

Program Assessment Report

Program: POLITICAL SCIENCE

Year: 20/21

Division: Social Sciences

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Actions Taken in Response to Last Year's Report

After the previous assessment, we continued the same course, seeking to gather more data on political science students' growth in positive civic attitudes and likelihood of future participation.

Rationale for Current Assessments

Assessment 1 of 1

Goal / Project

Outcome(s)

Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of civic involvement in a democratic society. (16/17)

Standard / Objective

Average growth in students' civic index and political interest score should be 5 points in POL103 and POL105.

Method of assessment

Course Embedded Paper(s)/Projects

Comment/Details about the method of assessment

Pre and post surveys were administered to both POL103 and POL105 sections. The experience in each of these classes is identical, except that POL105 students complete 15 hours of civic engagement. The surveys are intended to measure positive civic attitudes and likelihood of future political participation (i.e. protest, vote, boycott, etc.). The sum of student responses to these questions creates a composite "civic index." The surveys also contain four questions asking students to place themselves on a 10-point scale regarding their interest in politics, enjoyment of learning about politics, enjoyment of discussing politics and whether they could be involved politically. The sum of responses to these questions create a 40-point political interest index. Changes from the beginning to the end of the semester are observed by calculating the difference in means between the pretest and the posttest for both the civic index and political interest index.

Courses Affected

POL103 and POL105

Time Frame

Fall 2020-Winter 2021

Submitted By

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Result

Result

(1) Results did not meet expectation/standard

Data Collection (general or specific stats regarding results)

A civic index was calculated as a composite of 15 variables measuring students' likelihood of future political participation. Variables represented student responses on a 5-level scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. In both POL103 and POL105, students' civic attitudes moved in a positive direction from the beginning to end of the semester. Data was collected from 19 students for the fall and winter semesters, who completed both the pretest and the posttest; however, all but one of the students was in POL103. The pre and post test allows us to calculate the difference from the beginning to the end of the semester; however, the small number of students who completed the survey, especially in POL105 prevents a statistical comparison between the POL103s and POL105s. Still, the civic index score moved in the positive direction an average of 2.9 points, which was similar to POL103 students in previous semesters. Another index measuring political interest from four variables on a 10-point scale also demonstrated movement in the positive direction from the beginning to end of the semester. Growth on that 40-point scale was 2.1 points for the students who completed pre and post surveys. This was slightly lower but comparable to POL103 students from previous semesters.

What We Learned (areas for improvements, strengths, etc.)

Over multiple semesters of data, with sample size now of 205 cases, we continue to find growth in students positive civic attitudes and political interest from the beginning to the end of the semester. Administration of the pre and post surveys in fall 2020 and winter 2021 semesters posed challenges, as all classes were moved online. The survey was administered electronically via eLearning rather than hard copy face-to-face, which significantly reduced the response rate. In the future, we will explore methods for improving the return rate in the online environment. Further, the slightly lower civic index and political interest index scores, we believe, represents the highly politically polarized environment in which the surveys were administered. Nationwide, 2020 hit new lows for divisiveness of politics, which could be reflected in students' lack of enjoyment of discussing politics and learning about politics. Still, the growth from the beginning to the end of the semester indicates movement in a positive direction.

Use of Data to Improve Student Success

As an institution of higher education, Delta College is serious about its civic mission. Our role is not only to prepare students for the workforce but also to prepare them for citizenship. These results indicate that completing a civic literacy course has an impact on that goal. As a college, we should continue encouraging students to complete a civic literacy course and offer these opportunities across as many disciplines as possible.

Institutional Student Learning Outcome	Action plan items of what is planned based on the data and results
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Apply Knowledge and Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Change assignments/activities <input type="checkbox"/> Update course content
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Think Critically	<input type="checkbox"/> Change materials provided <input type="checkbox"/> Update course outcomes
<input type="checkbox"/> Communicate Effectively	<input type="checkbox"/> Adjust grading rubric <input type="checkbox"/> Update prior courses
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Act Responsibly	<input type="checkbox"/> Continue to Monitor <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other

Comments and Action Plan

Discipline/Program Comments

Advisory Board Comments

Assessment Committee Comments

Are there changes that can be made within POL 103 to help any of the aspects of the questions where results are increasing the least for starters? From the previous assessment, it appeared that POL 105 had higher increase scores than POL 103, so is there something there that could be adjusted for future semesters?

Curriculum Council Comments

Action Plan

Actions Taken in Response to Older Reports