Academic Program Review
Department of Political Science

1 May 2011

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List academic highlights in research and teaching, as well as important outreach programs in academic year 10-11. What we envision here is a simply a list of bullet points with a bit of elaboration. We will use these for PR (internal and external) and development purposes.

**Scholarship**

Our faculty continue to produce excellent scholarship. This year, we were happy to see new books or new editions authored, co-authored, or co-edited by


We also published in numerous journals, too many to list here, but including


Faculty members also edit these book series.

- Laura Sjoberg, *Gender and International Relations*. Oxford University Press.
Professional Leadership

Our faculty members continue to play important leadership roles in the profession. This year,

- Larry Dodd served as Vice President and 2011 Program Chair for the Southern Political Science Association;
- Laura Sjoberg was elected President of ISA-Northeast, and organized their meeting in Baltimore;
- Laura Sjoberg was named the homebase editor for the *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, starting Summer 2011; and
- Eight of our Comparative Politics faculty, led by Michael Bernhard, were named the editorial team of the *APSA-Comparative Democratization Newsletter*.

We hosted conferences in Gainesville that produced scholarship and helped to highlight the contributions of the Department.

- Sam Barkin and Laura Sjoberg hosted a conference on *Epistemology and Method in International Relations*.
- Michael Bernhard hosted a conference on *Twenty Years After: 1989 and the Politics of Memory*.

Teaching and Advising

Our faculty continue to excel in teaching and advising, and our Undergraduate students are moving on to prestigious fellowships, graduate programs, and professional schools.

- Ken Wald received the University’s highest academic honor, the Teacher-Scholar Award.
- Lynn Leverty selected as a CLAS Teacher of the Year.
- Aida Hozic received the Dr. Julie A. Sina Award, presented by Student Government to a faculty member who shows “outstanding commitment to students.”
- Elizabeth Rojas was selected to participate in the prestigious Gubernatorial Fellowship Program.
- Stephen Morgan received a Fulbright Fellowship, and will study in Africa next year before joining Duke’s Ph.D. program in IR/Political Economy in Fall 2012.
- Over the past year, our current and former undergraduate students have been accepted at law schools/graduate programs at - among others - Stanford, Harvard, Johns Hopkins, George Washington, American, Yale, Georgetown, Columbia, U-Penn, University of Virginia, and William and Mary.

Strategic Planning: To which facets of the CLAS Strategic Plan do you see your department contributing most? Which raise the most concern?

*Hire, develop, and retain the best faculty*

Recent faculty losses in Political Theory and Political Methodology have created important holes that we have to fill to be able to improve the national standing of our Ph.D. program.


**Using data to inform decisions**

This year, under the leadership of our Strategic Planning Committee, the Department gathered data from faculty members on publication output and citations, our collective contributions to the profession, and placement of Ph.D.s. This information helped us to assess our progress from the time that the NRC data were collected to present, and in comparison to a Department ranked higher than us. A summary of our self-study follows in section 3.

**Improving fundraising**

With the UF Foundation and our alumni Development Board, we have developed a plan through which our current Board members will reach out to other alumni in their regions to increase contributions to the Department. Faculty have made or planned trips to Washington, Tallahassee, Orlando, Tampa and Miami this year to meet with potential donors, and some friends have made multiyear commitments or contributions to the Department. But we are awaiting the larger fruits of the regional groups’ efforts.

We have also worked with the Foundation to prepare proposals for a Chair in Islam and Politics and a Professorship in Political Methodology. If funded, both positions would contribute to cross-disciplinary initiatives in the College.

While endowed chairs, professorships, and scholarships are welcome, we would also like to work with the College and the Foundation to secure a general endowment for the Department or smaller endowments which might be allocated to a broad range of faculty to support conference and research expenses.

**Encourage interaction and collaboration across units**

We are working with other social science departments to better integrate and expand our graduate methods offerings, and form a cross-disciplinary group of quantitatively oriented social scientists to enhance the reputation of all of our Departments. This group has exchanged and disseminated information about methods coursework that is available to graduate students from multiple departments, providing students with more opportunities and eventually providing economies of scale that will permit more advanced methods offerings in each department.

Several of our faculty also play key roles in other programs in the University. Les Thiele has been appointed to direct the BA in Sustainability Studies, Katrina Schwarz will also contribute to that program, and Philip Williams directs the Center for Latin American Studies. Several other faculty are affiliated with the Center for Jewish Studies and the Center for Women’s Studies and Gender Research. These are important programs that benefit us and that we support.

After serving as the founding Director for the Center for European Studies for nine years, Amie Kreppel is returning to the Department next year. Leo Villalón is also stepping down as Director of the Center for African Studies after serving as its Director for nine years, and he will join the Department full time in Fall 2012 after his research-restart year. While we welcome two valued colleagues back “home”, we would like to reaffirm the importance of these Centers for our faculty and students. Those Centers have helped us to attract productive faculty members and
numerous graduate students who have benefitted from FLAS and other programs, and we hope that the new Directors will have the support of the College to sustain their excellence.

*Increase the number of self-funded graduate students*

While this is a relatively new strategic priority for CLAS, we have had MA programs in International Relations, Political Campaigning, and Public Affairs for many years, which together have attracted about twenty self-funded students per year on average. As other Departments grow their MA programs, we hope that our commitment to these established programs and the resources that they have provided will continue to be recognized by the College.

At the same time, we are committed to maintaining an appropriate balance between our BA, MA, and PhD programs, with a particular focus on improving the national position of our PhD program. Accepting more self-funded PhD students not only creates a tension in pursuit of that goal (as NRC and other measures reward programs that fund a higher proportion of PhD students), we have found that some unfunded PhD students often have unrealistically optimistic expectations of the probability of getting picked up for funding, given their credentials and performance.

*Improve student advising*

Under the supervision of Aida Hozic and Richard Scher (our undergraduate coordinator and Pi Sigma Alpha faculty advisor, respectively), our Pi Sigma Alpha chapter began a peer advising program last fall, which has become a small but important component of our advising during peak periods.

*Expand experiential learning*

Internships are requirements for our MA students in Public Affairs and Political Campaigning, and our successes in establishing contacts in those programs have benefitted our undergraduates, as well.

*Embrace international opportunities*

Our Department faculty received two important outreach grants that will bring international scholars to UF for intensive study and interactions with UF and other scholars and policymakers.

- Leo Villalón and Dan Smith received a $650,000 two-year grant from the US Department of State Division of Educational and Cultural Affairs “Trans-Saharan Professionals Program” for a series of seminars and exchanges on the issues of elections, and
- Steve Craig and Laura Sjoberg received a $289,222 US Department of State grant to host the US Foreign Policy Institute at UF again this summer, following the successful programs hosted by Ido Oren and Aida Hozic the past three summers.
In addition, our Department has hosts Dietmar Schirmer, our second German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) scholar who contributes to our research and teaching for half the salary we would expect to pay for a visiting faculty member. Schirmer will be in his last year here in 2011-12, and we would be interested in discussing the possibility of searching for another visitor to fill one of our pressing needs in Political Theory or Methodology.

**Other: Any other issues or initiatives you would like to discuss?**

*Executive Summary of Strategic Planning Report*

Last year, we adopted a Strategic Plan that included a goal of becoming a top twenty Political Science Department among public universities. This year, our Strategic Planning Committee was tasked by the Department with establishing markers of our progress that are valid both longitudinally and comparatively. In mid-year, the NRC data from 2005 were released, so our Strategic Planning Committee was able to both estimate our progress and compare our research productivity with a peer institution.

**Research Productivity and Reputation over Time**

Comparing our measurements of productivity from 2005-2010 to the NRC data from 2000-2005 shows marked increases in research productivity and impact. Our research productivity (measured as articles in published in SSCI journals per capita per year) increased from 0.26 to .41, a 54 percent increase in five years. It also puts us substantially above the disciplinary mean for the previous reporting period.

Our research impact (measured as SSCI journal citations/per article/year) is also on a strong upward trajectory since the last NRC report, as shown in Table 1 in the Appendix. The impact of our work is almost double in 2010 from what it was during the period of the NRC study, and we are now well above the disciplinary mean of that earlier time.

**Peer Institution Comparison**

We also collected data on the University of Virginia, which ranks fifth among public universities south of the Mason-Dixon line, and nationally is a middle ranked program above the mean, with a reputational ranking substantially better than UF.

In terms of SSCI journal publication, and citation of such articles, UF has surpassed UVA in terms of productivity (gauged in items) and impact (cites per item) in the last half-decade. The picture that emerges from a consideration of the Google Scholar Data is somewhat different (see Table 2). Overall UF is the more productive department, with more published items per faculty member. However the number of citations per item is much higher for UVA.

**Graduate Placement**

The committee also collected data on what has happened to the cohort of graduate students trained in the last decade. In order to achieve our goals, we need to place our graduate students in tenure track positions in doctoral degree granting institutions. We have begun to take such steps, but in small numbers. Some of the best news in this regard is that two of these placements
have been at programs which we presently consider peer institutions, University of South Carolina, and University of North Texas.

Table 3 summarizes our record of job placement for our PhDs for the last decade. A full seventy-eight percent of our graduates are placed in the academic sector. Our rate of production of PhDs in this decade was also impressive, averaging over six per year.

Presence in the Discipline

Members of the department are extremely active in the life of political science as a discipline. Florida Political Scientists have held over thirty leadership positions in a number of professional organizations over the last decade. The number of faculty members playing a role in shaping our professional organizations and conferences, including the American Political Science Association, the International Studies Association and its regional affiliates, the European Union Studies Association, and the Southern Political Science Association, is indicative of the growing recognition of the department in the discipline.

Conclusions

The department has come through an important decade in its development. There has been substantial progress in laying the foundations for reaching our stated goal of making ourselves a top twenty public university political science department. First, the second half of the decade saw rapid growth in the research productivity of the department as well as in the impact of that work. Second, we are graduating a substantial number of students and placing a high percentage of them in tenure track jobs. Most encouraging has been the placement of three of those students in peer institutions. That represents an important milestone in terms of the quality of students that we produce. Third, a high percentage of our faculty has been very visible in leadership positions in the discipline. Such visibility brings attention to the sorts of things we are doing right in terms of research and graduate training.

Despite this progress, the attainment of our goal is no certainty. We cannot rest on our laurels in terms of research productivity and impact. Five good years is not enough to firmly establish the academic reputation of a department. We need to continue to publish and publish in increasingly more visible and influential journals and presses. We will also need to continue to improve graduate placement and given the current budgetary situation and the lack of hiring by many universities, this means we must do an even better job and focus on cultivating publication as a central facet of graduate training. Finally, the austerity in our own University is taking a toll. In particular two key losses of faculty and the impossibility of hiring in these circumstances will impede our ability to make progress. The loss of one of our methodologists two years ago has put a substantial burden on the remaining methodologist and constrained us in our ability to offer advanced courses in methodology. The loss of one of our three political theorists, while the two other theorists are discharging important administrative responsibilities, has left us with .75 FTEs for both the undergraduate and graduate offerings in this field. Such a situation is not tenable in anything more the short-term.
Appendix: Tables from Strategic Planning Report

Table 1: Increasing Impact of UF Political Science Research Output
(SSCI Journal Citations/per article/year)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>.97</td>
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</table>

Table 2: Comparison of Google Scholar and SSCI Citations, 2005-2010
University of Virginia and University of Florida Political Science Departments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Google Scholar Items (per cap per year)</th>
<th>Google Scholar cites/item</th>
<th>SSCI Items (per cap per year)</th>
<th>SSCI cites/item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UVA Dept</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>4.22</td>
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<tr>
<td>UF Dept</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>5.32</td>
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Table 3: Post-Graduate Job Placement of UF Political Science PhDs (2000-10)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>78.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Assistant Prof</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Associate Prof</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Instructor, Lecturer, Sr. Lecturer</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Visiting Asst Prof</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Adjunct, LTA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Academic</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
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<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deceased</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
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