The Department of Political Science offers a B.A. degree and a Masters in Public Administration (MPA), as well as minors in Political Science and Public Administration. The MPA program is accredited by the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) and recently earned an extension of its accreditation until 2016. Our identity in a global community is a department that provides a liberal-arts education in citizenship and critical-thinking skills, as well as in-depth knowledge and professional preparation. We contribute to scholarship in our discipline and the life of our community through our professional activities. We help promote the cultural and intellectual life of the University with a variety of activities on and off campus.

Tables I and II provide enrollment data for our undergraduate as well as our MPA programs. Tables III contains demographic data regarding the ethnic background of our majors. It is evident that we serve a diverse student population and our numbers are in line with those of the university as a whole.

### Vital Statistics

#### Table I. FTES (from Majors) and FTES (from Non-Majors)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of majors</th>
<th>FTES from majors</th>
<th>FTES from non-majors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>108.63</td>
<td>114.62</td>
<td>386.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>102.98</td>
<td>107.93</td>
<td>360.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>101.21</td>
<td>96.43</td>
<td>342.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>164.60</td>
<td>108.60</td>
<td>363.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>108.32</td>
<td>120.22</td>
<td>369.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table II. FTES from MPA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Spring 2013</th>
<th>Fall 2012</th>
<th>Spring 2012</th>
<th>Fall 2011</th>
<th>Spring 2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FTES - MPA</td>
<td>29.67</td>
<td>37.00</td>
<td>30.25</td>
<td>33.25</td>
<td>28.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table III. Average Percentage of BA Degrees in Political Science by Ethnic Background

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Background</th>
<th>2008-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table IV. Average Percentage of MPA Degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2008-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strengths

Community & Alumni Connections – In its most recent strategic plan, the university identified “community connections” as one of its goals. Few departments on campus fulfill this goal as well as the Department of Political Science, which emphasizes community connections and civic engagement in both its graduate and undergraduate programs.

For three decades, the department has benefitted from the work of Drs. Terry Christensen and Larry Gerston in building up our state/local program, leading to rich rewards for the department and university. Dr. Garrick Percival was hired to replace Dr. Christensen who retired a year ago. Dr. Percival hit the ground running. Our graduates become community leaders, who are then in a position to provide opportunities to our current students, who go on to become the next generation of leaders.

The department supports internships at every level. Our local internship program is particularly robust -- students are regularly placed in a wide variety of settings. At the state level, we annually send students to the state government internship program at Sacramento State (the “Sacramento Semester”). We also have an excellent track record of placing students in the prestigious Capitol Fellows program, and each year we provide financial support for students to study at the Panetta Institute at Monterey Bay. At the national level, we have recently obtained a gift of $100,000 to support students interning in Washington DC. The department also has an exchange program with the Institut d’etudes Science Po in Lille, France.

The department has a robust relationship with its alumni. Our alumni association is very active with hundreds of members. More than 25 people attended its most recent meeting. It publishes a newsletter semi-annually and holds an annual fundraising drive, historically raising approximately $15,000 for student-related causes. The association has made further attempts to
connect with students by hosting a alumni-faculty-student mixer in May 2011 and May 2012, with plans to sponsor another such events in future academic years.

Largely as a result, the Department awards more scholarships than virtually any other department in the college, awarding 8-10 scholarships annually. During the review period, we were fortunate enough to add a new endowed scholarship, the Les Frances scholarship. Our alumni also raised enough money to establish an endowment to help defray the costs of student activities, making our field trip to the California Supreme Court free in Fall 2009 and has helped fund our yearly field trip to the State Capitol.

The department’s connections have also allowed us to hire political leaders to teach courses, providing a unique learning opportunity for students. Since 2006, our undergraduate program has had courses taught by: Ira Ruskin, former state assemblyman; Fred Keeley, former state assemblyman and Santa Cruz treasurer; San Jose City Vice Mayor Cindy Chavez; San Jose City Council member Sam Liccardo; and Santa Clara County Supervisor Ken Yeager.

The Department is also the founder and main sponsor of the Edwards Lecture series. This series has brought many diverse and high-profile speakers to SJSU, including Leon Panetta, Former Governor Gray Davis, Gloria Steinem, Erin Brockovich-Ellis, Barbara Boxer, two Republican gubernatorial candidates, historian Haynes Johnson, and former speaker of the California State Assembly Fabian Nunez.

The MPA program also has deep connections with professionals in governmental and non-governmental agencies throughout the Bay Area. Notable alums include Deb Figone, San Jose City Manager; Kevin Duggan, Longtime city manager of Mountain View; Jason Dwyer, chief spokesperson for the San Jose Police Department; Tim Tung, Primary Credit Analyst for public bonds with Standard and Poors; and Rachael VanDer Veen, Administrative Officer of the San Jose Housing Department. Like the undergraduate program, the MPA program draws upon local leaders as faculty, including Kevin Duggan; City of San Jose Director of Transportation Jim Helmer; and former San Jose City Manager Mark Linder.

MPA faculty have been intimately connected with the Mineta Transportation Institute, a federally-funded University Transportation Center specializing in policy studies and education. Dr. Haas serves as director of the institute’s education program, while Dr. Edwards serves as deputy director of the institute’s National Transportation Security Center of Excellence. Drs. Haas, Edwards and Brent all teach courses in the program.

Dr. Edwards also teaches public administration and emergency management courses in the IES Chinese Leadership program, which hosts twenty leaders from a Chinese city for a three-month course of study focused on public agency leadership.

**Campus Connections** – The Department is a good campus citizen that works collaboratively with other departments and units. Specifically,

- The department offers several cross-listed courses. Our largest single course is 15AB, a team-taught interdisciplinary course cross-listed with History. Other cross-listed courses include: POLS 124 (Introduction to Environmental Law) and POLS 135 (U.S. Environmental Policy) are cross-listed with Environmental Studies. POLS 136 (History of Terrorism in the Modern World) is cross-listed with History. POLS 156 (Islam, Politics and the West) is cross-listed with Religious Studies. POLS 103 (Local Government and Politics) is cross-listed with Urban Planning. It is also required for Journalism majors, and is part of the Organizational Studies major currently working its way through the curricular review process.
- The MPA program has also increased its interdisciplinary ties with other programs. The Master of Engineering Management has selected three PADM courses as part of its course list. Communication Studies lecturer Dr. Richard Webb and Dr. Edwards jointly created COMM 265 (Crisis Communications) to support the emergency management education of MPA students. MPA students also take the MTI MSTM 226B (Security for Transportation Professionals) course as part of the emergency management focus. The Master of Urban Planning program provides two cross-listed courses – URBP/PADM 228 and URBP/PADM 240 - that attract many MPA students. Professor Hilary Nixon who teaches URBP 240 has joined the MPA faculty.
- In 2008, the college received approval for a new teacher-preparation program. Dr. Brent worked closely with the Departments of History and Social Science by authoring the pertinent portions of the proposal submitted to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and developing a new introductory American government course (POLS 101) designed for future teachers.
- Dr. Jackson is almost single-handedly responsible for salvaging the Survey and Policy Research Institute (SPRI). SPRI was a high-profile unit that conducted survey research and issued reports. It never became financially self-sustaining and was funded largely through the Provost’s office. In 2007, the Provost decided to end funding for the Institute. Dean Hegstrom strongly felt that the institute should continue, and he turned to Dr. Jackson to save it. Dean Bienefeld has been equally supportive. Dr. Jackson successfully transformed the unit into one with a more academic focus that supports both students and faculty research, and it is on a path to financial self-sufficiency. One of our lecturers, Mary Currin-Percival, was appointed associate director in 2012-2013.
- Dr. Quill worked with faculty in five colleges to create an interdisciplinary course as part of the Climate Solutions Initiative. Dr. Quill also taught this course the first time it was offered (and it’s now a permanent course in the College of Engineering). Dr. Quill also serves as the director of the university’s Institute for Social Responsibility Ethics Education (ISREE), a center for applied ethics that works actively with faculty members from multiple colleges to provide programs for the university community and beyond. Dr. Peter has taught in the university’s Humanities Honors Program for several years.
- One of the college’s major initiatives of the past few years has been the hosting of a professional conference on immigration and establishing a research foundation on the same topic. Dr. Edwards has been a member of the organizing committee since its inception and has incorporated assignments on immigration into her 100W course. Dr. Danopoulos has also been an active supporter and delivered a paper at the first conference.
- Dr. Christensen was the founder of CommUniverCity and its director for several years. CommUniverCity is a high-profile collaborative effort between SJSU, the City of San Jose, and the local Five Wounds neighborhood. Activities related to the initiative were also incorporated into several political science courses.

Scholarship – The Department is comprised of dedicated academics with prodigious scholarly output. Since 2006, eight of the eleven regular faculty members have published at least one article in a peer-reviewed journal, and several faculty members can rightly be considered leaders in their fields. Terry Christensen and Larry Gerston are leading experts in California politics, having solo- and co-authored numerous books together over the years. Frances Edwards is a
recognized national authority in the field of emergency management publishing extensively on this and other topics related to public administration. Peter Haas has published extensively in the fields of transportation management and public administration, and co-authored a book on film and politics with Dr. Christensen. Constantine Danopoulos’ scholarly output is so prodigious that he won the President’s Scholar Award in 2009, the university’s highest award recognizing scholarly achievement. Lawrence Quill is an emerging leader in political theory, having published two books and multiple articles since 2006, with a third book under contract. Our two newest hires show great promise of continuing this scholarly tradition. Melinda Jackson is developing a strong track record of publications in political psychology. Karthika Sasikumar has published several articles on Indian politics and received a year-long sabbatical at Harvard University to conduct research on a book project. More recently, Dr. Sasikumar edited a special issue of the JOURNAL OF POLITICAL AND MILITARY SOCIOLOGY, which dealt with nuclear weapons. Collectively, since the start of 2006, faculty have published or revised 18 books, 15 book chapters, 43 articles, and have made too many research presentations to count. In addition, Professors Christensen, Gerston, Danopoulos and Haas have each won the College of Social Science’s Warburton Award, awarded annually to a faculty member to honor their distinguished career of scholarly achievement.

Faculty also encourage student scholarship and collaborate with them, particularly at the graduate level. Dr. Edwards has twice co-authored with students (Isabelle Afawubo and Frances McCormick) papers published in The Public Manager arising out of projects initiated in PADM courses. Yvonne Wong turned her PADM 298 project into a book chapter published in Rivera and Miller, Minority Resilience and the Legacy of Disaster. Mai Tran designed a culturally-appropriate cancer support group for Japanese patients, survivors and caregivers in concert with Yuki Ai Senior Services in San Jose. Numerous other examples could be given.

Teaching/Student Support – The Department prides itself on being a student-oriented department providing both high-quality teaching and advising in a welcoming, supportive environment. Highlights include:

- We sponsor both an annual trip to the state capitol, and a bi-annual trip to the California Supreme Court in San Francisco. The department subsidizes the cost of a bus and takes students to tour government facilities and meet with political leaders.
- With financial support and logistical support from the department, students organize our department’s convocation ceremony, attended by hundreds annually.
- The department publishes a “Courses and Faculty” booklet each semester, designed to help students registering for courses by giving them in-depth descriptions of the courses being taught and the professors who teach them. Due to budget cuts and staff reductions, we have recently stopped producing hard copies, but are still distributing electronic copies via email.
- The MPA program has begun holding a student orientation event each semester, typically running 3-4 hours on a Saturday morning. Students receive an orientation book, and have the opportunity to hear presentations from and ask questions of program faculty.
- The department has a chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha, the national political science honor society. This group regularly hosts events both social (e.g. the popular “Plato Club” held 3-4 times a year at a local tavern) and professional (e.g. the “Battle of the Theorists” in Spring 2010 in which Professors Peter and Quill debated each other while acting the roles of Thomas Jefferson and Immanuel Kant). A more recent development has been the
creation of the MPA Student Association, which helps organize the orientation mentioned above and other events, including an end-of-the-year party.

- The department sponsors an active Model UN program, in which students form a team and participate in a regional conference in Burlingame each spring.
- Step-to-College – the Department participates in the Step-to-College program in which high school students take courses for college credit.
- Dr. Ken Nuger offered a MUSE (first-year experience) course every year that the program was in existence.

### Challenges

#### Table IV. Student to Faculty Ratio (SFR)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SFR</th>
<th>Fall 2008</th>
<th>Fall 2009</th>
<th>Fall 2010</th>
<th>Fall 2011</th>
<th>Fall 2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower division</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>39.0</td>
<td>39.8</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper division</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate division</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Table V. Ratio of Tenure/Tenure Track Faculty to Lecturers (FTEF)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A.Tenured/tenure track faculty (headcount)</th>
<th>B.Temporary lecturers (headcount)</th>
<th>Ratio A:B (headcount)</th>
<th>C.Tenured/tenure track faculty by FTEF</th>
<th>D.Temporary lecturers by FTEF</th>
<th>Ratio C:D (FTEF)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003-04</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>21:17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>17:4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004-05</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20:14</td>
<td>15.9</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>15.9:6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18:22</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>14.5:9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>17:24</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>12.5:8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17:32</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>10.4:10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17:2</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>12.4:10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22:20</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>15.2:8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>19:25</td>
<td>13.8</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>13.8:10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19:21</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>14.5:7.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Loss of Faculty – Tables IV and V provide data regarding our student/faculty and tenure/tenure track lecturers faculty ratios. Our needs are clear and pressing. The review period has seen many faculty members depart (Sharyl Cross and Dongsung Kong), retire (Ron Sylvia, Terry Christensen, and Cobie Harris), or FERP (Larry Gerston). Meanwhile, the department has hired only three (3) tenure-track faculty member (Karthika Sasikumar, Garrick Percival, and Dong Chul Shim). This has had or is about to have significant negative impacts on both the graduate and undergraduate programs.

This has been most evident in the MPA program, which has only three tenured faculty members (Drs. Edwards, Shim, and Haas) whose professional specialization is Public Administration. According to MPA accreditation guidelines, the program should have a minimum of five faculty who teach the majority of all classes, and at least half of the core classes must be taught by the full-time faculty – a challenge with only three such professors. The program has been able to attain technical compliance with this standard by having several non-MPA faculty members teach in the program and sit on its governing board, but achieving even technical compliance has become more difficult following the retirement of Ron Sylvia and Terry Christensen.

At the undergraduate level, the department now relies on lecturers to perform several of the tasks that were once performed by tenured or tenure-track faculty. This problem is most evident regarding General Education. We now have more GE courses than we have full-time faculty to coordinate them, and therefore two of our GE courses are coordinated lecturers. Meanwhile, for the first time, one faculty member (Dr. Brent) is now serving as GE coordinator for two different courses. POLS 102 may eventually lose GE accreditation because the course coordinator (Dr. Gerston) has FERPed, and giving responsibility to a lecturer would not make sense in that situation. Furthermore, we are attempting to create a new GE course (see below) which would also be coordinated by a lecturer. We have considered merely abandoning GE certification for some of its courses. The leading candidate would be POLS 020, the only course in our curriculum that does not count toward the major. However, this course is very popular, and the department is hesitant to abandon it.

Faculty erosion takes its toll in other ways. A few years ago responsibility for our Model UN program was shifted to a lecturer (Dr. Ken Faulve-Montojo), but he left the university a year ago and we will have to find another lecturer willing to take on the program. For the first time ever, the Pi Sigma Alpha advisor is a lecturer (Kathryn Wood) last year. Wood got a regular job at Mission College and will no longer be able to serve as advisor. We are pleased that our lecturers are available to step up to the plate. However, this places important programs on shaky ground, susceptible to budget cuts or a simple decision by a lecturer to relocate. Furthermore, lecturers are often paid a (very modest) stipend for their efforts out of the department’s budget at a time when that budget is shrinking, meaning less money available for travel, equipment, and other needs.

We are now dealing with a new set of challenges resulting from Dr. Christensen’s full retirement at the end of last year. Many of the department’s high-profile and enduring programs are due to Dr. Christensen’s efforts. While FERPing, Dr. Christensen has continued his work on behalf of these programs, but he does so as a volunteer. Other faculty have assumed
responsibility for these tasks. Dr. Brent assumed responsibility for the Edwards Lecture. Dr. Peter took over the department’s scholarship program. Dr. Percival is assuming responsibility for alumni relations and is running our internship program. However, a new gap in our state/local program may emerge in two years when Dr. Gerston fully retires.

Dr. Harris’s unexpected retirement has left our international relations and comparative politics sub-fields with only two full-time faculty (Danopoulos and Sasikumar), and one of the two (Danopoulos) serves as department chair. It is also clear that Dr. Danopoulos is reaching retirement age. The need to hire a full-time person in the coparative politics/international relations is absolutely critical. The department applied for a position (Latin American politics and international relations), but our request was not approved. In addition, we will need an American and state and local politics person to replace Dr. Gerston when he fully retires.

American Institutions Waiver – According to the California Education Code, university graduates are supposed to pass courses in American History, American Government and California Government. [At SJSU, these are known, respectively, as the “F1,” “F2” and “F3” requirements.] That changed when the California legislature passed SB 1440, allowing community colleges to develop 60-unit course AA degrees guaranteeing students who complete them admission into their selected major in the CSU. SB 1440 also guarantees that transfer students will be able to complete their Bachelor’s degree by taking no more than 60 additional units. Many community colleges are not including F1, F2 and F3 requirements in the degree programs. Normally, students would complete these requirements after transfer. However, many high-unit majors find it difficult to meet the mandate that transfer students be required to take no more than 60 units while also fulfilling the F1, F2 and F3 requirements. In response, the CSU Board of Trustees voted in July 2011 to allow high-unit majors to receive waivers of the American Institutions requirement. This policy was adopted despite the vociferous opposition of political science and history faculty across the system.

The department’s opposition to this plan is partially philosophical: We oppose any plan which results in less exposure to these principles of civic education and engagement. But it also represents an “existential crisis” for the long-term viability of our department. The policy creates a glaring inequity: students who enter SJSU as freshmen will be required to fulfill the F1, F2 and F3 requirements even in high-unit majors, while transfer students in the same majors will not be expected to do so. We anticipate that this will eventually lead to pressure to abandon the requirements altogether. This would have a disastrous impact on our program, which obtains a large percentage of its FTES from courses that fulfill these requirements.

The department is working with the History Department to devise a solution: Both departments will develop a new upper-division course for transfer students. The History course would fulfill the F1 requirement, as well as Area S of SJSU Studies. The Political Science course [which would likely be called “American Government in Comparative Perspective”] would fulfill the F2 and F3 requirements, as well as Area V of SJSU Studies. Students may take one or both courses depending on their needs, but the two departments will give them related numbering schemes and will present them together as a package to the College Curriculum Committee and BOGS.

WASC Program Rubric Outcomes
The WASC rubric uses five categories to stimulate discussion of how to develop and improve a program’s assessment activities, discussed here in relation to our undergraduate program.

Comprehensive List -- Several years ago our undergraduate program created a list of five “Learning Objectives”, as follows:

- **Breadth** -- Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.
- **Application** -- Students should be able to apply a variety of techniques to identify, understand, and analyze domestic and international political issues and organizations.
- **Disciplinary methods** -- Student should be able to formulate research questions, engage in systematic literature searches using primary and secondary sources, have competence in systematic data gathering using library sources, government documents, and data available through electronic sources, should be able to evaluate research studies, and should be able to critically analyze and interpret influential political texts.
- **Communication Skills** -- Students should master basic competencies in oral and written communication skills and be able to apply these skills in the context of political science. This means communicating effectively about politics and/or public administration, public policy, and law.
- **Citizenship** -- Students should acquire an understanding of the role of the citizen in local, state, national and global contexts and appreciate the importance of lifelong participation in political processes.

We have discussed at some length the nomenclature of “objectives” vs. “outcomes” and believe that the five points listed above are desirable outcomes for our students. We will emphasize this point by switching to the more affirmative term “outcomes” rather than the more aspirational term “objectives.”

We believe that our list of outcomes best fits WASC’s “emerging” category. They are “reasonable outcomes” and are probably complete even if they lack a level of specific detail. To move to a more developed level would require adding institution-wide outcomes and determining whether there are national disciplinary standards available.

Two years ago, we were instructed to focus our assessment energies on one of our five outcomes per year. This has given us a chance to explore each outcome in much greater depth – and more importantly – to discover what does and does not work with our self-assessment methods. This means that currently we are working on the third of our outcomes, with the fourth and fifth scheduled over the next two years. The appropriate time to revise our list will come when we have completed at least one cycle through the five outcomes. Therefore, we plan to review and update our “comprehensive list” in AY 2014-2015, following the completion of a full cycle.

Assessable Outcomes – Our efforts in the category of “assessable outcomes” lie somewhere between WASC’s “initial” and “emerging” categories. However, we frankly admit to some confusion about the level of specific detail that belongs in the statement of outcomes as opposed to the mechanisms that are used to do the assessment. Depending on how the nomenclature is defined we might in fact be “developed” when it comes to the two outcomes that we have studied in depth.
The specific outcomes are phrased in a somewhat general way, and they do not by themselves identify specifically “what students can do to demonstrate learning.” However, when it comes to the “breadth” and the “communication skills” outcomes, we have invested much time developing rather specific rubrics to measure what students have learned. Thus, in order to move to the “developed” category, we might need to move the specific details from our measurement rubrics into the actual text of our “outcomes,” which would make them lengthier and less elegant. If this is in fact what WASC intends, we are willing to do so in response to feedback on this report. More substantively, we simply need to complete our five year cycle so that we can develop more specific rubrics for the remaining three of our five outcomes. Since feedback is expected by the beginning of next AY, we will tackle this category in AY 2012-2013.

**Alignment --** We believe our curriculum is closely aligned with our five outcomes, but we may not be doing the best job possible in explaining and documenting our alignment. Thus we believe we are squarely in the “emerging” category for “Alignment.”

Positively, we do give students “reasonable opportunities to develop the outcomes in the required curriculum.” For example, our “Breadth” outcome is aligned with the requirement to take both upper- and lower-division courses in each of the four traditional subfields of Political Science. Our “Disciplinary methods” outcome is aligned with the department’s methods course. Our “Communications skills” outcome is aligned with both our 100W course and the Senior Seminar.

To move to the “Developed” category, we would need to make these relationships more explicit. One possibility would be to publish a curriculum map, which we plan to produce by the end of AY 2012-2013, possibly by inserting the relevant program outcomes on our existing degree checklist.

**Assessment Planning --** We believe that we meet WASC’s criteria for “developed.” We do have a multi-year assessment plan that identifies when each outcome will be assessed, as follows:

- Communication Skills AY 2009-2010
- Breadth AY 2010-2011
- Disciplinary Methods AY 2011-2012
- Citizenship either AY 2012-2013 or AY 2013-2014
- Application either AY 2012-2013 or AY 2013-2014

Learning from the first rounds of assessment have allowed us to refine and improve our instruments and techniques. To move this to a higher level of development, we will need to articulate how we will assess our two remaining learning outcomes. Only after accomplishing this (by the end of AY 2013-2014) will we be in a position to “fully articulate” our multi-year assessment plan

**The Student Experience --** We classify our assessment efforts as “emerging” in this category. We suspect that our students do understand most of the outcomes and understand what they need to learn to achieve those outcomes. However, we also suspect that they do not necessarily have a “good” grasp of the details. While the program is structured to guide them to those outcomes, they may not use the outcomes to guide them through the program. Connecting a curriculum map to our check-off sheet for the major might be a step in this direction.

To move toward the more “developed” category, we would need to be more explicit on a course-by-course basis about the course’s relationship to the program outcomes. In Fall 2011, 19
out of 26 departmental syllabi explicitly stated their learning objectives, but we have not yet begun to incorporate program outcomes into most individual syllabi. We will consider the best way to inform our students about the program outcomes and will produce guidelines by the end of AY 2012-13. Placing the program outcomes in relevant course syllabi is one option, but we may also need to rewrite the description of the major using the five outcomes as organizational principles.

Finally, the department has long conducted an exit survey and focus groups for our graduating seniors, which can be modified to more explicitly ask students about their knowledge of our learning outcomes.

Student Learning

At the undergraduate level, our Department Curriculum Committee has been chiefly responsible for program assessment and has been gathering assessment data for several years. As instructed by the university, we have tackled one learning outcome each year over the last two years and have plans to finish our remaining three outcomes over the next three years.

The department spent several years developing our breadth-exam and techniques for gathering and evaluating senior-seminar papers. For example, in 2006 and 2010 we gathered papers from the senior seminars and read them to evaluate the quality of writing. Our experience in 2006 was critical for improving our assessment technique for 2010. In the latter case, we gathered papers electronically and also evaluated only first drafts of papers, so as to minimize the influence of last-semester coaching by faculty. During the interval between 2006 and 2010, we also implemented several reforms that we hoped might improve student writing, and we did see some small improvements. (See appended annual reports.)

We spent considerable energy developing a multiple-choice “breadth” exam to measure whether our students were learning objective knowledge of the four traditional subfields of Political Science. Faculty wrote multiple choice questions that they thought should be answerable by a student who completed our core course and one advanced course in each subfield. We have now administered this exam several times to students in our senior seminar. The results when we first administered the exam in 2008 were a mean of 52%, and in 2010 the mean was 56%. Such low numbers seem dismal, but we have no basis for comparison. Rather than focus on the mean, it is probably more useful to see if the overall scores improve over time. We have also disaggregated the data on how our students perform on the exam by subfield, and also sorted it by a variety of other demographic and curricular factors. [See appendix for detailed results.]

This year, we are assessing our “disciplinary methods” outcome using research proposal papers from the required methods course (195A). We will look to see if the student is able to:

- formulate research questions.
- engage in systematic literature searches using primary and secondary sources.
- demonstrate competence in systematic data gathering using library sources, government documents and data available through electronic sources.
- evaluate research studies.
- critically analyze and interpret influential political texts.

We will apply a rubric that spans from “does not meet” to “exceeds expectations.” We anticipate that this will be our most challenging assessment to date, involving a high degree of scrutiny and many judgments about the extent to which a paper reflects these points.
The two remaining learning outcomes – “Application” and “Citizenship” -- remain to be tackled in the next two years. We have already spent some time discussing appropriate assessment for both outcomes, but space limitations prevent us from explicating them here. In any case, such discussions have only been tentative.

At the graduate level, the MPA program participates in two assessment processes: WASC and NASPAA. The WASC process five competencies are documented in Appendix B, and reported each year. The NASPAA process changed to outcome-based assessment in 2010. The MPA Committee is currently developing the data-collection methods for the required NASPAA outcomes related to core competencies.