

**ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES
FOR
DEPARTMENT OF
HISTORY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE**

Political Science Discipline

August 2008-August 2009

October 2009

Program Name

Level

Public Affairs: Political and Governmental Processes

Master of Arts

Submitted by: Dr. A. Manafy, Professor of Political Science
Dr. Elaine Rodriguez, Associate Professor of Political Science
Dr. Thomas Corbin, Assistant Professor of Political Science

ASSESSMENT REPORT

Public Affairs: Political and Governmental Processes

Master of Arts

2008-2009

October 2009

Mission and Goals

Institutional Mission:

"New Mexico Highlands University is committed to . . . discovering, preserving and applying knowledge and . . . to new opportunities for learning, research and public service . . . [and] to empower students . . . to achieve full involvement . . . in society."

Department's/Program's Goal(s) in Support of Institutional Mission:

" . . . to discovering, preserving and applying knowledge . . . to new opportunities for learning, research and public service . . . to empower students . . ."

Intended Educational (Student) Outcome:

- 1) To provide graduate students with comprehensive graduate education in the field of public affairs which includes the totality of American governmental organization and operation and the policy-making process.
- 2) To develop among graduate students an awareness and understanding of the advanced literature in political science and public affairs.
- 3) To develop among graduate students the ability to carry out original, creative, scholarly research in the fields of political science and public affairs.

ASSESSMENT REPORT

Public Affairs: Political and Governmental Processes

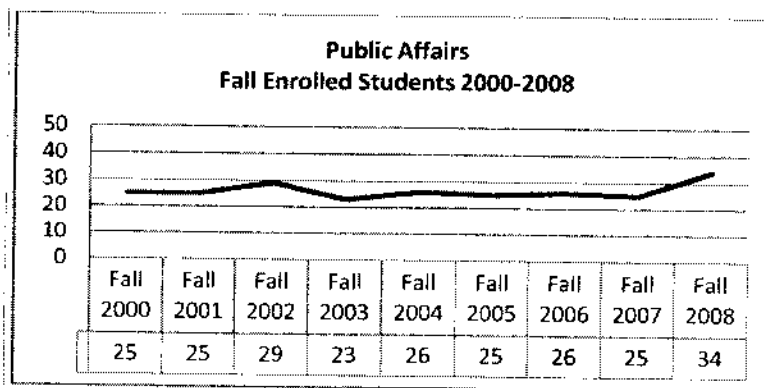
Master of Arts

2008-2009

October 2009

Graduate Enrollment

Fall Semester 2008	Spring Semester 2008	Spring Semester 2009
33	31	30



Illustrated in the above graph, the number of students enrolled in the Public Affairs graduate program increased by 36 percent or 9 students between fall of 2007 and 2008. The number of students enrolled in fall 2008—34 students—was the largest enrollment since the fall of 2000. All Political Science faculty are actively engaged in recruiting for the program. Obstacles in recruitment are 1) the lack of graduate/teaching assistantships available to potential students, and 2) existing funds are not competitive with other universities research/teaching assistantships. Currently, the History and Political Science disciplines offer six assistantships. Each assistantship is in the amount of \$3,500 a semester, plus free tuition for 12 credit hours.

ASSESSMENT REPORT

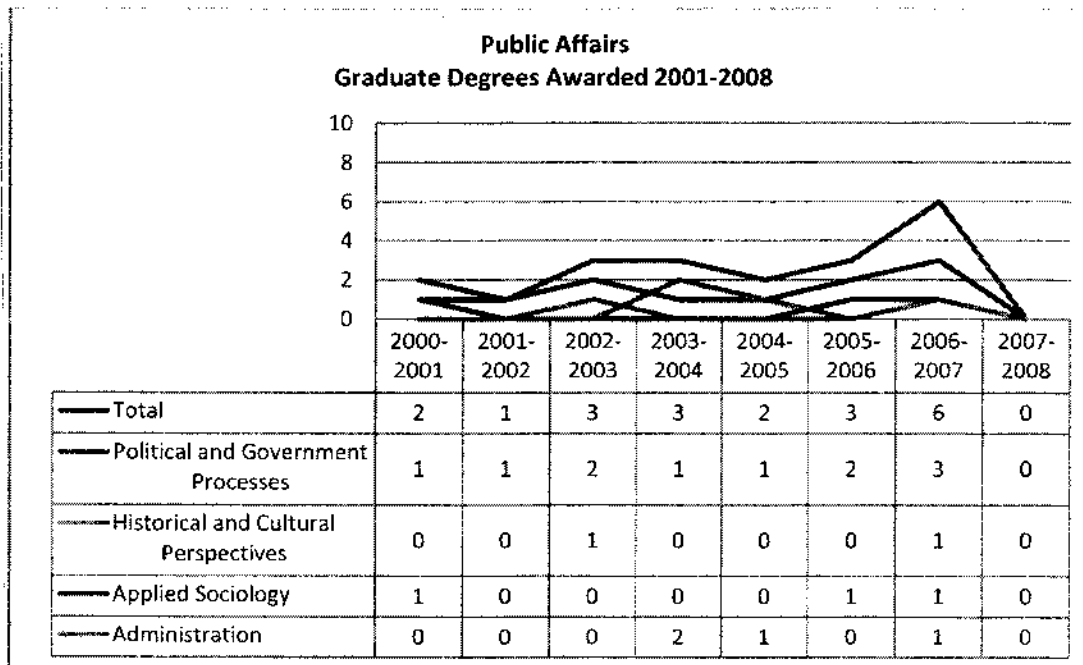
Public Affairs: Political and Governmental Processes

Master of Arts

2008-2009

October 2009

Graduate Degrees Awarded



Between 1994 and 1999, on average three (3) students completed their M. A. in Public Affairs/Political and Governmental Processes. Illustrated in the above graph, between 2000 and 2007, typically three (3) students graduated for the Public Affairs program with one to three students completing their M.A. in Political and Governmental Processes. The 2007-2008 academic was the exception to the previous years and produced zero graduates. Possible reasons for the decreased number of graduate students is two-fold: 1) recently, the University underwent a reorganization, and 2) the political science department had only one full-time tenured faculty member and two temporary/visiting or adjunct faculty members.

Currently (2009) the Political Science Department has 3 full-time (FTE) faculty members. In the spring of 2008, a second tenured-track professor was hired to teach

all undergraduate and graduate Pre-Law courses; and in the spring of 2009, a third tenured-track professor was hired to teach undergraduate and graduate courses in American/Minority Politics.

The following lists M. A. graduate students who are at different stages of completing their thesis.

M.A. Graduates	Status
Nicole Ortiz	Thesis Candidate
Neil Carson	Thesis Candidate
Asong Folifac	Thesis Candidate
Robert Anaya	Thesis Candidate
Jessy Lopez	Thesis Candidate
Lucy Brizal	Thesis Candidate
Robecca Lucero	Thesis Candidate
Reina Revell	Thesis Candidate
Geraldine Savador	Thesis Candidate
Ane Romero	Thesis Candidate
Shulimite Abang	Thesis Candidate
Enagha Enyong	Thesis Candidate
Hedy Trevino	Thesis Candidate

ASSESSMENT REPORT

Public Affairs: Political and Governmental Processes

Master of Arts

2008-2009

October 2009

Intended Educational Outcomes:

- 1) To provide graduate students with comprehensive graduate education in the field of public affairs which includes the totality of American governmental organization and operation and the policy-making process.
- 2) To develop among graduate students an awareness and understanding of the advanced literature in political science and public affairs.
- 3) To develop among graduate students the ability to carry out original, creative, scholarly research in the fields of political science and public affairs.

A. Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success:

Graduate students are required to complete writing samples (research papers, essays, book reviews, memorandums, and short critical and analytical reaction papers) as part of their course work. Writing samples were randomly selected from the various graduate-level Political Science courses and evaluated by two Political Science professors. The writing samples were scored by categories (knowledge of literature, analytical ability, critical comparative thinking, originality, ability to employ empirical research and theoretical frameworks, and writing skills) on a scale of 1 to 20. A total score of 90-100 is considered excellent, 80-90, good; 70-80, satisfactory; and 60-70 passing, but marginal. ** Assessment Rubric included for the Political and Governmental Processes Program.

B. Data Results:

Thirty-nine writing samples were evaluated for graduate-level student achievement. Student evaluations were based on the following categories:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Methodology | On a scale of 0-20 points |
| 2. Literature Review | On a scale of 0-20 points |
| 3. Critical/Analytical Skills | On a scale of 0-20 points |
| 4. Writing Skills | On a scale of 0-20 points |
| 5. Originality | On a scale of 0-20 points |

Evaluation Categories	Writing Samples Evaluated	Average Score
Literature Review	30	80—Good
Critical/Analytical Skills	39	80—Good
Writing Skills	39	85—Very Good
Originality	39	85—Very Good
Methodology	37	85—Very Good

Evaluator's Comments:

Strengths:

- 1) Various students demonstrated mastery of the literature through the incorporation of the literature in their writing samples.
- 2) Student writing samples demonstrated a progression from descriptive information to analytical conclusions.
- 3) Student research confirmed the application of a range of qualitative and quantitative methodological techniques, such as participatory/observer approach, usage of polling data and U.S. Census data.
- 4) Many of the student writing samples demonstrated usage and application of theory.

Weaknesses:

- 1) Most student writing samples included citations, however the correct format of citation and citation placement were inconsistent.
- 2) Some student writing samples used a limited number of sources, such as instructors lecture notes and one or two additional sources. Student research needs to incorporate a broader number of sources and as a result will enhance their creativity.
- 3) Some of the student research samples lacked a clear research question(s) that led the student to provide too much information on the research topic, with no clear direction, nor conciseness.
- 4) Some of the student writing samples internalized their argument by utilizing personal pronouns.

C. Use of Results:

Results from the outcomes assessment will be reported to the Dean of Humanities and Fine Arts, the Department Chair and Political Science faculty for discussion and appropriate changes where needed

ASSESSMENT REPORT

Public Affairs: Political and Governmental Processes

Master of Arts

2008-2009

October 2009

Outcome Assessment Rubric

ID# _____ Reviewer: _____

1) Knowledge of Literature (Scale of 0-20 points)

Score: _____

Reviewer Comments:

2) Critical/Analytical Skills (Scale of 0-20 points)

Score: _____

Reviewer Comments:

3) Writing Skills (Scale of 0-20 points)

Score: _____

Reviewer Comments:

4) Originality (Scale of 0-20 points)

Score: _____

Reviewer Comments:

5) Methodology (Scale of 0-20 points)

Score: _____

Reviewer Comments:

Evaluation Method: Each writing sample was evaluated using the above rubric. Individual scores and reviewer comments were placed into an Excel database. The scores produced an average of the student writing samples. Reviewer comments were analyzed in the aggregate for common patterns presented as strengths and weaknesses in student writing samples.