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 continues to be 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 8 students graduating from the Honors College in 2016-2017.
- The William V. Moore Student Research Conference held each spring providing opportunities for undergraduates and high school students to present original research in 2016-2017 with 44 student presenters.
- An emphasis on faculty/student research with 8 Bachelor’s Essays and 20 Independent Study projects in 2016-2017.
- A continued focus on helping our students develop the skills necessary for successful careers.
- High profile events to enhance the intellectual climate on campus including talks by nationally known figures including Trevor Potter (former Chairman of the Federal Election Commission) and Sarah Chayes (Senior fellow in the Democracy and Rule of Law program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace).
- 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 including faculty led trips to Morocco and Vietnam/Cambodia.
- 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 Science in Environmental Studies (MES) program. In addition, the directors of both programs, Dr. Phil Jos (MPA) and Dr. Annette Watson (MES), are tenured faculty members of the political science department. 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. Riley Center Director, Dr. Kendra Stewart, is a tenured faculty member in the political science department.
• 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 most recent successful accreditation took place in 2013-2014 and we are working toward our next accreditation in 2020-2021.

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.

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 provides 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. The theme for 2016-2017 was “Money in Politics.” Our fall Convocation of Majors speaker was the former Chairman of the Federal Election Commission, Trevor Potter. Our spring speaker Convocation of Majors speaker was Sarah Chayes, senior fellow in the Democracy and Rule of Law program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. This event took place on April 13 and was very well attended by our students as well as other members of the campus community.

The department maintains its commitment to helping students prepare for life after college. We continued our Alumni Mentorship Program, a program that matches departmental alumni with current students. To date, we have over 30 mentors/mentees participating in the program. In addition, we organized three Career Café events to help students learn more about career opportunities. We held a kickoff event on September 9, with distinguished alumni speakers including Meredith Gerber, Brady Quirk-Garvan, Margaret Pilarski, and Kate Tiller. Our October 14 event focused on career opportunities in the nonprofit sector and included panelists Marjiana Radic Boone, Leah Cockerham, James Carroll, and Dr. Phil Jos. Finally, we organized a Career Café event for our students interested in law related careers on March 24. Speakers for this event included distinguished alumni Michael Bender, Les Blankenship, Kenny Gardner, and Carmen Scott.

The seventh annual William V. Moore Student Research Conference took place on March 31 in the College of Charleston’s Stern Student Center. We were very pleased that 44 students presented research on a variety of political science and public policy topics. In addition to our undergraduate students, the conference included presentations by MPA students and students from Academic Magnet High School (AMHS). Kayla Gilchrist, Executive Director at Central Midlands Justice Ministry (and formerly Community Organizer for the Charleston Area Justice Ministry), 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 Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Terrorism, the U.S. Intelligence Community, and Sustainability. In 2016-2017, we approved an optional “Public Policy” concentration for our majors. This concentration will provide our students specific policy related skills.

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 112 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 2016**

FYSE 131 – Government by Design: Learning about Planning, Politics, and Policy from the City of Charleston  
Kevin Keenan

FYSE 131 – The US and Globalization  
Guoli Liu

POLI 101 – American Government (Learning Community)  
LaTasha Chaffin

**Spring 2017**

FYSE 131 – Us and Them: The Politics of Identity  
Mark Long

FYSE 131 – Conflict and Cooperation in American Politics  
Jordan Ragusa

POLI 101 – American Government (Learning Community)  
LaTasha Chaffin

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

Spring 2017

HONS 131 – Honors Colloquium in Western Civilization  
David Hinton

HONS 132 – Inter. Honors Colloquium in Western Civilization  
David Hinton

HONS 166 – Honors World Politics  
John Creed

HONS 398 – Zero Waster Events Initiative  
Brian Fisher

**Contributions to the REACH Program**

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

**Distance education or hybrid course offerings**


Gibbs Knotts taught POLI 210 (Public Administration) and POLI 402 (Field Internship) online in Summer 2016.

Brian Fisher taught POLI 294 (Sustainability) online in Summer 2016.

Annette Watson taught POLI 104 (World Regional Geography) online in Summer 2016.

**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 interdisciplinarity, 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 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, European Studies, Public Health, Environmental Studies, Women’s and Gender Studies, among others.

Internationalization/Globalization

The department is 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. Our faculty led study abroad trips to Germany/France/Luxembourg/Belgium, Vietnam/Cambodia and Morocco in summer 2016, and have coordinated the College’s fall semester program in Trujillo, Spain since 2011.

Personalized Education and High Impact Student Experiences

Personalized education and high impact student experiences are hallmarks of the Department of Political Science. In 2016-2017, our faculty taught 9 “special topics” courses, supervised 20 independent study projects and 8 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 219 (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, 10 students completed internships for academic credit in a wide array of government and nonprofit agencies and organizations, including the Charleston County Public Defender, Charleston Pro Bono Legal Services, Citizens Climate Lobby, Congressman Sanford’s office, Defense Security Service, Garden and Gun magazine, and WCBD News 2.

We also offered three “Model” courses for our students in 2016-2017. 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. The students also traveled with Dr. Day to Washington, D.C., to compete in a Model African Union competition. In addition, Dr. Max Kovalov worked with 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 2016. Finally, we offered POLI 119 (Advanced Mock Trial) in fall 2016. The course was taught by a local attorney, Paul Dominick. Students learned about courtroom procedure and competed in a mock trial competition in January 2017.

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.” In 2016, team members worked on a project exploring the reasons some Republicans abandoned the party’s 2016 presidential nominee, Donald Trump. In addition, they conducted research on South Carolina’s “First in the South” presidential primary.

As noted above, the Department hosted the seventh annual William V. Moore Student Research Conference. Conference participation consisted 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 14 of the past 22 years. In 2016-2017, political science major Zach Sturman won the award. In addition, 36 students joined the Pi Sigma Alpha Honor Society, and 107 students qualified for the Honor Roll in the fall and 98 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 once again spearheaded our department’s curriculum and assessment activities in 2016-2017. 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 an updated 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. 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 20 roster faculty (15%) 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.


Knotts, G. (with S. Huffmon, and S. McKee). “First in the South: The Importance


Wofford, C. “Avoiding Adversariness?: The Effects of Gender on Litigation Strategy.” *Politics & Gender*, forthcoming.

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


Curtis, C. “Standards of Justice for Human Being and Doing in Kim Stanley Robinson’s 2312 and C.S. Lewis Friedman’s *This Alien Shore*,” Open Library of the Humanities, forthcoming.


France, H. “Bringing into Focus Alternative Futures: Indigenous Women Internalizing Externalities Produced by Neoliberalism” in *Indigenous*
Geographies and Caribbean Feminisms: Common Struggles Against Global Capitalism. The book is affiliated with the Institute for Gender & Developmental Studies which is housed by The University of the West Indies.


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 $1,200,000 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.

Watson, A. (PI), “Ethnographic Overview and Assessment of the Southern Preserve Unit of Gates of the Arctic National Park,” Sponsored by the National Park Service, awarded $78,000, June 2015-August 2016. $16,000 supplement for undergraduate and graduate research assistants.


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.

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. In addition, she served on the department’s Student Awards and Recognition Committee. Dr. Chaffin was also the co-founder of a student chapter of the Southern Poverty Law Center on our campus.

John Creed continues to provide considerable service to the department, chairing the Student Awards and Recognition Committee in 2016-2017. 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 2016-2017. She also chaired the department’s Curriculum and Assessment Committee and served on 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 2016-2017 and served on the Intellectual Life Committee and Geography Committee. He also works as the department’s Graduate School Advisor. In addition, he works closely with international groups including the Enough Project. Finally, he has spoken with the media about comparative and international politics.

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 continued his long history of departmental and College service. In 2016-2017, he served as Interim MPA Director.

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. The number of Urban Studies majors has grown considerably under Dr. Keenan’s leadership, and there are now over 40 majors in the program. In addition, Dr. Keenan worked to get the program a permanent seat on the South Carolina Chapter of the American Planning Association. He also served on the Geography Minor Committee in 2016-2017.
Gibbs Knotts serves as Department Chair and also served on the Faculty Curriculum Committee. He speaks to community groups about the South and southern politics, and he is also a frequent commentator on political issues, appearing 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 continued to play an active role on campus. He served as the co-Director of the William V. Moore Student Research Conference. He also coordinated the school’s Trujillo program and continues to serve as Curator at Large at the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art.

Matt Nowlin is a core MPA faculty and serves on the Admissions Committee for both the MPA and MES programs. He also served on the department’s Student Awards and Recognition Committee and was also a peer reviewer for academic journals.

Jordan Ragusa chaired the College’s Student Affairs and Athletics Committee and the department’s Intellectual Life Committee. 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 several editorial boards including State and Local Government Review, Journal of Public Affairs Education, and Public Administration Quarterly. She was appointed by the South Carolina Governor to the Charleston/Dorchester Mental Health Center Board, where she serves as Chair. She is also Chair of the Green Heart Project. 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 Director of the MES Program and an active member of the Geography Program.
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, and is the faculty advisor for the Political Science Club.