communication, and information-gathering skills. 2. Encourage students to be tolerant, informed, and responsible citizens. 3. Offer opportunities for practical experience through internships, work studies, and memberships in honorary societies in political science and criminal justice. 4. Contribute to the cultural, political, and justice development of Southern Utah and the surrounding region. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will successfully complete academic requirements for the course of study. 2. Students will develop the ability to conduct research on theoretical and practical aspects of the department disciplines and to present findings and conclusions in their written work. 3. Students will improve upon their critical thinking and analytical skills and articulate their views in oral presentations and discussions. 	<p>Evaluation of student success in course work will be determined by the high percentage of students who receive a final grade of "C" or higher. It is expected that 90% of the students enrolled in the department's courses will achieve this.</p> <p>Written projects and term papers are required in all upper division courses, and some lower division classes. This written component is a significant part of the final grade. In assessing the written assignments, instructors provide constructive comments, give direction during the process, and written</p>	<p>An analysis of final grade performance for the past school year disclosed that 91.7% of the underclassmen (freshmen and sophomores) completing course work in the dept. achieved a final grade of "C" or higher. 97.5% of the upperclassmen (juniors and seniors) achieved a grade of "C" or higher. The overall average for all students completing courses in</p>	<p>Data collected this past year will be used to monitor and compare results with next year. As more data is collected for this department it will be used to measure the level of success in meeting stated goals. Some of the goals may be difficult to measure, but as the assessment program continues into the future, it is expected that some definitive</p>

Political Science is devoted to the study of the theory and practice of government and politics. The political science program complements a student's liberal arts education with an emphasis on understanding the theoretical and practical aspects of political philosophy, public law, international relations, and American government and policy. Vocational alternatives for political science majors include teaching, public management, law, and foreign service.

The goal of the Criminal Justice Program is to provide students with a comprehensive practical and professional knowledge of the Criminal Justice System consisting of law enforcement, courts, and corrections process. Students will develop an understanding of the application of the law, social sciences, and natural sciences to the problems of crime and delinquency.

4. Students will improve upon their vocabulary as it relates to some of the unique terms in criminal justice and political science.
5. Prepare students for admission to law school and other graduate degree programs.
6. Prepare students to meet career and professional goals.

feedback to the students.

In class discussions, instructors promote critical thinking and analysis of pertinent issues related to the course topics. Further assessment involves oral presentations by students in class, group projects, and panel discussions. Instructors expect these activities to result in improvement of these skills over the semester period. These classroom activities will also provide opportunities for instructors to assess students' growth in utilizing the vocabulary of the disciplines.

All graduating seniors in Political Science and Criminal Justice are expected to complete an Exit Survey form given to them by the department chair when graduation papers are signed. This Exit Survey collects information on students' plans for graduate school, law school, jobs, and professional positions after graduation. This form is an excellent assessment instrument and helps the department to track our students after they leave the university.

the dept. with a final grade of "C" or higher was **94.6%**. This is a slight improvement over last year.

With regard to written projects and term papers, it has been observed by faculty that the quality of the written product has improved by the time the students take the Senior Seminar class in both Political Science and Criminal Justice.

Critical thinking skills are promoted in all departmental courses and particularly in the upper division classes where enrollment numbers are usually smaller and more conducive to class discussions. Professors have utilized activities in class designed to enhance critical thinking and improvements have been noted in this area.

results may be captured for review, evaluation, and change.

The Dept. Chair continues to collect info. From graduating seniors on the Graduate Exit Survey. In May 2007 the dept. awarded 55 bachelor degrees in Criminal Justice and 18 bachelor degrees in Political Science, for a total of **73 graduates**. There appears to be an increase in the number of graduating seniors applying for graduate and law school. It is worth noting that for the past two years, 100% of our students in POLS and CJ who applied to law school were accepted at one or more institutions of law. Job placement rates for our graduates have also been very favorable.