I. Narrative Description of the Status of the Discipline(s) from a National Perspective (including emerging issues and trends)

We have faculty from three primary disciplines in our department (political science, public administration, and geography). All three disciplines are united around common questions related to power and politics, and we provide our undergraduate and graduate students with a wide-range of tools to answer questions about the world we live in.

Since the majority of faculty reside in political science, this section will provide a few highlights of this discipline from a national perspective. The American Political Science Association (APSA) defines political science as “the study of governments, public policies and political processes, systems, and political behaviors.” Subsequently, APSA lists the following political science subfields: political theory, political philosophy, political ideology, political economy, policy studies and analysis, comparative politics, international relations, and several other related fields.

The APSA is currently focused on ways to help improve public perceptions of political science’s value. The organization recently created a task force with many of the discipline’s leaders including John Sides, Professor at George Washington University and co-founder of the political blog, The Monkey Cage. The report provides a number of recommendations for how the discipline can “communicate its insights to a wide range of diverse constituencies using a dynamic collection of communicative strategies and technologies.” Many members of our department are supportive of this effort and committed to sharing research and insights with both scholarly and general audiences.

II. Program

a. Mission statement

We updated our mission statement at a May 2013 retreat. Our new mission statement is “The Department of Political Science is committed to the rigorous study of politics, power, and place, expanding opportunities for learning and service, career preparation and civic participation locally and globally.”

b. Strategies and tactics in the College’s strategic plan your department or program would place as highest priorities
The department still considers Strategic Plan strategies 1 through 5 the most relevant for academic units. Of these, we continue to focus on strategies 1 and 2.

Strategy 1: Enhance the undergraduate academic core.

We remain focused on enhancing our academic core and spend considerable time developing “a highly personalized education based on a liberal arts and sciences core and enhanced by opportunities for experiential learning” (SP Goal 1). Though much of this annual report is devoted to ways the department enhances the undergraduate core, a few specific tactics are highlighted below.

- Continued commitment to the Honors College with 4 Honors classes and 11 students graduating from the Honors College in 2015-2016.
- The William V. Moore Student Research Conference held each spring providing opportunities for undergraduates and high school students to present original research. We had a record number of participants in 2015-2016 with 56 student presenters.
- An emphasis on faculty/student research with 20 Bachelor’s Essays and 17 Independent Study projects in 2015-2016.
- High profile events to enhance the intellectual climate on campus including talks by nationally known figures including Dr. Unni Karunakara (International President of Doctors Without Borders) and Lecia Brooks (Outreach Director for the Southern Poverty Law Center).
- A strengthened partnership with the Bully Pulpit Series resulting in visits from presidential candidates including Ted Cruz, Lindsey Graham, Martin O’Malley, Mike Huckabee, and Marco Rubio. We also partnered with the Bully Pulpit Series to host the Charleston Mayoral Debate which was broadcast live on the local ABC affiliate (WCIV).
- A highly engaged faculty willing to share their expertise on politics, public policy, public administration, and geography both on and off campus.
- Study abroad opportunities for students.
- A focus on assessment of student learning outcomes and commitment to continuous improvement.

We provide all roster faculty for the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program and most of the roster faculty for the policy component of the Master of Environmental Studies (MES) program. These are among the largest and most successful graduate programs on campus, programs that take full advantage of the unique “history, culture, and location in Charleston and contribute to the wellbeing of the region” (SP Goal 2). Tactics designed to pursue strategy 2 include:

- Expand individual research opportunities for MES and MPA students.
• Expand student led applied research projects that benefit area nonprofits and government organizations.
• Continue to strengthen partnerships between the department and the Joseph P. Riley Center for Livable Communities.
• Expand and solidify the joint MES/MPA degree.
• Continue to maintain accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) for the MPA program. The MPA program’s annual accreditation process took place in 2013-2014. The successful re-accreditation was led by MPA Director, Dr. Jo Ann Ewalt, and all the department’s core MPA faculty were involved in the process.

c. Program goals and their relationship to the College’s strategic plan

The Department of Political Science continues to have the program goals listed below. However, these goals will be reexamined in 2016-2017 in light of our new mission statement and program learning outcomes.

Goal 1: Acquire knowledge of political systems including their institutions, processes, laws and constitutions and the relations between and among nations.

Goal 2: Acquire knowledge of major political philosophies, western and nonwestern, and their origins.

Goal 3: Acquire knowledge of the bases of human behavior in diverse political settings and roles.

Goal 4: Read for comprehension, critically analyze text, and write effectively in a manner appropriate to the task.

Goal 5: Comprehend the views of others and articulate and defend one’s own position.

Goal 6: Develop the skill of applying theories and concepts to new situations.

Goal 7: Develop an appreciation for the scope and methodologies used to study politics.

Goal 8: Conduct research and analysis, including qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Goal 9: Develop the expectation of participation in public life and actively engage with the Charleston and Lowcountry communities.
Goal 10: Develop the communication, cooperation, and negotiation skills necessary to work with others.

Goal 11: Develop an appreciation for the interplay of ideas in the public forum and a critical understanding of political communication and the mass media.

Goal 12: Work comfortably in a diverse world and develop the skills needed to address problems that cross disciplinary and national boundaries.

Goal 13: Receive recognition and support for academic potential and achievement.

Goal 14: Students in interdisciplinary and graduate programs should continue to benefit from faculty.

d. Student Learning Outcomes of the program

Knowledge
Students are able to identify and explain theories, institutions and processes related to power, place and politics

Skills
Students are able to critically analyze texts, communicate effectively, critically assess the views of others, defend their own views and apply appropriate methodological and theoretical approaches

Engagement
Students demonstrate a habit of engagement with the world and an understanding of the value of civic participation, locally, nationally and globally

III. Narrative Summary and Analysis of Departmental or Program Accomplishments

a. Please discuss any of the following that apply to your department or program over the last year, making reference to any data provided at http://ir.cofc.edu/aadeptdata/ or data that you supply in the Supporting Data section as appropriate. What are your strengths, and where would you like to develop?
The Department of Political Science continues to provide a high quality and highly personalized education to its students. One of the unique features of the Department is the adoption of an annual theme. In 2015-2016, we experimented with a new format, with a fall and a spring convocation, with two different themes. For the fall, we selected a theme of “Voting Rights” to align with The College Reads! book, Freedom Summer, and to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. Our November speaker was the Southern Poverty Law Center’s Outreach Director, Lecia Brooks. Our spring convocation theme was “Refugees and Humanitarian Space,” and our speaker was Dr. Unni Karunakara, former medical director from Doctors Without Borders. This event took place on March 3 and was very well attended by our students as well as other members of the campus community.

As noted above, we also had a number of speakers related to the 2016 presidential election. In addition to candidate visits, we hosted Northeastern University Professor William Mayer, a leading expert on the presidential primary process on September 28. His talk was entitled, “Why Trump?” For this event, we collaborated with the Communication Department and the Colonial Athletic Association as part of the Colonial Academic Alliance Scholar Exchange.

We also hosted a Geography speaker, Dr. Steven Hoelscher from the University of Texas on October 1. Dr. Hoelscher’s talk, “Monuments We’d Like to Forget,” connected his research in Vienna, Austria with current debates about Confederate monuments in the American South.

The Charleston Mayoral debate was a considerable undertaking, but it provided a lot of media attention for the College and a meaningful learning experience for our students. We partnered with the Bully Pulpit series for this October 14 event. Two political science faculty were on a panel that asked the candidates questions, and the event was broadcast live on ABC News 4 (WCIV).

We also sponsored a “Money in Politics” forum in collaboration with the League of Women Voters. Panelists for this October 21 event included State Representative Jenny Horne, State Senator Marlon Kimpson, and Political Science Department Chair, Gibbs Knotts.

Another highlight for 2015-2016 was the department’s “Elect Her” program. Professor Hollis France, Professor Claire Wofford, and our student leaders applied for an external grant to bring the “Elect Her” event to our campus. The purpose of the event was to train more women to run for student government and future political office.

In our continuing efforts to help prepare students for life after college, we started a Mentorship Program. This program matched departmental alumni with current students. To date, we have over 30 mentors/mentees participating in the program.
The sixth annual William V. Moore Student Research Conference took place on Friday, April 15 in the College of Charleston’s Stern Student Center. We were very pleased that 56 students presented research on a variety of political science and public policy topics. Michelle Mapp, CEO of the South Carolina Community Loan Fund, delivered the keynote address.

Curricular offerings unusual for your discipline

Our curriculum attempts to balance required courses with a range of options for students to customize their learning. Some of our unique offerings include classes on Cyber Security, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and Sustainability. In 2015-2016, we planned an optional “Public Policy” concentration for our majors. This concentration will provide our students specific policy related skills and also be attractive to other majors on campus. We expect to submit the proposed new concentration to the Faculty Curriculum Committee in the fall of 2016.

We are fortunate to have several practitioners teaching in our program. For example, former Central Intelligence Agency employee Dr. Mary Desjeans teaches classes on Terrorism and U.S. National Security for the department. Two local attorneys, David Aylor and Rhett Dunaway teach POLI 203 (Criminal Justice).

We also remain focused on assessment and continue to improve our department’s assessment procedures. All students are required to take a Capstone class, giving them an opportunity to integrate material from other courses and complete an original research project. It is also important to note that our concentration in Politics, Philosophy, and the Law continues to grow with 90 declared students.

Instructional contributions to other units, programs, and initiatives, including the Honors and First Year Experience programs, undergraduate and graduate programs outside your department, the REACH program, etc.

Contributions to First Year Experience

Fall 2015

POLI 101 – American Government (Learning Community)
LaTasha Chaffin

Spring 2016

POLI 102 – Contemporary Political Issues (Learning Community)
Chris Day
Contributions to the Honors Program

HONS 382 – American’s Vietnam War: 40 Years Later (John Creed, Fall 2015)
HONS 131 – Honors Colloquium in Western Civilization (David Hinton, Spring 2016)
HONS 132 – Inter. Honors Colloquium in Western Civilization (David Hinton, Spring 2016)
HONS 166 – Honors World Politics (John Creed, Spring 2016)

Contributions to the REACH Program

Faculty participating in the REACH Program included Claire Curtis, Hollis France, and Annette Watson.

Distance education or hybrid course offerings

LaTasha Chaffin taught POLI 101 (American Government) online in Summer 2015.
Gibbs Knotts taught POLI 210 (Public Administration) online in Summer 2015.
Brian Fisher taught POLI 294 (Sustainability) online in Summer 2015.

Departmental or program contributions to interdisciplinarity, internationalization/globalization, personalized education and high impact student experiences (such as research and creative activities, civic engagement, study away, internships, peer education and service learning) during review year.

Interdisciplinarity

The department embodies interdisciplinary, with three geography PhDs in rank, and a geography minor. As mentioned above, the department also contributes to a number of interdisciplinary programs across the College. We provide the entire core faculty for the MPA program and make substantial contributions to the MES program. In addition, the department makes important contributions to the Latin America and Caribbean Studies, International Studies, African Studies, Asian Studies, Public Health, Environmental Studies, Women’s and Gender Studies, among others.

Internationalization/Globalization

The department is firmly committed to providing an international perspective to students and the larger College community. The primary area of expertise for five of our tenure line faculty is international or comparative politics. We also have geographers in our department who study the process of globalization. As
mentioned above, we are strong supporters of the College’s study abroad efforts and we continue to play a major part in the successful Trujillo program in Spain. Our faculty lead study abroad trips to Western Europe and Morocco in summer 2016.

**Personalized Education and High Impact Student Experiences**

Personalized education and high impact student experiences are hallmarks of the Department of Political Science. In 2015-2016, our faculty taught 11 “special topics” courses, supervised 17 independent study projects and 20 Bachelor’s Essays. Our faculty also engaged students outside the classroom. For example, Dr. Hollis France took her Maymester Capstone students to John’s Island to learn more about migrant workers and to Meggett to visit Swimming Rockfish Farm. Dr. Annette Watson took her GEOG 2019 (Reading the Lowcountry Landscape) class to a number of places including I’On Village, Remley’s Point, and Folly Beach. In addition, Dr. Brian Fisher taught a number of innovative classes connecting students with sustainability issues on campus and across the Lowcountry.

In addition, 20 students completed internships for academic credit in a wide array of government and nonprofit agencies and organizations, including the ACLU of South Carolina, Charleston County Public Defender, Charleston County Solicitor’s Office, Charleston Police Department, Charleston Pro Bono Legal Services, College of Charleston Office of Sustainability, Dee Norton Lowcountry Children’s Center, Defense Security Service, Jeb Bush for President, John Tecklenberg for Mayor, Marco Rubio for President, Mark Sanford Congressional Campaign, Mayor’s Office for Children, Youth and Families, and the Ninth Judicial Circuit Juvenile Division.

We also offered two “Model” courses for our students in 2015-2016. Dr. Chris Day taught POLI 266 (Model African Union) that provided students an opportunity for engaged, high impact learning. Working in delegations of up to six, students honed research skills and developed a deep knowledge of specific African countries. In spring 2016, Warren Steele received Committee Leadership and Outstanding Delegation Awards and Nicholas Catherall received an Outstanding Delegation Award. In addition, Dr. Max Kovalov worked student leaders to organize a College of Charleston Model United Nations for students on campus and traveled with the student leaders for a regional competition. This team did exceptionally well at the Southern Regional Model United Nations Conference in Atlanta in November 2015. They won every possible award, including best delegation.

To coordinate engaged learning opportunities for students, Professors Jordan Ragusa and Gibbs Knotts founded the American Politics Research Team (APRT) in 2015. Modeled after the College’s Women’s Health Research, Team, the APRT is a faculty-student research team with a mission to “conduct empirical
research on important topics in American Politics, contribute to public discourse on political issues, and to help students develop their research skills.” As an example of the team’s work, the APRT collected Exit Poll data during the historic 2015 Charleston mayoral race.

To further encourage academic excellence and student research, the Department hosted the sixth annual William V. Moore Student Research Conference. Conference participation was the highest ever with 56 students, consisting of undergraduates as well as a number of outstanding high school seniors from Academic Magnet High School. In addition, approximately 100 students, faculty, alumni, and parents attended the conference luncheon. Conference sessions were filled with supportive parents, interested students, faculty and friends.

**Summary of student and/or graduate accomplishments**

Our graduates continue to attend graduate school, work in a variety of professions, and win prestigious scholarships and fellowships. We are particularly proud that the College’s highest academic honor, the Bishop Robert Smith Award, has gone to a political science major 13 of the past 20 years. In addition, 4 political science majors graduated with Department Honors, 37 students joined the Pi Sigma Alpha Honor Society, and 103 students qualified for the Honor Roll in the fall and 114 students in the spring. We also continue to advise students interested in attending graduate school.

b. Please provide a brief narrative summary of the curricular assessment activities undertaken by your unit this year, along with both actions taken in earlier years that have led to improvement and plans for improvement.

Dr. Claire Curtis spearheaded our department’s curriculum and assessment activities in 2015-2016. At the end of the 2012-2013 cycle we adopted a new program mission statement and at the end of the 2013-2014 cycle we have adopted new program learning outcomes, moving from 8 program learning outcomes to 3. We have a new curriculum map to align with our new learning outcomes, and a new rubric to assess the capstone papers in order to reflect the new program learning outcomes. We have also decided to switch from an academic year cycle of assessment to a calendar year cycle. This will give us the spring semester to discuss the findings from the previous calendar year. The academic year cycle gave little time for discussion of findings at the end of the year. In order for assessment to lead to productive and evidence based changes we need a system that provides ample time during the academic year to discuss findings and to consider next steps. Lastly, we began tracking a cohort of first year students to learn how they connect with the major, transform as students, and progress through the College.
c. Please discuss the diversity among your faculty, including efforts made in recruitment (if applicable) to increase the presence of under-represented groups.

The department remains fully committed to recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty and to increasing the presence of under-represented groups. Females make up about half of the department, and 3 of our 21 roster faculty (14%) are African American.

d. Please provide a summary analysis of research and professional development productivity in your department or program, referring to the Supporting Data section as appropriate. What are your strengths and challenges?

Faculty in the Department of Political Science publish in a wide-range of scholarly outlets. In addition, faculty demonstrate the ability to write for a wider-audience by publishing policy reports and op-ed pieces. A list of recent publications appears below.

Books


Peer Reviewed Journal Articles


Ford, L. “Two steps forward, one step back? Strengthening the foundations of women’s leadership in higher education” *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, April 2016.


Keenan, K. “Rethinking Place in the Study of Societal Responses to Terrorism: Insights from Boston, Massachusetts” *Urban Studies*, forthcoming.


Book Chapters, Translations, Invited Papers, Other Publications and Recognition


Long, M. 2015. “Remnants of the Rice Culture: Agricultural History as Art. The Aerial Photographs of David Soliday” (curator), City Gallery at Waterfront Park, Charleston, SC.


External Grants

Nowlin, M. (PI), “Coastal Climate Support: Extending Climate Adaptation Lessons to other Communities.” Sponsored by the SC Sea Grant, Federal governmental agency, awarded $25,000.

Stewart, K. (co-PI) Farm-to-School: Stimulating Local Economies while Improving Child Health Outcomes (4-year grant), 2013-present, over $1,20,000 grant funded by Boeing Aeronautics.

Stewart K. (PI) City of Charleston Illumination Project 2015-present, Working with the Charleston Police Department to conduct an evaluation of citizen-police relations in Charleston $12,000.

Stewart K. (PI) South Carolina City/County Management Association 2014-present $20,000 annually renewable for training and professional development (funded $40,000 to date).

Stewart K. (PI) South Carolina Community Loan Fund 2014-2016 Hired to perform evaluation for a Kresge Foundation Project Grant on Healthy Food Access $48,000.

Stewart, K. (co-PI). South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium Coastal Climate Support: Extending Climate Adaptation Lessons to other Communities 2014-2016, project assessing attitudes on climate change policies $25,000.


e. Please provide a summary of departmental or program service and outreach contributions to the school, College, community (of a professional nature), or profession. What are your strengths and challenges?

As you can see below, our department continues to be heavily engaged in service and outreach activities. Our strengths include College-wide service, frequent commentary with media outlets, and a wide range of public lectures on a range of political and public policy topics.
Karyn Amira served on the department’s Curriculum and Assessment Committee and the Intellectual Life Committee in 2015-2016.

LaTasha Chaffin is a core member of our MPA faculty. She is also a faculty affiliate for the African American Studies Program and the Urban Studies Program. She also served on the department’s Student Awards and Recognition Committee. She also served on the Kline Award Committee for the Southeastern Conference of Public Administrators.

John Creed continues to provide considerable service to the department, chairing the Student Awards and Recognition Committee in 2015-2016. He also worked closely with the College’s Honors College and gave talks to many groups on the Middle East and American Foreign Policy.

Claire Curtis served as associate chair in 2015-2016. She also chaired the department’s Curriculum and Assessment Committee and was a member of the College’s Advisory Committee on Tenure, Promotion, and Third-Year Review and served as a reader for the College’s General Education Assessment.

Chris Day is an integral part of the College’s African Studies program and like many of our faculty, teaches courses for the International Studies program. He was co-director of the William V. Moore Conference in 2015-2016 and served on the Intellectual Life Committee. He also works closely with international groups including the Enough Project. In addition, he has spoken with the media about comparative and international politics.

Jo Ann Ewalt directed the College’s MPA program and also served on the Committee on Graduate Education, and the Graduate Council. She is significantly engaged in her discipline, having served as the president of the Southeastern Conference for Public Administration. She is also a member of the NASPAA Executive Council and serves as a member of the Commission on Peer Review and Accreditation.

Andy Felts served on the Department's Intellectual Life Committee.

Brian Fisher is the College’s Director of Sustainability where he coordinates a number of important initiatives for the College related to energy, waste and water management, outreach and awareness, research and planning, and food and agriculture.

Hollis France served as the Director of the College’s Gender and Sexuality Equity Center (GSEC). She also chaired the Faculty and Staff Labor Day Committee and worked on the campus’s Climate Study.
Phil Jos is a core MPA faculty member and also co-directed the William V. Moore Student Research Conference. He also led a special Ad-Hoc committee to revise the department’s job search procedures.

Kevin Keenan serves in a number of administrative roles for the College. He continues to be the Director of the Urban and Regional Planning Certificate program and serves as Director of Urban Studies. Urban Studies now has a permanent seat on the South Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association. He co-chaired the Geography Minor Committee in fall 2015.

Gibbs Knotts serves as Department Chair and also served as chair of the Faculty Curriculum Committee. He is a frequent commentator on political issues and has appeared in local, state, national, and international media outlets. He is co-founder of the American Politics Research Team.

Guoli Liu remains an active member of the College community, serving on the Council on Undergraduate Research. He also serves as a board member of the Chinese Association in Greater Charleston and on the editorial board for the Journal of Chinese Political Science.

Mark Long was on sabbatical in 2015-2016.

Matt Nowlin is a core MPA faculty and serves on the admissions committees for both the MPA and MES programs. He was also a peer reviewer for academic journals.

Jordan Ragusa chaired the College’s Student Affairs and Athletics Committee and a variety of department level committees. His blog, “Rule 22,” was picked up by the Christian Science Monitor. He also talks frequently with the media about current political issues and serves as a senior project advisor to Academic Magnet students. He is co-founder of the American Politics Research Team.

Alex Sanders contributes to the intellectual life of the College and larger community in many ways. He is a sought after public speaker, addressing a range of audiences. He also serves on the editorial board of the South Carolina Trial Objections Manual and a number of other community boards and foundations.

Kendra Stewart serves as Director of the Joseph P. Riley Center for Livable Communities. She serves on the editorial board for State and Local Government Review, Journal of Public Affairs Education, and Public Administration Quarterly. Like many of our faculty, Dr. Stewart is a frequent contributor to local and national media outlets providing expert commentary on a range of political and public policy issues.
Annette Watson is an active member of the Geography Program and the Master of Environmental Studies Program. In 2015-2016, she co-chaired the Geography Minor Committee and served on Faculty Senate.

Claire Wofford shares her expertise in American politics and the judicial system with media outlets and is on the Editorial Board for the Law and Courts Newsletter. She also does a considerable amount of pre-law advising for the department.