

COMPREHENSIVE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM REVIEW

Political Science Moreno Valley College Round Three 2011-2014

RCCD

**RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY
COLLEGE DISTRICT**

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Web Resources:

<http://www.rccd.edu/administration/educationalservices/ieffectiveness/Pages/ProgramReview.aspx>

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**COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM REVIEW
POLITICAL SCIENCE
MORENO VALLEY COLLEGE 2011-2014**

A. Mission and Relationship to the College(s)

The Political Science discipline fulfills the mission of the Riverside Community College District and the particular missions of its three colleges by offering students a broad range of classes that fulfill a variety of functions. Generally, the courses offered by the discipline reflect the District's aim to provide courses in "the liberal arts and sciences" that create the conditions "for intellectual and cultural awareness, critical and independent thought, and self-reliance." The discipline also reflects the specific mission of Moreno Valley College by offering "baccalaureate transfer and pre-professional" courses. In the tradition of a liberal arts education, the discipline considers the study of politics to be essential to the development of well-rounded academics and competent citizens.

The primary emphasis of the discipline is to teach students about the history, culture, traditions and institutions that inform American politics. Our primary course – American Politics – fulfills the American Institutions requisite for a number of the Associates of Arts degree programs in our district as well as the Graduation Requirement in U.S. History, Constitution, and American Ideals for the California State University system and the American History and American Institutions requirement for the University of California.

We consider politics as the formulation, implementation and revision of notions of the good life, visions that are historical, contingent and contested. We understand politics to be carried out in a variety of arenas, in the generally recognized areas of political institutions as well as the more mundane spheres of life such as the workplace and the living room. It is the central aim of the discipline to expose students to how these notions of the good life are rooted in social, cultural and economic conditions, how they have changed over time; and, as a result of actions undertaken by individuals and groups, how current institutions can be likewise considered and potentially changed.

The Political Science discipline also concerns itself with exposing students to techniques used in the social sciences that have been central to the study of contemporary politics. Although the discipline does not offer courses in empirical design or statistical analysis, it nonetheless explains the current techniques that are used in Political Science research – such as survey methods and system analysis – and provides students with a basic understanding of the "science" component of Political Science.

Finally, the discipline is committed to the idea that individuals pursue politics – implicitly and explicitly – almost continuously in their daily lives. Rather than conceptualize politics merely as a contestation over resources that happens in state and federal governments, the discipline is oriented by Carol Hanisch's oft-cited phrase that "the personal is political." For the discipline, this means that students in Political Science must confront how their seemingly mundane activities, such as buying groceries or befriending a particular person, have implications for social, political, cultural and economic institutions. By equipping students with a basic understanding of political institutions as well as knowledge regarding how these institutions function within a

broader historical and cultural framework and how individuals can work to modify or perpetuate them, we prepare them to become more competent actors in a complex, ever-changing world. It is in this sense that we provide students “intellectual and cultural awareness, critical and independent thought, and self-reliance” (from RCCD Mission Statement).

B. History

The Political Science discipline consists of six full-time tenured faculty, all with Ph.D.'s - three at Riverside City College, two at Norco College and one at Moreno Valley College. We firmly believe that students are best served by content-matter experts who have shown a commitment to teaching excellence and that this expertise is best reflected in the attainment of the highest degree of academic commitment, the Doctor of Philosophy. So far, two of our colleagues have also achieved the status of full professor, namely, Dr. Dariush Haghightat and Dr. Fabian Biancardi.

The Political Science discipline faculty has served in several leadership positions such as being elected in the Spring of 2012 as officers of the RCCD Faculty Association - VP for RCC, VP for MVC and District President. We have also served on a variety of hiring committees including those for the highest administrative positions such as District Chancellor, College Presidents, Vice Presidents and Deans.

The five goals identified in the discipline's 2009 CIPR were:

1. Continued development of emphasis-area courses in the program
2. Assessment of success rates
3. Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes
4. Improve our full-time to part-time teaching ratio at Moreno Valley
5. Determine class size on pedagogical practice

Of these, numbers 3 and 4 remain relevant and urgent, i.e., the assessment of student learning outcomes and the improvement of the part-time to full-time teaching ratio in Political Science courses at Moreno Valley College. As to the issue of assessment of student learning outcomes, though MVC has now established continual assessment of its main course, POL-1 *American Government*, the other courses listed in the catalogue have yet to be assessed. The reason for this is that they have been offered rarely at the College, because of budget cuts and the corresponding restrictions on hiring part-time faculty to teach those sections. Two of them, POL-2, *Comparative Politics*, and POL-4, *World Politics*, will be taught during the Fall 2013 term by Dr. Biancardi and assessed as part of the Study Aboard experience. It is the discipline's intention to offer the A.A.-T. degree in Political Science using the Transfer Model Curriculum (SB 1440) soon. To make this degree available for Moreno Valley College students who want to transfer to a California State University will necessitate the regular offering of classes listed in the catalogue that are required as part of it.

Finally, the discipline's goal of improving the full to part-time teaching ratio at MVC by hiring one more full-time faculty member is unlikely to be met until the current financial situation improves considerably. Nevertheless, this remains a priority of the discipline.

C. Data Analysis and Environmental Scan

Though Moreno Valley College has just one full-time faculty in the area of Political Science and two part-time faculty remaining after the section cuts of the last three years, it has continued to achieve very high levels of efficiency with excellent retention and good success rates. (For the data with longer-run charts, see page 7)

Fall 2009	Fall 2010	Fall 2011
Efficiency: 810.21	Efficiency: 761.96	Efficiency: 748.95
Retention: 83.0%	Retention: 84.5%	Retention: 80.3%
Success: 63.7%	Success: 63.6%	Success: 65.8%

Overall enrollment rates have not fluctuated very much in the years between 2009 and 2011 even if they are down from the peak years of 2004/5 with 402 and 404 respectively. Still, compared with the numbers of students prevalent before the full-time hire in 2001 (179), they appear to indicate a healthy demand for Political Science courses at the College.

Fall Enrollments
2009: 353
2010: 335
2011: 325

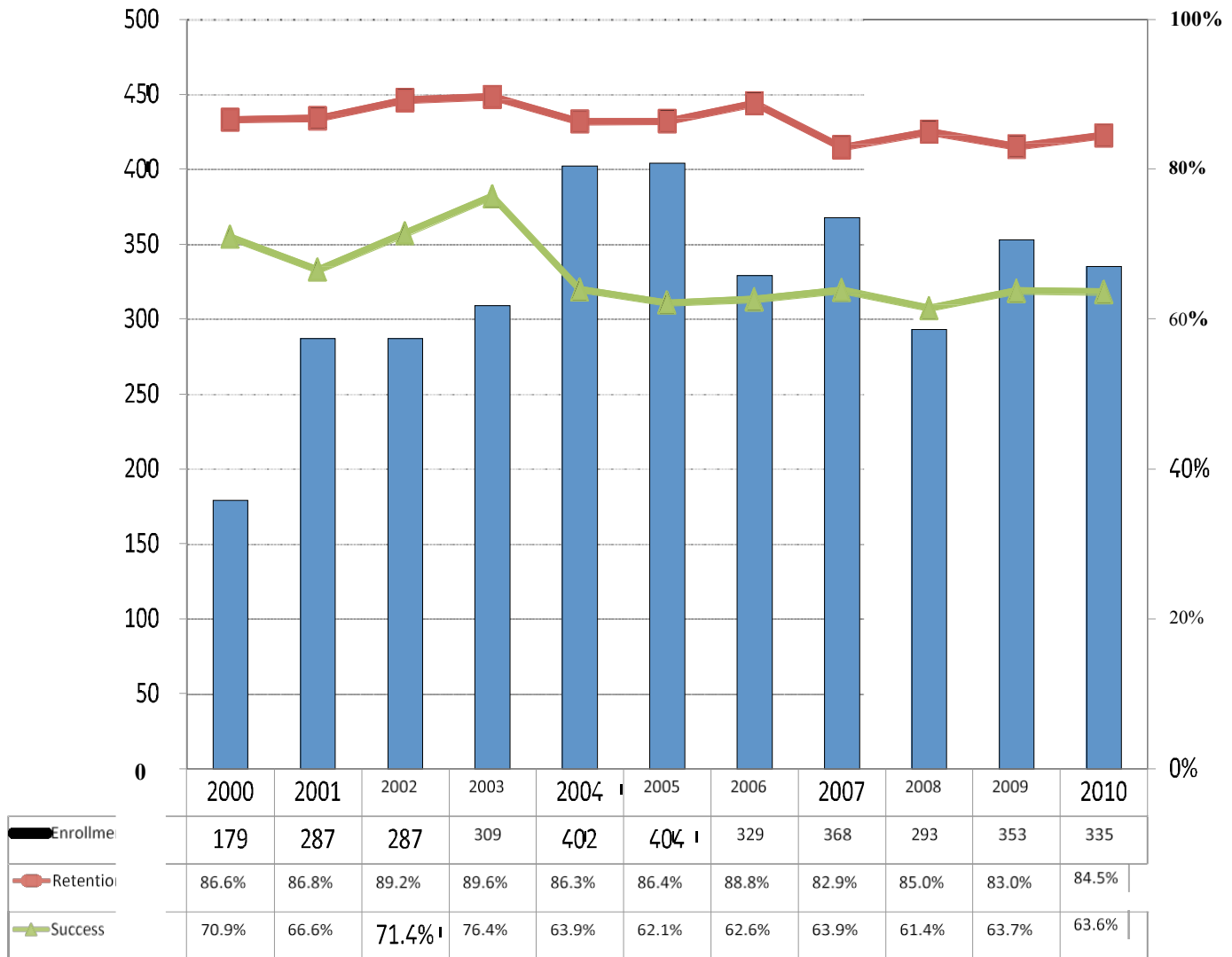
Not surprisingly given the class cuts we have endured over the last several years, what has changed most starkly since 2006 is the Full Time Equivalent Faculty numbers. These have fallen from a peak of 2.2 FTEF in 2006 to 1.4 FTEF for each year of our survey, namely for 2009, 2010, and 2011. Unless we see a turnaround in our revenues, these are unlikely to improve over the next few years.

POL FTEF
2009: 1.40
2010: 1.40
2011: 1.40

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DATA SUPPORT- MOV POL

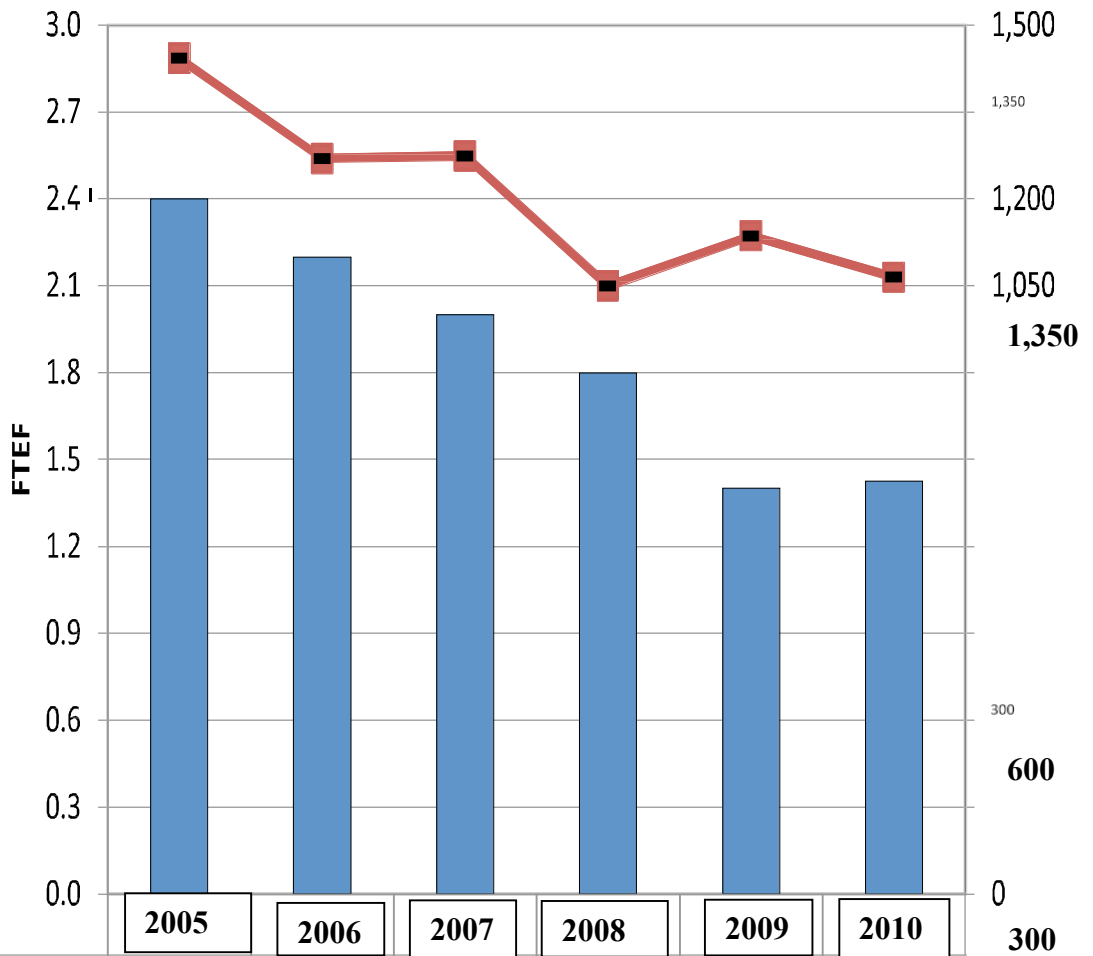
MOV POL Enrollments, Retention and Success Rates, Fall 2000 - 2010



**MOV POL Efficiencies,
Fall Terms 2005 -2010**



MOV POL FTEF and WSCH,
Fall Terms 2005 -2010



FTEF	2.40	2.20	2.00	1.80	1.40	
Discipline WSH	1442.58	1270.02	1273.98	1049.66	1136.32	1064.46

D. Programs and Curriculum

A review and revision of MVC's Political Science CORs was last undertaken on Friday, October 26, 2012. This included adding new assignments for out-of-class reading, writing and other scholastic preparations as well as updating suggested textbooks.

<u>COURSE NUMBER</u>	<u>COURSE NAME</u>	<u>Update of CORs</u>	<u>Comments</u>
POL-1	American Politics, 3 units	10/26/12	
POL-1H	Honors American Politics, 3 units	10/26/12	
POL-2	Comparative Politics, 3 units	10/26/12	
POL-2H	Honors Comparative Politics, 3 units	10/26/12	
POL-4	Introduction to World Politics, 3 units	10/26/12	
POL-4H	Honors Introduction to World Politics, 3 units	10/26/12	
POL-6 (ECO-6)	Introduction to Political Economy, 3 units	10/26/12 10/29/12	Updated both classes
POL-11	Political Theory, 3 units	10/26/12	

E. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment

MVC has ongoing and cyclical assessment of its main Political Science offering, namely, POL-1 *American Politics*. It is a direct assessment of a writing assignment - a comparative essay of modern liberalism and conservatism - and has led to several improvements including new reading material, writing prompts for students and grading rubrics. So far, this has been a direct assessment of a major reading and writing assignment based on SLO # 2 "Students will be able to identify and analyze the major current political ideologies." i.e., a four-page comparative essay of modern liberalism and conservatism based on specific readings provided by the instructor - 44 page document with extracts from a number of authors from both sides of the philosophical divide. The scoring criteria includes engagement with the central concepts and arguments of the readings provided, the use of examples from the real-world of politics to illustrate student arguments, and the employment of critical reflections as well as proper referencing.

Modifications to the curriculum have included new prompts to the essay guide, new explicit examples of pitfalls that unsuccessful students tend to fall into, new additions to the required

readings, and new warnings to stick closely to these assigned readings.

Based on the results of the last two Annual Program reviews, the results of the assessments to date have been very positive with the primary goal of seeing 90% or more of the students achieving satisfactory grades being accomplished. A secondary goal moving forward is to try to ensure a higher percentage of students achieving grades in the top two bands or A and B grades.

The courses that have yet to be assessed but are listed in our catalogue are as follows:

POL 1H: *Honors American Politics*

POL 2: *Comparative Politics*

POL 2H: *Honors Comparative Politics*

POL 4: *Introduction to World Politics*

POL 4H: *Honors Introduction to World Politics*

POL 6: *Introduction to Political Economy*

POL 11: *Political Theory*

POL-2 and POL-4 will be assessed in the Fall 2013 term under the assessment cycle adopted by the Political Science discipline at Moreno Valley College.

F. Collaboration with Other Units Including Instructional, Student Services or Administrative Units (Internal)

Beyond the provision of standard courses in politics, our faculty have participated in several District programs including Honors, Model United Nations, and Study Abroad.

The Political Science faculty at Moreno Valley College have had ongoing participation with the District's "Green Initiative." They assisted in getting the Political Science discipline to "green" its curricula by including reading and writing assignments based on environmental topics, and they are currently pushing for the District to support solar carports on the three college campuses.

G. Outreach Activities

Professor Biancardi from MVC was involved in the first RCCD Study Abroad trip to Beijing, China, in spring 2011. Dr. Biancardi has also recently been selected for the fall 2013 RCCD Study Abroad Program to Florence, Italy.

H. Long Term Major Resource Planning

Transfer Model Curriculum:

The Political Science discipline plans on introducing a Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) which will make the teaching of historically low-enrolled courses at MVC an imperative

New F/T Faculty:

The goal of adding a second, full-time Political Science faculty member at MVC remains a priority if one that must await the return of financial health to our District.

I. Summary

The goals of the Political Science discipline for the next four years are as follows:

1. To introduce a Transfer Model Curriculum (TMC) in Political Science.
2. To offer the courses needed to complete that degree at Moreno Valley College.
3. To complete SLO assessments for all Political Science classes in the MVC Catalogue.
4. To implement the SLO assessment plan for the Political Science discipline.
5. To hire a second full-time faculty member in Political Science.

J. Recommendations to the Program Review Committee

(none at this time)