

Department of Political Science

Office or Department of Academic Affairs

Administrative Unit Assessment Report Information

Year Reporting: FY21 (July 2020 – June 2021)

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Department Mission and Goals

The mission and goals of the department should be consistent over a 5 year period, although some institutional changes may necessitate and prompt a change in mission or goals for specific departments. In this section, you will report the mission statement for your department as well as the long term goals (5 year range) for the department.

<p>6. What is the mission statement for this department/area? Your mission should explain why the department/area exists and who it serves.</p>	<p>The mission of the Department of Political Science is to be an organization of faculty and staff who are committed to excellence and integrity and whose collective goal is service to others through positive contributions that enrich and impact our region in general and students in particular. We mentor students pursuing studies in political science at the baccalaureate degree level, preparing students to meet the growing demand for research, analytical, and critical thinking skills in Central Georgia and beyond. We also support the general education mission of the university by teaching introductory courses in political science in the core curriculum.</p>
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<p>7. What are the goals for this department? These should be the "big things" the department/area intends to accomplish within 5 years.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Build enrollment in the bachelor of science in political science program so it is among the five largest liberal arts and sciences bachelor's programs offered by the university* by the 2024–25 academic year.2) Implement the bachelor of science in political science program on the Macon campus while, if sufficient faculty resources are available, continuing to offer the program in Cochran.3) Increase enrollment in the minors and the certificate program offered by the department.
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	<p>4) Identify and implement opportunities for collaboration with other departments, both within and outside the School of Education and Behavioral Sciences.</p> <p>5) Improve student retention, progression, and graduation in the core curriculum courses offered by the department.</p> <p>6) Optimize scheduling to reduce the number of underutilized sections and expenditures on inter-campus travel.</p> <p>7) Increase the diversity of the department's full-time faculty.</p>
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Objectives

Each year, every department should identify objectives the department hopes to accomplish in the next year. These should align with departmental goals and the MGA strategic plan. In the next section you will be reporting on the objectives you set and whether or not you achieved them in FY21. Later in the document you will report on objectives you hope to accomplish in the coming fiscal year, FY22.

Objective 1

8. Objective 1: What was this department's first objective for this fiscal year? Objectives should be specific, measurable, and achievable within one year.	The Department of Political Science will increase the total enrollment in the bachelor of science in political science program from 33 enrolled students in spring 2020 to 56 enrolled students in spring 2021.
9. Objective 1: Detail how your department measured this objective? (Survey, budget number, number of participants, jobs completed, measurable time and/or effort)	Headcount of enrolled majors from waa093c
10. Objective 1: What was your target outcome for this objective? (1.e. 80% participation, 5% enrollment growth, 7% change in engagement)	Net gain of 23 students.
11. Objective 1: At what level did the department/area achieve on this objective? (This should be a number, i.e. 82%, 6%, 345 attendees, 75% engagement)	Net loss of 2 students.
12. Objective 1: Did your department meet this objective?	The department did not meet this objective.
13. Objective 1: What did your department learn from working toward this objective? What changes will you make based on this effort next year?	As noted below we were hampered by an inability to engage in many of the recruitment activities needed to build a new major and MGA not bringing in as many students seeking a traditional liberal arts major and on-campus experience, which our political science major is designed to help complement. We spent a substantial amount of end-of-year funds on promotional materials to be used in AY 2021–22 to build awareness and interest in the major, and we have recruited a new (replacement) faculty member who is highly enthusiastic about promoting MGA and our degree program in local high schools. We will also engage in more aggressive efforts to convert undecided students and attract students who may not be as successful in their current major to switch to our major rather than dropping out or transferring to another institution.

Objective 2

14. Objective 2: What was this department's second objective for this fiscal year? Objectives should be specific, measurable, and achievable within one year.	The Department of Political Science will redesign the Sustainability Policy Studies minor to facilitate student completion and attract greater enrollment, in collaboration with other departments.
15. Objective 2: Detail how your department measured this objective? (Survey, budget number, number of participants, jobs completed, measurable time and/or effort)	Was the goal achieved or not.
16. Objective 2: What was your target outcome for this objective? (1.e. 80% participation, 5% enrollment growth, 7% change in engagement)	Achieve the goal.
17. Objective 2: At what level did the department/area achieve on this objective? (This should be a number, i.e. 82%, 6%, 345 attendees, 75% engagement)	We achieved the goal.
18. Objective 2: Did your department meet this objective?	The department met this objective.
19. Objective 2: What did your department learn from working toward this objective? What changes will you make based on this effort next year?	The changes resulting from the minor redesign will be implemented in FY 2021–22.

Objective 3

20. Objective 3: What was this department's third objective for this fiscal year? Objectives should be specific, measurable, and achievable within one year.	The Department of Political Science will reduce the combined aggregate DFW rate in POLS 1101 for the full terms this academic year to 0.95 times its combined rate in the full terms the previous academic year.
21. Objective 3: Detail how your department measured this objective? (Survey, budget number, number of participants, jobs completed, measurable time and/or effort)	DFW rates calculated based on final grades posted in SWORDS.
22. Objective 3: What was your target outcome for this objective? (1.e. 80% participation, 5% enrollment growth, 7% change in engagement)	Combined DFW rate of 24.1%
23. Objective 3: At what level did the department/area achieve on this objective? (This should be a number, i.e. 82%, 6%, 345 attendees, 75% engagement)	Combined DFW rate of 28.7%
24. Objective 3: Did your department meet this objective?	The department did not meet this objective.
25. Objective 3: What did your department learn from working toward this objective? What changes will you make based on this effort next year?	We would have nearly met this objective based on spring 2021 grades alone; however, the DFW rate of 31.7% in fall 2020 was substantially higher than in previous terms. It is possible that this increase in DFW rates was the result of USG adopting less selective admissions policies; ACT/SAT scores were not required for admission to most USG institutions (except UGA and Georgia Tech) in the 2020–21 academic year. We will seek to return to our improvement trajectory in the 2021–22 academic year.

Objective 4

26. Objective 4: What was this department's fourth objective for this fiscal year? Objectives should be specific, measurable, and achievable within one year.	The Department of Political Science will increase the combined ratio of seats filled to seats offered per section in POLS 1101 for the full terms this academic year over its rate in the full terms the previous academic year by two percentage points, while maintaining the current section cap of 35 students per section (or the room size, whatever is less).
27. Objective 4: Detail how your department measured this objective? (Survey, budget number, number of participants, jobs completed, measurable time and/or effort)	Section capacity usage from wrg144 reports.
28. Objective 4: What was your target outcome for this objective? (1.e. 80% participation, 5% enrollment growth, 7% change in engagement)	78.2% utilization
29. Objective 4: At what level did the department/area achieve on this objective? (This should be a number, i.e. 82%, 6%, 345 attendees, 75% engagement)	64.4% utilization
30. Objective 4: Did your department meet this objective?	The department did not meet this objective.
31. Objective 4: What did your department learn from working toward this objective? What changes will you make based on this effort next year?	Our planning for classroom utilization was based on an assumption that students would more readily return to face-to-face instruction and that our admission rate of first-time freshman students would remain high. We will redouble our efforts to improve our efficiency in using classroom space and faculty, within the constraints of the president's and chancellor's directives to offer a robust campus presence option to students.

Future Plans

<p>32. Please identify and detail three to four measurable objectives for the next fiscal year. In listing the objectives, please use the format shown in these examples. 1) The Department of X will improve services levels by 5% as measured by our satisfaction survey. 2) The department of X will provide training in ABC for at least 73 MGA faculty and staff.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The department will work with the Office of Graduate Studies and other departments/schools to develop a proposal for a master's degree in professional leadership or a related area.2) The department will increase the total enrollment in the bachelor of science in political science program from 31 enrolled students in spring 2021 to 50 enrolled students in spring 2021.3) The department will reduce the combined aggregate DFW rate in POLS 1101 for the full terms this academic year to 0.95 times its combined rate in the full terms the previous academic year.4) The department will increase the combined ratio of seats filled to seats offered per section in POLS 1101 for the full terms this academic year over its rate in the full terms the previous academic year by two percentage points, while maintaining the current section cap of 35 students per section (or the room size, whatever is less).
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Open Box for Assessment Comments

<p>33. Based on this assessment, please share your thoughts on the current status and future direction of this department or area. Use this space to summarize overall use of assessment results for continuous improvement and open text box for assessment comments:</p>	<p>As a new department with a relatively new bachelor's program, we have an opportunity to build a department that is simultaneously effective, collegial, and efficient. We continue to rely excessively on overloads—with all tenure-line faculty typically teaching overloads every semester—and, to a lesser extent, shared and part-time faculty to meet the demand for general education courses even though we are limiting courses supporting the major and our minors to the bare essentials for student progression. Our department is also excessively top-heavy, with 50% of the department's faculty being full professors in 2020–21 and all but one tenure-line faculty member holding tenure, with that faculty member being tenured effective July 1, 2021. Accordingly we require at least two additional tenure-track faculty lines to discontinue our routine use of overloads, increase the diversity of the department's faculty, bring in greater expertise that would support graduate-level programming, reduce inter-campus travel, and better support the new minors in pre-law and African and African Diaspora Studies.</p> <p>* The following bachelors programs as of AY 2020–21 are classified as liberal arts and sciences programs for the purpose of this goal: applied art and design, biology, contemporary musicianship, criminal justice, English, history, interdisciplinary studies (B.A.), interdisciplinary studies (B.S.), mathematics, media and communications, political science, and psychology. Pre-professional programs are omitted. For objectives 3 and 4, partial term courses, course sections offered via eCore, and course sections taught on high school campuses are excluded from these rate calculations.</p>
<p>37. If the COVID-19 pandemic impacted this assessment cycle, please provide specific details below.</p>	<p>Our ability to meet objectives 1, 3, and 4 was severely hampered by COVID-19. We were unable to engage in many of the recruitment activities necessary to attract majors, and many of the potential students that would be attracted to a liberal arts major were more able to get into institutions that normally are more selective than MGA such as Georgia College, Georgia Southern, and Valdosta State. This also affected general</p>

	<p>education as the caliber of our admitted students declined due to students who perform poorly on the ACT and SAT being able to get into more selective USG institutions, affecting the DFW rate in POLS 1101. The pandemic led many students to avoid on-campus instruction in AY 2020-2021 in favor of online courses, drastically affecting our classroom utilization as we offered in-person sections that turned out to have soft demand to meet university and USG strategic goals to return to a "normal" degree of campus presence.</p>
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MGA’s Strategic Plan

<p>34. Based on your goals and objectives listed above please indicate their connection with MGA's Strategic Plan (https://www.mga.edu/about/docs/Strategic_Plan_Overall_DB.pdf) by checking all associated and relevant Imperatives / Strategies from the list below. (Check all the apply)</p>	<p>Grow Enrollment with Purpose 1. Expand and enrich the face to face student experience, Grow Enrollment with Purpose 2. Expand and enrich online instruction into new markets, Own Student Success 3. Develop academic pipelines and expand degrees, Build Shared Culture 6. Sustain financial health through resourceful fiscal management</p>
<p>35. Please indicate which of the following actions you have taken as a result of the 2020/2021 Assessment Cycle (Note: These actions are documented in reports, memos, emails, meeting minutes, or other directives within the reporting area) (Check all the apply)</p>	<p>Disseminating/Discussing Assessment Results/Feedback to Appropriate Members of the Campus Community, Process Changes: Improve, Expand, Refine, Enhance, Discontinue, etc. Operational Processes, Request for Additional Financial or Human Resources, Making Improvements to Teaching Approach, Course Design, Curriculum, Scheduling, other</p>

Other

<p>36. Please indicate (if appropriate) any local, state, or national initiatives (academic or otherwise) that are influential in the operations, or goals, and objectives of your unit. (Complete College Georgia, USG High Impact Practice Initiative, LEAP, USG Momentum Year, Low-Cost No-Cost Books, etc)</p>	<p>We have aggressively promoted the use of low-cost and no-cost textbooks, particularly in POLS 1101. Jeannie Ruggerio has participated in LEAP-sponsored activities in POLS 1101. As part of Complete College Georgia, we have participated in the Gateways to Completion (G2C) initiative's first cohort with POLS 1101. Our major is designed to incorporate high-impact practices such as a required experiential learning component of either an internship or a directed research project. We have also participated in USG's Momentum Year and Momentum Approach initiatives.</p>
<p>38. Mindset Update (Academic Deans ONLY) Please provide an update on the implementation of your school based mindset plan/strategy. Include any adjustments to metrics for the AY20/21 as well as outcomes associated with your appraisal of your schools activities.</p>	