

**DALTON STATE COLLEGE  
COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM REVIEW**

**Program/Subject Area: Associate of Arts – Political Science**  
**Review Period: Fall 2012**

**1. PROGRAM GOAL AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Program goal statement:

The Associates of Arts in political science is designed to create educated and competent global citizens. The Associate of Arts in political science serves as a foundation for careers both in the private and public sector including business, law, government, civic organizations, political campaigns, interest groups, and secondary and college teaching. In addition, graduates will possess the skills necessary for fostering and contributing to effective local, national, and global citizenship. The Associates of Arts in political science offers coursework in the general areas of American government, state and local politics, and international relations. This degree transfers toward the Bachelor of Arts in political science and requires proof of computer literacy.

Program outcomes:

The AA in political science shares the program outcomes that are associated with all of the School of Liberal Arts' AA transfer programs:

1. Graduates of associate's degree programs in the School of Liberal Arts will express satisfaction with the faculty and programs in the School of Liberal Arts.
2. Graduates of associate's degree programs in the School of Liberal Arts will be academically successful on transferring to a four-year program at Dalton State or at another University System of Georgia institution.

Program specific student learning outcomes:

POLS 1101 Student Learning Outcomes, Fall 2011 and Spring 2012

1. *Students will articulate the constitutional principles and governmental processes fundamental to American democracy and political participation.*
2. *Students will articulate an understanding of major forces and events, influences, or ideas that have shaped history and society.*
3. *Students will analyze, evaluate, and provide convincing reasons in support of conclusions and arguments.*

POLS 2201 Student Learning Outcomes, Spring 2012

1. *Students will articulate an understanding of major forces and events, influences, or ideas that have shaped history and society. (US Perspectives, Area E)*
2. *Students will demonstrate the constitutional principles and governmental processes fundamental to American democracy and political participation. (US Perspectives, Area E)*

3. *Students will use technology and gather data to conduct research from various sources, including electronic media, and demonstrate an understanding of plagiarism by acknowledging and citing informational sources correctly. (Critical Thinking, Area E)*

POLS 2401 Student Learning Outcomes, Spring 2012

1. *Students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate observations, inferences or relationships in works under investigation. (Critical Thinking)*
2. *Students will articulate an understanding of individual and cultural differences and perspectives across the globe. (Global Perspectives, Area E)*
3. *Students will analyze social institutions, world religions, natural landscapes, or human behavior using appropriate disciplinary frameworks. (Global Perspectives, Area E)*

## 2. MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS/PROGRAM-LEVEL OUTCOMES

### (a) Five-year enrollment summary by headcount, FTE, & full-time/part-time status (duplicated fall, spring, and summer)

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	% Change
Headcount	27	40	35	24	24	-11%
FTE	22.25	34.42	32.2	21.3	19.5	-12%
Full-time	17	25	28	15	14	-17.6%
Part-time	10	15	7	9	10	0%

#### Analysis and comments:

The number of students who chose to major in political science has continued to drop over the past five years. The number of majors has decreased 41.1% since 2009-10, from 19 majors to 11 majors in 2011. The unduplicated headcount provides a more accurate measure of the program decline than the duplicated headcount; however, since the courses in the program can all be used to fulfill the general education requirements, the program can be administered without additional cost to the College.

**(b) Five-year enrollment summary by gender & race/ethnicity (unduplicated, fall only)**

	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	% Change
<b>Gender</b>						
Female	4	4	4	6	5	25%
Male	10	15	8	5	5	-50%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>						
Am. Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Asian or Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Black	2	1	0	1	2	0%
Hawaiian/Other Pacific	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Hispanic	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Multiracial	0	0	0	1	2	NA
Unknown	2	9	4	2	1	-50%
White	9	9	8	7	5	-44%

**Analysis and comments:**

There has been a substantial decrease in the percentage of male students majoring in political science over the past five years and a slight increase in the percentage of females. However, the numbers are not large enough to be very meaningful. The declining number of white students in the program also simply reflects the general decrease in the number of political science majors overall.

**(c) Average class size, credit hours, and credit hours/FTE faculty**

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Average class size	29.6	31.1	31.6	27.1	23.7
Student credit hours	3726	3831	4929	5286	4764
Credit hours/FTE faculty	665	766	870	881	794

**Analysis and comments:**

The average class size began dropping in 2010 and has continued with the College's drop in enrollment. However, the number of student credit hours generated has increased by 27.9% over the last five years. This finding is not surprising given that the College's enrollment, though declining, is still higher than it was in 2007-2008. The percentage increase in political science hours generated, however, is higher than the percentage increase in the fall-to-fall enrollment (21%), suggesting that more students are enrolled in the College's degree programs as opposed to its technical offerings.

**(d) Faculty teaching in program**

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Total Faculty	6	5	7	8	6
Full-time Faculty	5	5	5	7	6
Part-time Faculty	1	0	2	1	0
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	6	5	6	8	6
Female	0	0	1	0	0
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>					
American Indian/Pacific	0	0	0	0	0
Asian	1	1	1	1	1
African-American	0	0	0	1	1
Hispanic	0	0	0	0	0
White	5	4	6	6	4
Multiracial	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Tenure Status (full-time)</b>					
Tenured	4	4	5	6	4
On-tenure track	1	1	0	1	1
Non-tenure track		0	0	0	1
<b>Rank (full-time)</b>					
Professor	1	1	1	1	2
Associate Professor	3	3	3	5	2
Assistant Professor	1	1	1	1	1
Instructor/Lecturer		0	0	0	1
<b>Highest Degree (full-time)</b>					
Doctorate	5	5	5	6	4
Specialist	0	0	0	0	0
Master's	0	0	0	1	2
Bachelor's	0	0	0	0	0
Associate's/Other	0	0	0	0	0

**Analysis and comments:**

The full-time faculty is made up exclusively of males; however, there is some racial diversity, with 33% of the faculty being Asian or African-American. The majority of full-time faculty members have doctoral degrees, and one of the remaining faculty members expects to complete his degree in August. As some of the older faculty members retire, the department should try to increase the diversity in gender.

**(e) Percent of classes taught by full-time faculty**

2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
98%	100%	85%	94%	100%

**Analysis and comments:**

The majority of political science courses at Dalton State are taught by full-time faculty members. This finding could be considered a strength since these faculty members are fully invested in the college.

**(f) Number of degrees conferred**

2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
6	1	2	1	0

**Analysis and comments:**

Very few degrees have been conferred over the past five years, and the numbers have dropped significantly. If this trend continues, the Department of Social Sciences should consider deactivating the program.

**(g) Placement rates: Five-year summary of job placement rates, if applicable**

2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

**Analysis and comments:**

This is a two-year transfer program.

**(h) Average cost per FTE and credit hour**

	2011-12
Cost per FTE	\$854
Cost per hour	\$56.8

**Analysis and comments:**

Since the cost per credit hour is less than the cost of tuition, the College does not appear to lose money because of the program. In addition, POLS 1101 makes up the majority of the political science course offerings. POLS 1101 is a required general education course for all majors, so the course itself may cover the cost of faculty salaries.

**(i) Cost per FTE Faculty**

2011-12
\$45,146

**Analysis and comments:**

The AA in political science is not an expensive program to operate given the \$45,146 cost per FTE faculty. The College hired a full-time lecturer in 2010, and his salary has helped reduce the cost of the program.

**(j) Summary and evidence of achievement of program outcomes**

Describe the extent to which students have achieved current program outcomes.

The AA in political science shares the program outcomes of the Dalton State AA transfer programs. The table below details the program outcomes, benchmarks and assessment measures, and results for the AA transfer programs combined. Most of the evidence/results of assessment are taken from the 2011-2012 School of Liberal Arts Annual Report.

Program Outcome	Benchmarks & Assessment Measures	Evidence/Results of Assessment
Graduates of associate's degree programs in the School of Liberal Arts will express satisfaction with the faculty and programs in the School of Liberal Arts.	Student evaluations of Liberal Arts faculty will exceed 4.5 on a 5-point scale, the upper-range of standard faculty performance (4.0-4.59).	<p>During the 2011-2012 academic year, faculty in the Department of Humanities and faculty in the Department of Social Sciences averaged 4.66 on their student evaluations (4.70 for the Department of Humanities and 4.61 for the Department of Social Sciences).</p> <p>Benchmark met. On average, faculty members in the School of Liberal Arts are rated in the "High" performance range on student evaluations.</p>
	On the Graduating Student Surveys, 70% of the students responding will report that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the education they received at Dalton State.	<p>On the Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 Graduating Student Surveys, 94.04% of the students agreed that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the education they received at Dalton State.</p> <p>Benchmark met. This percentage represents a 3.26% increase in satisfaction over the previous academic year.</p>
	On Writing Lab student surveys, 70% of the students surveyed will report that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the assistance they received in the lab.	<p>During the 2011-2012 academic year, 99% of the students surveyed reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the assistance they received in the lab.</p> <p>Benchmark met. Students were extremely satisfied with Writing Lab staff and volunteers.</p>

<p>Graduates of associate's degree programs in the School of Liberal Arts will be academically successful on transferring to a four-year program at Dalton State or at another University System of Georgia institution.</p>	<p>Students' first-semester transfer GPA will be used to assess student success on transferring to another University System institution or to a Dalton State four-year program. Data will be derived from the System's Transfer Student Report and the Dalton State Student Information System (Banner).</p>	<p>During 2010, 100% of all AA transfer students had a first-semester GPA of 2.0 or better, achieving an average GPA of 3.36. During 2011, only 63% of AA transfer students had a first-semester GPA of 2.0 or better; however, the average transfer GPA was 2.75.</p> <p>Benchmark partially met. The average GPA for transfer students was an acceptable 2.75 for the most recent year, but it is disappointing that only 63% of the students who transferred had a first-semester GPA of 2.0 or greater.</p> <p>We also do not have data for students who have enrolled in Dalton's own four-year programs. We expect to revise the assessment measure during the next cycle.</p>
--	---	--

**(k) Summary and evidence of achievement of student learning outcomes**

Describe the extent to which students have achieved current student learning outcomes in Area F and/or upper-division courses, if applicable. (current year)

As the following tables show, all student learning outcomes were achieved for political science courses offered during Fall 2011 and Spring 2012.

POLS 1101 Student Learning Outcomes Summary, Fall 2011 and Spring 2012

	Student Learning Outcomes	Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success	Actual Results
1.	<p><i>Students will articulate the constitutional principles and governmental processes fundamental to American democracy and political participation. (US Perspectives, Area E)</i></p>	<p>At least seventy percent of the students will demonstrate understanding of the constitutional principles and governmental processes fundamental to American democracy and political participation by earning a 70% or higher on an in class examination that is focused on the US constitution and the principles of American democracy.</p>	77.5%

2.	<i>Students will articulate an understanding of major forces and events, influences, or ideas that have shaped history and society.</i>	At least seventy percent of the students will demonstrate the ability to articulate an understanding of major forces and events, influences or ideas that have shaped history and society by earning a 70% or higher on their course test average in POLS 1101.	86%
3.	<i>Students will analyze, evaluate, and provide convincing reasons in support of conclusions and arguments.</i>	Students will use at least (3) different learning tools (mediums of conveying information) to analyze, evaluate and support their conclusions and arguments while in POLS 1101.	80%

POLS 1101 Student Learning Outcomes Summary, Spring 2012 Online

	Student Learning Outcomes	Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success	Actual Results
1.	<i>Students will articulate the constitutional principles and governmental processes fundamental to American democracy and political participation. (US Perspectives, Area E)</i>	At least 70% of the students will demonstrate understanding of the constitutional principles and governmental processes fundamental to American democracy and political participation by earning a 70% or higher on an in-class examination that is focused on the US constitution and the principles of American democracy.	70%
2.	<i>Students will articulate an understanding of major forces and events, influences, or ideas that have shaped history and society. (US Perspectives, Area E)</i>	At least 70% of the students will demonstrate the ability to articulate an understanding of major forces and events, influences or ideas that have shaped history and society by earning a 70% or higher on their course test average in POLS 1101.	70%
3.	<i>Students will analyze, evaluate, and provide convincing reasons in support of conclusions and arguments. (Critical Thinking)</i>	Students will use at least (3) different learning tools (mediums of conveying information) to analyze, evaluate, and support their conclusions and arguments while in POLS 1101.	100%

POLS 2201 Student Learning Outcomes Summary, Spring 2012 only

	Student Learning Outcomes	Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success	Actual Results
1.	<i>Students will articulate an understanding of major forces and events, influences, or ideas that have shaped history and society. (US Perspectives, Area E)</i>	Seventy percent of the students will articulate an understanding of major forces, events, influences, or ideas that have shaped history and society by earning a 70% or higher on an in-class presentation that will highlight a topic or event relevant to state and local governments in the United States of America.	85%
2.	<i>Students will demonstrate the constitutional principles and governmental processes fundamental to American democracy and political participation. (US Perspectives, Area E)</i>	Seventy percent of the students will demonstrate the constitutional principles and governmental processes fundamental to American democracy and political participation by earning a 70% or higher on the major examinations during the course of the semester in State and Local government.	93%
3.	<i>Students will use technology and gather data to conduct research from various sources, including electronic media, and demonstrate an understanding of plagiarism by acknowledging and citing informational sources correctly. (Critical Thinking, Area E)</i>	Seventy percent of the student will use technology and gather data to conduct research from various sources, including electronic media, and demonstrate an understanding of plagiarism by acknowledging and citing informational sources correctly by earning a 70% or higher on a research paper relating to a key topic or idea regarding State and Local government.	93%

POLS 2401 Student Learning Outcomes Summary, Spring 2012 only

	Student Learning Outcomes	Means of Assessment and Criteria for Success	Actual Results
1.	<i>Students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate observations, inferences or relationships in works under investigation. (Critical Thinking)</i>	Seventy percent of the students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate observations, inferences, or relationships in works under investigation by earning a 70% or higher on their evaluation of a supplemental reading source (a source other than the main text used for the class) during the semester in International Relations.	85%
2.	<i>Students will articulate an understanding of individual and cultural differences and perspectives across the globe. (Global Perspectives, Area E)</i>	Seventy percent of the students will articulate an understanding of individual and cultural differences and perspective across the globe, by earning a 70% or higher on a research paper dealing with some global	100%

		perspective during the semester in International Relations.	
3.	<i>Students will analyze social institutions, world religions, natural landscapes, or human behavior using appropriate disciplinary frameworks. (Global Perspectives, Area E)</i>	Seventy percent of the students will demonstrate the ability to analyze social institutions or human behavior using appropriate disciplinary frameworks by earning a 70% on their in class examinations during the course of the semester in International Relations.	85%

### (I) Evidence of program viability

Based on enrollment history, retention rates, degree completion/graduation rates, and other program outcomes, comment on whether continued resources should be devoted to this program. Your comments should consider external factors such as the following: Are your students getting jobs? What is the job outlook for graduates? Are students prepared for the jobs they get? How is the field changing? Are the program faculty members in touch with employers and getting feedback on our students' performance? Do employers see a need for changes in the program?

Based on enrollment history and degree completion rates, the AA in political science does not seem to be a viable program in its present form. During the last five years the number of majors has ranged from 13 to 11, with only 11 and 10 majors during the past two years. In the past three years, only three students have graduated with the AA in political science, with no graduates during 2011-2012. If this trend continues, the program should be deactivated.

### 3. USE OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS FOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

What improvements have occurred since the last program review or assessment?

This is the first program review for the AA in political science.

#### 4. REVIEW OF CURRICULUM

What changes or revisions have been made to the program, its curriculum, or its student learning outcomes since the last program review or assessment?

During the past five years, there have been no changes to the curriculum for the AA in political science. However, individual faculty members have begun offering POLS 1101 as a fully online course. In addition, the student learning outcomes for all political science courses were revised in 2011 to align with Dalton State's new general education outcomes.

#### 5. PROGRAM STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths:

The faculty members who teach in the program have strong credentials. Sixty-seven percent have doctoral degrees, one is ABD, and the remaining faculty member has a master's in the discipline. The majority of the political science faculty members are active in their disciplines, publishing encyclopedia entries or presenting at local, regional, and national conferences. In addition, the courses that make up the AA in political science curriculum are all a part of the general education curriculum; consequently, the program functions without additional cost to the college.

Weaknesses and concerns:

The program has few majors, the majority of whom do not graduate. There were only 10 majors as of Fall Semester 2012 and no graduates during 2011-2012. Though the program does not cost the College anything additional to operate, the poor graduation rate hurts the College's overall associate's graduation rate, which may impact the College's funding in the future.

#### 6. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP AND/OR ACTION PLANS (if needed)

Issue/concern:

The primary issues are lack of student interest in the major and poor graduation rates.

Specific action(s):

The Department of Social Sciences plans to explore the feasibility of developing a BA in public administration as a part of the College's Academic Master Plan. Students may find this a more marketable degree and a viable alternative to the traditional political science program. In addition, if student interest and graduation rates do not improve, the Department will deactivate the AA in Fall 2013.

To determine student interest in the BA in public administration, the Department will first need to conduct a program interest survey. If student interest is evident, then Matthew Hipps, who has begun exploring the degree, will work with other political science faculty to prepare a prospectus for the proposed degree program. If the Board of Regents approves the prospectus, the political science faculty will then develop the full proposal.

Expected outcomes:

Dalton State students will have another marketable degree option, and student interest in political science, in its new form, will improve.

Time frame:

Deactivating the AA in political science (if warranted): Fall 2013.

Student Interest Survey: Fall 2013.

Development of the prospectus: Fall 2013/Spring 2014.

Development of the proposal if approved: Fall 2014.

Person(s) responsible:

Dr. Judy Cornett  
Mr. Matthew Hipps

Resources needed:

None

Prepared by: Mary Nielsen and Judy Cornett

Date: May 22, 2013

Reviewed by: Mary Nielsen

Date: May 23, 2013

Reviewed by Chair of Program Review Subcommittee: Marilyn M Helms

Date: 6/3/13

Reviewed/Approved by Vice President for Academic Affairs: Sh S Stue

Date: 6/3/13