The last Program Review for the Department of Political Science was held May 5-7, 1997. The three years that have elapsed since the last program review have not been easy. A lack of resources has made it difficult to retain faculty members. With 17 faculty members we struggle with the competing demands of offering a quality undergraduate program and three graduate level degrees (the Masters in Political Science, the Masters in Public Administration and the Ph.D. in Political Science). Two of our junior faculty, Lilliard Richardson and Jeffrey Berejekian have accepted positions at other universities (Professor Richardson moved to the University of Missouri and Professor Berejekian to the University of Georgia). While we have hired three assistant professors with strong records over the past three years (Professors Donna Van Cott, Janet Kelly, and April Morgan), it is difficult to lose faculty making such a strong contribution to the Department. The Department of Political Science has experienced other losses during this period. Professors Gil Evans and Hyrum Plaas have retired. Professor Otis Stephens moved to the University of Tennessee Law School after he left his position last year as Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Professor Robert Peterson will retire in May 2001. At the time of the last Program Review in 1997 the Department of Political Science had 19 faculty members. In 1988 there were 23 full-time faculty.

The last Program Review was critical, and called for a number of actions that will demonstrate that the Department of Political Science is making progress. The Department’s response to each of the problem areas identified in the program review is outlined below.
Uncivil faculty meetings and a history of contentiousness within the Department of Political Science.

Response: Faculty meetings are for the most part civil and productive. Members of the Department hold strong opinions and disagree on a number of professional concerns. Interpersonal relations are at times strained among certain individuals. This description of the Political Science Department at the University of Tennessee fits a majority of academic departments. Conflict does not render us unable to make decisions in a collegial fashion nor does it adversely affect students.

A Lack of Productivity and Visibility among Faculty Members.

Response: There has been a steady increase in faculty productivity. In the last Program Review we were criticized for a relatively low number of scholarly book and referred publications in highly ranked journals. Both the number and visibility of publications have increased. For example, the articles published during 1999 or accepted for publication during 1999-2000 by members of this Department include the Journal of Politics (Lyons), Social Science Quarterly (Lyons and Scheb), Political Research Quarterly (Zhong), Public Administration Review (Foltz), State and Local Government Review, (Freeland, Lyons and Scheb), American Politics Quarterly (Nownes), Legislative Studies Quarterly (Nownes), Policy Studies Journal (Kelly, Houston), Policy Studies Review (Houston), Public Administration Quarterly (Kelly), the Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory (Houston), Evaluation Review (Houston), and Studies in International Comparative Development (Van Cott). In addition to these articles, during this time period (1999-2000) an additional 15 articles in peer reviewed journals and six chapters in edited books have been accepted for publication. Comparing these numbers to the data presented in the last Program Review shows a significant increase in the number of articles published in the most prestigious journals in political science. For the period 1995 to 1997 8 articles were published in the journals listed above, compared to 15 during the period 1999-2000.
The number of books authored by faculty has also increased. Since the last program review two books of original research have been published (Professor Smith is the author of one and Professor Van Cott author of the other) and one is forthcoming in 2001 (authored by Professor Nownes). Professors Lyons and Scheb have written a book on Tennessee politics that will be published by the University of Tennessee Press in 2001. This book fulfills a significant need in the state, for the last comprehensive book on Tennessee politics was published 15 years ago. Several other faculty members have books under various stages of preparation.

Several faculty members serve as members of editorial boards of professional journals including Professors Cunningham, Freeland, Kelly, Nownes and Zhong. Professor Kelly serves on the National Council of the American Society for Public Administration and Bob Cunningham last year won a service award from the American Society for Public Administration.

Response: The Department of Political Science is currently undergoing review for NAASPA accreditation. The site visit will take place during spring semester, 2001. The M.P.A Program was thoroughly reviewed as part of the NASPAA accreditation process. As part of this evaluation, graduates of the program and practitioners in the field were asked to comment on the quality of the MPA curriculum and the students we graduated. We received generally very positive responses. Where changes were suggested, faculty met and by and large made the improvements suggested. (A copy of the material submitted for NASPAA accreditation is available upon request). There is considerable demand for our MPA graduates, who continue to get good job offers before or immediately after graduation. We are incorporating a focus on non-profit organizations in existing courses to develop a more complete public service administration orientation.

A differential teaching load policy must be developed.
Response: The Department of Political Science has a workload policy. Faculty not producing on average at least one publication a year in a refereed journal or publishing a scholarly book every five years will be given a higher teaching load. There is variance within the Department in the number of courses taught and over the past three years faculty have taught an extra course when their research record temporarily lagged.

The Department must begin a dialog on revision of the undergraduate curriculum.

The faculty of the Political Science Department has worked to keep the undergraduate curriculum reflective of the diverse components of political science. This is sometimes difficult, given the turnover in faculty we have experienced in recent years and shrinking resources. We are currently discussing whether we have sufficient resources to continue the Department’s Undergraduate Honor’s Program. The smaller sized seminars offered in the Honor’s Program have been an attractive option for some of our better students. However, given the demand for political science courses at both the graduate and undergraduate level we are not certain we should continue classes that restrict enrollment. The last Program Review stated that “The courses listed in the catalog mirror those of many political science departments, and thus are lodged firmly in the past” (p. 5). We were not certain how to respond to this statement. We offer courses in the discipline that provide students with a through and comprehensive study of political science.

The Department must revise its graduate program handbook and consider how many fields the Ph.D. Program it can realistically offer.

We have worked continually to improve our graduate curriculum and put in place a system and set of expectations that will produce highly trained and motivated graduate students. There has been a consensus that to make optimal use of a shrinking resource base we need to focus our doctoral curriculum. The Department has made two changes in the Ph.D. Program as a result of this decision to focus. First, we agreed to emphasize public policy training for our students. This is in line with the mission statement of the Department, which emphasizes the
importance of providing training and conducting research on public policy and democratic institutions. We offer a number of policy courses and we have several professors with considerable expertise in the policy area. Second, after considerable debate we agreed that doctoral students will be required to test in two fields instead of three. After a review of the faculty's fields of specialization and their teaching commitments we decided to drop empirical research methods as a testing field. The Department of Political Science will continue to offer basic competency in the methods field; students who desire to acquire the most advanced methods training used in the discipline will be assisted in finding appropriate coursework outside of the Department.

After dropping research methods as a testing field we are left with four testing fields for doctoral students: American Politics and Government, Public Administration, International Relations, and Comparative Government and Politics. For several reasons we decided against a further reduction in the number of fields. First, faculty members in all fields have agreed to work with students individually to insure that students receive high quality training in an area even if the number of seminars offered is limited. This mentoring is especially important in the Comparative and International Relations fields, where the number of seminars is more limited than in the American and Public Administration fields. Second, we feared that merging fields would place students at a disadvantage when entering the job market; recruiters may be uncertain about what particular training they had. Third, top-notch young faculty usually desire to join a department that offers a testing field in their area of specialization. We feared that abolishing a field might adversely affect our ability to recruit new faculty.

The Department of Political Science has worked to increase linkages across departments on campus to more efficiently use departmental resources. Our graduate students are aware of the courses offered by other departments that they may find useful and are allowed to enroll in these seminars.
Using various criteria, we are graduating successful doctoral students. Over the last three years our students have received tenure-track positions at Kennesaw State University, Abraham Baldwin University, High Point University, Central Missouri State University, Georgia Southern University, and the University of New Hampshire. Two students joined the faculty at universities in Korea. Three people graduating since 1996 have accepted administrative or policy analysis positions. Two of our recent graduates have visiting assistant professor positions at Bowling Green State University and Southern Methodist University. While we encourage faculty to write articles with graduate students it is particularly impressive for a graduate student to publish without a faculty member as a co-author. Several individuals have published at least one article in a peer-reviewed journal while still in graduate school. Within the past three years two graduates have had their dissertations accepted for publication as a book.

The faculty has worked to improve relations with graduate students. We have a space designated for informal interaction among graduate students. Graduate students serve as members of the Department’s Graduate Studies Committee. No change in the Department’s Graduate Program is made without discussion in this committee. Finding a place where students and faculty can talk has been a continuing problem since graduate students do not have offices in the same building as faculty. Most of the faculty work closely with graduate students; assisting them with their projects or co-authoring articles. In the spring semester, 2001 the Department of Political Science will offer a new one credit course titled “How to Publish in Political Science.” Directed by Professor Van Cott, the course is designed to instruct students how to produce a high quality research project, write it in a manner suitable for publication, choose an appropriate journal, respond to criticism and other issues academics encounter when attempting to publish in peer reviewed journals.

**Conclusion:** The last Program Review identified several problems that needed to be addressed by the Department of Political Science. During the past three years the Department has initiated a process to rectify these concerns. The graduate curriculum has become more focused.
There is greater productivity and professional visibility among both faculty and graduate students. The Department is seeking NASPAA accreditation for its M.P.A Program. In addition to changes we have made in response to the last Program Review we want to emphasize that we continue to do a number of things very well. Teaching evaluations for the Department remains very high and several faculty have been leaders on campus bringing web-based technology into the classroom.

The public exhibits considerable interest in government and politics and professors in the Department of Political Science are active in outreach. Most faculty members give talks in the community and several have served as political commentators or have used their research skills to assist local non-profit agencies or local government.

Change is not easy, particularly during a time of scarce resources. Nevertheless, the Department of Political Science can demonstrate respectable levels of high quality scholarship, teaching, and service.