

Indiana State University

2004 - 2005 Academic Annual Report

Department of Political Science

Year in Review

Accomplishments

As you have heard, increasing public awareness of Indiana State University's accomplishments is crucial to building student enrollment, influencing policy makers, and developing a place of pre-eminence in the Midwest. What do you consider to be your department's 5-10 top accomplishments for the 2004-2005 year that will help contribute to this effort?

The Department of Political Science has had a number of major accomplishments this year. Our successful year includes the following: 1) In spite of increasing enrollment pressure at Indiana State University, the department's enrollments continue to climb, up 5% over 2003-2004, and 25.6% over 2000-2001 (simple headcount; partial figures for Summer 2005, actual numbers will be higher). 2) The Department was awarded a highly prestigious three-year (renewable) National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates grant for its "Democracy and World Politics Summer Research Program." This grant brings about \$100,000 per year to the department to work with 12 students from ISU and other universities each summer. This year is the first year of the program. 3) The Department initiated its Lilly-grant-supported Focus Indiana Pilot program, placing interns supported with stipends in a variety of positions in local and state government, as well as public interest and not-for-profit organizations. This program tripled the department's internship placement over last year. 4) Department faculty received recognition of a variety of kinds for their excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service. This recognition included a President's Medal (Erismann, 2004), a Caleb Mills Award (Maule, 2005), an Indiana INTERNnet award (Lloyd, 2004), an Indiana Campus Compact Hiltunen Award (Maule, 2005), and a Visiting Scholar Award from Eastern Illinois University (Scott, 2004). 5) Political Science students received major recognition for their academic achievements. Among others, this recognition included a Hines Medalist (Zibrowski), two Rankin Awards (Fox, Zibrowski), and a Campbell Scholarship (Emery). At the Spring 2005 graduation ceremony, an amazing two-thirds of the department's graduates did so with honors. 6) The department built on its previous success by completing major curriculum revisions to all its programs to better serve its students and incorporate experiential learning into the core of its efforts.

Research and Scholarship

What is your assessment of accomplishments in the area of research and scholarship? Are you satisfied overall? In which areas do you feel your department does particularly well? In which areas do you feel your department needs to improve?

First, let me note that, since three faculty members did not use the IFAR, the figures automatically reported are in error. The correct data is: Books - 1 Chapters - 6 Articles - 13 Creative Works - 0 Electronic Media - 2 Conference Papers - 16 Art - 0 Books/Journal Edited - 0 Awards - 2 The faculty of the Department of Political Science remained steady in research productivity this year. While the overall level of activity is quite satisfactory, several key improvements can be made. First, although the department was productive, it can be more so and further success in publication is an area for progress. Second, members of the department were especially active in participating in professional conferences. Further progress converting such conference presentations into published scholarship is an area for progress. Third, the department can be more aggressive in seeking both

internal and, especially, external support for its scholarly activities and programs, including support seeking funding for graduate assistantships (which would enable more rapid expansion of the graduate program).

Grants, Contracts & Off Campus Professional Service

What is your assessment of accomplishments in the area of grants, contracts, and off campus professional service? Are you satisfied overall? In which areas do you feel your department does particularly well? In which areas do you feel your department needs to improve?

The Department of Political Science is active in serving a variety of community needs and interests. Maintenance of its activities is a department objective. As noted in the scholarship section, external funding is an area in which there is room for more aggressive efforts to seek support for faculty work and program elements. One particularly promising avenue is collaborative efforts with other departments, on which the department is working.

Best Practices

Describe the progress your unit has made thus far. Were you able to take these steps? What steps or goals have been particularly difficult to achieve and why? What practices, actions, initiatives are you doing that could be considered eminent?

The Department made aggressive efforts to establish the Washington Center internship program, but faced resistance as it tried to: a) ensure that students would not pay double fees/tuition for the experience (i.e., at both the Washington Center and ISU); b) become an affiliated program. The MPA program completed its program restructuring, and began a revision of the undergraduate PA minor. It also initiated a new certificate program, a proposal to establish an online MPA degree program, and strengthened relationships with other graduate programs on campus (e.g., Human Resources Development). Discussions and plans on the development of an interdisciplinary public policy center are ongoing. The department led the way to establishing this as a college-wide strategic priority in the college strategic plan, and introduced several components of the proposal into the discussion for the upcoming capital campaign. The department has also proposed to hire a director for the center next year.

Student Credit Hours

What did you learn? What steps will you take during 2004-05 to meet your department's student credit hour target by fall 2005?

The department has been successful. In terms of simple headcount, Banner figures show the department's enrollments up 5% this year versus last year (which will be even higher when Summer 2005 is factored in), and up 25.6% since 2000-2001. The department's concerns regarding the SCH targets and formulas remain as described in last year's report. For its part, the department took the following steps to address its enrollment targets, with student interests and well-being as the first concern: (1) More tenure-track faculty members were scheduled into introductory level courses to raise SCH, and fewer single-digit upper-level courses were scheduled; (2) enrollment levels in introductory courses were raised to ensure larger classes; (3) graduate-only courses (600-level) were limited in favor of 400/500 courses; (4) the department streamlined its rotation and offerings of required courses, which has had negative impacts on the ability of some students to complete their degrees without special petitions. The department will continue to make adjustments to its course assignments to ensure that tenure-track faculty teach introductory courses.

Budget

Identify and describe any collaborative efforts that have been undertaken by your department

with other academic or administrative units to maximize resources to meet departmental goals. Please also consider collaborative opportunities with external partners.

The Department has worked with the Sociology Department to share instructor resources to deliver method courses efficiently. In its revision of the MPA and PA (minor) programs, the department has built in electives from other disciplines. The department has also initiated work with other social science programs to establish an interdisciplinary public policy center, planning to contribute its Center for Governmental Services as its core, in conjunction with the Sociology Research Lab, the Feminist Institute for Research in Education, and, potentially, other existing units.

Outreach

What are the outreach opportunities for your discipline? (non-traditional modes of delivery and timing, etc)

The Department's primary opportunities for outreach concern its MPA program, a substantial portion of which is currently online (including two certificates). The department is proposing a online MPA degree in its entirety. The department also has several correspondence-based courses for its PA minor. The department also provides courses to the correctional programs, both onsite and online. Over the next several years, the department will be making efforts to develop additional distance and web-based courses at the introductory level and at the upper level to serve those constituencies who would benefit from such flexible learning opportunities.

Assessment

For each program in the department, provide one or two examples of how the program is using assessment and evaluation (student outcomes, program review, and/or accreditation) to enhance student learning and program strength this year.

For the MA/MS program, the department conducted a curriculum review and revision this year to strengthen the program's focus on preparing students for successful completion of Ph.D. degrees elsewhere. In particular, the department revised the core methods requirements, expanded the subfield theory requirements, and integrated substantive courses in the subfields to these areas more tightly. For the MPA program, the department completed a curriculum revision the integrated the MPA more tightly to the MA/MS degrees and established a set of core requirements in methods, political inquiry, and American politics and the the policy process. Also, in response to assessment information, the department revised its on-line courses, and is currently in the process of establishing an online MPA degree in its entirety. For the Legal Studies Program, assessment data led to increased emphasis on Legal Research and Writing requirements in the sophomore and juniors years. Additionally, the Legal Studies Capstone was revised to emphasize an applied project involving a mock appellate court simulation requiring students to prepare and present briefs in a simulated court. For the Political Science Program, assessment data led to several program revisions. First, the curriculum has been revised (pending approval) to ensure a broad foundation of core courses emphasizing both substance and skills, while also ensuring flexibility for student emphasis in a subfield or subfields. Second, the program has been more tightly linked to outcomes, with a freshman learning community, a sophomore and junior core requirement, and a senior capstone presenting systematic entry points to assessment, with specific content emphases focused on key department learning objectives. In parallel, the department is completing its revision of its assessment plan to match the newly-revised program structure. Finally, the department has aggressively expanded and integrated its experiential learning components, including internships, service and community engagement, and research into its program to better enable students to apply their course-work to practical settings, and to learn better from both.

Strategic Initiatives

Development Activities

What steps have you taken to support development activities in your department? How can your efforts be supported?

The Department of Political Science encourages its alumni to contribute to its suite of existing scholarships (9) and to establish new scholarships. It also actively seeks general contributions to the Department's foundation fund, which supports a variety of activities. Finally, the department regularly invites donors and their families to department events such as its annual honors day, at which the scholarships are awarded.

Experiential Learning

Please provide examples of experiential learning in which your department was engaged in 2004-2005.

Several key examples illustrate the department's commitment to and progress in incorporating experiential learning into the core of the program. 1) Internships: With its Focus Indiana Pilot Program funds, the department dramatically expanded its internship placements in 2004-2005. By the time the summer 2005 interns are placed the department will have increased its internships by 4 or 5 times from the previous year. Many of these internships are supported with stipends, and they include high-profile placements in the U.S. Congress, state and local government, courts, law offices, and a variety of public interest and not-for-profit organizations. 2) Student Research. In March 2004, the department was awarded a prestigious National Science Foundation Research Experience for Undergraduates grant. As one of only two Political Science programs in the country to receive such a grant, The department will receive about \$100,000 per year for at least three years for an innovative summer research program involving ISU faculty and Political Science students, students from other universities, and visiting scholars from Ph.D. institutions. The first year of the program began in Spring 2005, and will serve as the centerpiece of the departments efforts to broaden and extend student research experiences. Along with this major program, the department continued its undergraduate research assistant program, with 4 more students serving as paid assistants to work closely with faculty on research projects. Additional students will work with faculty on projects in the summer of 2005 as well. 3) Field Study. The department continued its program of meaningful field study experiences for its students in 2004-2005. For example: two Political Science/Legal Studies students were sent by ISU to the Democratic National Convention in summer 2004; four Political Science students were supported by Focus Indiana funds to attend a special Inside Washington Seminar in January 2005; students in the Legal Studies and Political Science Capstone courses engaged in a Washington DC field study as part of the courses in March 2005; 10 students traveled to the National Association of Women Judges Conference in October 2005; Capstone students (and others)attended the meeting of the Indiana Circuit Court of Appeals when it met on ISU's campus in April 2005 (students had prepared briefs on the case prior to the meeting, and conducted a Mock Appellate Court on the case afterward). 4) Service Learning/Community Engagement. While additional examples of these activities may be found in the Community Engagement section, two representative examples nicely illustrate the range of such meaningful experiences that enhance student learning: student participation in a Hull House trip to Chicago to work in that community; Capstone student community engagement projects (a wide variety of self-organized projects by the 25 students in the Legal Studies and Political Science capstone course).

Future Goals

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The University is highlighting experiential learning, community engagement, and eminent programs as aspects of our campus that will attract students and resources. How is your department planning to contribute to these strategic initiatives in ways that will help ISU be recognized as a Pre-eminent University?

The department's objectives and plans should contribute substantially to broad university goals and initiatives, and should help to attract students and resources. 1) Program. The department has completed a comprehensive curriculum review and revision designed to enhance student experiences and better prepare them for further education and careers of a variety of types. The new programs blend core training and substantive foundations with flexible electives and integrated experiential learning opportunities, and promise close mentoring relationships between majors and faculty. The department anticipates that, in future years, faculty advisors and recruiters will be able to point to a rich variety of student opportunities and say to each prospective major that they will graduate with one or more of the following: internship, independent research project, service learning/community engagement project, study abroad experience. To support these program elements, the department has (as described in other sections) and will continue to seek funds (internal and external) to support student activities and learning opportunities. 2) Experiential Learning. The department's commitment to experiential learning is one of its centerpieces and will continue to grow in each of its elements (internships, independent student research, service-learning, community engagement, study abroad). The department, college, and university will be able to point to a growing pool of accomplishments and success stories by its Political Science, Legal Studies, and Public Administration students. As the department will continue to press for affiliated status with the Washington Center for Internships, it expects to eventually be at the hub of a university-wide set of opportunities each semester for students of virtually any major to experience a valuable Washington-DC-based internship to enrich their learning. As the department's undergraduate research program grows, it will be taking a growing number of students to participate in the National Conference for Undergraduate Research and other such professional conferences each year. As the graduate programs grow, resting on their revised and strengthened curriculum, students will increasingly move from MS/MS degrees into good Ph.D. programs, and will use the improved MPA training to secure professional positions. 3) Public Policy. The department is taking the lead in developing an interdisciplinary public policy center, with its Center for Governmental Services at the core. When in place, this center will serve as a valuable asset for the department, college and university to engage in public policy research, public education activities, and a variety of programs linking students to applied public policy opportunities. The revised and expanded center will also serve as a hub for a wide variety of community engagement activities. The center's public policy research and consulting will elevate the profile of ISU in both local and state audiences and constituencies. 4) Development. The department hopes to initiate fundraising for support of its programs and students. In particular, the department hopes to raise funds for an "Experiential Learning" fund that will enable scholarships for research projects, internships, field study, service learning/community engagement, and study abroad. Ideally, and eventually, the department would like to allocate \$5,000-10,000 each for these purposes.