

**Political Science Report
SLOAC Review Comments**

Thanks for filing an assessment plan with the SLOAC. We have the following comments for you to consider:

1. Since this is the first time this committee has reviewed assessment materials from you, we have a couple of comments about your overall plan. We see that you are planning to use your assessment data to support a request for a faculty position. We believe your argument would be stronger by addressing the following issues:
 - The large number of learning outcomes you have makes it difficult for you to clearly document student learning. Fewer outcomes that are more precisely measured will lead to a tighter report and argument.
 - Much of your assessment relies on indirect measures, the Upper Division Course Rating form. We encourage departments to assess specific artifacts of student learning instead of a measure of your overall impression of student work.
 - We also have concern for interrater reliability. Your rubrics are not very specific and it is quite possible that different raters would have different impressions. For instance, what is the difference between a 5 and 6 on your Upper Division Rating Form. How do you know each evaluator will make the same judgment?
 - On the course embedded assessments, it would also be useful to consider issues of interrater reliability. Using more than one evaluator, a clear rubric, and/or have a “calibration” discussion are all methods that would be useful.
2. Though concern for faculty resources in terms of teaching your curriculum is a good response to assessment data, your answer could include some additional strategies. In fact, your response includes a couple of blank lines that are not filled in.
3. We are encouraging programs to consider ways of doing more formative assessment instead of relying only on assessment data gained during the senior seminar course. In other words, is there a course that all students take early in their careers where you can gather similar data to compare with students when they are finished with your program. As a related issue, how much do your students know about their scores on assessment? Is there a way for students to “track” their progress through your program on the outcomes. Please consider how you can move your assessment to a deeper level by considering these additions.

We do not need anything more from you for this year.

Your next report will be due on October 31, 2008.

If you wish to apply for an Instructional Improvement Grant, the deadline is January 31, 2008. Complete details are available at www.mnstate.edu/assess, click on Grants.

If you have questions, please contact Dr. Jean Sando at sandoje@mnstate.edu.