Assessment Report

Yuba Community College District

YC - Political Science Program Recommendations

Year of Review: 2013-2014

Type of Review: Self-Study (4-year review)

Executive Summary (Include a list of team members): Yuba College and Woodland Community College currently do not have a political science major. Political Science courses encourage active political participation and promote democracy. A Political Science major prepares students for a diverse array of jobs and careers as well as transfer to 4-year institutions, especially CSU Sacramento, Chico and UC Davis, all of which have significant political science programs. Yuba College already offers all required and elective courses for Political
Science AA degree. Also, this AA degree is linked to PolSci Transfer Model Curriculum (now known as ADT--Associates Degree for Transfer) which is very important for students to transfer into the CSU system. The ADT will be completed by spring 2014.

Program Description : A1
Currently, students have access to the following curriculum-specific and program-specific support services but there are problems that inhibit student-success:
1. Blackboard/DE: Blackboard/WebCT serves as the major learning platform for online classes and also for web enhanced classes (ex. Polsc-1 and Polsc-7). However, there has been a tremendous amount of technical problems preventing students and instructors from accessing and using Blackboard.
2. College Success Center: Lena Hsieh has worked with the College Success Center to provide free tutors for students. However, the Center is confined to small rooms (512 and 513) due to Measure J bond remodeling. Future move to larger location should improve student access and success.
3. Writing Center: Students can access the Writing Center to learn how to compose a term paper with academic citation formats.
4. Library: Students can also use YC library to do their research papers. However, again, due to Measure J bond remodeling, the library is confined to a small area in the 300 building. Future relocation to larger facility should improve student experience.
5. Bookstore: Students can buy their books at the YC bookstore but there have been unacceptable amounts of complaints from students regarding their inability to purchase their books due to stock shortages. Bookstore needs to order book quantities that are indicated by course enrollment caps.
6. DSPS: Students can go to the DSPS for special accommodations and help.
7. Communication issues: Many co-workers have experienced the situations in which emails/phone calls were not getting replies from several departments/units. This has reduced our college efficiency and increased frustration. Yuba College needs to examine whether it results from the shortage of staff/clerical support or not.

A2
With the services above available for political science students, the retention rates have been improved from the 75% in 2008-9 to 88% in 2012-13 and averaging 85% during this time period. Students have positive feedback about the web-enhanced online learning tools and tutoring service.

However, there are problems:

1. Blackboard/DE: The Blackboard/WebCT we are using now is out of date and has experienced several major prolonged outages in the past several semester. I have seen more students (about 15%) dropping from online classes at the beginning of Fall 2013 due to their inability to access their classes via Blackboard and their inability to purchase their course textbooks due to constant stock shortages. Yuba College has planned to adopt a new platform Canvas for the Spring 2014 semester. This move cannot be delayed and must be done!

2. College Success Center: The Center is confined to small rooms (512 and 513) due to Measure J bond remodeling. This has caused a decrease in students accessing Success Center resources due to the inconvenience of services in these small rooms. Hopefully, this problem will be solved after the Center moves back to the remodeled new building in Dec. 2013.
3. Library: Again, due to Measure J bond remodeling, the current library is confined to a small area in the 300 building, which makes the scheduling of computer research workshop-tours more difficult.
4. Bookstore: There have been countless complaints and frustration from students about their inability to purchase their books. The bookstore store under-orders unacceptably insufficient quantities. The College bookstore is supposed to facilitate student-success, not cripple students by not having required textbooks available for them to purchase.

5. Financial Aid: Students can access financial aid but sometimes the communications/emails with the department were not responded to help students in a timely manner.

B3
The following problems were solved after the past program reviews highlighted those issues:
1. Move out of the 500 building where the facility and equipment, such as A/C units and computers, are too old for effective instruction. Presently, political science classes are taught mostly in the 3000 Building and the new Sutter building.
2. More adjunct instructors hired: FTEF was cut down to 1.2 in 2011-12 due to budget cuts and thus, class cuts which led to students' rising anxiety to get their classes. FTEF was brought up to 1.9 because more adjuncts were hired.
3. More polsc-1 classes offered: More adjuncts hired have enabled the political science program to offer more classes which has dramatically reduced students' anxiety. 21 sections, including one extra online Polsc-1, were offered last year that boosted WSCH to 1769, compared to only 1223.4 the year before. The FTES peaked in 2012-13 at 58.95, the highest number since 2007-8.
4. The process to add a Political Science AA degree and TMC/ADT was launched in Nov. 2012.

Curriculum & SLO Assessment Summary :

D6
A proposal to offer a Political Science AA degree was approved by Yuba College Curriculum Committee in February 2011. Lena Hsieh has followed up by submitting the CCC-501 form and completed the TMC/ADT application through CurricuNet in Fall 2012. YCCD board members were supposed to review and approve it in summer 2013. Lena Hsieh has contacted and worked with the Curriculum Committee chair to follow up the process but was notified to wait because of the committee's busy agenda.

D7
All of the current Political Science courses (Posc-1, Polsc-6, and Polsc-6) are active. None of them should be in-activated.
On the other hand, the Political Science program should be expanded toward the following directions:
a. The Polsc-1 online and ITV classes should be offered continuously because the enrollments for both are strong and many students were unable to enroll in an online/ITV class. Therefore, more online Polsc-1 classes or ITV classes can be offered in the future to address strong student demand.
b. The department holds the TMC/ADT under SB 1440 as a high priority and has submitted the application in Nov. 2012. Lena Hsieh has contacted the Curriculum Committee chair Steven Cox to follow up on the process.
c. Course Diversities: To further diversify Polsc courses, the possibility and feasibility of offering other Polsc courses (e.g. comparative politics, political theory, or California state government) can be considered in the future.

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D8
Yes, all of our Polsc courses have current updated CORs. Lena Hsieh has been communicating with adjunct faculty to update CORs along the way.

D9
To access teaching methodologies in the political science program, regular evaluations of both full-time and part-time faculty members are conducted according to contractual requirements between the faculty and the YCCD district and evaluation reports and meetings are held as well. Faculty members occasionally conduct anonymous surveys in their classes for their own reference to help improve their methodologies.

In addition, with the course SLOs accessed, the reports serve as references for instructors to look for any major instructional issues and concerns.

D10
The results of the assessment have been used to improve current teaching methodologies. For example, observing students' anxiety and low success rates back to 2008-9, Lena Hsieh began to use Blackboard platform in web-enhanced classes in Spring 2010 as a learning tool to improve student retention and success rates. Students' responses since have been positive and both success rates and retention rates have improved.

D11
It is evaluated through students' test scores, success rates, retention rates, and students' communications with the instructors as well as among themselves. The DE department is also developing methods to evaluate the effectiveness of DE instruction.

D12
Regarding Polsc-1 online classes, the Blackboard/WebCT as the platform for online classes at Yuba College often time has serious problems because it is an out-of-date product that is no longer supported by the software company. For the past few semesters, there have been occasional service outages that have prevented students and instructors from accessing and using Blackboard. It is unconscionable for the College NOT to provide a stable reliable teaching modality to our students. We have to move on to a new platform as soon as possible. The DE department has planned to move to a new platform "Canvas" in Spring. This cannot be delayed.

D13
The teaching philosophy that the political science department applies to its curriculum is known as Active Learning which encourages students to be actively involved in their own education. Student-centered strategies utilized in classrooms include class discussions, group-work projects and activities, multi-media technologies (ex. Videos and online films), and real world examples and real life experiences.

Real-life experiences designed to motivate students include: assignments to encourage students to attend city council meetings, visit the CA state capitol, and write letters to the editors of newspapers and politicians. Furthermore, guest speakers are invited to classes/campus and students are encouraged to do internships and be volunteers with community civic/political groups.

D14
CSLO: The SLOs of Polsc-1 and Polsc-7 have been submitted by Lena Hsieh. The SLOs data were collected for the first time in the

Spring 2011 semester and will be accessed every year.
Lena Hsieh also helped adjunct Daniel Sorensen submit the first Polsc-6 SLO assessment report successfully in September 2013.

D15
SLO assessments for two Polsc-1 classes in Spring 2011 and one Polsc-7 in Spring 2012 were conducted. The results were analyzed and found “distraction” is a strong factor detrimental to the learning process. The Poslc-1 class without “distractions” performed better than the other.

The result also suggested that Polsc-7 is a more difficult class than Polsc-1. The instructor Lena Hsieh will work on improving the success rate for Polsc-7 even though the retention rates were high (reaching 90%) in general. This may imply that students enjoy Polsc-7 and thus were willing to stay in the class to the end but had more difficulty in mastering the abstract theories.

Industry Trends and Program Data Analysis :

C4
Department goal #1: Prepare students with an introduction to politics and government.
Department goal #2: Prepare students for responsible citizenship.
(These two goals aim at preparing students to have knowledge about politics and encourage their civic engagement for our diverse communities and region.)

Department goal #3: Introduce students to a variety of civic experiences.
Department goal #5: Expose students to the rich contributions various racial and ethnic groups have made to American society, politics, culture, and economic development.
Department goal #6: Satisfy the Social Science and Multicultural Graduation Requirements.
(These three goals aim at exposing students to different cultural experiences, preparing them to have cultural awareness and promoting multi-cultural acceptance and appreciation toward our diverse demographic society.)

Department goal #4: Prepare students with the necessary skills and information to succeed in the workforce and society at-large, including critical and analytical thinking skills.
Department goal #7: Provide students with a variety of courses that fulfill the requirements for transfer eligibility to a four-year college/university.
(These two goals aim at preparing students the skills to succeed in their workforce and their analytical capability to continue their four-year education.)

C5
Political science department adjusts the number of classes offered and the number of instructors hired according to the enrollment statistics.
First, regarding the number of classes offered, the Political Science program at Yuba College continues to offer Polsc-1 (American Government), online Polsc-1, Polsc-6 (Political Philosophy), and Polsc-7 (International Relations). In the year of 2011-2012, only ten sections were offered. The number of students’ email inquiries regarding adding and enrollment in Polsc-1 dramatically increased, thus we concluded that student demand was not being met by supply.
To solve the problem, in Fall 2012, an additional Polsc-1 ITV class was added to provide for students with commuting challenges. Furthermore, two additional Polsc-1 classes were offered at the newly opened Sutter Center in Fall 2012. The addition of the two classes and one ITV class has helped increase supply to better meet student demand and the enrollments overall continue to be robust. There were still many students' emailing requests to add into Polsc-1 online class. Overall, students’ anxiety to add into Polsc-1 declined in the year of 2012-13 with 21 Polsc sections, including two online and one ITV classes offered in Spring 2013. The enrollments for most political science classes were strong with the average number of students/faculty ratio reaching 31.03 in 2012-13.
For Polsc-7, enrollment has consistently reached the class cap and retention rates are consistently high (80.8% in 2012-2013).

However, in Spring 2013, it suddenly dropped to 15 students but back to 30 students in Fall 2013. The possible reasons to explain the sudden drop could be many sections (21 sections) offered and the opening of the Sutter center that reduced student population from Marysville campus.
In general, enrollment in the Polsc Program is strong. 596 students enrolled across 21 Polsc sections offered in 2012-2013. All Polsc-1 sections have consistently reached their enrollment caps each semester.
As to the adjustment of the number of instructors hired, please see “Faculty” in section H21 below.
(*Note: Data for Polsc-6 Political Philosophy during 2009-2013 was not available in PoliSci TracDat and therefore no analysis can be done for it.)

Future Goals and Program Direction: Curriculum and Program Direction

a. The department takes the TMC under SB 1440 as a high priority and has started to process it.

b. Course Diversities: To further diversify Polsc courses, the possibility and feasibility of offering other Polsc courses (e.g. comparative politics, political theory, or California government) may be explored in the future.

c. The Polsc-1 online and ITV classes should be offered continuously because the enrollments for both are strong. More online Polsc -1 classes can be offered in the future to address strong student demand.

Course Content and Statistical Analysis: During any semester at Yuba College as many as 21 sections are offered and the opening of the Sutter center may be a factor in reducing the student population from Marysville campus.
In general, enrollment in the PolSci Program is strong with 596 students enrolled across 21 Polsc sections offered in 2012-2013. All Polsc-1 sections have consistently reached their enrollment caps each semester.
As to the adjustment of the number of instructors hired, please see “Faculty” in section H21.

Are you ready to submit your final program review?: Yes

Goal	Recommendations	Plan of Action & Budgetary Impact / Tasks	Status	Feedback & Follow-Up
YC Goal 9 - 1. Prepare students with an introduction to politics and government.				

Goal	Recommendations	Plan of Action & Budgetary Impact / Tasks	Status	Feedback & Follow-Up
YC Goal 9 - 2. Prepare students for responsible citizenship.				

Goal	Recommendations	Plan of Action & Budgetary Impact / Tasks	Status	Feedback & Follow-Up
YC Goal 9 - 3. Introduce students to a variety of civic experiences.				

Goal	Recommendations	Plan of Action & Budgetary Impact / Tasks	Status	Feedback & Follow-Up
YCCD VS 1 - 4. Prepare students with the necessary skills and information to				

Goal	Recommendations	Plan of Action & Budgetary Impact / Tasks	Status	Feedback & Follow-Up
succeed in the workforce and society at-large, including critical and analytical thinking skills.				

Goal	Recommendations	Plan of Action & Budgetary Impact / Tasks	Status	Feedback & Follow-Up
YCCD VS 4 - 5. Expose students to the rich contributions various racial and ethnic groups have made to American society, politics, culture, and economic development.				

Goal	Recommendations	Plan of Action & Budgetary Impact / Tasks	Status	Feedback & Follow-Up
YCCD VS 4 - 6. Satisfy the Social Science and Multicultural Graduation Requirements.				

Goal	Recommendations	Plan of Action & Budgetary Impact / Tasks	Status	Feedback & Follow-Up
YC Goal 5 - 7. Provide students with a variety of courses that fulfill the requirements for transfer eligibility to a four-year college/university.				