

Political Science Session Notes

**Disciplinary Sector Leaders**

Community Colleges:

State Universities: Ben Taylor, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts

UMass: Susan Gallagher, University of Massachusetts Lowell

**Faculty Attendees**

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Though faculty leaders were present, this group initially had a hard time responding to questions. In an effort to promote discussion by having faculty introduce themselves, the conversation began by going round the room asking what courses were taught by those present. Eventually, with the help of Paul Weizer, the group reviewed the courses listed on the handouts and discussed how those would/not work upon transfer. After much discussion the following are the courses that were agreed upon to transfer into the political science major at the four years:

- American National Government;
- State & Local Government;
- Comparative Government; and
- International Relations

There was concern from Stephen Slaner, faculty representative from Northern Essex that Political Theory I, a course he teaches would not be accepted by the majority of the four years. The reason why this course was viewed as being non-transferable is content could differ drastically and/or there is not an equivalent course offered at the majority of the four years. Stephen seemed to think that if this particular course wasn't part of the foundational courses agreed upon, that somehow the State (DHE) would step in and the course would no longer be offered. Many present assured him that would not occur. Some cc reps. indicated that additional political science courses could not be offered on some of their campuses as in some instances those present were the only faculty teaching political science.

The group also discussed the importance of those looking to transfer having solid writing skills and expressed hope that these would be honed thru completing English Comp. & Lit. I & II along with an appropriate mathematics course(s) to promote logical reasoning.

Faculty also observed that Massachusetts is radically different from other states because students at public campuses have no shared access to centralized library systems and, consequently, experience highly unequal access to academic resources. This anomalous and inequitable system makes it extremely difficult to ensure that students at different institutions can acquire comparable research skills or reach comparable levels of information literacy.

There was interest expressed by several that the DHE create a site where faculty could share comments as the project moves forward.