University of Charleston, SC

Graduate School

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s).

In its continuing efforts to develop nationally recognized graduate programs in conjunction with the College of Charleston’s Strategic Plan, the Graduate School continues to monitor UCSC graduate programs to ensure that these satisfy SACSOC standards of graduate rigor, review graduate programs regularly with external assistance, ensure that graduates are satisfied with both the quality of education and the support they are receiving, and ensure that graduate student research successes are appropriately disseminated to the larger populace. This year’s monitoring efforts did not indicate improvement in disseminating student research results or in maintaining rigorous academic standards in cross-listed courses, but showed slight improvement in student satisfaction with these programs. We will work closely with program directors and students to improve in each of these assessment areas in 2018-19 as outlined elsewhere in this report.

Accountancy - MS

Assessment Report Summary - Accountancy MS

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s).

The results generally support that the small cohort nature of the program and its thesis system are supporting effective student learning with respect to Broadened Perspective (above 90%), Specialized Technical Skills and Knowledge (above 90%), and Communication (above 85%). The focus on conducting research and analyzing extant literature of the discipline teaches students to gather, analyze and synthesize academic, practitioner, and authoritative literature on a topic that bears to their intended area of practice. The thesis is central to the fall Accounting Theory course and ideally brings together other materials and perspectives from the other fall courses. Students are encouraged in the Accountancy Program’s Orientation at the beginning of each academic year in August to immediately begin focusing on topics for their fall thesis. Students are encouraged to engage their professors about their interests in accounting and seek guidance on approaching a thesis.

The two semester thesis system allows students to focus on specific technical areas that bear to their intended area of practice. Students are expected to be “mini-experts” on at least one technical topic relevant to their career plans. In following a recommendation from our AACSB re-affirmation team in 2014, the assessment is made to ascertain whether the students are effectively gaining Specialized Technical Skills and Knowledge in the context of their respective tracks. The focus has been on the auditing and taxation tracks. The Spring thesis is used for the assessment vehicle with a rubric designed to focus on attributes that provide information pertaining to the student’s intended area of practice. Students are oriented to focusing on more practice issues in the spring semester’s required ACCT 599 course as opposed to a more theoretical focus in the ACCT 500 course taken in the fall. Thus, a more broad-based thesis is written in the fall with a greater emphasis on practical matters in the spring thesis.

The results provide evidence that the thesis system to include presentation of proposals early on in the process works to ensure that graduates are effective communicators. The small cohort and focus on the individual are likely important contributors of our high degree of effectiveness in student communications skills.

Learning outcomes for theEthical Awareness goal (at or below 83%) suggest that curriculum changes are needed to formally incorporate the subject of ethics and professional responsibility for accounting professionals. As discussed, beginning in Spring 2019 an ethics component will be added to the required curriculum in the contemporary accountancy issues course.

Arts Management - Certificate

Assessment Report Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s).

Business Administration - MBA

Assessment Report Summary - MBA

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the
In summary, the MBA program met or exceeded its learning outcome goals. In most every measure there was improvement from the previous year. Of the 6 measures in the 3 learning outcome areas (Quantitative Fluency, Synthesis and Global & Civic Responsibility) all met their target and 5 of the 6 showed improvement from last year. The only measure that didn’t improve from the previous year was 87.2% compared to 88% in the previous year. The target was 80%.

These strong results will require the MBA Committee to look for other opportunities to improve in the future. Since the ETS Exam is taken nationally and covers a wide array of topics, it can provide opportunities for continued growth in areas where we are not currently strong.

**Child Life - MS**

**Child Life**

7. **Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement:** Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s): 

**New Assessment Report Summary Item**

7. **Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement:** Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s): 

Overall, the MS in Child Life program has utilized assessment outcome data to enhance, refine, and expand student assessment in the form of more detailed evaluation rubrics that allow for the analysis of content areas through aggregate scoring. Given the Association of Child Life Professionals’ (national organization) recommendation for specific instruction in medical terminology, this component has been added into first year coursework and assessment outcomes reported in the 2017-18 assessment report. In addition, securing baseline data has allowed for refinement in the performance targets (increases) given students’ overall success rates. Given these data, we have focused on adding assessment of subcomponent skills that collectively contribute to the summative score totals for student outcomes so as to identify any areas of student learning and performance that may benefit from additional/adjusted instruction and mentorship. Finally, we have added additional measures of core outcomes for our education and training program in child life.

**Communication - MA**

**Communication MA**

7. **Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement:** Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s): 

MCOM, as noted, is moving to an online only format, which will formally debut in Fall 2019, but these changes have been in the works since early 2018. Moving the administration and delivery of the new MCOM program and its constituent courses online will, without a doubt, demand some new assessment metrics. Our current thinking, however, is that while much of the course delivery and workload will change, the content will not be revolutionized, and some course assignments will remain more-or-less the same. Therefore, we will need to develop some new assessment metrics, but some of these existing metrics will not need to be retired. They have been working fairly and, where appropriate in the future program, they will hopefully work again.

**Community Planning, Policy, and Design - MA**

**CPAD**

7. **Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement:** Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s): 

**Computer Information Sciences - MS**

**CSIS**

7. **Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement:** Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s): 

The CSIS program is generally successful in getting students to the level of academic achievement that is sufficient. However, we continue to work to improve across the board.

Specifics related to the Cybersecurity specialization, which was detected following the 2016 and 2017 assessments, when outcomes related to firewalls were not met, the instructor has made plans to improve student success in future terms, by providing clearer sample rules and additional short exercises focused on learning the syntax and attack vector that the rule prevents.
Also, for the plans are underway to add CSIS 632 as a prerequisite for CSIS 641 (Advanced Cybersecurity), which currently has only 631 as a prerequisite. It is believed that students with a background in network technologies prior to taking 641 will be able to learn deeper concepts in 641. (Note 632 is already required in the specialization/certificate, but it is often taken simultaneously with and even after with 641.)

Creative Writing - MFA

MFA
7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Bret,

Fill this out at the end of the year with a brief summary of what you learned and how you will use it for program improvement. This can include: changes in pedagogy, curricular modifications, or changes to the assessment process.

New Assessment Report Summary Item
7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

New Assessment Report Summary Item
7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Cybersecurity - Certificate

Assessment Report Statement
7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Outcome 1 was not met. To improve potential student success, the plan is to provide more sample rules for a short exercise focused on learning the syntax and attack vector that the rule prevents.

Also, plans are underway to add CSIS 632 as a prerequisite for CSIS 641, which currently has only 631 as a prerequisite. It is believed that students with a background in network technologies prior to taking 641 will allow them to cover more depth in 641. (Note 632 is already required in the specialization/certificate, but it is often taken simultaneously with 641.)

Early Childhood Education - MAT

Assessment Report Summary
7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

We graduated a small number of MAT students this year. Data indicate they met or exceeded expectations in all areas. We will not be making any major program changes based on this year’s data but instead will continue to refine our assessment tools, focus on maintaining program quality, and increase student recruitment and retention efforts.

Program changes we have made in the last few assessment cycles include:

- removing the stand alone assessment course (EDEE 615) and integrating assessment content into methods courses
- revising EDEE 682 to provide more authentic opportunities to collect and analyze literacy assessment data
- providing more authentic opportunities for candidates to interact with families of diverse backgrounds
- changing where program assessments occur within the program

Elementary Education - MAT

Assessment Report Summary
7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Assessment #1

Measurement 1:
This was a new assessment for the program and because of the data we were able to make evidence-based changes for improve on the Teacher as a Professional Paper. As part of the assessment and to comply with the ACEI requirements, we provide assistants for students who struggle. Since we only had one cycle of data (Spring 2018) we will continue to monitor this assessment.

Measurement 2:

This was a new assessment for compliance assistance and a base level assessment. Since this is a unit measurement, we were able to use that data as reliable. The SCTS 4.0 Professional Standards will be monitored for necessary changes in the future.

Assessment #2

Measurement 1 & 2:

These were new assessment for compliance assistance and a base level assessment. Since this is a unit measurement, we were able to use that data as reliable. The SCTS 4.0 instruction standards for students enrolled in the final field and during clinical practice will continue to be monitored for necessary changes in the future.

Assessment #3

Measurement 1:

This is a new assessment for compliance assistance and a base level assessment. Since there was only 2 cycles of data the Content Portfolio will be monitored for necessary changes in the future.

Measurement 2:

This is a new assessment for compliance assistance and a base level assessment. Since this is a unit measurement, we were able to use that data as reliable. The LRP will be monitored for necessary changes in the future.

English - MA

Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

As indicated in the other sections of this report, our program enrollment is very low, and with those low numbers, it is premature to draw conclusions, let alone make program changes based on them.

In the past, our assessments have made clear to us the need to develop an introductory course for the degree, which we did and began offering in 2016-17. Materials from that course have now entered into our assessment to give us a sense of how our students are thinking about career options.

Our past assessments of high-stakes writing from MA classes indicated a weakness in our students’ handling of the close examination of texts, discovery and integration of secondary source material, and their engagement with criticism and scholarship. In this light, last year we proposed a new graduation requirement, an ePortfolio, to replace our comprehensive examination, which is now in our catalog:

**ePortfolio Requirement**

All MA students who do not complete a thesis will propose and prepare an ePortfolio consisting of significant revisions of three substantial pieces of writing produced in the program and that integrate critical sources and contemporary scholarship in English Studies. These revisions will be contextualized within program goals and outcomes through reflective writing.

We are eager to see how results from this last year’s assessment combine with those from this coming year and what they can indicate to us about possible program changes.

Environmental Studies - MS

Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

ESOL 1 - Certificate

Assessment Report Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):
In the past, students did not always address all portions of their micro-cultures. One reason for this is that they were fearful of peer and instructor reactions. Another reason was that they had never delved into portions of their past and culture(s). Again, providing students with examples of a well-written cultural paper helped students in creating their own.

Instructors in all courses have had students do more critical thinking, by asking more of the following questions: Why? How does this impact your class? Would you use this strategy in your class? Would this strategy work with all English learners? Why or why not? Candidates are always encouraged to offer their opinions but to always be able to back them up.

Another problem that instructors keep facing on the graduate level is the quality of writing produced by students. Explicitly going over frequent errors helped some students. Other students had to see the errors on their own papers and then have the instructor highlight the problem(s); only then could they see their errors.

There have been no changes due to state regulations, recommendations from regional or specialized accreditation reviews.

The courses assessed this year were taught at two locations: the North Campus and local school districts. As before, we have found that many of the teachers taking courses as a cohort, located in the school districts, face a greater challenge in producing well-written and thought out, developed, and organized papers. This is probably because they have been away from writing assignment for many years. They write often, but not the kind of writing that is required for formal papers. Instructors will continue to emphasize the need for coherent, well-organized, grammatically well-written papers.

**Gifted and Talented Education - Certificate**

**Assessment Report Summary**

7. **Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement:** Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Assessment results are mostly positive, but with the low number (currently N=1) in the GTE certificate, changes in the GTE certificate to be considered are 1) infuse effort into recruiting students into the GTE certificate courses, or 2) place a moratorium on accepting additional students into the GTE certificate courses until the department sets priorities for graduate certificates.

**Historic Preservation - MS**

**Historic Preservation MS**

7. **Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement:** Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

**Student Learning Outcomes**

In addition to the measures applied annually through the Assessment of Student Learning tracked by Compliance Assist, the MSHP program also conducted the following activities that provide additional information that identifies curricular strengths as well as opportunities for improvement:

- Focus Group Exit Interviews with Graduating Students (See MSHP Annual Report, Appendix Two: 2018 Exit Interview Summary)
- End-of-Year Questionnaire for First Year Students (See MSHP Annual Report, Appendix Three: SUMMARY FIRST YEAR QUESTIONNAIRE. 2018)
- Clemson University Student Learning Outcomes Assessment managed through WEAVE, a program utilized by Clemson University.

Learning goals, objectives and measures written for the WEAVE program are transposed to the Compliance Assist program as required. The 2017-2018 WEAVE report for Clemson is due in mid October 2018.

Results of all these measures of student learning are shared with all MSHP faculty members and discussed by the faculty at strategic planning retreats that or typically convened in January. While the results of the 2017-2018 round of assessment of student learning have been shared with MSHP faculty, discussion of the results and development of responses will not take place until January 2019. The MSHP faculty did discuss the results of the 2016-2017 round of assessment of student learning and adopted recommendations to address these results during the 2017-2018 academic year.

**Application of Result of 2016-2017 Results**

The thesis plays a central role in the MSHP program not only as a demonstration of student ability to design and execute a significant research project and intellectual achievement but in the program’s student learning outcomes process. At the close of the 2016-2017 academic year, the MSHP faculty convened in its annual assessment of that year’s theses and the thesis process. In response to observation of student performance, measurement of learning outcomes, and student recommendations, MSHP faculty extended instruction in thesis-related courses as well as digital tools and historical writing.

**Thesis Process.** Faculty commentary on the 2016-2017 thesis process and theses is summarized here:

**SUMMARY: FACULTY REVIEW OF THESIS. 2016-2017**
Suggest moving deadline for submission of completed thesis one week earlier in the spring semester. Rationale: earlier submission deadline would provide additional time for revisions following defense.

All figures should be submitted for review and revision prior to submission of completed thesis prior to defense.

Conclusion must be stronger, more definitive.

Defense: Student should be able to engage more actively in questions put to them at the defense.

Defense / process: thesis should reflect higher level of critical thinking.

Thesis revisions: As revisions proceed, students must remove old material, that is the purposes, methods, arguments, data, etc. that may fall away as the thesis assumes sharper and sharper focus.

Students were inclined to embrace topics too ambitious to be completed within the program’s prescribed schedule.

Quality of writing bears improvement.

In response to these observations, the MSHP faculty implemented the following remedies during the 2017-2018 academic year:

Director of MSHP program developed and circulated revised explanation of the role and responsibilities held by thesis committee members. Thesis director’s responsibility to insure that all components of the thesis were complete before the finished thesis was circulated for review emphasized.

Thesis director’s responsibilities to insure that successive iterations of revisions were removed also addressed.

Ta strengthen perceived weaknesses in engagement on part of some students in critical thinking and in drawing more robust conclusions from their research, HP 8020: Thesis Research to be revised to include (a) new exercises and seminar discussions in the critical evaluation of historical sources and scholarly arguments as part of historiographic assignment, and (b) new exercises in drawing inductive and deductive conclusions.

Ta encourage more robust participation in defense of the thesis, November thesis progress reports to MSHP faculty to include (a) evaluation of oral presentations, results of the scoring and assessment to be shared and discussed with each thesis students, and (b) extended opportunity for critical discussion follow each progress report.

Ta address concerns about student pursuit of overly broad thesis topics, faculty agreed that during 20172018 cycle, each thesis student will meet with his/her entire committee twice in September to insure that student has defined an achievable thesis.

Ta address faculty concerns about the quality of student writing, faculty, acknowledging that students with weaker writing skills on entry in the program must improve in writing abilities, agreed that at final faculty meeting, faculty would discuss work completed by First Year students and those whose writing is identified as weaker in clarity of expression will be mentored in the summer before they take on thesis requirements.

**SUMMARY: FACULTY REVIEW OF DIGITAL TOOLS. 2016-2017**

MSHP Students rely on a range of digital tools as they pursue research related to class assignments, their theses, and public service projects the program undertakes for regional clients. In response to student commentary and student recommendations, MSHP faculty made several directs to course offerings and course content:

The course HP 8920: Digital Tools in Historic Preservation was made a permanent fall semester course offering, A portion of this course devoted to GIS instruction to address student recommendation and employer expectations. Another portion of this course devoted to 3-D laser scanning, this extension in instruction also a response to student recommendations and employer expectations.

Instruction in GIS data capture using I-Phones and Survey 1-2-3 app added to the course HP 8070.

**SUMMARY: FACULTY REVIEW OF HISTORICAL WRITING. 2016-2017**

Historical Writing is an essential skill all MSHP students must master. In an effort to strengthen student skills in writing analytical historical narrative, a rubric for the evaluation of student writing was developed and tested in HP 8020: Historical Research Methods in fall 2017. This assessment of student writing will be woven into Student Learning Outcomes assessment but was used initially, and will be used subsequently, to identify mechanical weaknesses in narrative expression and student ability to draw conclusions from historical sources. Students who faculty rank in the lowest third of this three-tiered scoring system will be meet with program faculty to discuss their writing skills and be assigned a faculty mentor with whom they will work during their second semester to improve their writing skills.

**SUMMARY: FACULTY REVIEW OF DOCUMENTATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES. 2017-2018**

Measure 3 for the SLO Goal Documentation of Historic Resources stipulates that students acquire advanced skills in measured architectural drawings using accepted national standards promulgated by the Historic American Building Survey [HABS] of the National Park Service.

Measure 3 requires submission of AutoCAD documentation drawings of a historic building and a grade of B or higher on this assignment. All members of the class (N=12) successfully met this target. Assessment results thus exceeded the Achievement target of 90% of each entering class by the end of their first semester in the program.

Results of the 2017-2018 round of assessment of student progress in the acquisition of fundamental skills in the broad area of the documentation of historic resources were discussed by the MSHP faculty at their final meeting of the academic year in May 2018 and again at opening faculty meeting in August 2018. Faculty responded to the results as confirmation that instruction in this area
continued to move students efficiently toward skill acquisition, particularly in the area of field documentation drawings and AutoCAD, methods of data acquisition for which most students in the MSHP class of 2019, like all previous classes, lacked prior experience.

Further discussion elicited the following refinements to instruction in the course HP 8090 / HSPV 809: Historical Research Methods:

1. Placement of a class session early in the semester of introduction to historical styles of calligraphy and handwriting to better equip students with skills to transcribe historic script.
2. Insertion of a class session on oral sources with the intention of introducing the oral interview as a method of data gathering students might apply in later research projects, e.g. the thesis.

Instructors involved in the team-taught courses through which these components of the MSHP program’s assessment of student learning are applied will review results of the 2017-2018 assessment cycle at a strategic planning meeting in October 2018.

History - MA

Assessment Report Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Assessment results for the years 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 show that our graduating students on the whole are meeting and sometimes exceeding the targets in all three measures of historical research skills, writing skills, and historiographical skills. Our master’s theses show very positive assessment results for the past three years.

It is in the incoming classes that assessment results have been more mixed. The past three years show that a significant percentage of incoming students are not meeting the targets in the three measures, especially in the difficult historical skill of historiographical thinking. It may be that the measure of historiographical thinking may need to be revised or replaced by a different measure for incoming students. It may be that the vast majority of undergraduate history departments in the United States are not imparting this difficult skill to their graduating students, which is reflected in their writing samples.

It should be noted too that the Joint Program needs to be able to better access and store master’s theses and especially research seminar papers. For thesis-track students the storing process is made complicated by the time-frame for thesis submission. Master’s theses, for example, are often granted significant extensions which means the defense date can occur well into the summer. This is well after the spring graduation deadline. In addition, master’s theses are approved by thesis committees typically under the condition that revisions must take place. These revisions can add weeks to the calendar which can result in the submission of a final version of the thesis still deeper into the summer. This delay makes it more difficult for the assessment committee to assess these theses in a timely manner to meet assessment deadlines. In other words, the master’s theses deadlines do not fit very well into assessment deadlines. Furthermore, faculty members who sit on assessment committees are often not on salary during the summer months from May 15 through August 15. Assessment has become a summer activity so the Joint Program in History may need to rethink its assessment calendar, perhaps by rethinking how it defines a graduating class.

Moreover, the non-thesis track students are assessed on the basis of their research seminar papers. Currently, the research seminar papers are kept by faculty teaching those seminars or students who have written them. Because these research seminars are taken by non-thesis track students in different semesters and at different times in their academic careers, it is more difficult for the assessment committee to obtain the research seminar papers. This is a challenge for the joint program with two sets of institutional faculties. A solution needs to be found, perhaps with the two directors taking on an additional duty of making sure all research seminar papers are housed by the two directors.

Information Systems - Certificate

Information Systems Certificate

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Languages - MEd

Assessment Report Summary. M.Ed. in Languages

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

The program assessment was conducted by the Program Director with input and assistance from the program steering committee and program faculty. The Program Director coordinated the administration and gathering of the assessment measures, collected the data, analyzed the results, and prepared the report. Supporting faculty reviewed the results via email or in a meeting in person. They provided feedback, suggestions for improvement, and discussed areas of strength and how to maintain excellence in those areas. The report was also provided to the Assessment Coordinator to perform additional analysis, revision, and synthesis of the results if found necessary.
To gather data two measures were collected and analyzed for each student learning outcome. Based on previous assessment cycle data analysis and results, new more realistic performance targets were established for this assessment cycle (2017-18). For all students, regardless of emphasis in SPAN or ESOL, 80% was the new performance target as a group for all student learning outcomes.

The data reveals improved results in all areas. In general, measures tied to the courses (LALE 601 and LALE 603) show that clearer instructions, more examples, and class time on the objectives in the courses have helped. For the Portfolio, clearer instructions to the student candidates have also helped. For next academic year, a one-credit portfolio course, LALE 695 Standards-based teaching Portfolio (similar to an independent study) will be taught to student candidates as it was recently approved to start in Fall 2018.

These changes will be applied next year with the overall goal to see improvement in the quality of student learning.

Marine Biology - MS

New Assessment Report Summary Item

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Three areas of assessment are currently utilized: 1) broad knowledge (in marine biology, the ocean environment, and the practice of science), 2) scientific communication, and 3) publication of thesis research in the peer-reviewed scientific literature. Results and plans were discussed with GPMB staff and the Marine Biology Council (GPMB governing body) and will be presented to the full faculty at our semi-annual fall meeting in October 2019.

Assessments from the past three years indicate that performance in Broad Knowledge, assessed through core course final exam scores and oral comprehensive exams) has fluctuated and largely reflected recruiting success. Measure 1.1 (core course final exam scores) has only one complete year of data but shows scores that are a bit below target and the 5-year period 2011-2015, when applicant number and metrics of incoming students peaked. Measure 1.2 (oral exam scores) increased in the current assessment year (87%) relative to the prior three-year period (2014-2016; 43-73% vs. target of 90%) but are still a bit below the prior three-year period when targets were met (or very close, 88-93%) and applicant numbers were at their peak. We conclude that the scores for this outcome at least in part are related to recruiting success, thus efforts for improvement here mainly focus on increasing number and quality of applicants. Several new recruiting tactics will be tried this year. Both measures are related to instruction in our core curriculum (BIOL 600, 601, 610, and 611). Over the entire period of both metrics, the instructors for these courses have remained unchanged. However, this coming year BIOL 600 will have a new instructor due to retirement. These assessment tools will be helpful in monitoring the performance of the revised course.

Assessment of Scientific Communication skills through poster and oral presentation of research at our annual GPMB Student Research Colloquium generally indicate that students are performing very well in this area and have often exceeded target thresholds. Poster results (Measure 2.1) exceeded target (100% vs. target of 90%) and represent a rebound from a below-target score (73%) last year. This may reflect increased individual attention by advisors following all-faculty discussions about this performance. On the other hand, scores for oral presentations (Measure 2.2) in which target was not met (73%) had until this past year always exceeded target (100% vs. 90% target). This may be due to small sample size or, more likely, is a cohort effect due to the recent declines in applicant numbers (2015-2018). Additional recruiting efforts will be our primary response. BIOL 600, in which students have received significant training in oral presentation, will see a new instructor in 2019. This assessment measure will help monitor any changes in this aspect of the course and program.

Regarding the Thesis Research outcome, we failed to gather data for Measure 3.1 (thesis proposal). We have added a check-off box to our thesis proposal cover form to ensure that this mistake is not repeated. This is our newest measure, thus we have only one year of data to date. The two years of data for the thesis publication measure are encouraging. The goal of a 75% publication rate within 3 years of graduation is ambitious relative to peer institutions. This year (data for 2014 cohort) we were slightly below target (73% vs. 75%) but slightly exceeded target the year before (79%), therefore will retain the same target for at least one more year before we change the benchmark.

Mathematics Sciences - MS

Mathematics Sciences - MS

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Student continue to do well in mastering theoretical knowledge and skills, communicating mathematics and statistics, and conducting independent projects. The move away from assessing only one or two individual questions to a more holistic assessment of the final exams is paying off. It is easier to identify any significant weaknesses.

The Graduate School Exit survey is easy to use and corroborates the fact that students have been learning core theoretical skills well and are aware that such skills are connected to their goals (in this case, employment)
Regarding the mastering of core knowledge, the overall sense is that the students continue to do well. Issues related to Math 530 (Mathematical Statistics I) performance in Fall 2016 did not present themselves again in Fall 2017. Math 511 (Real Analysis I) continues to be the most challenging core course, as known and expected: real analysis is one of the hardest core areas of mathematics.

Generally, but perhaps more so in the Statistics Concentration, most of the low-performance case is related to provisional admission of students who, though promising, have been out of education for a long time or do not have a sufficient mathematical background despite a strong drive.

Students are doing exceptionally well at communicating technical results and methodology in their fields. This year, we have a strong cohort, as reported by several professors, especially in the more applied fields. We also noted rising enrollments in Math 551. Encouraging faculty to incorporate a project component in suitable courses and to engage in graduate research supervision has provided some good results. In 2017-2018, the number and quality of project has risen.

Also, Dr. Langville together with graduate program alumna Kathryn Pedings-Behling has constructed a very effective assessment rubric for projects and presentations, suitable for courses that have an applied/industrial focus (specifically Math 551 and Math 552).

Based on this analysis, we plan the following future interventions:

1. We have been experimenting with an informal bridge course to higher mathematics. This involves three core preparatory areas: proofs, linear algebra, and analysis. We plan to develop the course more formally as an online course, and move towards requiring provisional students to complete the course. Ideally this could be a zero-credit, self-paced course.

2. We would like to used portions of the bridge course to provide a refresh of analysis for some of the students in the Mathematics Concentration. This should help increase performance in Math 511 (Real Analysis I) and overall performance in that concentration.

3. We need to strengthen the admission process when it comes to students who are very talented or driven, but are missing some background or have been out for a long time. We have been following such students very closely, but we have had mixed results recently, mostly when dealing with students who have longer commutes to Charleston and are unable to take undergraduate-level courses.

4. Amy Langville together with graduate program alumna Kathryn Pedings-Behling has constructed a very effective assessment rubric for projects and presentations, suitable for courses that have an applied/industrial focus (specifically Math 551 and Math 552). Inspired by her example, we are in the process of creating better rubrics for theses, and other projects and presentations.

Middle Grades Education - MAT

Assessment Report Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Changes in the Assessment system over the past two cycles has resulted from state-mandated forms and assessments to use with the students in the Middle Grades program. For each Outcome, a new Measure was added to reflect the use of different sections of the state-mandated assessment. Data will have to be collected over a period of two years to better be able to make decisions about the program. The results will also be compared with the undergraduate program since there are more students and the data can be used to help inform the same Assessments at the graduate level.

Revisiting the inter-rater reliability through continued training should bring down the average scores of the students so that they are not achieving a 4.0/4.0 on all of the criteria. University supervisors who score the students will have a better understanding of what a specific value on the rubric means.

Operations Research - Certificate

Assessment Report Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Student continue to do well on core theoretical knowledge and skills, and core modeling knowledge and skills. The move away from assessing only one or two individual questions to a more holistic assessment of the final exams is paying off. It is easier to analyse whether there are significant weaknesses.

The Graduate School Exit survey is easy to use and corroborates the fact that students have been learning core theoretical skills well and are aware that such skills are connected to their goals (in this case, employment)

Students are doing exceptionally well at communicating technical results and methodology in their fields. This year, we have a strong cohort, as reported by several professors, especially in the more applied fields. We also noted a bump in enrollments in Math 551.
Encouraging faculty to incorporate a project component in suitable courses and to engage in graduate research supervision has provided some good results. In 2017-2018, the number and quality of project has risen.

Also, Dr. Langville together with graduate program alumna Kathryn Pedings-BeHling has constructed an effective assessment rubric for projects and presentations, suitable for courses that have an applied/industrial focus (specifically Math 551 and Math 552). Inspired by her example, we are in the process of creating better rubrics for Theses, and other projects and presentations.

Performing Arts - MAT

Assessment Report Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Over the past few assessment cycles, two key assignments used as assessment measures were revamped along with their rubrics for both music and theatre coursework. It was also decided that the directing and conducting projects completed in the clinical student teaching semester was the most appropriate time to complete this project and assessment. By placing this assessment in the student teaching experience it allowed the student to receive additional feedback from a current K12 arts teacher external to the MAT program providing more objective assessment based on hours and hours of observation. As a result, a more detailed understanding of the sub-skills associated with each SLO’s were established allowing for more focused teaching and assessment. More experiential opportunities to reinforce these skills were also added to coursework and field work. Lastly, the first cycle of theatre students taking and passing the national standardized teacher credential tests (Praxis) with above average scores for the most part, provided evidence that a through line of knowledge and applied skills in the real world of teaching is successfully occurring within the MAT in the Performing Arts program. Although the second group taking the Praxis teacher certification exams is helping reveal some places in our curriculum that must be reexamined to ensure quality and student success. A process, as outlined previously, is underway to improve the program in these areas.

Public Administration - MPA

Assessment Report Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

The biggest change that has taken place is the inclusion of internship site-supervisor feedback into the assessment process. All that is needed now is a process by which we can assure those evaluations are complete and used to inform any decision-making related to the internship.

Additionally, the program is undergoing a massive review of its assessment practices so that reporting can not only document student learning in a way that is consistent with the expectations of the College and our accrediting body, but also so that the data we collect from faculty, students, alumni, internship supervisors, advisory committee members, and other interested stakeholders can be used to inform decision making and improve the program. We will be working closely with the College's assessment office and our national accreditors to develop a portfolio process whereby students will reflect on and document their learning outcomes by supplying appropriate artifacts that demonstrate mastery of the expected competencies.

Sciences and Mathematics for Teachers - MEd

SMFT

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

For SLOs 1 & 2 (Science & Math Course Content Knowledge & Competencies) the SMFT program chose to use an assessment methodology driven mainly by individual instructors. So pre and post tests were designed by the instructors to inform each instructor about student learning in each area, and faculty were encouraged to use the results of the pre-test to inform pedagogical practice and content focus. This design allows faculty to tailor their assessments to their own course goals, modify content focus and pedagogy based on results, and respond to assessment results accordingly. Baseline data for all courses does show significant improvement in content knowledge and competencies from pre to post course, but there is variation across the 4 measures with and across courses. Since our SMFT courses are offered on a 2 year rotation cycle, we are still collecting follow-up data for our courses. We will begin to get some follow-up data for more courses in the next assessment year.

For SLO 3 (Essential Professional Tools) the results of our assessments have resulted in the following goals and corresponding strategies to improve professional competencies.
Goal: Increasing overall quality of the capstone projects – Prior to the 2016, there was no clear requirement that students submit a written capstone proposal or final report to their adviser before presenting their work to the faculty. Students are now required to submit their proposal and final report to their advisory committee at least 2 weeks prior to the date of their presentation. Proposal and reports must be approved by the student’s major adviser before each presentation. The results of our assessment also showed that students may not have been receiving sufficient guidance in all areas of the capstone project. Beginning this year, all students in the program are now required to have an adviser from the School of Science and Math and from Teacher Education. This is intended to ensure that students receive sound guidance in both the scientific/mathematical and educational (pedagogy/research design) aspects of their project.

Goal: Improving on lower performing objectives - The SMFT steering committee developed more explicit guidelines for each section of the project proposal and final report. These guidelines are now provided to students prior to taking SMFT 690 – Capstone Proposal Development, and are published on the program website along with examples of exemplary work in each area. These guidelines are also intended to clarify the objectives for program faculty so that advisers can work more effectively with their advisees in these areas, and to improve inter-rater agreement on the presentation scoring rubrics.

Goal: Ensuring that students are thinking of the capstone as a “keystone” of the program, rather than an after-thought at the end of the program, and more directly tying capstone projects to students’ unique professional interests and goals. The SMFT steering committee met to discuss the capstone requirement of the SMFT program. Currently the capstone requires students to incorporate an educational research component into their capstone project. The committee is now considering broadening or refocusing this requirement to allow students to develop capstone projects that relate more to students’ unique professional goals. For example, projects could include those related to curriculum development, assessment strategies, or colleague professional development or mentoring. This will be a substantial change to our program, which will be developed over the coming academic year.

Software Engineering - Certificate

Software Engineering Certificate

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Special Education - Certificate

Assessment Report Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Special Education - MAT

Assessment Report Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

* continue to monitor goal performance carefully in all three areas of certification, to maximize efficiency and minimize overlap.

* study and increase the reliability of the ADEPT instrument as used with undergraduate special education teacher candidates.

* work in faculty meetings to increase the inter-rater reliability and standardization of ADEPT and rubrics for the CWS and the CMS, all of which are included in our measures.

* analyze teacher candidate performance on other licensure exams (e.g., Principles of Learning and Teaching and exams needed to gain “highly qualified” status, although this may be changing in the near future as a result of new federal legislation).

* based on CEC-developed disability-specific standards, work with teacher candidates to increase their ability to reflect and document their growth in knowledge and skills using all program requirements, and to better report on their students' growth, as well.

Unfortunately, the MAT program in special education has been paused indefinitely due to low enrollment.

Statistics - Certificate

Statistics Certificate
7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

Student continue to do well on core theoretical knowledge and skills, and core modeling knowledge and skills. The move away from assessing only one or two individual questions to a more holistic assessment of the final exams is paying off. It is easier to analyse whether there are significant weaknesses.

The overall sense is that the students continue to do well and that the problems related to Math 530 in Fall 2016 did not present themselves in Fall 2017.

The Graduate School Exit survey is easy to use and corroborates the fact that students have been learning core theoretical skills well and are aware that such skills are connected to their goals (in this case, employment).

Students are doing well at communicating technical results and methodology in their fields.

Encouraging faculty to incorporate a project component in suitable courses and to engage in graduate research supervision has provided some good results. In 2017-2018, the number and quality of project has risen.

Also, Dr. Langville together with graduate program alumna Kathryn Pedings-Behling has constructed a very effective assessment rubric for projects and presentations, suitable for courses that have an applied/industrial focus (specifically Math 551 and Math 552). Inspired by her example, we are in the process of creating better rubrics for theses, and other projects and presentations.

Teaching, Learning, and Advocacy - MEd

Assessment Report Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):

The student data analyzed for this period (fall 2017 and spring 2018) were derived from the MTLA capstone and key assessments leading into the capstone project, administered in the core courses of the MTLA program. To gather formative data, various rubrics clearly outlining the criteria for each assignment/capstone were used in evaluating the MTLA goals/outcomes: a) intersection of theory and practice, b) research, c) policy analysis, d) advocacy, and e) professionalism and reflective practice.

A committee of faculty who teach the MTLA core courses analyzed and reviewed the data results. Results of data analysis show that the MTLA program has taken appropriate steps to provide the structure and opportunities needed to be successful in the program. Program improvements are going to be undertaken through the following planned changes:

1. Continue to use MTLA 602 as a first step toward the capstone by ensuring that students identify a literature review topic that has clear connections to policy.

2. Continue to use MTLA 607 as the final step in the sequence prior to the capstone to ensure that students develop an actionable advocacy plan in the final capstone project.

3. Continue to use program courses, especially EDFS 635 and MTLA 607, to move research proposals through school district and university IRB approval processes.

4. Continue to obtain end of program reflections from students in MTLA 702 regarding the fit between concentration courses and the MTLA program goals.

Urban and Regional Planning - Certificate

Assessment Report Summary

7. Summary of Assessment Results with Focus on Program Improvement: Describe evidence-based changes that have taken place within the last few assessment cycles because of assessment. Statements must be supported by evidence from the assessment report(s):