

**Assessment Plan and Report
Southern Utah University**

**Department of Political Science and Criminal Justice
2008-2009 Final**

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. 4. Students will improve upon their vocabulary as it relates to some of the unique terms in criminal justice and political science. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 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 feed-back to the students. 2. 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 	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>In May 2009, 82 Bachelors Degrees were conferred (59 CJ and 23 POLS) as well as 9 Masters Degrees in Public</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 results may be captured for review, evaluation, and change.</p>
<p>Political Science is devoted to the study of the theory and practice of government and</p>				

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.

The goal of the Master of Public Administration program is to provide students with a thorough working knowledge of administration within the public and non-profit sectors.

5. Prepare students for admission to law school and other graduate degree programs.
6. Prepare students to meet career and professional goals.

3. All graduating seniors in Political Science, Criminal Justice and Masters of Public Administration are asked to complete an Exit Survey on graduation day. 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.

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.

Administration. Only 25% of the responding graduates to our exit survey claimed to have applied to Law/Graduate School. This is down from last significantly. Further, students with a job waiting for them after graduation also declined. Both of these areas can be directly tied to the poor state of the economy.

Other notable results of the Exit Poll include:

- 91.5% of our graduates worked during the education; of these 48.8% claimed to have worked full-time (almost double that of 2008);
- 25% of the graduating MPA students have already found management positions within the public sector;
- 98.2% of graduates rated the "Quality of the Course Offerings" as appropriate to meet their future goals;
- 96.4% of graduates rated their "Overall Academic Experience: as Very Good - Extraordinary