2014 -15 COAS Committee Assessment Report

In 2014-15, the Assessment Council proposed a revision of SD 98-22 to ensure that the assessment process aligned with current expectations and best practices for assessment. This revision was passed by the Faculty Senate on 10/19/2015. The format of this year's college report follows the 'College Level Template Assessment Report' (from SD 15-6, Appendix E) organized in four sections, including: (1) a summary of findings, (2) a summary of recommendations to academic departments, (3) the results of activities related to prior year findings and (4) conclusions and future directions.

Section 1: Summary of Findings

2014-15 Report Submission Summary

As shown in Table 1, fifteen assessment reports were submitted and eight waivers ('with condition', see description below) were granted. Four of these waivers were granted to departments and four were granted to certificate programs. In addition, the COAS Assessment Committee was informed that one certificate program had begun the process of phasing out and was, thus, exempt from providing a report. Liberal Studies suspended admissions and began a process of phasing out the degree in June 2014. The program was informed last year that the creation of assessment reports would not be necessary, and thus, did not produce one for 2015. The COAS Assessment Committee Chair became aware of the phasing out of the program after the deadline had passed for report submissions.

Comments on process: The COAS Assessment Committee sent the call out for assessment reports on 9/8 with the original deadline of 11/6. When the call for assessment reports went out to departments and programs, the committee decided to adopt the assessment report template from SD 98-22 prior to its approval. Shortly following its approval (on 10/19), the Director of Assessment announced a series of workshops designed to assist departments and programs with the preparation of reports. However, because the scheduled workshops (11/4 - 11/12) extended beyond the COAS Assessment Committee report deadline (11/6), the COAS Assessment Committee pushed the deadline back one week (to 11/13). At the time of the revised deadline, twelve reports were submitted, three departments requested a short extension, and six departments/programs requested a 'waiver with condition.' Thus, all but one department and two programs submitted a report, a request for a brief extension, or a request for a ‘waiver with condition’ by the revised deadline (11/13).

A follow-up email was sent to the non-responding department and programs. Within a few days, a report was submitted by the department and one of the certificate programs requested a 'waiver with condition'. The other program (Liberal Studies) indicated that it was in the process of being phased out. In addition, of the three departments that requested a brief extension, two subsequently submitted a report, and one requested a ‘waiver with condition.’

Comments on waivers: As mentioned above, a 'waiver with condition' was granted to eight departments/programs. As requested by the Director of Assessment, the following information was included in the granting of all waiver requests:

> *COAS adopted the Assessment Report Template from SD 15-6 prior to its approval by Faculty Senate. COAS has a legacy policy of granting waivers on the annual assessment report based*

on departmental needs. The approval of SD 15-6 established an institutional requirement for programmatic assessment. Because of the institutional requirement, COAS will not grant waivers beyond the 2015-16 Academic Year.

However, as departments adjust to the new assessment plan, the Assessment Committee recommends allowing a "waiver with condition" for the 2015-16 Academic Year. Specifically, the COAS Assessment Committee will grant departments unable to complete the assessment report a waiver for this year with the expectation that units granted a waiver work with the Office of Assessment to complete and submit to the Assessment Office for review, the first three sections of the Departmental Assessment Report in Spring 2016. This includes the design of an assessment plan and implementation of the plan beginning no later than Fall 2016.

Table 1 *Summary of COAS Assessment Report Submissions Over Past Six Years*

	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10
Departments						
ANTH						
BIO	WC			NR	NR	W
CHEM						
COMM						W
CSD		W				
ENGL						W
ENGL grad					NR	
GEO				NR		W
HIST	WC	W			NR	
ILCS	WC	W	NR		NR	
MATH						W
PHIL	WC					
Rel.Stds.Minor						
PHYS						
POLS						
PSY						
SOC						
Programs						
GERN	WC	W		NR		
INTL						
LGBT	WC	W	NR			
LIBST	X	W		NR		NR
PACS	WC	W	NR	NR	NR	NR
WOST	WC	W				

Note. Blank = report submitted. NR = no report submitted W = waiver granted, WC = waiver with condition granted, X= program being phased out. Based upon the best available information on report submissions available to COAS Assessment Committee.

2014-15 Report Content Summary

The COAS Assessment Committee experienced some challenges in this first implementation of the new rubrics (see Section 4). After corresponding with the Director of Assessment, it was recommended that the Committee forgo the use of scores, and instead use the rubrics to provide

formative feedback this year. The COAS Assessment Committee followed this recommendation. Thus, no scores and/or data tables are presented in this year's executive summary.

Section 2: Recommendations to Academic Departments

The COAS Assessment Committee provided formative feedback and recommendations to each academic department and certificate program in the form of a letter. Letters were sent to respective departments and programs during the second week of December. Copies of the letters are appended to the current document, and the rubrics (with the original comments, but no scores) are on file in the Office of Assessment.

Section 3: Results of Activities related to Prior Year Findings

This section describes changes made to the new assessment program following last year's recommendations, as articulated in SD 98-22. First, the outline provided in the call for assessment reports (and which programs were asked to follow) was explicitly aligned with the new rubric elements. Most of the reports received were organized according to the outline requested. The COAS Assessment Committee believes the outline was helpful to departments and programs. Moreover, Committee members said that because the reports followed the outline and the rubric closely, reviewing the reports was relatively quick and easy compared to previous years.

The letters prepared by the COAS Assessment Committee contained formative feedback to departments and programs in the order of the outline and rubric. The Committee believes aligning the letter with the rubric in this way will help departments understand the feedback regarding each elements on the rubrics. Echoing earlier sentiments about reviewing reports, Committee members said writing the letters was relatively quick and easy compared to previous years because the reports, letter, and outline/rubric all aligned.

One problem in previous years was that programs did not always reflect on their responses to recommendations from previous years' COAS Assessment Committee letters. The new outline included a section in which programs were to do this. Consequently, many more departments and programs specifically addressed recommendations from last year's reports in the current year's reports than has been seen previously.

Finally, departments and programs were asked to submit their reports to the secretary in the Dean's office, rather than the Chair of the COAS Assessment Committee, in order to add a level of accountability to the process. In comparison with previous years, more departments and programs provided some information (a submission, a request for an extension or a request for a 'waiver with condition') prior to the deadline.

Section 4: Conclusions and Future Directions

Although the changes made to the assessment process appear beneficial, the rubrics are still very much a "work in progress." The Assessment Committee found the use of 'scores' on the rubrics a bit concerning in this early stage, for several reasons. If a report fails to address a particular section (or rubric element), that section receives a "0" in which case, departments would receive very low overall scores. In the past, the rubric scores were not summed. However, because these

new rubric scores are intended to be sent up the administrative ladder, this issue was a concern to the COAS Assessment Committee. Another concern was that the rubrics may be more susceptible to subjectivity than intended. That is, good learning outcomes are probably the most important driver of good assessment. If the evaluator has not been trained in writing good learning outcomes, can s/he fairly evaluate them? Because of these concerns, the Director of Assessment recommended using the rubrics as a guide for providing feedback, without the use of specific scores this year. For those reports omitting a particular section, it was recommended that the evaluator note that as an area that needs to be addressed next year. With regard to the subjectivity issue, consistency is an important aspect of the application of the rubrics, and may be related to the issue of becoming more familiar with applying the rubrics. Thus, the COAS Assessment Committee recommends the offering of training workshops for committee members beginning early Fall semester. It was also suggested that, perhaps, service on the committee should be lengthened from two years, to three years. The Committee has also provided the Director of Assessment with feedback regarding suggested modifications to specific elements in the rubrics.

Considering all the changes this year in the implementation of the new assessment procedures, the COAS Assessment process was relatively smooth. Members of the COAS Assessment Committee worked efficiently, creating timely reports and adapting to the changes in the assessment process. Although eight departments and programs requested a ‘waiver with condition’, the primary reason was attributed to major changes in assessment plans given the new requirements as per the revised SD 98-22. It is anticipated that all COAS departments and programs will work with the Director of Assessment to submit assessment reports to be reviewed by the COAS Assessment Committee Fall 2016.

In the future, as assessment procedures move forward, it is anticipated that departments will be utilizing assessment results to guide programmatic change.

2014-15 Assessment Committee Brenda Lundy Jackson, Chair
Noor Borbieva
Talia Bugel
Robert Gillespie
Vincent Maloney
Suzanne Rumsey

TO:	Dr. Rick Sutter, Chair, Department of Anthropology
FROM:	COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT:	2014-2015 Assessment Report for Anthropology
Date:	November 24, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the Department of Anthropology's 2014-2015 Assessment Report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Section 1: Student Learning Outcomes for the Program (SD 98-22 rev. Appendix D, Section I

The Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are clearly stated and include good descriptions of the expectations Anthropology has for its students. The SLOs are written in easily understood, student-centered language. Our main suggestion is to increase the expectation level of the SLOs. Currently they all employ verbs at the lower end of achievement (e.g. know, demonstrate, achieve familiarity). Consider changing the expectation level by changing the verbs to higher order expectations such as analyze, synthesize, critique, etc.

Section 2: Curricular Maps (Appendix D, Sections II and Section III)

The SLOs are aligned to all Baccalaureate Framework goals. We commend the Anthropology dept. that both lower level classes and upper level classes address a particular BF goal.

The curricular map clearly indicates how each SLO maps to particular courses. We note that the map has both lower level and upper level courses listed for each SLO. There is a broad sense that the map identifies the progression of students, and an asterisk indicates courses in which anthropological methods are taught

Section 3: Assessment Plan (Appendix D, Section IV)

The report shows good connections between SLOs and their measures, particularly in part IV.3 which discusses the capstone courses. We note that the department has included more specific detail regarding why 70% is their benchmark, which was requested by last year's evaluators. The SLOs are assessed using grade distributions, capstone written product assessment, graduate surveys, and alumni surveys. These measures provide useful and detailed results. Further, the measures used are sound, clearly explained, and specific enough to justify the results indicated.

Section 4. Assessment Results (Appendix D, Section V)

We applaud how the Anthropology department has presented the results of its assessment measures. Student achievement is clearly demonstrated, and these results are compared to previous assessments. Further, we applaud the self-identified areas for improvement and the manner in which the department is continually seeking to build a stronger program, particularly the implementation of ePortfolios.

Section 5: Conclusions, Next Steps and Communication (Appendix D, Section V and Section VI)

Overall Recommendations: The department is continuing to improve in obtaining data which will be used in future assessments of the program. Throughout the narrative explanation, it is clear that faculty members are included in both the assessment process and in discussions of the results. While it is not

clear that outside stakeholders are provided this information, by indicated the number of students who are accepted into graduate programs, the report broadly indicates that the measures employed are preparing students for graduate study.

For next year's report we suggest you:

- Increase the expectation level by changing the verbs in SLOs to higher order expectations such as analyze, synthesize, critique, etc., and
- Incorporate outside stakeholders' input and collaboration on the continued development of the programs and the assessment measures.

The committee asks the department to respond directly to the bulleted recommendations listed above, in next year's report. Please contact us if we can provide any assistance as you move forward with your assessment process.

TO: Dr. Ronald Friedman, Chair, Department of Chemistry
FROM: COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Assessment Report for Chemistry
Date: December 4, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the Department of Chemistry's 2014-2015 Assessment Report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Section 1: Student Learning Outcomes for the Program (SD 98-22 rev. Appendix D, Section I

SLOs generally contain precise verbs, as well as the skills and value domains expected of students upon completing the program. For SLO-1, it is recommended that the areas of structure, physicochemical transformation, synthesis and analysis be listed in a manner that corresponds to the presentation of the SLOs in the table (i.e., 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d; respectively). For SLO-2, effective oral and written presentation should be described separately to correspond with the table (2a, 2b; respectively). Descriptions of the knowledge, skills and values in relation to each of the SLOs could be more developed. SLOs are stated in student-centered terms.

Section 2: Curricular Maps (Appendix D, Sections II and Section III)

SLOs (1a-3) are aligned to most of the foundation areas of the IPFW Baccalaureate Framework (i.e., acquisition of knowledge, application of knowledge, critical thinking, communication, professional values). However, none of the program level SLO's are aligned to Sense of Community. In Section 2, please provide a more developed description of how each of the SLOs (1a-3) align with the Baccalaureate Framework. Please consider how SLO-4 might align with the IPFW Baccalaureate Framework.

Section 3: Assessment Plan (Appendix D, Section IV)

The table provides a clear presentation of how SLOs (1a - 3) are mapped to common classes. The table also demonstrates the progression of student learning relative to SLOs (1a - 3) at specific points in the curriculum. Please consider including SLO-4 in the curriculum map, or an explanation why it has not been included

Section 4. Assessment Results (Appendix D, Section V)

A description of the department's assessment model is provided (including embedded quizzes internally-developed and nationally-normed written examinations, and a capstone course to evaluate communication skill using internally developed rubrics). However, please provide a detailed description of how SLOs match the assessment measures. Pre-course and post-course examinations will indicate how well students have learned the course material. In addition, this information will also inform the faculty on the level of success in which the course material is taught. However, more information should be provided regarding data targets (or desired results).

Section 5: Conclusions, Next Steps and Communication (Appendix D, Section V and Section VI)

The data collection process (interim measures, internal measures at or after graduation, and external measures at or after graduation) is sound and clearly explained. However, the results are not clearly

related to SLOs and no iterations of prior results are provided. Please clarify that all faculty had multiple opportunities for collaboration to build meaningful future plans.

Overall Recommendations: The department is clearly making progress in obtaining data which will be used in future assessments of the program.

For next year's report we suggest you:

- List the areas of structure, physicochemical transformation, synthesis and analysis in a manner that corresponds to the presentation of the SLOs in the table (i.e., 1a, 1b, 1c, and 1d; respectively)
- Provide more developed descriptions of how SLOs align with the IPFW Baccalaureate Framework
- Provide more detailed descriptions of how SLOs match the assessment measures.
- Connect results more clearly to SLOs

The committee asks the department to respond directly to the bulleted recommendations listed above, in next year's report. Please contact us if we can provide any assistance as you move forward with your assessment process.

TO: Dr. Rachel Hile, Interim Chair, Department of Communication
FROM: COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Assessment Report for Communication
Date: December 1, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the Department of Communication's 2014-2015 Graduate Assessment Report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Section 1: Student Learning Outcomes for the Program (SD 98-22 rev. Appendix D, Section I

The Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are clearly stated – focusing on theory, research methods, and one area of specialization. Nevertheless, we find that there is no description of the skills expected of students by the time they complete the program - the current SLOs state goals for the Program but not for the students, and we think that the absence of an explanation of the levels of expectation of student achievement is a consequence of this.

Section 2: Curricular Maps (Appendix D, Sections II and Section III)

With respect to the Learning Benchmarks, only core courses for the three existing areas of specialization have been identified. There are none regarding theory and research methods.

Section 3: Assessment Plan (Appendix D, Section IV)

Assessment of non-course degree requirements from graduating students is being conducted – including piloting of a new developed scale. We note that there are good types of measures - separate for understanding and application of research methods; understanding and synthesis of the discipline; inter- and intra-disciplinary bridges within the discipline etc.). We approve of the plan for disseminating results.

Section 4. Assessment Results (Appendix D, Section V)

We found the assessment rubric, which was piloted on 8 term papers in Fall 2014, to be acceptable – there were two faculty members assessing the documents and applying a rubric. Though there were disagreements between those faculty, we found the method to be well developed. We look forward to seeing the rubric used to assess the actual work for which it was developed (theses and comprehensive exams responses).

Section 5: Conclusions, Next Steps and Communication (Appendix D, Section V and Section VI)

Overall Recommendations: The department is clearly making progress in obtaining data which will be used in future assessments of the program. There seems to be good involvement by faculty in the assessment process.

For next year's report we suggest you include:

- Statement of the SLOs in a student-centered format;
- Descriptions of students' levels of achievement at completion of the program; and

- Courses of theory and methods that address the Learning Benchmarks (Student Learning Development of SLOs).

The committee asks the department to respond directly to the bulleted recommendations listed above, in next year's report. Please contact us if we can provide any assistance as you move forward with your assessment process.

TO:	Dr. Rachel Hile, Interim Chair, Department of Communications
FROM:	COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT:	2014-2015 Assessment Report for Department of Communications
Date:	November 24, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the Department of Communication's undergraduate 2014-2015 Assessment Report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Section 1: Student Learning Outcomes for the Program (SD 98-22 rev. Appendix D, Section I

We approve of the clarity and specificity of the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for the core outcomes and Media and Public Relations Track. However, we encourage the Department of Communications to increase the clarity and specificity of the outcomes related to the Interpersonal and Organizational to rise to the same level. The SLOs are generally very well written in terms of student-centered and expectation level. There is a good mix of lower-order skills (e.g. "demonstrate) and higher-order skills (e.g. "critically analyze").

Section 2: Curricular Maps (Appendix D, Sections II and Section III)

We find the SLOs to be very well aligned with the Baccalaureate Framework (BFs). We particularly like how both core classes and courses in particular tracks are listed for different SLOs and aligned with different BFs. This shows an integrated alignment of the entire Communications undergraduate program to the university goals. We do note that for the Interpersonal Organizational track, there are fewer options and alignments, which would be corrected if our prior recommendation is addressed.

We also find that all SLOs are clearly mapped to specific courses or learning activities. There is a clear progression of student learning throughout the map.

Section 3: Assessment Plan (Appendix D, Section IV)

Taken together, the overview information in Section III, Appendix A, and Appendix D, illustrates a systematic assessment plan that does match SLOs to specific measures. Faculty members evaluate portfolios using rubrics, employer survey, and alumni survey scores are the three measures indicated. These all seem reasonable choices. We note, too, the updates that have been made: definitions of scores in the rubric and established benchmarks. We applaud these updates. We particularly note that the alumni survey is designed to garner feedback related directly to SLOs.

Further, we note that the data collection process seems logical and is appropriately actionable. The methods used to ensure reliability of findings are clearly explained.

Section 4. Assessment Results (Appendix D, Section V)

Results are presented in a clear manner that is consistent across all SLOs. We note that the department has updated their presentation of assessment results in positive ways that directly address comments made by the COAS Assessment Committee in 2014. We applaud the significant update. SLOs showed a mean of at least 3 (competent) for each outcome. However, the benchmark of scores being 4 on at least 1/2 of the outcomes has not yet been met. We recommend that an explanation be provided for how

this benchmark was established. Further, we recommend that the Department of Communications address how it will achieve this benchmark in future years.

Section 5: Conclusions, Next Steps and Communication (Appendix D, Section V and Section VI)

Overall Recommendations: The department is clearly making progress in obtaining data which will be used in future assessments of the program. We note that faculty members do participate in the rubric scoring of portfolios. No other faculty stakeholder involvement is evident in the report. This does not mean that such involvement was absent, it just isn't described here. We recommend that such involvement be articulated in future assessment reports.

For next year's report we suggest you:

- Increase the clarity and specificity of the SLOs related to the Interpersonal and Organizational to rise to the same level as the Media and Public Relations Track,
- Align the suggested SLOs for the Interpersonal and Organizational Track to the Baccalaureate Framework,
- Provide an explanation for how the benchmark of "scores of 4 on at least ½ the outcomes" was established. Further, we recommend that the Department of Communications address how it will achieve this benchmark in future years, and
- Articulate more clearly how faculty and outside stakeholders are involved in the assessment process.

The committee asks the department to respond directly to the bulleted recommendations listed above, in next year's report. Please contact us if we can provide any assistance as you move forward with your assessment process.

TO: Dr. Lucille Hess, Interim Department Administrator
FROM: COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Assessment Report for Communication Sciences and Disorders
Date: December 14, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the Communication Sciences and Disorders Department's 2014-2015 Assessment Report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Programmatic Student Learning Outcomes (Appendix D, Section I)

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are clear and specific. They are written in student-centered terms. In the next report, please clarify the difference between SLOs (c) and (d). To the lay reader, it is not immediately clear how demonstrating correct use of speech and language assessment tools is different from demonstrating ability to screen hearing, speech and language.

Alignment with IPFW Baccalaureate Framework (Appendix D, Section II)

SLOs appear to align with the Baccalaureate Framework, but there is no discussion of this. In future reports, as per the new senate document (pg. 7, IV.b), please include a discussion of how SLOs align with the BF. One concern that is evident, even without such a discussion, is that stated SLOs indicate CSD is committed to giving students depth of knowledge in the field but not the breadth of knowledge/skills appropriate to a liberal arts degree (even though CSD's commitment to the latter is clear throughout the discussion of assessment measures).

SLOs mapped to planned learning experiences (curricular map) (Appendix D, Section III)

The assessment plan includes a curricular map. However in next year's report, please discuss how each of the proposed SLOs are mapped to common classes or learning activities expected of all students completing the program.

Systematic Method for Measuring Progress toward Accomplishment of SLOs (Appendix D, Section IV.i)

Desired results are discussed, but assessment measures are linked to general education outcomes, not to SLOs. In future reports, please indicate which assessment measures are being used to determine accomplishment of which SLOs.

Systematic Method for Measuring Progress toward Accomplishment of SLOs (Appendix D, Section IV.ii)

The data collection process appears sound, and it is clearly explained. The report includes some discussion of reliability. For example, the Interim Administrator indicates CSD 42000 papers were randomly selected and reviewed by several people. In next year's report, please add additional discussion about the reliability of assessment measures.

Reporting Results (Appendix D, Section V)

Some past results are provided and interpretation of the results appears sound. In next year's report, please provide additional discussion of past results to provide context for the current year's results. Additionally, please include more information about who interpreted the results and how results reflect accomplishment of SLOs.

Stakeholder involvement (Appendix D, Section VI)

This element was not addressed. In future reports, please provide information about how assessment results are shared among faculty and stakeholders.

TO: Department of English, Graduate Studies Committee
FROM: COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Assessment Report, English Graduate Program
Date: December 4, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the English Department's graduate program 2014-2015 assessment report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Programmatic Student Learning Outcomes (Appendix D, Section I)

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are clear and specific. They are written in student-centered terms. They exceed the basic expectations established by the university for a graduate program.

Alignment with IPFW Baccalaureate Framework (Appendix D, Section II)

n/a

SLOs mapped to planned learning experiences (curricular map) (Appendix D, Section III)

The report lists the classes that are used as sources for the papers assessed here, but it does not clarify how individual SLOs map to these courses, or how students are expected to move toward accomplishment of the SLOs as they move through the curriculum. Please address these points in next year's report.

Systematic Method for Measuring Progress toward Accomplishment of SLOs (Appendix D, Section IV.i)

SLOs are clearly linked to individual measures and most SLOs are assessed using at least one direct measure. Desired results are stated and provide useful context for the results presented.

Systematic Method for Measuring Progress toward Accomplishment of SLOs (Appendix D, Section IV.ii)

The data collection process appears sound, and it is clearly explained. The report includes extensive discussion of reliability. The report offers evidence that concerns raised in last year's assessment letter about issues of reliability and measurement were satisfactorily addressed.

Reporting Results (Appendix D, Section V)

Results suggest students are consistently achieving the SLOs. Interpretations of results appear sound, particularly as multiple faculty participated in the process. In future reports, please include a longer history of results.

Stakeholder involvement (Appendix D, Section VI)

The current report mentions a number of ways the program reaches out to alumni and publicizes the successes of the department. Further documentation of ongoing contact with alumni and their employers (established with the goal of improving the program and prospects of future graduates) would be helpful here. In future reports, please provide additional information about how assessment results are shared among faculty and stakeholders.

TO:	Department of English, Undergraduate Assessment Committee
FROM:	COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT:	2014-2015 Assessment Report, English undergraduate program
Date:	December 4, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the English Department's undergraduate program 2014-2015 assessment report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Programmatic Student Learning Outcomes (Appendix D, Section I)

Department-wide (not concentration-specific) Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are provided, and they are clear and specific. They are written in student-centered terms. They exceed the basic expectations established by the university for an undergraduate program. In future reports, please include the learning outcomes for the concentrations, even if these are not being assessed in a given year.

Alignment with IPFW Baccalaureate Framework (Appendix D, Section II)

Department-wide SLOs are clearly linked to all areas of the IPFW BF. In future reports, please include discussion of how all SLOs, including those in the concentrations, align with the BF.

SLOs mapped to planned learning experiences (curricular map) (Appendix D, Section III)

All SLOs are mapped to two core courses that all students take. The report provides and extensive discussion of how students progress towards the SLOs in the course of taking the two courses.

Systematic Method for Measuring Progress toward Accomplishment of SLOs (Appendix D, Section IV.i)

Excellent presentation and analysis here: detail is provided regarding the match between SLOs and measures. All SLOs are assessed using several measures and desired results are provided. One suggestion is to make the language consistent; the report sometimes refers to SLOs as program goals.

Systematic Method for Measuring Progress toward Accomplishment of SLOs (Appendix D, Section IV.ii)

The data collection process is sound, and it is clearly explained. The report includes extensive discussion of reliability.

Reporting Results (Appendix D, Section V)

Results suggest students are consistently achieving the SLOs. Past results on similar measures are provided for context. Interpretations of results are sound, particularly as multiple faculty participated in the process.

Stakeholder involvement (Appendix D, Section VI)

The report documents that information from assessment is shared with faculty, but minimal evidence is provided that information is provided to stakeholders. The report mentions the Chair's intention to distribute the results to stakeholders. In future reports, please discuss how this was or will be done.

TO: Dr. Anne Argast, Chair of Geosciences
FROM: COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Assessment Report for Geosciences
Date: December 1, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the Department Geosciences' 2014-2015 Assessment Report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Section 1: Student Learning Outcomes for the Program (SD 98-22 rev. Appendix D, Section I

We applaud the significant alterations and additions made to Geosciences Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Taken as a working draft, we note that great strides have been made to clarify and provide rich descriptions, to make the SLOs student-centered, and to establish broad expectation levels. There is significant change from last year, and it is clear that Geology is on the right path to establishing solid SLOs.

Section 2: Curricular Maps (Appendix D, Sections II and Section III)

SLOs are mapped to the Baccalaureate Framework broadly, at this point. Will the sub-outcomes of each number also be mapped in a future report?

The preliminary map of SLOs to core courses is commendable. Again, this is a significant change from the previous year's report, and we applaud the department's efforts.

Section 3: Assessment Plan (Appendix D, Section IV)

At present, no assessment measures are indicated; however, the department has clearly been in conversation with the VCAA's Office of Assessment. We approve of the suggestions present for courses that might be good targets for assessment, particularly the inclusion of the Field Camp Experience as a capstone. The current/previous model of assessment was to evaluate the number of students who present at scientific conferences and to track the number of students employed by the department. Should these measures continue to be employed, we encourage the department to establish more clear and specific rubrics for evaluating those conference presentations.

The report indicates a very solid plan for creating a systematic method for measuring progress, which will be done in consultation with the Office of Assessment.

Section 4. Assessment Results (Appendix D, Section V)

The list of student posters at scientific conferences is indicative of the strengths of the department. We look forward to seeing more structured analysis and results once the new SLOs are crafted. We want to acknowledge the significant changes in this year's report, even as it is a "work in progress."

Section 5: Conclusions, Next Steps and Communication (Appendix D, Section V and Section VI)

Overall Recommendations: The department is clearly making progress in obtaining data which will be used in future assessments of the program. We trust that all faculty in the department are participating

in the creation of the SLOs and assessment measures. We encourage the Geology Department to also consider outside stakeholders.

For next year's report we suggest you:

- Continue to consult with the Office of Assessment,
- Continue to build assessment measures that are clear, systematic, and beneficial to developing and maintaining the strength and integrity of the programs in the department, and
- Continue to develop measures that map to the baccalaureate framework.

The committee asks the department to respond directly to the bulleted recommendations listed above, in next year's report. Please contact us if we can provide any assistance as you move forward with your assessment process.

TO: Dr. Whalen, Director, International Studies
FROM: COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Assessment Report for International Studies
Date: December 4, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the International Studies' 2014-2015 Assessment Report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Section 1: Student Learning Outcomes for the Program (SD 98-22 rev. Appendix D, Section I

The learning outcomes presented are clear and concise. However, there are only three outcomes for the entire certificate program. Is this enough?

Section 2: Curricular Maps (Appendix D, Sections II and Section III)

SLOs are mapped to only two classes currently offered by the INTL program. However, the certificate requires 18 credits. SLOs should also be mapped to electives required in outside courses. For example, SLO "A" could be assessed in any of the history courses. SLO "B" could be assessed in any of the POLS courses. Assessing SLOs in courses outside of the program could be a challenge. But, it may be necessary. There is no progression of expectations presented for SLOs within the curriculum. It is proposed that "students can easily demonstrate success" for all three INTL SLOs in INTL I200. However, this is an introductory course and the program is an 18-credit certificate. We encourage consideration of additional outcomes (or expectations for these three) for the non-INTL outside courses.

Section 3: Assessment Plan (Appendix D, Section IV)

The current plan depends upon evaluation of course artifacts. The protocols for assessing artifacts are well-presented. But, there are details missing about the artifacts used. What artifacts qualify for assessment? How many are required for assessment? Who determines which artifacts are used? Is the current rubric adequate to evaluate the three learning outcomes? There should be more details about these in the plan. It is also recommended that the plan be expanded to include more of the curriculum. It is also recommended that multiple assessment tools be used.

Section 4. Assessment Results (Appendix D, Section V)

Artifacts representing 36 students from 2 sections of INTL I200 were assessed. However, there are no details about what artifacts were used. The benchmark set for this assessment was met by 100% of students. However, the benchmark score of 2 or higher seems to be fairly low. This score indicates that the quality of the artifact is "poor" (needs work). Should the expectation level of appreciation, understanding and ability be higher? Since this is an introductory course perhaps the LOs could be introduced with much higher expectations in higher-level program courses.

Section 5: Conclusions, Next Steps and Communication (Appendix D, Section V and Section VI)

The Director reports that 100% of students in INTL I200 achieved the benchmark set for all three SLOs. However, results are limited to evaluation of one artifact in one course. As course learning outcomes, it is still uncertain if the program learning outcomes have been met. One artifact in one course does not necessarily provide evidence that program goals are being met. As the Director reports, this is a very

cursory evaluation of the program. We encourage the program to broaden the assessment plan to include other courses (e.g. electives) and to broaden the types of assessment used.

Overall Recommendations:

For next year's report we suggest you include:

- A revised assessment plan that addresses all program learning outcomes with specific assessment methods and expectations. For example, consider the recommendations made in Sections 3.9, 4.B and 5 of this report. We also recommend using the guidelines presented in Senate Document 15-16, Appendix D and those in the document, College of Arts and Sciences Outcomes Assessment Team "Best Practices" Model for Assessment (4/25/11). The Office of Assessment is very willing to assist with developing the plan.

The committee asks the department to respond directly to the bulleted recommendations listed above, in next year's report. Please contact us if we can provide any assistance as you move forward with your assessment process.

TO:	Dr. Peter Dragnev, Chair, Department of Mathematics and Statistics
FROM:	COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT:	2014-2015 Assessment Report for Mathematics and Statistics
Date:	December 11, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the Department of Mathematics and Statistics' 2014-2015 Assessment Report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Section 1: Student Learning Outcomes for the Program (SD 98-22 rev. Appendix D, Section I

The Student Learning Outcomes are generally stated clearly and are specific. The organization across broad goals contributes to a manageable assessment plan given the variety of major offerings. The SLO's are generally precise but could benefit from some review. For example - In G1 you state that students will be able to "reason" mathematically. The SLO's in the category are all written at an "understanding" level. However, the assessment strategy you are using "solving specific types of problems" suggest the learning expectation is an ability to apply mathematical knowledge to "do" specific intellectual tasks.

Section 2: Curricular Maps (Appendix D, Sections II and Section III)

The program demonstrated how SLOs (with the exception of BF 3 (PPV) and BF 4(SOC) aligned with the Baccalaureate Framework. This appears to be primarily a challenge of incorporating these elements of the BF in a crowded curriculum; however they might actually be occurring in the learning environment or in specific projects or experiences of your majors. This is an area that we suggest consultation with the Office of Assessment to help you capture where students are potentially demonstrating these outcomes. SLO's are mapped to common classes. More specificity could be added to more clearly identify the progression of student learning relative to the SLO's through identifying the levels of performance expected of students at specific points in the curriculum.

Section 3: Assessment Plan (Appendix D, Section IV)

Measures development is excellent. You have noted some of the challenges and have a method for refining measures in progress. It appears that multiple measures are used for each SLO evidenced by the use of multiple student products and at least two direct measures for each outcome. You have set data targets; however, this is the one area where the precision might be enhanced to ensure that useful comparisons of performance over time might be better leveraged for curricular decisions. Additionally, the targets are based on a percentage of students achieving a specific level of performance demonstrated through completing specific tasks, it might be beneficial to do some type of item analysis on these tasks to provide a more granular analysis of student learning in which you can focus on what aspects of a particular construct students are grasping well and what aspects they are not grasping as well. This would help focus your curricular interventions.

The assessment strategy clearly focuses on methodology with a very strong emphasis on ensuring reliability. The data collection process is sound and there are few methodological concerns (the methods are actually very good). However, the data collection strategy could be enhanced to be more specific and actionable. We recommend working with the Assessment Office to fine tune the process but reiterate that the overall strategy is very good.

Section 4. Assessment Results (Appendix D, Section V)

The departmental faculty engage in a community to determine future actions to enhance the curriculum. This suggests that the communication within the department is at a high level. The report demonstrates that both present and past results are clearly presented. The program did a good job of describing prior results and actions to date on those results. The interpretation is reasonable, multiple faculty interpreted the results. It appears that the faculty work collaboratively to use findings to improve student learning.

Overall Recommendations: The department is clearly making progress in obtaining data which will be used in future assessments of the program.

For next year's report we suggest that you:

- Work on defining the level of learning expected in the SLOs and supplement your current methodology with additional analyses (e.g. item analysis). The Office of Assessment is very willing to provide assistance.

The committee asks the department to respond directly to the bulleted recommendations listed above, in next year's report. Please contact us if we can provide any assistance as you move forward with your assessment process.

TO: Dr. Mark Masters, Chair, Department of Physics
FROM: COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Assessment Report for Physics
Date: December 17, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received the Department of Physics' 2014-2015 Assessment Report. The comments below are from the Director of Assessment (due to the timing of submission) and follow the rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Section 1: Student Learning Outcomes for the Program (SD 98-22 rev. Appendix D, Section I

The SLO's are generally stated clearly but lack precise verbs in a couple of the domains. The precision of the SLO's in "Physics Content" could be improved. The SLO's state "basic understanding" at the undergraduate level but does not adequately describe what you expect students to "know" and "be able to do" with the knowledge areas listed. I think we could work backwards from the projects where they demonstrate this knowledge to determine these levels.

Section 2: Curricular Maps (Appendix D, Sections II and Section III)

The SLOs are mapped but the trajectory of student learning relative to the outcomes is not. The program should identify some "levels" of learning expected of students as they matriculate through the curriculum. There is no progression of expectations for student learning in the current maps. Improving the precision of the SLO's in the "Physics Content" area as described above should provide a foundation for strengthening the maps. The program could work with the Office of Assessment to improve.

Section 3: Assessment Plan (Appendix D, Section IV)

Overall this is fairly good. Your program is using a "holistic" approach with two faculty reviewing work followed by discussions with the whole faculty in faculty meetings. Moving forward it would be nice to develop some rubrics which might allow for a bit more precision. However, the plan process did generate conversations that lead to curricular changes to address student learning concerns so this is a very good progress.

Section 4. Assessment Results (Appendix D, Section V)

The items discussed previously - improving the curricular map and developing rubrics will go a long way in improving this area. However, it is clear in reading the identified issues section and proposed changes section that the department worked as a whole on the interpretation of results which suggests a great deal of consensus. The primary need is to make expectations more explicit and to use assessment data to support "claims" of student learning. Past iterations of results were not available and not rated. The program clearly identified specific changes proposed to the curriculum as a result of the assessment and identified challenges (e.g. multiple faculty teaching sections with differing methods) to be addressed.

Section 5: Conclusions, Next Steps and Communication (Appendix D, Section V and Section VI)

Overall the assessment effort was strong. The Physics department identified in the report the need and plan to develop rubrics. This effort will provide a foundation to address the concerns mentioned in this evaluation of the assessment effort.

Overall Recommendations:

For next year's report we suggest you:

- Complete the development of rubrics for assessing student learning.
- Increase the specificity of the Physics Content SLO's. This would lay a foundation for a stronger curricular map.
- Finally, the department could include FCI as a baseline measure and the DIRECT and Concept Survey of Electricity and Magnetism as a secondary level baseline measure. This would allow the program to use the Baseline Measure in conjunction with the other measures to document student growth as they matriculate through the program.

The committee asks the department to respond directly to the bulleted recommendations listed above, in next year's report. Please contact us if we can provide any assistance as you move forward with your assessment process.

TO: Dr. James Lutz, Chair, Department of Political Science
FROM: COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Assessment Report for Political Science
Date: December 7, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the Department of Political Science's 2014-2015 Assessment Report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Section 1: Student Learning Outcomes for the Program (SD 98-22 rev. Appendix D, Section I

The Learning Goals should be referred to as Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's). These should all be stated clearly in Section 1 of the assessment report. Currently they are spread throughout the first half of the report. The outcomes should be precise and include expectations. It would be best if the outcomes were written in the following format.

"Students will demonstrate the ability to identify and explain key terms and concepts in the major fields of the discipline ..."

Section 2: Curricular Maps (Appendix D, Sections II and Section III)

There should be a separate section consisting of a table with two columns. One column would list the Baccalaureate Framework (BF) Goals while the other column lists the corresponding SLO that achieves the BF Goal. As redundant as this seems, it improves clarity, it does allow the reviewer to proceed more quickly and enables the reviewer to focus on areas where improvement may be needed.

The progression of expectations for learning outcomes in Section III is well-presented. However, no course learning experiences (activities, artifacts) are identified for assessment of learning outcomes. We recommend identifying specific endpoints that satisfy the assessment of learning outcomes.

Section 3: Assessment Plan (Appendix D, Section IV)

Under Types of Measures, the Program Learning Objectives table, SLO's 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7 currently lists 1 measure instead of 2. Given the difficulty and time required to acquire and/or develop measures, this is quite understandable.

Section 4. Assessment Results (Appendix D, Section V)

Course grades should not be used for assessment. Separate assessment tools with clearly defined rubrics for measuring the achievement of SLO's should be developed. If any exams or other assessment methods developed by a national association for political science exist, these might be valuable for your program. Whether or not such exists, a pre- and post-test of content knowledge for the field developed by your department may also be effective. Such methods will validate the assigned grades and design of the course. Similarly, graduation rates are not measures of learning. Although it will be time consuming to develop and cannot be expected to be completed in a short time period, two measures should be developed for each learning objective. Of course a single assessment method may cover more than one SLO. The current assessment of the student projects in Y207 and Y490 is more useful in that it develops a rubric for determining the student learning. However it consists of one set of rubrics for one learning objective. It should be possible develop rubrics for other SLO's and assess those also. It is also

suggested that at least 2 faculty members assess each project. The report mentions that a statistics course measures research skills and rubrics to assess student research papers in upper level courses have been developed but these are not described. The development of an alumni survey is important but it should include questions that directly address SLO's.

Section 5: Conclusions, Next Steps and Communication (Appendix D, Section V and Section VI)

Overall Recommendations: The department is working hard to develop an assessment program.

For next year's report we suggest you include:

- A revised assessment plan that addresses all program learning outcomes with specific assessment methods and expectations. We recommend using the guidelines presented in Senate Document 15-16, Appendix D and those in the document, College of Arts and Sciences Outcomes Assessment Team "Best Practices" Model for Assessment (4/25/11). The Office of Assessment is very willing to assist with developing the plan.
- As important as enrollment and graduation rates are, the assessment plan should directly address learning outcomes. Enrollment and graduation rates should not be included but more appropriately belong in another forum.
- Provide a separate table aligning the Baccalaureate Framework with your student learning outcomes.
- Develop or use current assessment methods that do not use grades or graduation rates.

The committee asks the department to respond directly to the bulleted recommendations listed above, in next year's report. Please contact us if we can provide any assistance as you move forward with your assessment process.

TO: Dr. Carol Lawton, Chair, Department of Psychology
FROM: COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Assessment Report for Psychology
Date: December 7, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the Department of Psychology's 2014-2015 Assessment Report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Section 1: Student Learning Outcomes for the Program (SD 98-22 rev. Appendix D, Section I

SLO's 1 through 9 clearly address the requirements stated for each section. Considering Kratwohl's Update of Bloom's Taxonomy, it appears that all of the SLO's except 3 and 6 address only Remembering, Understanding, and Applying. If the other categories are addressed in the curriculum, perhaps it would be advantageous to include more SLO's that pertain to them.

Section 2: Curricular Maps (Appendix D, Sections II and Section III)

Although some clarifications for the reviewers may be required for evaluating Content Alignment and Student Engagement, at this time the criteria appear to have been met.

It is excellent that SLO's 1 through 7 are threaded throughout the entire curriculum. It is then somewhat surprising that SLO 8 is addressed in only one course and SLO 9 is addressed in just two courses. Perhaps this is entirely appropriate, but it is such a contrast with the first seven SLO's that it raises the question why to a reviewer.

For Student Learning Development, one letter or symbol for the alignment of an SLO with a course may not be sufficient to indicate the progression of student learning. Other departments have used a 3 tier ranking to indicate SLO development through the curriculum. One example is to rank the learning development for an SLO in a course as I (introductory), D (developmental), or M (mastering). An alternative method is to use the rankings of I (introduced), E (emphasized), or R (reinforced).

No course learning experiences (activities, artifacts) are identified for assessment of learning outcomes. We recommend identifying specific endpoints that satisfy the assessment of learning outcomes.

There appear to be typos in the spelling of knowledge and diversity in the table.

Section 3: Assessment Plan (Appendix D, Section IV)

Under Types of Measures, the Program Learning Objectives table, SLO's 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7 currently lists 1 measure instead of 2. Given the difficulty and time required to acquire and/or develop measures, this is quite understandable.

Section 4. Assessment Results (Appendix D, Section V)

For SLO's 8 and 9 in particular and for some of the other SLO's, a survey of your majors was used to evaluate how well the outcomes had been achieved. Both questions relating to SLO 8, some of the questions relating to 9, and some questions for the other SLO's appear to ask the students to judge

course and curriculum content. If so, are the students the best judges of such content? Perhaps a short explanation of why would be helpful to reviewers.

Section 5: Conclusions, Next Steps and Communication (Appendix D, Section V and Section VI)

Overall Recommendations: The department is clearly making progress in obtaining data which will be used in future assessments of the program.

For next year's report we suggest you include:

- Provide rankings of student learning progression in the curriculum map and course learning experiences for assessment of learning outcomes.

The committee asks the department to respond directly to the bulleted recommendations listed above, in next year's report. Please contact us if we can provide any assistance as you move forward with your assessment process.

TO: Bernd Buldt, Chair, Department of Philosophy
FROM: COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Assessment Report for Religious Studies Minor
Date: December 11, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the Religious Studies Minor's 2014-2015 Assessment Report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from the revised Senate Document 98-22. Appendix D.

Section 1: Student Learning Outcomes for the Program (SD 98-22 rev. Appendix D, Section I

The SLOs generally are precise but could be enhanced through a minor structural change. For example: the program might state SLO 1 as: (if this is what students can do) Students identify and apply appropriate scholarly methods in the study of religion. Part of the challenge is that there are a limited number of courses and students in your program are potentially from a number of different disciplines with different methodological backgrounds. The Office of Assessment is planning to assemble a group of programs that offer only a minor or certificate to discuss how best to assess - this could include a modification of Appendix D requirements to more accurately reflect the expectations of these types of important programs. We recommend you contact Kent Johnson to discuss.

Section 2: Curricular Maps (Appendix D, Sections II and Section III)

The curricular map is aligned to the BF but could be enhanced through more specific descriptives. The SLO's are mapped to courses but the level of expected learning could be more clearly specified. We recommend working with Kent to develop a more complete and detailed Curricular Map.

Section 3: Assessment Plan (Appendix D, Section IV)

The challenge of programmatic assessment in a smaller program is evident (e.g. sample of one product due to the number of students in the program). We recommend that you discuss a course based assessment strategy using embedded measures with the Office of Assessment. The data collection process is limited by the number of students in the program. The Office of Assessment can help with this.

Section 4. Assessment Results (Appendix D, Section V)

The ability to communicate results was limited by the response rate on the assessment instrument used. A course embedded assessment strategy could provide the type of data that yields actionable findings.

For next year's report we suggest you:

- Please contact the Director of Assessment for information regarding participation in a group that focuses on the assessment of minors and certificate programs.

The committee asks the department to respond directly to the bulleted recommendations listed above, in next year's report. Please contact us if we can provide any assistance as you move forward with your assessment process.

TO: Dr. Iadicola, Chair, Department of Sociology
FROM: COAS Assessment Committee
SUBJECT: 2014-2015 Assessment Report for Sociology
Date: December 4, 2015

The COAS Assessment Committee has received and reviewed the Department of Sociology's 2014-2015 Assessment Report. Our comments below follow a rubric derived from Senate Document 15-16. Appendix D.

Section 1: Student Learning Outcomes for the Program (SD 98-22 rev. Appendix D, Section I

Some student learning outcome verbs like, "critically evaluate" and "demonstrate mastery" provide a general expectation that can be assessed quantitatively. However, others, such as "write, develop, engage" do not, nor can they be assessed quantitatively. We recommend revising outcomes so that all are precise and include expectations.

Section 2: Curricular Maps (Appendix D, Sections II and Section III)

The progression of expectations for learning outcomes over the four-course set is well-presented. However, no course learning experiences (activities, artifacts) are identified for assessment of learning outcomes. We recommend identifying specific endpoints that satisfy the assessment of learning outcomes.

Section 3: Assessment Plan (Appendix D, Section IV)

The assessment plan is missing key components. As written, there is no mention of an assessment approach, nor specific measurement methods. For written work, rubrics are mentioned, but not specified. Exit and alumni surveys can provide important feedback, but for program assessment purposes they need to be linked to learning outcomes and should be assessed objectively by skilled observers. Self-reporting by students seems problematic for objective assessment. The assessment plan does not detail how data are collected. Although the plan requires faculty to meet and to develop specific assessment instruments, there is no mention about how this was accomplished in 2014-15.

Individual course assessment protocols are provided in the "Results". But, details are missing and there is no consistency between courses. For example, in S351 achievement of course learning outcomes were evaluated by the "performance" of answers to questions on a post-test. A 70% benchmark was used for acceptable performance on responses, but it is unknown how performance was evaluated. Was a rubric used? How is the 70% benchmark justified? It is also questionable whether answers to questions, rather than performance on assignments, should be used to assess these skills. Assessment of LO #4 did appear to use an assignment, however, there is no mention of how that assignment was evaluated.

In S470, assessment was completed by instructor observations, but there are no details of methods for evaluations. Papers and presentations were used for assessment, but there are no details about how they were evaluated. Rubrics were not used. The use of student course evaluations is problematic and not a generally-accepted practice for program review. Student perceptions of their own skills are not as objective as those by an external, competent observer. The assessment plan should be revised to provide consistent, standard, quantitative measures of learning outcomes. There are many models, standard assessment practices that can be adopted to both of these courses.

Section 4. Assessment Results (Appendix D, Section V)

For S351, the instructor reports that a comparison of results from a pre-test and post-test found that 95-100% of students achieved a benchmark of 70% performance on answers to outcome questions on the post-test assessment. However, the methods for evaluation are not reported. The results are suspect because of the absence of a rubric or other assessment method for evaluating the answers to these questions. How was 70% performance determined?

Because the methods of assessment of abilities in theoretical analysis and research design in S470 did not use quantitative assessment measures, it is not clear whether expectations were met. The lack of specific assessment methods and benchmarks for achievement makes it difficult to verify the conclusions. The use of student course evaluations is problematic. Excerpts from the report below show how conclusions are made difficult from the lack of standard assessment practice.

- In general, the students' performance[s] were adequate. Some students were more able to interpret this work than others
- Overall, two out of the three teams of students were able to determine the appropriateness of their chosen design
- All students were in general successful in the passing this exercise
- The majority of students successfully completed the assignment

Section 5: Conclusions, Next Steps and Communication (Appendix D, Section V and Section VI)

The instructors for both courses (SOC-S 351 and SOC-S 470) concluded that "the required courses met the program objectives assigned". Although there is some evidence for this, the credibility of the conclusions are compromised by the lack of standard, quantitative assessment methods.

The use of a pre-test and post-test assessment in S351 could be effective for assessing knowledge. However, for assessing skills it is recommended that the assignments be evaluated directly using performance rubrics. The instructor for SOC-S 470 recommended that "students be provided with more opportunity to write research papers". However, this could be a much stronger recommendation if results from more rigorous assessment had been used to support the conclusion. The instructor concluded that the capstone course could provide an important opportunity to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the program if teaching methods and assessment methods are standardized. The committee strongly endorses this conclusion.

Overall Recommendations:

For next year's report we suggest you include:

- A revised assessment plan that addresses all program learning outcomes with specific assessment methods and expectations. We recommend using the guidelines presented in Senate Document 15-16, Appendix D and those in the document, College of Arts and Sciences Outcomes Assessment Team "Best Practices" Model for Assessment (4/25/11). The Office of Assessment is very willing to assist with developing the plan.

The committee asks the department to respond directly to the bulleted recommendations listed above, in next year's report. Please contact us if we can provide any assistance as you move forward with your assessment process.