



Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Three Year Summary Report Annual report – Academic year 2016-17

Program Information		
Faculty	FAS	
Department	PSPA	
Academic Program	PS	
Degree	BA	
Academic Year	2016-17	
Assessment Committee (Please indicate the contact person for the PLOs assessment process.)		
Full Name	E-Mail Address	Extension
Coralie Pison Hindawi	chindawi@aub.edu.lb	4337
Date Submitted:	May 31, 2017	

Summary

Describe briefly the PLOs assessment approach followed in your department, the assessment tools and methods used, and the assessment results collected during the three-year assessment cycle. Explain required changes based on the findings. This section should not exceed 1 page.

During the academic year 2014-15, we have not assessed our PLOs in Public Administration. Based on the reevaluation of the procedures of assessment started in 2013-2014, we devised a three-year plan to assess the various PLOs across the courses, starting with the fall 2015-16 and extending to the spring 2017-18, with an online survey as a final assessment of the cycle. The department appointed one faculty member to oversee the process of assessment over the three-year period to ensure consistency and continuity and to manage any process of revision of the assessment process and the PLO. Last year, during the academic year 2015-16, Dr. Samer Frangie coordinated the process, which was taken over by Dr. Coralie Pison Hindawi for the academic year 2016-17.

In the fall 2016-17, PLO 1: 'Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes' was evaluated in the course PSPA 210 (2 sections) by Dr. Samer Frangie. In the spring 2017, PLO 2: 'Think critically of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes, and their relevance to past and contemporary issues' as well as PLO 3: 'Engage in informed discussions of current domestic and international affairs' were evaluated in the course PSPA 213 (2 sections) by Dr. Coralie Pison Hindawi.

Similar to last year's report, two types of recommendations were made by the colleagues involved in the PLO assessment process. The first pertains to the manner courses were taught with a view of improving the achievement of the current PLOs. The second pertains to the definition of PLOs and the mode of assessing them. The first type of recommendations will feed into the improvement of teaching in the PSPA department, while the second type of recommendations will form the basis for the revision of the PLOs at the end of the three year cycle.

Summary of Assessment Results/Improvement Plan

Department/Program Learning Outcomes	Year and semester in which the PLO was assessed	Assessment Methods <i>Direct/Indirect</i>	Data Sources <i>List the sources of data used for assessment like courses, projects, surveys, standard tests, etc.</i>	Data Analysis <i>Compare the actual outcomes to the intended target. Do the results indicate that the PLO is achieved and students are learning what was intended?</i>	Improvement Plan <i>How can we make it more likely that our students will achieve the intended learning outcome?</i>
<p>1. PS PLO 1: Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes.</p>	Fall 2016-17	Direct	PSPA 210: The sample was the student population of the two sections of PSPA 210. All the students who sat for the final examination were selected, for a sample size of 53.	PSPA 210: The ability of students to understand immediate concept seems more advanced than their ability to understand and use compound concept, especially if they have a historical component. Moreover, their capacity to contrast concept was shown not to be as advanced as their capacity to define concepts.	PSPA 210: Based on these findings, the future iteration of this course will contain a section on concepts, separate from the discussion of the historical evolution of these concepts, to make sure that students are able to achieve the various CLOs of this course. Courses at higher level will bridge the gap between these two components.
<p>2. PS PLO 2: Think critically of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes, and their relevance to past and contemporary issues</p>	Spring 2016-17	Direct	PSPA213: The sample was the student population of the two sections of PSPA 213. All the students who took the midterm exam were selected, for a sample size of 60.	PSPA213: The quality of students' essays and their ability to engage critically with theories and approaches in International Politics were uneven. But overall, almost two third of the student population was able to engage critically with some of the theories and approaches studied,	PSPA213: PLO 2 is framed in quite broad terms, and designates a set of skills whose acquisition is relatively complex. Thinking critically of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes, and their relevance to past and contemporary issues requires from the first to understand these

				and one fourth of the student population was able to do so very satisfactorily.	concepts, ideologies etc. (which is our PLO 1) before engaging critically with them. It may make sense to split this PLO into less broad learning outcomes that are less complex and easier to assess, or discuss more thoroughly the connection between PLO 1 and 2 within the department.
3. PS PLO 3: Engage in informed discussions of current domestic and international affairs	Spring 2016-17	Direct	PSPA 213: The sample was the student population of the two sections of PSPA 213. All the students who submitted the moodle assignment were selected, for a sample size of 60.	PSPA 213: The finding support the conclusion that the course achieved a good score in the learning outcome evaluation. The quality of the work produced was very encouraging.	<p>PSPA 213: No change in the curriculum.</p> <p>PLO 3 is obviously a skill that each of the courses offered at the department should naturally contribute to.</p> <p>I would like to encourage colleagues teaching the 213 course, Introduction to International Politics, to use a similar exercise to encourage students to engage in informed and well prepared discussions of international politics beyond the classroom.</p> <p>On average, one third of the students start thinking about their assignment early on in the semester, seeking feedback, and taking advantage of the</p>

					feedback provided to deepen their analysis and/or improve their writing skills. The shortness of the main posting (max 800 words) makes the provision of detailed feedback manageable for an introductory course. Also, this assignment allows to expand the scope of class discussions. Students and the teacher learn a lot from each other, and shy or discrete students also get the opportunity to engage in discussions in a manner that makes them more comfortable than during class.
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How PLO Assessment Data will be shared?

PLO reports are circulated among faculty members

Comments on the PLO Assessment Process

The system of rotation allows the weight of the exercise to be spread across the faculty member equally, in addition to introducing each faculty member to the PLO assessment process and its technics.

The assessment for next academic year will be important as it will close the three year assessment plan designed for the 2016-18 period. It was decided to use an online survey as an indirect means of assessment for all PLOs in the spring 2017-18, which will have to be planed in advance. At the end of next academic year, it will be important for the department to meet after carefully reviewing the yearly reports in order to benefit from the assessment done and to discuss the lessons learned and the way forward. Revisions of the PLOs will have to be discussed, as well as ways in which achievement of the PLOs can be enhanced, if applicable.

It would make sense for the PLO assessment process to be connected to the departmental periodic review process that was announced early in the fall 2016-17, but never discussed in a departmental meeting since that date.

Appendix I – PLO Reports submitted by faculty members for each of the PLO assessed during the AY.

It can contain curriculum analysis matrix, relevant assignments and outcomes, data collection methods (ex: rubrics), charts, or materials as appropriate.

1. Report submitted by Dr. Samer Frangie – Fall 2016-17 (PLO 1, assessed in PSPA 210)

American University of Beirut



Annual Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Report

Program Information	
Faculty	FAS
Department	PSPA
Academic Program (Major)	Political Studies
Degree (e.g., BA, BS...)	B.A.
Program Learning Outcomes Please list all of the learning outcomes for this program.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes 2. Think critically of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes, and their relevance to past and contemporary issues 3. Engage in informed discussions of current domestic and international affairs 4. Use different theories and concepts to investigate given problems in political science 5. Apply the basic research methodologies of the social sciences and learn to select appropriate conceptual and practical methods of enquiry in the field of political science 6. Demonstrate/apply advanced reading and writing skills 7. Demonstrate an independent and inquisitive attitude in both thought and research in the field of political

	<p>science</p> <p>8. Respect academic and intellectual rules governing academic discourse, integrity, tolerance, and constructive criticism</p>	
Academic Year	2016-17	
Contact Person		
Name (Person coordinating the PLO assessment process.)	Dr. Coralie Pison Hindawi	
Title	Assistant Professor	
E-Mail Address	chindawi@aub.edu.lb	
Extension	4337	
Outcomes Assessed, Means of Assessment, and Improvement Plans		
Semester	<i>Fall Semester</i>	<i>Spring Semester</i>
PLOs Assessed (Please provide both text and number.)	1. PLO 1. Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes	
Data Source Describe where and when data was collected; how and if students were sampled; and sample size. Please report on each PLO separately.	The sample was the student population of the two sections of PSPA210. All the students who sat for the final examination were selected, for a sample size of 53.	
Means of Assessment Describe in detail the assessment method used (e.g., capstone project, course-embedded assessment, standardized instrument, etc.) and briefly explain the task. Please report on each PLO separately.	The PLO was measured through testing students in-depth understanding of a fundamental socio-political concept, that of <i>Disciplinary Power</i> . The question starts by asking them to define the components of this concept. The second step was to bring these definitions to bear upon the explanation of the concept of <i>Disciplinary Power</i> . The question was:	

	<p>In <i>Discipline and Punish</i>, Foucault writes: “The examination combines the techniques of an observing hierarchy and those of a normalizing judgment. It is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify, and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them. ... In it are combined the ceremony of power and the form of the experiment, the deployment of force and the establishment of truth. At the heart of the procedures of discipline, it manifests the subjection of those who are perceived as objects and the objectification of those who are subjected. The superimposition of the power relations and knowledge relations assumes in the examination all its visible brilliance”</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain this citation by explaining what Foucault means by examination, hierarchical observation and normalizing judgement. 2. Using the notion of normalizing judgement, explain the difference between disciplinary power and sovereign power? 	
<p>Means of Scoring Describe how you scored the assessment. For example, did you use a rubric or answer key, or was it scored by a testing company? Please report on each PLO separately.</p>	<p>The grade for the question was 33, divided as follow: Question 1: 15 points, 5 per definition Question 2: 18 points, 8 for the definition of disciplinary power, 5 for the definition of sovereign power, and 5 for the contrast between the two.</p>	
<p>Assessment Results After analyzing your numerical data, present it in a table on the next page. Please report on each PLO</p>	<p>Most of the students answered the first part of the question well. Defining the components of the definition was a task the student could well do. The results were more varied when it came to defining the main concept</p>	

separately.	and to contrast it with other concepts. Most of the variation in the grades was due to the second part of the question, where students faced some difficulty in contrasting the two definitions of power.	
Findings, Use and Dissemination		
Semester	<i>Fall Semester</i>	<i>Spring Semester</i>
Findings What were the most valuable things you learned?	The ability of students to understand immediate concept more advanced than their ability to understand and use compound concept, especially if they have a historical component. Moreover, their capacity to contrast concept was shown not to be as advanced as their capacity to define concepts.	
Use of Findings Explain how these findings will be used.	Changes to the Assessment Plan (<i>Revision of intended learning outcomes; revision of measurement approaches; changes in data collection methods; changes in targets/standards; changes in sample...</i>)	
	No change in the assessment plan.	
	Changes to the Curriculum (<i>Changes in teaching techniques; revision of prerequisites; revision of course sequence; revision of course content; addition of courses; deletion of courses...</i>)	
	Based on these findings, the future iteration of this course will contain a section on concepts, separate from the discussion of the historical evolution of these concepts, to make sure that students are able to achieve the various CLOs of this course. Courses at higher level will bridge the gap between these two components.	
	Changes to the Academic Process (<i>Revision of admission criteria; revision of advising standards or processes; improvements in technology; changes in personnel; changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings...</i>)	
	No change in the academic process.	
Assessment feedback	This report will be shared with the department.	

Describe how data and analysis are being shared and discussed with faculty and staff involved in the program/department.		
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Data For PSPA 210

Grade	Number of Students
23	3
24	3
25	2
26	10
27	11
28	9
29	4
30	9
31	2

Average is 27

2. Report submitted by Dr. Coralie Pison Hindawi – Spring 2016-17 (PLO 2, assessed in PSPA 213)

American University of Beirut



Annual Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Report

Program Information	
Faculty	FAS
Department	PSPA
Academic Program (Major)	Political Studies
Degree (e.g., BA, BS...)	B.A.
Program Learning Outcomes Please list all of the learning outcomes for this program.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes 10. Think critically of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes, and their relevance to past and contemporary issues 11. Engage in informed discussions of current domestic and international affairs 12. Use different theories and concepts to investigate given problems in political science 13. Apply the basic research methodologies of the social sciences and learn to select appropriate conceptual and practical methods of enquiry in the field of political science 14. Demonstrate/apply advanced reading and writing skills 15. Demonstrate an independent and inquisitive attitude in both thought and research in the field of political science 16. Respect academic and intellectual rules governing academic discourse, integrity, tolerance, and

	constructive criticism	
Academic Year	2016-17	
Contact Person		
Name (Person coordinating the PLO assessment process.)	Dr. Coralie Pison Hindawi	
Title	Assistant Professor	
E-Mail Address	chindawi@aub.edu.lb	
Extension	4337	
Outcomes Assessed, Means of Assessment, and Improvement Plans		
Semester	<i>Fall Semester</i>	<i>Spring Semester</i>
PLOs Assessed (Please provide both text and number.)		PLO 2. Think critically of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes, and their relevance to past and contemporary issues.
Data Source Describe where and when data was collected; how and if students were sampled; and sample size. Please report on each PLO separately.		The sample was the student population of the two sections of PSPA 213. All the students who took the midterm exam were selected, for a sample size of 60.
Means of Assessment Describe in detail the assessment method used (e.g., capstone project, course-embedded assessment, standardized instrument, etc.) and briefly explain the task. Please report on each PLO separately.		The PLO was measured in an essay that students had to draft as part of their midterm exam for the course. For this essay, students were asked to read an excerpt from an academic article by Hedley Bull. I did not disclose the author's or article's name, and asked students to do the following: - Please read carefully the excerpt from an academic article published in 1976 that is reproduced above and try to identify the school of thought to which the author of this quote may

		<p>belong (though perhaps you may think of more than one approach, a key concept in the quote should help you decide).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Then, explain what is specific to this approach and name a couple of authors that belong to this school. - Last, tell us whether you personally find this approach convincing and why, and whether one (or more) of the major approaches in IR theory we briefly studied seem to you to be particularly helpful to understand/study international politics and why. <p>Accordingly, I tried through this essay to assess, from the first, students' knowledge and understanding of the basic theories of International Politics that we covered in class. Then, I assessed students' ability to reflect critically on these theories and approaches.</p>
<p>Means of Scoring Describe how you scored the assessment. For example, did you use a rubric or answer key, or was it scored by a testing company? Please report on each PLO separately.</p>		<p>The essay counted for 40% of the midterm grade. The essay was graded according to the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Answering all three aspects of the question (1. Identification of approach and justification/ 2. Basic presentation of the approach selected and main authors / 3. Critical engagement with this and other theories of IR). - Displaying a good understanding of the approach identified and other approaches/theories of IR - Engaging personally and critically with these approaches, building a personal argumentation on solid arguments and examples. - Drafting a well structured and well written

<p>Assessment Results After analyzing your numerical data, present it in a table on the next page. Please report on each PLO separately.</p>		<p>essay.</p> <p>The quality of students' essays and their ability to engage critically with theories and approaches in International Politics were uneven. While most students did try to engage critically with some theories of IR, some did so more convincingly than others. Given that this ability to think critically of theoretical approaches depends upon a solid understanding of these approaches, students whose understanding of the theories studied is too superficial or partial are automatically hindered in their critical reflection. Others failed to provide examples or facts to back up their claims, which significantly weakened their argumentation.</p> <p>Overall, 12 students' performance was either extremely poor or poor (with grade ranging from 0 to 28). 10 students' performance was reasonable (with grade of 30 or 31).</p> <p>The rest of the students (38) got a grade of 32 or above and most of them were able to engage critically with some of the theories and approaches we studied. 21 of them got a grade of 34 or above and were able to do so very satisfactorily.</p>
Findings, Use and Dissemination		
Semester	<i>Fall Semester</i>	<i>Spring Semester</i>
<p>Findings What were the most valuable things you learned?</p>		<p>The PLO assessed requires students to acquire a complex set of skills, which they can only do in stages. The first step is for students to grasp that engaging critically with approaches, concepts, theories etc. requires a solid understanding of these approaches, concepts etc. The second step requires students to understand that any critical engagement has to be justified solidly, based upon facts and examples.</p>

		It cannot be expected that students will acquire these complex skills in any single course, but it is important for us as instructors to reflect on how we can contribute to this PLO in each of the courses we teach.
Use of Findings Explain how these findings will be used.	Changes to the Assessment Plan (<i>Revision of intended learning outcomes; revision of measurement approaches; changes in data collection methods; changes in targets/standards; changes in sample...</i>)	PLO 2 is framed in quite broad terms, and designates a set of skills whose acquisition is relatively complex. Thinking critically of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes, and their relevance to past and contemporary issues requires from the first to understand these concepts, ideologies etc. before engaging critically with them. It may make sense to split this PLO into less broad learning outcomes that are less complex and easier to assess. But this would have to be discussed within the department.
	Changes to the Curriculum (<i>Changes in teaching techniques; revision of prerequisites; revision of course sequence; revision of course content; addition of courses; deletion of courses...</i>)	No change in the curriculum.
	Changes to the Academic Process (<i>Revision of admission criteria; revision of advising standards or processes; improvements in technology; changes in personnel; changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings...</i>)	No change in the academic process.
Assessment feedback Describe how data and analysis are being shared and discussed with faculty and staff involved in the program/department.		This report will be shared with the department.

Data for PSPA 213, PLO 2:

Grade	Number of Students
0	1
18-20	4
24-26	3
28	5
30	6
31	4
32	9
33	7
34	8
35	6
36	3
37	1
38	1
40	2

Average: 31/40.

3. Report submitted by Dr. Coralie Pison Hindawi – Spring 2016-17 (PLO 3, PSPA 213)

American University of Beirut



Annual Program Learning Outcomes Assessment Report

Program Information	
Faculty	FAS
Department	PSPA
Academic Program (Major)	Political Studies
Degree (e.g., BA, BS...)	B.A.
Program Learning Outcomes Please list all of the learning outcomes for this program.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes 2. Think critically of fundamental socio-political concepts, ideologies, theories and processes, and their relevance to past and contemporary issues 3. Engage in informed discussions of current domestic and international affairs 4. Use different theories and concepts to investigate given problems in political science 5. Apply the basic research methodologies of the social sciences and learn to select appropriate conceptual and practical methods of enquiry in the field of political science 6. Demonstrate/apply advanced reading and writing skills 7. Demonstrate an independent and inquisitive attitude in both thought and research in the field of political science 8. Respect academic and intellectual rules governing academic discourse, integrity, tolerance, and

	constructive criticism	
Academic Year	2016-17	
Contact Person		
Name (Person coordinating the PLO assessment process.)	Dr. Coralie Pison Hindawi	
Title	Assistant Professor	
E-Mail Address	chindawi@aub.edu.lb	
Extension	4337	
Outcomes Assessed, Means of Assessment, and Improvement Plans		
Semester	<i>Fall Semester</i>	<i>Spring Semester</i>
PLOs Assessed (Please provide both text and number.)		PLO 3. Engage in informed discussions of current domestic and international affairs
Data Source Describe where and when data was collected; how and if students were sampled; and sample size. Please report on each PLO separately.		The sample was the student population of the two sections of PSPA 213. All the students who submitted the moodle assignment were selected, for a sample size of 60.
Means of Assessment Describe in detail the assessment method used (e.g., capstone project, course-embedded assessment, standardized instrument, etc.) and briefly explain the task. Please report on each PLO separately.		The PLO was measured through assessing students' ability to engage in informed discussions of international affairs within a moodle forum. Students were required to submit a moodle posting on a topic connected to international politics in which they share something (a book, an article, a video, a movie or a series, a conference they attended or personal experience connected to international politics etc...) and comment on it within a brief text (400 to 800 words).

		<p>In their posting, students were required to introduce what they chose to share, explain why and how what they chose to share is connected to questions discussed in class or to international politics in general.</p> <p>Furthermore, students were required to comment on two other students' postings. They were asked to do so in a critical and constructive way, specifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Why they wanted to react to the posting -What they considered to be of particular interest in the posting -What reflections it triggered <p>+ Comment critically on the posting.</p>
<p>Means of Scoring Describe how you scored the assessment. For example, did you use a rubric or answer key, or was it scored by a testing company? Please report on each PLO separately.</p>		<p>The moodle posting and the comments on two other students' postings represented together 20% of students' final grade for the course.</p> <p>The postings and comments were graded according to the following criteria: relevance of the choice, connection to the course, well structured/well developed arguments, connection to theories, approaches and/or concepts or issues discussed in class, effort to engage in additional research to better grasp the issue selected and its context, critical thinking.</p>
<p>Assessment Results After analyzing your numerical data, present it in a table on the next page. Please report on each PLO separately.</p>		<p>Most students' contributions were of high quality in terms of their relevance and connection to the course material and international politics more broadly. Most were also solidly researched, critical, and well written. As a result, 45 out of 60 students got a grade of 95 or above. The lowest grades (4 students) corresponded to students who did not take the assignment seriously enough and/or submitted with substantial delays. In between were 9 students whose postings were not researched thoroughly enough, and/or too confused.</p>

Findings, Use and Dissemination		
Semester	<i>Fall Semester</i>	<i>Spring Semester</i>
Findings What were the most valuable things you learned?		The ability of students to engage in informed discussions of current domestic or international affairs is obviously a skill that each of the courses offered at the department should naturally contribute to. In addition, some exercises such as the moodle assignment used here to assess this PLO can prove particularly suited to promote (and assess) students' ability to engage in such informed discussions. With the proper incentive, and given enough time to think about their project and seek feedback, students seem generally eager to work on this skill. The quality of the work produced is very encouraging.
Use of Findings Explain how these findings will be used.	Changes to the Assessment Plan (<i>Revision of intended learning outcomes; revision of measurement approaches; changes in data collection methods; changes in targets/standards; changes in sample...</i>)	
		No change in the assessment plan.
	Changes to the Curriculum (<i>Changes in teaching techniques; revision of prerequisites; revision of course sequence; revision of course content; addition of courses; deletion of courses...</i>)	
		No change in the curriculum. I would like to encourage colleagues teaching the 213 course, Introduction to International Politics, to use a similar exercise to encourage students to engage in informed and well prepared discussions of international politics beyond the classroom. I have been using this assignment for many years, and students tend to like it very much. On average, one third of the students start thinking about their assignment early on in the semester, seeking feedback, and taking advantage of the feedback provided to deepen their analysis and/or improve their writing skills. The shortness of the main posting (max 800 words) makes the provision of detailed feedback manageable for an introductory course. Also, this

		assignment allows to expand the scope of class discussions. Students and the teacher learn a lot from each other, and shy or discrete students also get the opportunity to engage in discussions in a manner that makes them more comfortable than during class.
	Changes to the Academic Process (<i>Revision of admission criteria; revision of advising standards or processes; improvements in technology; changes in personnel; changes in frequency or scheduling of course offerings...</i>)	
		No change in the academic process.
Assessment feedback Describe how data and analysis are being shared and discussed with faculty and staff involved in the program/department.		This report will be shared with the department.

Data for PSPA 213, PLO 3:

Grade	Number of Students
30-40	3
41-50	1
70-74	1
75-79	4
80-84	2
85-89	3
90-94	6
95	22
96-99	3
100	15

Average: 90/100.

