

I&II. Objective, course/learning experience

I. OBJECTIVES

Description of process for developing objectives: The process of developing objectives for the M.A. program in political science with a concentration in European Union Policy Studies began in Fall 2005, two years prior to the program's establishment. Political science faculty members discussed the specific knowledge, skills, and experiences that they wanted students to possess by the time they graduated from the program. The faculty ultimately settled on four objectives for all students in the concentration. None of the four objectives or sub-objectives have been modified, deleted, or added over the past year.

Comment [A1]: A brief history of how the objectives were developed provides context for the reader.

Objective 1: Comprehensive knowledge of the relevant subfields of political science that pertain to students' area of concentration in the program.

Comment [A2]: This program uses broad student-centered objectives followed by sub-objectives. Note the sub-objectives' contain more precise verbs and rich descriptions. This method of organization is acceptable.

Objective 1.1: Students will identify the major historical visions of a united Europe.

Objective 1.2: Students will evaluate competing theories of European integration.

Comment [A3]: Most objectives, especially the sub-objectives include precise verbs and a rich description of the content area being assessed. The objectives could be improved by specifying when students are to meet the objectives (e.g., graduating seniors).

Objective 1.3: Students will identify the ways that national institutions affect states' approaches to European Union policy-making and the ways that national institutions affect the implementation of EU law.

This corresponds to APT element I .A.

Objective 2: Comprehensive knowledge of the processes that shape politics and policies and the complex interrelationships of political, economic, cultural, and ideological interests that influence them in their concentration area.

Comment [A4]: All objectives are stated in student-centered terms. This phrasing correspond to APT element I. B.

Objective 2.1: Students will apply major concepts and theories from the fields of political science and public administration to practical administrative scenarios within the European Union.

Objective 2.2: Students will competently analyze the European Union's treaty framework and EU legal instruments; they will distinguish between hard law and soft law and show how specific legal instruments are used in various EU policy areas.

Objective 2.3: Students will clearly explain the ways that the European Union's institutions and bodies interact to create a governance system, and the ways that this governance system resembles and differs from national governance systems.

Objective 2.4: Students will identify the ways that various non-state actors (political parties, interest groups, media, sub-national institutions) influence public policy-making and public administration within the European Union.

Objective 2.5: Students will identify the contours and dynamics of European Union involvement in economic and social policy, common foreign and security policy, and justice/home affairs.

Objective 2.6: Students will be able to present the contours of the transatlantic relationship and to identify the determinants of cooperation and conflict between the United States and the European Union.

Objective 3: Expertise in contemporary policy issues in political science in their concentration area including international security, immigration, human rights, environmental protection, welfare provision, health and human services, and information technology and their underlying political philosophies.

Objective 3.1: Students will be able to gather and analyze data for the purpose of addressing public policy problems.

Objective 3.2: Students will be able to analyze and affect all stages of the policy cycle, from agenda setting through program evaluation.

Objective 4: Analytic and language skills, the ability to express themselves in written and verbal form, the ability to formulate and execute a final in-depth project or apply learning and skills in a practical situation, and broad intercultural competence.

Objective 4.1: Students will conduct analysis and present complex arguments in multi-cultural and multi-language environments.

Objective 4.2: Students will exhibit strategies for cross-cultural communication and problem-solving; they will confidently present material to diverse international audiences and lead international teams.

II. COURSE/LEARNING EXPERIENCES

0 = No Coverage; 1 = Slight Coverage; 2 = Moderate Coverage; 3 = Major Coverage

	Objective 1 (Knowledge of subfields)	Objective 2 (Knowledge of processes and interrelationships of interests)	Objective 3 (Policy issues)	Objective 4 (Communication and intercultural competence)
POSC 601 (Theories of European Integration)	3	2	1	0
POSC 602 (The Politics of European Culture and Identity)	3	1	1	1
POSC 603 (The Political Institutions of the European Union)	2	3	1	1
POSC 604 (Policy-Making Processes and Lobbying in the EU)	2	3	2	1
POSC 620 (The EU: Contemporary Issues and Controversies)	1	2	3	1
POSC 640 (Seminar in EU Policy Analysis)	2	3	1	1
POSC 641 (Topics in Economic and Social Policy)	2	3	3	0
POSC 642 (Topics in Foreign Policy and Internal Security)	2	3	3	0
POSC 690 (Tutorial in EU Policy Studies)	1	1	2	3
POSC 692 (EU Seminar)	0	1	2	3

Comment [A5]: Using this rating scale, the program indicates the degree to which a particular objective is covered in a particular class.

This level of detail may help link results to the curriculum later in an assessment report.

Comment [A6]: Each objective is mapped to at least one course or learning activity. This mapping corresponds to APT element 2.

While this map provides a great overview of where students are given the opportunity to learn, it could be improved by mapping sub-objectives too.

III. Evaluation/Assessment Methods

III. EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT METHODS

The M.A. program in Political Science with a concentration in European Union Policy Studies uses three instruments for its assessment. The table below summarizes the methodologies involving these instruments. More information about each instrument is presented in the paragraphs that follow the table.

Assessment Instrument	Frequency	Objectives Assessed	Type of Measure	Data Collection	Expected Results
Pre-test/post-test	Biannually (August, June)	1,2	Direct	All EUPS students take 100-question test before the formal academic program begins and before on-site graduation ceremony	Majority of students improve their performance (a) on the overall test, and (b) in each major section of the test
Capstone Portfolio	Once per year (June)	1,2,3,4	Direct	All EUPS candidates in final semester	83% (the minimum score in the pass range)
Alumni Survey	Semiannually (November of even-numbered years)	1,2,3,4	Indirect	All EUPS alumnae/i with valid contact information	3.0 ("Somewhat" on a four-point, self-reported question gauging the usefulness of knowledge/skills gained)

Comment [A7]: Using a table to summarize the evaluation/assessment methods is commendable. It allows the reader to easily follow the logic of the methodology process at a glance before reading the more detailed narrative that follows.

Comment [A8]: Here, it is clear that all objectives use at least one direct measure, which corresponds to APT Element III. B.

Comment [A9]: This expected results column conveys the specific faculty expectations of student performance. The best reports provide a rationale for why a particular value was selected. This program does so later in this section.

Providing a standard for expected student results corresponds to APT Element III. C.

Pre-test/post-test

General Information/Relationship to Objectives: 2010-2011 was the first academic year that this assessment instrument was used. The test, which was developed by program faculty, consists of 100 multiple-choice questions. The questions were written with clear reference to objectives 1 (knowledge of subfields) and 2 (knowledge of processes and interrelationships of interests). Since 2010-2011 was the first year that the instrument was used, this (2012) is the first year that we are able to conduct statistical tests of validity and **reliability**.

Data Collection: All students in the EUPS program take the assessment pre-test during program orientation. The program orientation takes place on site in Florence, and all students are required to attend the assessment testing session. In Fall 2010, 21 of 21 EUPS students took the pre-test. All EUPS students take the assessment post-test during a session of POSC 692 (EU Seminar) in the Summer semester. Since attendance and participation constitute a relatively large portion of the POSC 692 grade, students have a solid incentive to take the test seriously. The incentive is reinforced by the faculty's offer to make students' pre-test and post-test scores available to them shortly after they have completed the post-test.

Validity: This is the first year that we can begin to assess the validity of the questions associated with each learning objective by calculating the point biserial correlation coefficient for each assessment question. The results of this calculation for the 2010-2011 pre-test/post-test exercise are presented in the table below. The fourteen questions listed in **bold** had point biserial correlation coefficients of below 0.15 for both iterations of the test. As such, these questions raise possible validity concerns. In the future, we plan to review and potentially replace questions that have point biserial correlation coefficients below 0.15 for both the pre-test and the post-test in two consecutive years.

Question	Pre-test point biserial	Post-test point biserial
1	0.16	0.6
2	0.22	0.04
3	-0.14	0.4
4	0.18	0.08
5	-0.05	0.53
6	0.17	0.00
7	0.43	0.54
8	0.21	0.31
9	0.21	0.32
10	0.24	0.17
11	0.48	-0.02
12	0.22	0.11
13	-0.09	-0.24

Comment [A10]: This brief narrative conveys important information regarding the measures' relationship to objectives. Note that the items were deliberately written to align to specific objectives.

This objective-to-measure alignment corresponds to APT Element III. A. This area could be strengthened further by listing the items that correspond to each sub-objective.

Comment [A11]: The data collection process is clearly explained. Use of a pre-post testing design will allow the program to make inferences regarding student growth. Further, information regarding the details of data collection (e.g., that students are required to take the assessment) allows the program to infer that students were motivated, especially since the measure is a part of their grade.

This description corresponds to APT Element III. D.

Comment [A12]: In general validity evidence helps a program discern the meaningfulness of assessment results. To this end, the program analyzed items via point-biserial correlations. Validity is important and complex topic. Program Assessment Support Services can help.

This corresponds to APT Element III. E.

14	0.18	0.29
15	0.09	0.19
16	0.13	0.22
17	0.33	0.28
18	-0.07	0.01
19	0.43	0.39
20	-0.19	0.6
21	0.51	0.25
22	0.49	0.25
23	0.26	0.27
24	-0.1	0.17
25	-0.04	0.1
26	0.11	0.35
27	0.35	0.47
28	0.67	0.39
29	0.48	0.12
30	-0.11	0.48
31	0.47	0.64
32	0.57	-0.07
33	-0.17	-0.2
34	0	0.05
35	0.27	0.18
36	0.57	0.43
37	0.24	0.43
38	0.79	0.54
39	0.28	-
40	0.44	0.53
41	0.23	0.38
42	0.57	0.32
43	0.15	0.54
44	0.22	0.14
45	0.4	0.53
46	0.07	0.53
47	0.31	0.49
48	0.76	0.04
49	0.35	-0.31
50	0.02	0.59
51	0.44	0.22
52	0.18	0.3
53	0.59	0.17
54	0.17	0.29
55	0.53	0.28
56	-0.01	0.17
57	0.32	0.29
58	0.3	-
59	-0.04	0.44
60	0.08	0.35
61	0.41	-
62	0.33	0.69
63	0.55	0.24
64	0.61	0.39

65	-0.02	0.57
66	0.02	0.61
67	-0.24	0.37
68	0.19	-
69	-0.15	0.06
70	-0.09	0.35
71	0.45	0.26
72	0.37	0.46
73	0.5	-
74	-	0.07
75	-0.27	-
76	0.37	0.19
77	-0.1	-0.31
78	0.33	0.16
79	0.08	-0.3
80	0.59	0
81	-0.01	-0.29
82	0.14	-
83	0.48	0.34
84	0.08	0.41
85	0.04	0.01
86	0.07	0.59
87	0.36	0.29
88	0.1	0.44
89	-0.03	0.37
90	0.36	0.73
91	0.25	0.16
92	0.63	0.04
93	0.15	0.39
94	0.04	0.19
95	0.03	0.1
96	0.56	0.44
97	0.08	0.42
98	0.51	0.38
99	0.41	-
100	0.52	0.36

Reliability: We can assess reliability by using the Kuder-Richardson formula 20, a widely used indicator of reliability, to examine the reliability of items. For the 2010-2011 pre-test/post-test exercise, the average KR-20 for the pre-test was 0.86, and the average KR-20 for the post-test was 0.88. This suggests that items on the test cohere together reasonably well as measurements of learning objectives that form part of a larger programmatic whole.

Expected Results for Current Year (2011-2012): A majority of students are expected to improve their scores (a) on the test overall and (b) on the two tested subsections of the test (objective 1 and objective 2).

Comment [A13]: KR-20, provides a measure of reliability for multiple choice test data. The reliability estimate reported for the assessment instrument is greater than .60, indicating the scores are adequately consistent. This information directly corresponds to APT Element III. E.

Capstone portfolio

General Information/Relationship to Objectives: We have been using the capstone portfolio as an assessment tool since the first year of the program (2007-2008). The portfolio requires students to present and reflect on their work throughout the degree program. Specifically, the portfolio (which generally runs from 250-400 pages) is divided into four parts: self-assessment and reflection (assesses objective 4); presentation of academic work, including self-assessment of classroom experiences, internship and directed research experiences, critical reports on outside speakers, critical reports on guest lectures and conferences, summary reflections on research symposia, writing samples, informal reports about autonomously attended events, and a brief essay on the future of the European Union (assesses objectives 1, 2, 3, 4); career reflection, including a professional resume, a statement of and reflection on career aspirations and possible pathways to achieving these aspirations, and a statement of foreign language proficiency (assesses objective 4); and additional academic and career-related materials. The scope of the capstone portfolio and its attention to particular learning objectives suggests relatively high levels of content validity.

Regarding reliability, we continue to move towards formalization of inter-coder reliability tests. In the program's early years, an informal reliability check was utilized: at least two faculty members read each portfolio and discussed among themselves the extent to which students' portfolios reflected the various objectives.

Since 2011-2012, the reliability check has been becoming more formal and rigorous. In Summer 2011, the program director, in consultation with faculty colleagues, designed and used a rubric to evaluate all portfolios (see the "Assessment Rubric for EUPS Capstone Portfolios," pasted below).

Comment [A14]: The next two sections describe the program's other two instruments. As with the previous section, a systematic method of evaluating progress on objectives is in place.

Comment [A15]: Use of multiple raters and calculating inter-rater agreement is an optimal practice when performance assessments are used. This program's discussion of their future plans and past progress in this area is excellent. Processes regarding reliability relate to APT Element III. E.

Comment [A16]: As before, designing internal measures with multiple faculty members to align with objectives noteworthy practice, corresponding to Element III.A.

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC FOR EUPS CAPSTONE PORTFOLIOS

Student name: _____

Rater initials, date: _____

Objective	Relevant sections of portfolio	Grade (25 points per objective)
1: Comprehensive knowledge of the relevant subfields of political science.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Self-assessment/reflection on classroom academic experiences -Self-assessment of internship experience 	
2. Comprehensive knowledge of the processes that shape politics and policies and the complex interrelationships of political, economic, cultural, and ideological interests that influence them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reports on outside speakers -Reports on travel study trips -Informal reflection on Council of Ministers Simulation -Writing samples -Autonomous events -Future of the EU 	
3. Expertise in contemporary policy issues in political science, including security, immigration, human rights, environmental protection, welfare provision, health and human services, and IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reports on outside speakers -Reports on travel study trips -Writing samples -Autonomous events -Most pressing issues essay 	
4. Analytic and language skills, ability to express selves in verbal form, ability to formulate and execute a final in-depth project or apply their learning in a practical situation; broad intercultural competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reflection on presentation at summer research symposium -Informal reflection on Council of Ministers Simulation -Resume -Career aspirations and possible pathways -Statement of language proficiency 	
Total (100)		

Comment [A17]: Providing the rubric and additional information regarding the objective to measure match is a commendable practice. These supplements also help the reader to better understand the relationship between measures. This corresponds to APT Element III. A

The rubric covers all four objectives. The program's academic coordinator, who was on academic leave in Summer 2011, reviewed all capstone portfolios but did not employ the rubric in Summer 2011. Thus, for 2010-2011, program faculty were halfway between the old system and the new system; one reviewer used a formal rubric, a second reviewer used a less formal review procedure. Each reviewer reached an independent score (out of 100), and the two reviewers discussed among themselves the extent to which students' portfolios reflected the various objectives. There were no significant discrepancies between the two raters' final scores.

The total score (from 0 to 100) that a student received on the document reflects the following overall scheme:

Distinguished (98-100)	The overall document goes beyond a thorough demonstration of understanding of basic and advanced concepts. All included documents are consistent, well-constructed, and logical. The documents evidence an ability to make significant professional and/or scholarly contributions in this subject area. The documents may present new ideas, new interpretations, or new approaches to scholarly concepts or practical issues in the field.
High Pass (93-97)	The overall document reflects a thorough understanding of basic and advanced concepts. Included documents have few, if any, flaws in consistency, construction, or logic. In addition to evidence the student can restate and/or apply content area theories, strategies, or knowledge, the included documents demonstrate an ability to approach the subject area critically, creatively, and/or thoughtfully.
Pass (87-92)	The overall document reflects a competency with the basic concepts in the subject area. Included documents may have minor flaws in consistency, construction, or logic. Overall, the included documents demonstrate the student's ability to restate and/or apply content area theories, strategies, or knowledge.
Low Pass (83-86)	The overall document reflects only a marginal understanding of the basic concepts associated with the competency area. Included documents may exhibit incorrect information, weak construction or logic, weak claims, or a limited demonstration of the student's ability to restate and/or apply content area theories, strategies, or knowledge.
Fail (<83)	The overall document does not reflect a sufficient understanding of the basic concepts associated with the competency area. A failing document may exhibit any of the following: significant incorrect information, poor construction or logic, unsupported claims, or a failure to show that the student possesses the ability to restate and/or apply content area theories, strategies, or knowledge.

Comment [A18]: Using two raters is commendable. If two separate faculty members can arrive at the same decision regarding a student's performance, this is evidence related to both reliability and validity (Element III. E). Likewise, detailing this information helps a reader understand the data collection process. (Element III. D).

For 2010-2011, the two raters compared overall scores. The average score, across the two raters, was 90.92% (within the “pass” range), and the standard deviation was 2.49. No student received a score from either rater below 83%.

One rater used the assessment rubric for 2010-2011. Based on that rubric, it is possible to calculate objective-by-objective summary statistics:

<u>Objective</u>	<u>Average %</u>	<u>Std. Dev.</u>
1: Knowledge of subfield	92.10	0.84
2: Knowledge of processes and interrelationships	90.67	0.80
3: Policy issues	90.76	0.66
4: Communication and intercultural competence	90.38	0.94

Beginning in Summer 2012, the portfolio review process will become “fully formal.” Both faculty raters will use the rubric to evaluate the portfolios. In the case of significant discrepancies between raters’ evaluations, the raters will talk through their rationales and attempt to reach a consensus score. In the case that such a score does not emerge, they will refer the portfolio to a third faculty rater, and the three faculty raters’ scores will be averaged.

Data Collection: The capstone portfolio is the final assignment that students submit before finishing the academic program. The portfolio counts for a sizeable chunk of the grade for a course (POSC 692) and serves as a graduation/capstone requirement. This dual function assures that students take the portfolio seriously.

Expected Results for Current Year (2011-2012): All students are expected to demonstrate sufficient overall mastery and sufficient mastery of all four learning objectives. Specifically, all students should receive a passing grade (83% or higher) on the overall portfolio, and the average grade for each objective should be equal to or greater than 83%.

Alumni survey

General Information/Relationship to Objectives: The alumni survey has been administered twice (once in November 2008, again in November 2010). We send the survey to all program alumni November every other fall. The survey asks respondents to reflect on their experience in the EUPS program and to identify the ways that their training in the program has prepared them for the subsequent professional duties. Specifically, it asks alumni how strong a basis of knowledge and skills the program gave them. It seeks to identify if/how students’ training in the program (including their specific courses, internships, research experience, and outside-the-classroom academic experiences) prepares them to be successful professionals. Given that alumni are voluntarily participating in the survey, we expect the data to have high levels of face validity.

Data Collection: In November 2008, the EUPS alumni survey was administered via e-mail attachment. Alums were expected to print off the survey and send it back to JMU or to fill out the survey using word processing software and re-submit it via e-mail. This system had multiple setbacks. It was difficult to process participants’ responses, and the response rate was lower than anticipated. For this reason, the program director rewrote the survey and sent it to all alumni

Comment [A19]: The alumni survey is an indirect measure of student learning. However, the program assesses all of their objectives using at least one measure and this survey provides valuable supplementary information.

using Qualtrics in Fall 2010. This process was quite successful. We received a response rate of over 70%, and it was relatively simple to process the data. The survey will next be sent to all program alums in November 2012.

Expected Results for the Current Year (2011-2012): The average alumnus response to a question asking about the extent of useful knowledge and professional skills gained will be 3.0 (where 1 = “not at all,” 2 = “a little,” 3 = “somewhat,” and 4 = “very much”).

IV. Objective Accomplishments/Results

IV. RESULTS OF PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Scale or Subscale	Corresponding Objective(s)	2008-09 Results Mean (n=17)	2009-10 Results Mean (n=16)	2010-11 Results Mean (n=21)	Desired Result 2010-2011?	2011 Different from 2010?
<u>PRE-TEST/POST-TEST</u>						
Overall test	1,2	N/A	N/A	Pre-test: 46.1% Post-test: 71.9%	Yes	N/A
Knowledge of subfields	1	N/A	N/A	Pre-test: 43.3% Post-test: 67.1%	Yes	N/A
Knowledge of processes and interrelationships of interests	2	N/A	N/A	Pre-test: 47.8% Post-test: 74.4%	Yes	N/A
<u>CAPSTONE PORTFOLIO</u>						
Scores	1,2,3,4	88%	90.13%	90.93%	Yes	No**
<u>ALUMNI SURVEY</u>						
To what extent does your EUPS training help you to perform in the workplace?	1,2,3,4		3.07*		Yes*	N/A

*Note that the number reported here (3.07) is an average of all respondents' scores and is not split by respondents' year of graduation from the program.

**Based on independent t-tests, using $p < .01$ as significance level.

Comment [A20]: This table efficiently summarizes the results. Note that the second column indicates the objectives to which a particular scale corresponds. Further, there is a column dedicated to displaying whether the desired results were met. Presentation of results corresponds to APT Element IV. A.

Comment [A21]: Where possible, the program provides a history of results. Some measures are new and thus no previous results are available. Providing a history or results allows one to identify learning trends.

This corresponds to APT Element IV. B.

Comment [A22]: Displaying both pre-and post-test scores provides powerful evidence of how much students have gained as a result of the program.

Comment [A23]: Typically, a program would provide interpretation directly after the results.

For example, students exhibited large gains related to objective 1 & 2. Further, the performance on the capstone portfolio and the alumni survey suggest students' performance related to the other objectives meet expectations.

The program does provide interpretation later in the report.

V. Dissemination

The results included in the APT are posted on the political science department's common drive and shared with program faculty at the faculty's first fall meeting. At that meeting, the program director brings the faculty up to date on assessment exercises, highlights the strengths and weaknesses showcased by the instruments, and asks the rest of the faculty for feedback that might facilitate interpretation.

Based on the faculty's interpretation, we identify actions to take in the upcoming year to improve the program and, if necessary, to improve components of the assessment process.

Beginning in Fall 2012, we will also submit copies of the report to the political science department's advisory board.

VI. Uses of evaluation/Assessment Results and Actions Taken

VI. USE OF RESULTS

Until 2010-2011, the capstone portfolio and the alumni survey were the EUPS program's two instruments of assessment. As section III, above, has noted, there were a number of logistical limitations in the first (2008) round of the alumni survey, and these limitations have been addressed with the 2010 survey. These limitations notwithstanding, the 2008 alumni survey and the 2008 and 2009 capstone portfolios all suggested that steps needed to be taken toward improving progress towards the following three sub-objectives:

Objective 1.3: Students will identify the ways that national institutions affect states' approaches to European Union policy-making and the ways that national institutions affect the implementation of EU law.

Objective 2.3: Students will clearly explain the ways that the European Union's institutions and bodies interact to create a governance system, and the ways that this governance system resembles and differs from national governance systems.

Objective 2.4: Students will identify the ways that various non-state actors (political parties, interest groups, media, sub-national institutions) influence public policy-making and public administration within the European Union.

We have made a significant curricular change to meet these objectives. Specifically, beginning in Fall 2009, we added a course (POSC 604: Policy-making Processes and Lobbying in the EU) that focuses very strongly on these objectives. This course has been offered in Fall 2009 and Fall 2010. Summer 2010 capstone portfolios suggested that the changes were largely effective. We are looking forward to Summer 2011 capstone portfolios to see if this trend holds.

Comment [A24]: This narrative describes how the assessment report is disseminated. Likewise, the report describes the plan to submit the assessment report to external stakeholders, in this case the political science department's advisory board. Sharing the assessment results with all faculty and with stakeholders is exemplary practice for APT Element V.

Capstone portfolios (2008-2010) and alumni surveys (2008, 2010) also suggested the need for improvement on sub-objective 4.2 (“Students will exhibit strategies for cross-cultural communication and problem-solving; they will confidently present material to diverse international audiences and lead international teams”). In particular, the instruments suggested that students could use more work leading international teams and using international team leadership as a means of increasing their post-graduation professional prospects. For these reasons, we have added a number of international team leadership exercises and professional development sessions into the POSC 692 EU Seminar.

The pre-test/post-test instrument will be completely administered for the second time in 2011-2012. We look forward to comparing the results from this instrument with the results from the 2010-2011 iteration and to the results from the two other assessment instruments. If necessary, we will modify the structure or emphases of the program accordingly.

To summarize: students in the M.A. program in political science with a concentration in European Union Policy Studies appear to be learning the objectives. We are pleased with signs of progress in sub-objectives 1.3, 2.3, 2.4, and 4.2 but remain on guard here and elsewhere. We will closely monitor these objectives in upcoming assessment activities.

Moving forward, we will continue working to improve our assessment plan. In 2011-2012, we will fully employ the Assessment Rubric for EUPS Capstone Portfolios (e.g., both raters will use the same rubric). This change will allow us to more adequately assess each particular objective in isolation, in addition to gauging students' overall performance. We will also distribute the third iteration of our alumni survey in Fall 2012, analyze the data, compare our findings there with findings from the other two instruments, and make any necessary changes.

Comment [A25]: The narrative above explicitly describes how assessment results led to curricular changes in the program. This is excellent! The point of assessment is to identify areas of strengths and areas that could be bolstered to improve student learning. Further, because this program has a sound assessment process, the faculty are able to trust their results and make informed decisions based on them.

Use of results corresponds to APT Element VI. A.

Comment [A26]: This last paragraph describes the program's plans to improve their assessment process (APT Element VI. B). While this narrative focuses on the future, it is evident throughout the report that the program has made several changes to improve assessment quality (e.g., examining point biserial correlations on a new test).