Academic Affairs

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)

1. To provide students with a highly personalized education enhanced by opportunities for experiential learning.

Independent enrollments provide students with a highly personalized education. On average from Fall 2011 through Spring 2013 20% (506) of the 2524 HSS majors participated in an Independent Enrollment Course i.e., Internship, Academic Apprenticeship, Tutorial, Fieldwork, or Bachelor’s Essay. In AY13-14 18% (436) of the 2451 HSS majors received individualized instruction. Over the last four years HSS independent enrollments have fluctuated between 436 and 555 students (18% to 23%). Providing opportunities to work one-on-one with faculty is costly. Increasing these opportunities requires additional faculty lines and incentives for current faculty to engage in these experiences above and beyond their standard workload.

2. To develop global awareness.

On average from Fall 2011 through Spring 2013 9% (228) of the 2524 HSS majors studied abroad. Of the total students studying abroad (1426) on average 32% were HSS majors. In AY 13-14 9.9% (242) of the 2451 HSS majors studied abroad. This represents 31% of the students studying abroad this year. Over the last 5 years HSS participation in study abroad has increased from AY9-10: 199, AY10-11: 225, AY11-12: 221, AY12-13 235 to AY13-14: 242. For the most part the percentage of HSS students studying abroad has held steady between 9 and 10%. I believe this reflects both a desire to increase global awareness as well as a recovering economy. This is only one measure of developing global awareness. Additional measures would need to address specific course content which is only reasonably accomplished at the program level. While HSS has been able to provide some financial support to students, these were not recurring funds. Without additional scholarships there is little hope of increasing participation in the study abroad programs.

3. To help students acquire depth of knowledge and competence in at least one academic discipline.

In general, any assessment at the program level of competencies in the major demonstrated that HSS majors are performing above average when tested on key concepts in the discipline. For details see individual program reports.

4. To train students in the method of scholarly inquiry and research.

On average from Fall 2011 through Spring 2013 88% (2224) of the 2524 HSS majors were being trained in the methods of scholarly inquiry and research appropriate to their discipline. In AY13-14 98% (2408) of the 2451 HSS majors were enrolled in research methods courses. These HSS majors were enrolled in methods courses, student research apprenticeships, or bachelor’s essays. Given all of these courses are at the upper level and required of the individual majors, it is safe to say that 100% of HSS majors upon graduation have had research training. This shift from 88% to 98% reflects changes in major requirements. Given 100% of HSS majors at some point receive methods training appropriate to their discipline, HSS would like to increase the quality not quantity of these offerings. Research methods training is not only limited by faculty availability but, also by access to state of the art lab and computer facilities. Current physical resources are inadequate to provide our students with methods training to enter the workforce or continue their education in graduate school.
Communication - MA

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)
Based in the recommendation of the External reviewers in 2011/2012 and with full support of the Graduate Faculty and Graduate Students, the primary teaching location for the program was moved back to the main campus from the North Charleston facility. This has proven to be an excellent decision. Other reviewer and faculty recommendations included several course content modifications and one new course all with the intent to update and upgrade the rigor of the program. These new and improved pedagogical strategies and techniques (particularly in COMM 500, 502 and 510) have been successful and are under continuing review as a component of the assessment program.

Communication - BA/Minor

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)
Based on our assessment for 2011/2012 and 2012/2013, the Communication Department has been pleased with our assessment efforts and the results. We are doing a good job of meeting the learning outcomes for the courses we have assessed, but we also found that our ability to effectively assess data is very much dependent on our ability to evaluate the data at the end of the spring semester. For the courses in which we used common test questions or data from evaluation forms, we were able to easily and efficiently compile the data and draw conclusions about what, if any, changes need to be made in courses. For the courses in which we assessed papers or presentations, the length of time involved in the analysis was very time and energy intensive which made it impossible to complete the analysis at the end of the spring semester. For this reason the department has decided to shift our data collection from the academic year to the calendar year to allow the spring semester for analysis of the data collected.

The assessment plan that was submitted for academic year 2013/14 focused on two COMM courses - COMM 281-Introduction to Communication Messages and COMM 315-Ethical Communication. We planned to collect data during the fall 2013 and spring 2014 semesters and then submit our report at the end of spring 2014 (or early summer 2014). The department would not have been able to review the assessment findings until fall 2014 at which point it would be too late to make any changes/adjustments that might be suggested by the data. When the department decided to shift from the academic year to the calendar year for assessment, we made the decision to extend the data collection for COMM 281 and COMM 315 to the fall 2014 semester since we had not begun data collection for the next set of courses. As a result, we have collected data from the fall 2013 semester, spring 2014 and will also collect it for the fall 2014 semester and next year's assessment report will then be based on three semesters worth of data.

For this reason, the assessment plan that was submitted for 2013/14 will not be completed this year, but will be rolled to the 2014/15 assessment cycle and will be completed and submitted in May 2015. A very preliminary review of data collected from the fall 2013 semester suggests that students are able to effectively adapt a message to a specific audience, thus meeting the learning outcome for COMM 281. In addition, based on a very cursory review of student presentations, we believe that students are effectively able to adapt a message to a particular audience and present their work to the audience effectively.
Creative Writing - Minor

Program Improvement Summary

**Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)**

The minor in creative writing helps fulfill the College of Charleston's mission of liberal education by providing a sequence of writing-intensive courses that develops students' creative literacy. Students are introduced to diverse literary traditions, and through the workshop environment, students are given the opportunity to see their own creative engagements as part of a living tradition. The genre-based courses in the minor allow students to explore the craft of the literary arts through the production of quality writing, analyzing published works, critiquing peers' drafts, and revising.

In Fall 2013 an assessment plan was developed for the minor in Creative Writing. Data collection and full assessment of the Creative Writing Minor is scheduled to begin in Fall 2014.

This assessment plan is designed to allow students to demonstrate a working vocabulary for critical analysis relevant to creative genres (poetry and fiction), to write critiques of peer work that are objective in language and craft-centered, to demonstrate familiarity with contemporary examples of genres studied, to apply generic conventions and craft techniques in own work and demonstrate the ability to take a single work of fiction or a body of poetry through an extended revision process. The final portfolio of revised creative work from the Advanced Fiction or Advanced Poetry course, accompanied by a reflective essay on craft techniques and revision strategies will serve best as the signature assignment for assessment of the minor. A rubric with standards of "exceeds expectations," "meets expectations," and "does not meet expectations" is used to measure the learning outcomes. It is estimated that 70% of students meet expectations.

While formal assessment will commence Fall 2014, the annual report for the Department of English shows that students in creative writing classes and ENGL 395: Literary Magazine Production and Publishing come to understand what it means to write fiction and poetry for publication, and many of those students publish in the award-winning undergraduate magazine Miscellany and the creative writing concentration has been highly successful in placing students in nationally recognized MFA programs.

English - BA/Minor

Program Improvement Summary

**Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)**

As we have not yet accumulated all the data from 201, 202, and 207 testing, we have not been able to compare the results from all 3 required survey courses. From our first rounds of assessment of 299, the results confirm that the course is successfully meeting the first goal articulated for that course; therefore no changes to the course have been instituted as yet. Assessment of additional goals for 299 will begin in Spring 2015.

English - MA

Program Improvement Summary

**Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)**

The current curriculum of the M.A. in English program has a strong “middle” – a course sequence requiring national and historical distribution with a significant number of elective courses – as well as a challenging “end” – a comprehensive exam and a required seminar course. It does not yet have a “beginning” that might be geared toward the development of those research and writing skills that we now find to be deficient among our students. The Graduate Committee has thus opened discussion about such a course and will take initial steps toward designing it this summer. In the upcoming academic year we will complete the design of this course and then proceed to guide it through the approval process.
History - BA/Minor

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)
Assessment results show clearly that students leave our program having mastered the most important skills of a historian, including a clear understanding of the distinction between primary and secondary sources, an understanding of historical context, and a clear grasp of causation.

None of these measures, however, seems very useful in improving our program. The measures are too elementary—none of them are designed to reveal how advanced a student's understanding of history is. And the measures shed very little light on our ability to deliver (although a shift this year to comparative assessment of students' entire portfolios rather than just their 400-level research papers helps some in revealing how much we have taught as opposed to what students simply know). Our assessment plan does not assess in any way our ability to deliver. It does not shed light on whether students are able to get the classes they need or if we teach consistently or if students are capable of the advanced analysis of sources at the heart of the historian's craft.

To be effective in providing guidance to improve our program, it is our view that the department's assessment process requires a thorough overhaul.

History - MA

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)
The ways in which the M.A. in History Program can continue to improve:

In Research and Communication -- The History Department’s graduate committee will continue to monitor syllabi for HIST 691: Historiography, a required course for all new MA students, in order to ensure that both research and writing are adequately covered. In addition, we will continue to encourage MA program faculty to reinforce these learning objectives in our HIST 700 seminar courses and HIST 801/802 courses, so that students can continue to demonstrate these skills and knowledge effectively in their capstone research projects. We will also consider making each student complete a research seminar (currently, only students taking Comprehensive Exams are required to take a seminar).

In Historical, Cultural, and Intellectual Perspectives -- The History Department’s graduate committee will continue to monitor the syllabi of MA program faculty to ensure that the content of human history is covered adequately in the History MA program’s 500- and 600-level courses. These courses tend to focus primarily on historiography (the scholarship of history), rather than actual historical developments, so we plan to continue enhancing our coverage of the historical narrative in these courses in order to maintain acceptable student performance in this learning outcome.

In Advanced Knowledge of Skills in Major Area of Study -- The History Department’s graduate committee will continue to monitor the syllabi of MA program faculty teaching HIST 691: Historiography, a required course for all new MA students, in order to ensure that the skills and knowledge in the discipline are adequately introduced.

In addition, the graduate committee will continue to monitor the syllabi of MA program faculty teaching our 500-, 600-, and 700-level courses in order to ensure that these learning outcomes are consistently reinforced in our curriculum, so that students can continue to demonstrate these skills and knowledge effectively in their capstone research projects.
Philosophy - BA/Minor

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)

We currently assess three learning outcomes. Specifically, we ask our students to demonstrate:

1. familiarity with the history of philosophy (both ancient and early modern),
2. the ability to use the formal tools of propositional and predicate logic to critically assess arguments, and
3. the ability to compose clear, cogent, and well-crafted research papers.

This year, students demonstrated good understanding of the history of philosophy and good writing skills, but did not meet our target performance in critical reasoning (logic). Our assessment has led us to add "supplemental instruction" for our logic courses and will (next year) spur a discussion of how we can use our 300-level courses to better prepare students to write strong seminar papers.

Click for complete assessment report

Political Science - BA/Minor

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)

At the end of our last assessment cycle (2012-13) we adopted a new program mission statement and at the end of this cycle (2013-2014) we have adopted new program learning outcomes, moving from 8 program learning outcomes to three (see assessment report). In the next cycle (2014-15) we plan to complete a new curriculum map to align with our new learning outcomes. In addition we will rework the rubric we use to assess the capstone papers, in order to reflect the new program learning outcomes. We have also decided to switch from an academic year cycle of assessment to a calendar year cycle. The academic year cycle gave little time for discussion of findings at the end of the year. In order for assessment to lead to productive and evidence based changes we need a system that provides ample time during the academic year to discuss findings and to consider next steps.

Geography - Minor

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)

The Geography Minor Improvement Summary and Impact Statement

The Geography Minor has 5 student learning outcomes. Two of these SLOs were assessed in the 2013 – 2014 assessment cycle. The evidence collected for the assessment is noted below each outcome, followed by the ways in which the results will be used for continual improvement.

1. Students will be able to identify areas for future academic and professional growth that utilizes their geographical skills.
   1. Exit interviews were conducted with each Geography minor that graduated during the cycle (n=4).
   2. The assessment results showed that students were not meeting this SLO.
   3. The Geography Committee felt that the assessment method was flawed. The Committee decided to maintain the SLO, revise the assessment tool, and re-assess this objective in the 2014 – 2015 cycle.

1. Students will be able to explain what sets geography apart from other academic disciplines.
   1. Exit interviews were conducted with each Geography minor that graduated during the cycle (n=4).
   2. The students met this objective. The Geography Committee felt that change is not needed related to this objective. However, in the future the Geography Committee will consider assessing the ability of students to define the discipline at a higher level than was the case in this round of assessment (i.e., in a more nuanced way exhibiting greater depth).
Public Administration - MPA

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)

We assess 5 Program-specific SLOs that are required by our national accrediting body, the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration. These are:

1. Ability to lead and manage in public governance
2. Ability to participate in and contribute to the public policy process
3. Ability to analyze, synthesize, think critically, solve problems, make decisions
4. Ability to articulate and apply a public service perspective
5. Ability to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry

In addition, we assess our concentrations, which include arts management, nonprofit management, local government and urban planning, and environmental policy.

This year, we assessed SLO 4, Ability to articulate and apply a public service perspective. We had 4 program goals that align with this SLO. They are:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of personal and administrative responsibility, accountability and efficiency within the context of government and nonprofit public service programs.
2. Identify organizational arrangements, leadership strategies, and managerial tools that address public challenges effectively.
3. Identify specific strategies and methods to enhance equity and representativeness in the workforce (we did not assess this goal)
4. Define administrative ethics and distinguish among models and theories of ethical decision making.

We also assessed program goals in nonprofit management, as follows:

1. Understand and apply nonprofit requirements, structures, and approaches
2. Demonstrate understanding of the purposes, operation, and impact of the US nonprofit sector
3. Identify and articulate strategies for meeting nonprofit resource requirements (this goal with be assessed at the end of the summer 2014).
4. Demonstrate ability to strengthen the capacity of an individual nonprofit through activities such as strategic planning, performance measurement, and program evaluation.

From our assessments, we learned:

- We need to choose a better course to assess students' understanding of administrative efficiency. Using the foundational course that incoming students take is probably not the best place since new students are not likely to have developed a full understanding of the multiple dimensions of efficiency.
- A few students are applying a personal ideological viewpoint of social services to describe administrative responsibilities -- i.e. if they object to a social program they have trouble applying administrative governance principals to administrative behavior.
- In general students' final capstone projects demonstrate their capacity to strengthen nonprofit and public organizations through strategic planning, performance measurement, and program evaluation.
Urban and Regional Planning - Certificate

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)
The Urban and Regional Planning Graduate Certificate Improvement Summary and Impact Statement

The Urban and Regional Planning Certificate has 4 student learning outcomes. Two of these SLOs were assessed in the 2013 – 2014 assessment cycle. The evidence collected for the assessment is noted below each outcome, followed by the ways in which the results will be used for continual improvement.

1. Explain the history and theories that underpin the profession of planning in the U.S.
   1. Group assignments in PUBA 612 for Fall 2013 were collected.
   2. The assessment results showed that students did not meet this objective.
   3. The director of the program will review assignments to ensure alignment with SLOs.
   4. The director of the program will engage conversations around appropriateness of SLOs.

1. Identify areas where the student might direct additional professional development efforts.
   1. Exit interviews were conducted with 3 of the 4 students receiving the certificate in 2014.
   2. The students met this objective. However, the program may seek more specific outcomes from students by crafting a more specific assessment tool.

Psychology - BA/Minor

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)
Psychology BA Program Assessment Summary 2013-2014

In a continuing effort to assess mastery of content in foundational courses, three courses, Sensation and Perception, Social Psychology, and Behavioral Neuroscience were assessed at the beginning and end of the semester with objective tests created by instructors of each course. Statistically significant improvement was observed for students in each course. Test Item analyses are provided to instructors in order to identify particular content areas needing increased coverage.

Attempts to teach mastery of basic research methods in psychology begins in the Introductory Psychology course with, among other things, a required research experience assignment that can be accomplished by participating in research and/or reading journal articles. Questionnaires soliciting feedback about this assignment were administered to all students in this class. Although students do report learning and make positive evaluations about both types of assignments, reported differences in the kind of information learned and the relative proportions of favorable/unfavorable comments as a function of assignment type will inform any changes made to this assignment in the future.

Psychology - BS

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)
Psychology BS Program Assessment Summary 2013-2014

In a continuing effort to assess mastery of content in foundational courses, three courses, Sensation and Perception, Social Psychology, and Behavioral Neuroscience were assessed at the beginning and end of the semester with objective tests created by instructors of each course. Statistically significant improvement was observed for students in each course. Test Item analyses are provided to instructors in order to identify particular content areas needing increased coverage.

Attempts to teach mastery of basic research methods in psychology begins in the Introductory Psychology course with, among other things, a required research experience assignment that can be accomplished by participating in research and/or reading journal articles. Questionnaires
soliciting feedback about this assignment were administered to all students in this class. Although students do report learning and make positive evaluations about both types of assignments, reported differences in the kind of information learned and the relative proportions of favorable/unfavorable comments as a function of assignment type will inform any changes made to this assignment in the future.

In another attempt to assess learning about research methods, a brief questionnaire about student reactions to the first Psychology Research Presentation Day involving Bachelor’s Essay and Independent Study Student research projects revealed that students attending the event judged it to be extremely useful. Their suggestions for improvement will be considered for incorporation into future events.

A new and more extensive rubric was designed in order to assess the important abstract section of empirical report writing in the Advanced Laboratory courses. This assessment revealed that students were performing above expectations with regard to content, format, and expression. Efforts to improve writing in the style (APA) of the discipline will be continued by revising and extending the rubric to cover other sections of the empirical report and applied to these Advanced Lab (and other) courses.

Public Health - BA

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)

The primary mission of the interdisciplinary public health program is the academic preparation of students interested in all aspects of public health. This program prepares students for a wide variety of post-graduation options, including but not limited to employment opportunities in health agencies, allied health fields, health administration, or pursuit of a graduate degree.

The public health program is an interdisciplinary program which brings together multiple departments across the schools of EHHP and HSS. Every public health major is required to complete coursework in public health, communication and biology as well as selecting from a wide variety of options including political science, environmental science, philosophy, psychology, sociology, anthropology, urban studies, and history. This program offers the students an opportunity to create a personalized education experience through a unique combination of coursework, as well as, internship experiences within the public health community.

While the BA in Public Health currently has 86 majors, it is a new major. All students are expected to integrate, synthesize and apply knowledge through cumulative and experiential activities and therefore public health majors are required to complete approved independent studies or internships. Generally these internships and independent studies are not completed until the senior year. With only 10 students graduating with a BA in public health, the enrollments in internships were lower than expected when this goal was chosen for assessment. In addition, three students opted to complete their internships in the summer and have therefore not yet been assessed. As students continue to progress through the major, there should be many more students completing internships.

The BA program in Public Health is currently developing its own internship program and procedures, separate from the BS program. The data collected from the summer interns, in combination with the couple of internships from the spring, will be used to develop the BA internship program. For additional information about the program, please see a copy of the annual report attached.

Religious Studies - BA/Minor

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)

In 2013-14 we devoted our assessment efforts to the improvement of our students’ writing skills. In August 2013 the department held a one-day faculty development workshop on student writing, led by Amy Mecklenburg-Faenger and Chris Warnick from the English department, and sponsored by the First
Year Experience. Before the workshop, RELS faculty members read chapters from John Bean’s Engaging Ideas: The Professor’s Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom, which has been described as the “faculty development bible.” The workshop focused on designing and sequencing writing assignments and how to provide constructive feedback for students. The workshop was very helpful and faculty followed many of the guidelines for designing effective assignments in their courses for the fall and spring semesters. Katie Hladky was especially thoughtful about articulating our RELS learning goals in the writing assignments for her classes, and it is not surprising that students performed so well on the essay they wrote for her RELS 101 “Religion and Sex” course. Students were asked to write a 1000-1500 word formal essay on the prompt: Why do Christians disagree about homosexuality? and students were given a four-page guideline for how to construct a persuasive essay on the topic, complete with a detailed rubric for how the essay would be assessed. Prof. Hladky gathered ten randomly selected essays in December and those essays were assessed by three faculty members in February 2014, using the RELS rubric. Our stated goal (on the Assessment Plan) was to have 75% of the students demonstrate the Benchmark and 50% of students demonstrate Competence on these essays with regard to their use of evidence, their thesis and argument, and their awareness of context. The results demonstrate that the essays exceeded these targets, since 90-100% of the essays achieved the Benchmark and 53-77% achieved Competence. What this assessment exercise demonstrated is that we can expect students in our 100-level courses to write thesis-driven arguments in their essays, as long as faculty members design their writing assignments sequentially by building a “scaffold” of assignments that develop students’ abilities to write about controversies (in this case, about sexuality and religion) in critical fashion.

In spring 2014 Zeff Bjerken taught the new "Capstone Colloquium" (RELS 451) for the first time to graduating seniors. One goal of this course was for RELS majors to evaluate and assess the RELS curriculum in terms of its structure, requirements, and purported goals. Towards the end of the semester all graduating majors participated in an extensive 1-1.5 hour exit interview with the Chair. The exit interview provided extensive feedback on our curriculum and its structure; one area where we can improve is that our students are still not aware of the three RELS student learning outcomes. In the future we need to make these SLO more explicit on our syllabi, especially in our advanced 300-450 level seminar classes.

Anthropology - BS/Minor

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)

The mean for questions correctly answered across all items was 73.14%, which is an improvement over last year’s result of 69.23%, and which exceeds our target of 70%. The breakdown by concept area comparing items answered correctly for FY2013 compared to FY2014 is as follows: for this year and last is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept Area</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culture and cultural relativism</td>
<td>70.6</td>
<td>79.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture and biological diversity</td>
<td>69.3</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social organization</td>
<td>60.6</td>
<td>80.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural and biological evolution</td>
<td>84.1</td>
<td>78.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language and communication</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>79.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This shows both improvement in four of the five conceptual areas and more consistency across concept areas in correct responses. The latter can also be seen in the marked narrowing of variability for correct answers. Last year’s responses ranged from 42% correct answers (item 6) to 95% (item 5) – this year they ranged from 74% (item 4) to 84% (item 15). While the sample of students assessed in ANTH 101 sections this year (171) is smaller than last year’s (422), it is still sufficiently large to suggest the improvements are real and not merely due to chance.

This year a section of ANTH 491 research methods, a required course for Anthropology majors predominantly taken by upper-level students, was also assessed. Results, including a response mean across all items of 83.49%, are encouraging, as they suggest both retention and improvement of understanding of key anthropological concepts among majors over time. This will serve as an important component in subsequent assessment analyses.

In conclusion, rather than a prescription for program improvement we see evidence to support continuing the same level of quality instruction, keeping an eye on the results of subsequent assessments to guide our development.
Sociology - BS/Minor

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)
All students (~325 students) enrolled in the 9 sections of SOCY 101 in fall 2013 were asked to answer the following essay question (faculty in individual course sections were allowed to make minor modifications to the question):

Sociologists often use the sociological imagination to provide an interpretation of human social behavior. For this question, please 1) describe/explain what is the sociological imagination? And, 2) use the details from [refer to an assigned article, text or case study] to illustrate how the sociological imagination can be used to explain human behavior.

A sample of 3 students' work (the work of the first, last and middle student on the class roster will be sampled, using the same signature assignments sampled for the College's General Education Assessment for the Social Sciences) from a random sample of 7 of the 9 sections of SOCY 101 being taught in fall 2013 provide the data for this assessment. Thus, there were 21 students in this sample.

The Sociology assessment sub-committee used a rubric to assess students' competency in demonstrating an understanding of the sociological imagination as well as their ability to apply/illustrate the sociological imagination. The rubric below was used for the assessment:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does Not Meet Expectation</th>
<th>Approaches Expectations</th>
<th>Meets Expectations</th>
<th>Exceeds Expectations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describes the Sociological description Imagination</td>
<td>Inaccurate or absence of Satisfactory understanding, but lacked detail, specificity and accuracy</td>
<td>Accurate, complete description provided</td>
<td>Clear, coherent, sophisticated, multi-faceted description that demonstrates insight and/or mastery of material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Incorrect or no Sociological application Imagination</td>
<td>Inconsistently applies sociological imagination</td>
<td>Some accurate application of the sociological imagination but little depth of analysis</td>
<td>Thorough application, subtlety of thought and clearly articulated vision of the sociological imagination; demonstrates the &quot;quality of mind&quot; involved in thinking sociologically</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We predicted that 70% of the students would "Meet" or "Exceed" expectations. Of the 21 students whose work from SOCY101 was assessed the following results were realized:

- 24% (n = 5) were approaching or did not meet expectations.
- 76% (n = 16) met or exceeded expectations.
Urban Studies - BA/Minor

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)
The Urban Studies Program Improvement Summary and Impact Statement

The Urban Studies Program has 6 student learning outcomes. Each of these student learning outcomes is mapped to a core class that the students have to take. The evidence collected to assess each student learning outcome in the fall 2013 to spring 2014 assessment cycle is noted below each outcome, followed by the ways in which the results will be used for continual improvement.

Academic / Critical Thinking Assessable Outcomes:

1. *Identify* the major theoretical traditions and approaches to scholarship and practice in Urban Studies (URST 101).
   1. A question was included on the final examination of two sections of URST 101 offered in the fall of 2013. The data from these examinations revealed that the students have met this objective.
   2. Further clarification is needed from the Executive Committee of the Urban Studies Program regarding the difference between “theoretical tradition” and “approaches to scholarship.” These phrases seemed somewhat broad, thereby possibly inflating the passage rate.

1. *Explain* the urban economic formations, structures, and processes that shape cities and *contrast* the operation of these processes within different contexts (ECON 307).
   1. The instructor for ECON 307 provided the examinations for 3 of the 5 Urban Studies students in the class. The exam results indicate that students are meeting the first part of this student learning outcome, but not the second (i.e., they are unable to contrast the operation of these processes within different contexts).
   2. The Director of the Urban Studies Program will need to meet with the instructor of ECON 307 and possibly the chair of the Economics Department to make sure all exams are delivered. The structure of the assignment will also need to be discussed to ensure that the entire student learning outcome can be assessed, or the Executive Committee will have to revise the outcome.

1. *Explain* urban social formations, structures, and processes that exist within cities (SOCY 351).
   1. The instructor of the course assessed a final research project for all students in the class.
   2. The students were successful, so no action is recommended on this student learning outcome. The Executive Committee of the Urban Studies Program will consider an assessment program next year that does not involve the instructor in the assessment of content from her own course.

1. *Outline and Critique* western urban development (HIST 211 and POLI 305).
   1. The instructor of the course assessed a final research paper for all Urban Studies majors in the course.
   2. The students were successful, so no action is recommended on this student learning outcome. The Executive Committee of the Urban Studies Program will consider an assessment program next year that does not involve the instructor in the assessment of content from his own course.
Practice / Professional Assessable Outcomes:

1. Design and conduct a research project relevant to Urban Studies (currently mapped to DSCI 232, POLI 205; PSYC 211; and SOCY 272).
   
   1. Student artifacts were collected from two sections of POLI 205 and one section of SOCY 272.
   2. The findings from this assessment illustrated that the Executive Committee needs to reconsider either which classes will count towards this student learning outcome or the outcome itself. Currently, the assignments for the POLI course make sense as assessment artifacts, but the examinations for the other courses do not (as those other courses are mostly statistics courses and do not help determine if students can design and conduct a research project).

1. Compile a summary, professional portfolio that reflects market demand and enhances competitiveness for employment (URST 400).
   
   1. Two students completed the practicum and created portfolios in the Fall 2013-Spring 2014 cycle. Both of these students successfully met this objective.
   2. In the future, members of the Urban Studies Advisory Board (who are all practicing professionals) will be asked to review student portfolios and provide commentary on the professionalism of student portfolios.

Women's and Gender Studies - BA/Minor

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)

The process that WGST has pursued for this year reflects satisfaction of our assessment expectations. We have systemized this process by making the decision to assess courses and data for two consecutive years. This year, we honed our program learning outcomes, updated our curriculum map, revised our assessment process and cycle, and created a signature assignment for our foundation course (WGST 200, Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies). We continue to discuss revision of our program mission statement pending more assessment findings. For the next stage, we will continue this process and remain vigilant about any necessary adjustments based on evidence provided by our data collection.

Click for complete assessment report
Academic Affairs Program(s) Assessment Report
Program: Philosophy - BA/Minor

Academic Affairs
School of Humanities and Social Sciences
Philosophy
Philosophy - BA/Minor

Program Name: Philosophy
Program Type: Undergraduate Degree
Start: 7/1/2013
End: 6/30/2014
Program Assessment Coordinator: Department Chair (Grantham, Todd)
Administrative Unit Director receiving assessment updates: Dean (Hale, Jerry)
Program follows specialized accreditation standards: 
Name of accrediting organization: 
Date of last program review for the accrediting organization: 
Date of next program review: 

Program/Department Mission Statement
Philosophy has always been central to the liberal arts tradition. By examining the major intellectual movements of the past and present, philosophy helps students understand our shared intellectual heritage and thoughtfully examine their own fundamental beliefs and values. Philosophy teaches crucial intellectual skills, including the ability to read carefully, write effectively, and argue logically and imaginatively. Our primary mission is to help students develop these skills and to cultivate an understanding of the nature and value of philosophical inquiry. We accomplish this mission by delivering a curriculum that addresses the needs and interests of our majors, interdisciplinary programs, and the general education program.

The philosophy faculty strive to excel in teaching, service, and research. We believe that only faculty who are committed to ongoing research will remain effective teachers. In order to keep our teaching fresh and to model the engaged, lifelong learning which defines a liberal education, our faculty undertake significant and ongoing research projects. In addition, we value intellectual community and strive to create a vibrant sense of community within the department, with our students, and with the campus community.

Unit or School Mission
In the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, we are teacher-scholars committed to the study of human nature and human creations. We seek to deepen our understanding of history and literature, inquire into the character of cultures and societies and, lastly, support the value of ethical and moral reflection. Our HSS teacher-scholars cultivate in students the skills of creative problem-solving, critical thinking, and writing to discover. We also engage these students in activities that prepare them for productive civic engagement, understanding of different global perspectives and learning as a lifelong pursuit.

Comments and Attachments
In addition to the formal (outcomes-based) assessment, we also monitor student rates of acceptance in professional and graduate schools.

• [PHIL Feedback]

Related Items
There are no related items.

1: Knowledge of key figures and issues

Program Goal or SLO
Knowledge. Demonstrate knowledge of key figures and/or issues from Ancient & Modern philosophy;
articulate concepts and theories from the time period; assess arguments for and against those theories; apply theories in novel contexts.

**Assessment Method / Performance Expected**
We will collect final exam grades (for declared majors) in both PHIL 201 and 202. In each course, we would like 90% to demonstrate adequate knowledge (passing) and 60% to demonstrate good command of the material (B- or better).

**Assessment Results**
Students demonstrated adequate knowledge of the history of philosophy. Thirty three majors completed final exams in target courses this year (18 in PHIL 201, 15 in PHIL 202). Of these 100% passed and 22 (67%) were rated good or better (B- or higher). Two additional majors were enrolled in these courses but did not submit final exams; they are excluded from this analysis.

**Use of Results**
We continue to collect data to monitor the percentage of students who take an ethics course during the major. If we find that many students complete the degree without exposure to ethics, we will discuss revising the requirements for the major.

**Budget Changes**
None

**Comments and Attachments**
In addition, we continue to collect data to monitor the percentage of students who take an ethics course during the major. If we find that many students complete the degree without exposure to ethics, we will discuss revising the requirements for the major.

---

**2: Writing**

**Program Goal or SLO**
**Writing.** Students compose clear, cogent, and well-crafted essays, including a substantial (8-10 page) research paper. Student concisely states a philosophical thesis and provides a substantive and cogent assessment of the claim in light of alternative positions; student identifies relevant contributions in the secondary literature and incorporates them into the argument of the essay.

**Assessment Method / Performance Expected**
Assess all final papers submitted in PHIL 450 (senior seminar) using the attached rubric. In addition, we will assess papers written by PHIL majors who take PPLW 400 (rather than PHIL 450). Rubric will be completed by the instructor. We expect 70% of our students to rate “good” or better on this instrument.

**Assessment Results**
Our students demonstrate good writing skills. Twelve PHIL majors submitted seminar papers this year (3 during the Fall, 9 during the Spring semester). Two additional students were enrolled, but did not submit final papers. Ten of these papers (83%) scored “good” or better on our rubric and the median score was “very good.” One of the two papers rated lower than “good” missed our target score by a very slim margin -- receiving 47.5 points (rather than our target of 48 points). If we round that score up to 48, then 92% of the students would have scored “good or better.”

**Use of Results**
Instructors who have taught the seminar seminar will meet with the chair and with some instructors teaching advanced (300-level) courses to talk about possible strategies we might use in 300-level courses to help insure that students are adequately prepared to write strong seminar papers.

**Budget Changes**
None.

**Comments and Attachments**
- Senior Seminar Rubric
3: Critical Reasoning

Program Goal or SLO

Critical Reasoning. Students (a) reconstruct arguments presented in natural English, identify unstated premises and/or conclusions, and defend this reconstruction relative to other possible reconstructions, (b) use the tools of propositional and predicate logic to formalize and assess the (in)validity of arguments, and (c) use the method of counterexamples to demonstrate the invalidity of an argument form.

Assessment Method / Performance Expected

We will collect final exam scores for all declared majors enrolled in PHIL 120. In each course, we would like 90% to demonstrate adequate knowledge (passing) and 60% to demonstrate good command of the material (B or better).

Assessment Results

This year, 15 majors took final exams in PHIL 120. Of those, 11 (73%) passed and 8 (53%) received a grade of B- or higher. These results are below our targets. Given the relatively small sample size, it is normal to see some fluctuation above and below our targets from year to year. Furthermore, students must pass this course to complete the major, so our system does insure that graduates successfully demonstrate competence in critical reasoning.

Use of Results

PHIL 120 is a challenging course for many students and some of our instructors are still adjusting our new logic curriculum. To help our students (both majors and non-majors) succeed in this course, we began offering supplemental instruction in PHIL 120 during the Spring 2014 semester. This model has the potential to improve student performance in our logic course.

Budget Changes

The Center for Student Learning is providing budgetary and institutional support, including salary and training for SI leaders.

Comments and Attachments

Related Items

1: Enhance the undergraduate academic core.

Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)

We currently assess three learning outcomes. Specifically, we ask our students to demonstrate:

1. familiarity with the history of philosophy (both ancient and early modern),
2. the ability to use the formal tools of propositional and predicate logic to critically assess arguments, and
3. the ability to compose clear, cogent, and well-crafted research papers.

This year, students demonstrated good understanding of the history of philosophy and good writing skills, but did not meet our target performance in critical reasoning (logic). Our assessment has led us to add “supplemental instruction” for our logic courses and will (next year) spur a discussion of how we can use our 300-level courses to better prepare students to write strong seminar papers.
Program Name: Women's and Gender Studies
Program Type: Undergraduate Degree
Start: 7/1/2013
End: 6/30/2014
Program Assessment Coordinator: Assistant Director (Moscowitz, David)
Administrative Unit Director receiving assessment updates: Dean (Hale, Jerry)
Program follows specialized accreditation standards:
Name of accrediting organization:
Date of last program review for the accrediting organization:
Date of next program review:

Program/Department Mission Statement
The WGS program explores the intersections of gender, class, race, ethnicity, age, religion, ability, and sexuality while studying women and gender in different cultures, contexts, and time periods. We discuss complex cultural issues, from historical to contemporary controversies, and teach students to think critically and develop a range of analytical approaches.

Unit or School Mission
In the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, we are teacher-scholars committed to the study of human nature and human creations. We seek to deepen our understanding of history and literature, inquire into the character of cultures and societies and, lastly, support the value of ethical and moral reflection.

Our HSS teacher-scholars cultivate in students the skills of creative problem-solving, critical thinking, and writing to discover. We also engage these students in activities that prepare them for productive civic engagement, understanding of different global perspectives and learning as a lifelong pursuit.

Comments and Attachments
Assessment Narrative (updated May 14, 2014)
The Women’s and Gender Studies major went into effect in fall 2010, and our first three majors graduated in the winter graduation ceremony in 2010. When developing the Women’s and Gender Studies major, we used discussions with WGS faculty, administrators, and alumni, as well as examinations of WGS curricula nationwide, to determine our requirements.

All WGS majors must take the following core courses: WGST 200 (Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies), WGST 381 (internship), and WGST 401 (capstone). In addition, majors must take one WGS course from each of the following four categories: political and social organization, historical and global perspectives, culture and representation, and mind and body. The remaining 12 hours of the major are electives chosen from WGS courses. This curriculum will allow our students to attain our learning objectives, including demonstrating critical thinking skills, strong writing skills, the ability to assess social advocacy, and the application of concepts from WGS coursework to new situations and real-life experiences.

Student learning in WGS is grounded in the College of Charleston’s mission and its academic location as a liberal arts and sciences institution. Like other degree programs in the liberal arts, Women’s and Gender Studies prepares students for a wide range of careers by training students to evaluate valuable, real-life experiences. In preparing our proposal for the WGS major, we surveyed alumni, and 53% of respondents reported that they use what they learned in WGS in their current work “regularly,” while 23% reported that they “occasionally” do.

The College of Charleston’s mission statement explains that the College “provides students the opportunity to realize their intellectual and personal potential and to become responsible, productive members of society.” The WGS major emphasizes all these priorities. Our courses emphasize student-centered
intellectual inquiry, and an increasing number of these courses offer a service-learning or experiential component. Further, the WGS major requires students to complete a one-semester internship and a one-semester culminating capstone. These curricular components invite students to engage in critical thinking, refining strong writing skills, assess social advocacy, and apply concepts from WGS coursework to new situations and real-life experiences at various levels of the major curriculum.

Additional Outcomes or Comments:

1. **Assessment cycle**: Upon meeting in May 2014 to discuss not only the data and its correlation to the WGS curriculum, but also the assessment process itself, we have decided to revise the annual assessment period from academic year to calendar year. We are doing this so that we have more time (months instead of days) to review and analyze assessment data. This report’s assessment period, for example, is for AY 2013-2014; the next assessment period will be for calendar year 2014. We will collect data at the end of the fall 2014 term, then review and discuss it during spring 2015 before the report’s submission deadline of May 15, 2015. During spring 2015, we also will discuss our plan of action for the 2015 assessment period (due September 15, 2015).

2. **Curriculum map**: In AY 2013-2014, the WGS Associate Director (Program Assessment Coordinator) revised this document; it was then discussed and approved at the WGS year-end assessment meeting in May 2014.

3. **Mission statement**: In AY 2013-2014, the WGS Executive Committee began discussions about updating and revising the program’s mission statement. This process was deliberately not completed in order to review more assessment data. The WGS Executive Committee will continue this discussion in AY 2014-2015 using the increased body of assessment data available.

4. **WGST 381 - Internship**: AY 2013-2014 is the second consecutive year for assessing this course, and the data reflects improvement over the results from AY 2012-2013. It also reflects for the first time complete satisfaction of our assessment expectations. For this reason, we accept completion of the current two-year cycle for assessing the internship experience. Supervision of internships, however, remains a concern. Currently all internships are supervised by the Director of the program and this is done 1 on 1. A better plan might be to organize all interns into an internship class; however, this would remove the Director from courses needed for the major. This is a potential budget item to discuss in the future.

5. **WGST 200 - Introduction to Women's and Gender Studies**: We are pleased with the data from the first year for assessing WGST 200. We plan to raise the bar for our expectations when we assess this course for the second consecutive year. This year, we introduced a consistent signature assignment, the Activism Analysis essay, across all sections of WGST 200. As this is a new assignment used to assess the course, we are eager to study more data in the next assessment cycle.

6. **Budget**: No comments or changes at this point entail any budget requests or revisions.

Related Items
There are no related items.

1: Critical Thinking

**Program Goal or SLO**
Students demonstrate critical thinking skills.

**Assessment Method / Performance Expected**
Method: assessment of Intro to WGS papers (WGST 200) and WGS internship portfolios (WGST 381) for two consecutive years. 2013-2014 is year 1 for WGST 200 and year 2 for WGST 381. Templates/rubrics are attached.

Expectation: 80% at developed or substantially developed.

**Assessment Results**
Half of this year’s internship portfolios were assessed. For critical thinking skills, the template results are 8/5/2: 13 (87%) are developed or substantially developed.
130 Activism Analysis essays from WGST 200 were assessed. For critical thinking skills, the template results are 75/40/15: 115 (88%) are developed or substantially developed. These results are consistent across instructors and sections.

For this year, this meets our expectation.

**Use of Results**
Review: A group of WGS affiliated faculty and Executive Committee members reviewed this data in May 2014.

Changes: Upon completion of the two-year cycle for assessing WGST 381, we are: 1) adding the expectation that students specifically address five prompts (attached) in their journal/reflective essay work to better direct students’ attention on critical thinking skills, and 2) sharing the assessment template (attached) with students to better convey this expectation.

**Budget Changes**
None

**Comments and Attachments**
- templ internship 2014
- templ intro 2014
- WGS Internship Paperwork, updated May 2014

**Related Items**
1: Enhance the undergraduate academic core.

---

### 2: Writing Skills

**Program Goal or SLO**
Students demonstrate strong writing skills.

**Assessment Method / Performance Expected**
Method: assessment of Intro to WGS papers (WGST 200) for two consecutive years. 2013-2014 is year 1 for WGST 200. Templates/rubrics are attached.

Expectation: 80% at developed or substantially developed.

**Assessment Results**
130 Activism Analysis essays from WGST 200 were assessed. For strong writing skills, the template results are 70/49/11: 119 (91%) are developed or substantially developed. These results are consistent across instructors and sections.

For this year, this meets our expectation.

**Use of Results**
Review: A group of WGS affiliated faculty and Executive Committee members reviewed this data in May 2014.

Changes: For next year, we will raise our expectation for this SLO. We also plan to discuss raising the minimum page limit for this assignment and revising it further.

**Budget Changes**

**Comments and Attachments**
- templ intro 2014

**Related Items**
1: Enhance the undergraduate academic core.

---

### 3: Social Advocacy
**Program Goal or SLO**
Students assess social advocacy.

**Assessment Method / Performance Expected**
Method: assessment of Intro to WGS papers (WGST 200) and WGS internship portfolios (WGST 381) for two consecutive years. 2013-2014 is year 1 for WGST 200 and year 2 for WGST 381. Templates/rubrics are attached.

Expectation: 80% at developed or substantially developed.

**Assessment Results**
Half of this year’s internship portfolios were assessed. For assessing social advocacy, the results are 7/8/0: 15 (100%) are developed or substantially developed.

130 Activism Analysis essays from WGST 200 were assessed. For assessing social advocacy, the results are 64/52/14: 116 (89%) are developed or substantially developed. These results are consistent across instructors and sections.

For this year, this meets our expectation.

**Use of Results**
Review: A group of WGS affiliated faculty and Executive Committee members reviewed this data in May 2014.

Changes: Upon completion of the two-year cycle for assessing WGST 381, we are: 1) adding the expectation that students specifically address five prompts (attached) in their journal/reflective essay work to better direct students’ attention on assessing social advocacy, and 2) sharing the assessment template (attached) with students to better convey this expectation.

**Budget Changes**

---

**Program Goal or SLO**
Students apply concepts from WGS coursework to new situations and real-life experiences.

**Assessment Method / Performance Expected**
Method: assessment of WGS internship portfolios (WGST 381) for two consecutive years. 2013-2014 is year 2 for WGST 381. Templates/rubrics are attached.

Expectation: 80% at developed or substantially developed.

**Assessment Results**
Half of this year’s internship portfolios were assessed. For applying WGS concepts to new situations, the results are 8/4/3: 12 (80%) are developed or substantially developed.

For this year, this meets our expectation.

**Use of Results**
Review: A group of WGS affiliated faculty and Executive Committee members reviewed this data in May 2014.

Changes: Upon completion of the two-year cycle for assessing WGST 381, we are: 1) adding the expectation that students specifically address five prompts (attached) in their journal/reflective essay work to better direct students’ attention on applying concepts to new situations, and 2) sharing the assessment template (attached) with students to better convey this expectation.

**Budget Changes**
Program Improvement Summary

Summary of assessment results with focus on program improvement (to be shared publicly)

The process that WGST has pursued for this year reflects satisfaction of our assessment expectations. We have systemized this process by making the decision to assess courses and data for two consecutive years. This year, we honed our program learning outcomes, updated our curriculum map, revised our assessment process and cycle, and created a signature assignment for our foundation course (WGST 200, Introduction to Women’s and Gender Studies). We continue to discuss revision of our program mission statement pending more assessment findings. For the next stage, we will continue this process and remain vigilant about any necessary adjustments based on evidence provided by our data collection.