



## **POLITICAL SCIENCE/GEOGRAPHY CLUSTER MINUTES**

**March 24, 2016**

**1:30 – 3:30pm**

**Lake Worth Campus**

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**ITEM 1.      How can your cluster support textbook affordability? Please provide your top three recommendations. Also, list initiatives underway such as open source textbooks, out of copyright materials, textbook rentals, etc.**

Discussion:    The cluster continues to support textbook affordability by considering the possibility of moving to a free (open-source) textbook where it's available for the general education courses. OpenStax for the Introduction to American Government class is expected to be available this summer, but the release dates for Political Science and Geography have not yet been announced. In the meantime, cluster members use older editions of all textbooks so that students may buy used, and they have switched to an e-book (beginning Fall 2015) for Introduction to American Government and will follow with a switch to an e-book for Introduction to Political Science in Fall 2016. The electronic book cost is much lower than a printed, bound text.

Data source:   None.

Action:        The cluster unanimously agreed that it will continue to support and expand its efforts on textbook affordability.

## **ITEM 2.      *FOR CLUSTERS THAT HAVE GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES***

**As a cluster, please discuss the data provided to your chair and answer the questions below. Your cluster discussion should be included in the minutes if you are able to answer the questions today. If sub-committees are formed for follow-up, please enter that information in the minutes and submit any decisions made after today to IRE by April 29, 2016 (send email to Karen Pain at [paink@palmbeachstate.edu](mailto:paink@palmbeachstate.edu)).**

### **Questions to answer in cluster or follow-up work by April 29, 2016**

1. How do your current cycle results indicate your assessment instrument is measuring your selected outcome **and** that you have selected a reasonable benchmark?
2. In reflecting on this process and results, what changes might be necessary to the outcomes, instruments, implementation, or benchmarks for any of your courses, in order to move forward in a meaningful way?

**Discussion:** Cluster members discussed the embedded assessment for POS1041 (Introduction to American Government) and POS1001 (Introduction to Political Science). The assessment instrument uses a 5-point rubric, and the question set is comprehensive and accurately measuring the selected outcomes, as it is quite reflective of student performance on other assignments and in other areas of the courses. Cluster members continue to agree that a score of 3 out of 5 demonstrates competency, and that an established benchmark in which at least 70 percent of students reach this level of competency is a reasonable one. It is notable that overall student performance falls within logical parameters that are neither too high nor too low and remains consistent across terms, with slightly more positive results in the POS1041 classes than in POS1001. The Cluster has been pleased with the information that the data is providing and has been using it to improve teaching, student performance and success in all of the government courses.

The cluster's main goal for the future is continued consistency of administration. Members have long agreed that such consistent administration leads to better and more accurate results and data, and that has proven to be true. There have been no particular problems reporting the data, and information has been and will continue to be adequately communicated to adjuncts. The cluster remains comfortable with the one-term-per-year collegewide reporting across all sections of the classes.

**Data sources:** General Education Embedded Assessment Results, collected and reported in Fall 2014 and Fall 2015 by fulltime faculty and adjuncts; Assessment Instruments as selected by faculty; and General Education Embedded Assessment Spring 2016 Development Day Updates

**Action:** Cluster members agreed to continue their consistency of administration, which is all at once at the end of the term. Cluster members also agreed that no changes to the outcomes, instruments, implementation or benchmarks are needed at this time, as there is consensus that they are already moving forward (and will continue to do so) in a meaningful way.

**OTHER.** None.

**Attendance:**  
**Victor Aikhionbare**  
**Andrew Luma**  
**Shari MacLachlan**

Submitted by:  
Shari L. MacLachlan  
Scribe

c. Minutes Distribution List